

**DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

**THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN ENHANCING  
COMPETITIVENESS OF THE DURBAN FILM INDUSTRY**

**PHILISWA SHONGWE  
APRIL 2025**



# **THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN ENHANCING COMPETITIVENESS OF THE DURBAN FILM INDUSTRY**

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of the degree:

Masters in Management Sciences: Public Relations and Communication

Durban University of Technology

Faculty of Management Sciences

Department of Public Relations Management

**PHILISWA NOMFUNDO SHONGWE**

**21625443**

APRIL 2025

SUBMISSION APPROVED FOR EXAMINATION

Supervisor: Dr Elvis Madondo  
(PhD, Msc, MBA, PGDHE, B Tech, ND)

Date: 4 April 2025

## **STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY**

I, Philiswa Shongwe, do hereby declare that the work presented in this dissertation is my work and findings, except where indicated by references. All sources used have been fully cited. The work has not been submitted to any other institution of higher learning for the award of degree purposes, nor is it submitted concurrently.

---

Philiswa Shongwe

## **ABSTRACT**

The Durban film industry possesses great potential, however, the lack of adequate infrastructure, poor marketing and public relations, insufficiency of resources, and lack of exposure, among other concerns, have undermined this sector and invariably analysts have perceived this as a missed opportunity. As mentioned, the local film industry cannot generate enough volume on its own, it needs more public relations efforts to help it succeed and without these factors, it could be very difficult for the industry to achieve its objectives. There is a gap in the knowledge base as to what public relations (PR) can do to enhance competitiveness of the Durban film industry (DFI). Therefore, this study sought to explore the role of public relations in enhancing the competitiveness of the Durban film industry. A qualitative research methodology was used. A sample size of 16 participants was selected using purposive sampling. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis was conducted to deduce themes. The study found that the performance of the Durban film industry is not as competitive as other national and international film industries. Public relations play a significant role in promoting local films, raising awareness, developing and maintaining relationships as well as seeking support from sponsors and other related stakeholders. Furthermore, the study found that there are PR-related challenges that are hindering the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI, including lack of global awareness, poor networking, poor reputation, perceptions of the people, poor relationship with local people and international audience, as well as lack of sponsorship. Therefore, the study recommended that PR in DFI should be provided with adequate financial resources, to undertake campaigns, awareness road shows and engage in collaborations with other stakeholders from the national and international film industry. This will lead to successful progress of the DFI, providing them with a competitive advantage.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- I would like to thank the Almighty Father for granting me the perseverance, determination and strength to carry out this study.
- To my family, and friends; especially my parents, for their unconditional love and support. My cousins, for all their time and dedication in assisting me throughout my academic career. To Ms Sibongimpilo Mdabe, for dedicating her time to assisting me, I also wish her well in her PhD studies.
- I am truly thankful to my supervisor Dr Elvis Madondo, whose guidance, assistance, encouragement, patience and support have been amazing throughout this study. I would like to thank you for believing in me. I appreciate the support and I am truly grateful. God continue to bless you.
- To the Durban Film Office employees, thank you for your support, time and effort invested in this study.
- To every public relations practitioner, director, actress, producer writer and respondent, thank you for your support, time and effort invested in this study, you contributed towards the successful completion of this research.
- To the DUT Scholarship Scheme, for providing me with funding that assisted me in my research, I acknowledge you.

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is specifically dedicated to my late aunt, Zodwa Shongwe, who graduated posthumously from the Durban University of Technology in the year 1996 when it was still known as Technikon Natal. I lastly dedicate this dissertation to my late grandmothers MaHadebe and MaMhlongo.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY .....	i
ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	xi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xii
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	xiii
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS .....	xiv
CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION .....	1
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Background of the study .....	1
1.3 Statement of the problem .....	3
1.4 Aim and objectives.....	4
1.5 Research questions .....	4
1.6 Rationale of the study.....	5
1.7 Theoretical framework .....	5
1.8 Methodology .....	6
1.9 Delimitation of the study.....	6
1.10 Layout of the chapters .....	6
1.11 Chapter conclusion.....	8
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW: THE DURBAN FILM INDUSTRY DYNAMICS .	9
2.1 Introduction .....	9
2.2 Defining the film concept.....	9
2.2.1 Purpose of film .....	11
2.2.2 Evolution and growth of the global film industry .....	13
2.3 The South African film industry .....	15
2.3.1 The Durban film industry .....	16
2.3.2 Competitiveness of the Durban film industry .....	16
2.3.2.1 Comparing the Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town film industries .....	17
2.3.3 The growth and trajectory of the film industry in Durban .....	22

2.4 Challenges hindering the growth of the South African film industry .....	24
2.5 Conclusion.....	25

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW: THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN

PROMOTING FILMS .....	26
3.1 Introduction .....	26
3.2 The scope of public relations .....	26
3.3 Theoretical framework .....	27
3.3.1 Stakeholder theory .....	27
3.3.1.1 Stakeholder engagement .....	28
3.3.1.2 Stakeholder relationships .....	29
3.3.1.3 Building reputation and favourable perceptions among stakeholders .....	29
3.3.1.4 Networks and industry connections .....	30
3.3.1.5 Stakeholder perceptions .....	30
3.3.1.6 Effective communication .....	30
3.3.1.7 Relationship management .....	31
3.3.2 Resource-based view .....	31
3.3.2.1 Understanding competitive advantage through resources .....	31
3.3.2.2 Identifying valuable and rare resources .....	32
3.3.2.3 Emphasising inimitability and non-substitutability .....	32
3.3.2.4 Enhancing strategic decision-making .....	32
3.3.2.5 Leveraging dynamic capabilities .....	32
3.3.2.6 Supporting empirical validation.....	33
3.4 Constructs from the theories .....	33
3.4.1 Resource-based view .....	33
3.4.2 Stakeholder theory .....	34
3.5 Public relations and communication .....	36
3.5.1 Traditional media.....	36
3.5.2 New media.....	37
3.6 Techniques in PR relevant to the film industry.....	38
3.6.1 Media relations and placement .....	39
3.6.2 Organising .....	39
3.6.3 Writing.....	40
3.6.4 Editing .....	41

3.6.5 Production.....	41
3.6.6 Speaking .....	41
3.6.7 Training .....	42
3.6.8 Effective communication.....	43
3.6.9 PR and event management .....	43
3.6.10 Exhibitions and trade fairs.....	44
3.6.11 Sponsorships.....	47
3.6.12 Promotional activities .....	48
3.7 Roles of film festivals and awards .....	50
3.8 Distribution and exhibition models in the film industry .....	51
3.9 Role of public relations in enhancing competitiveness.....	51
3.10 Role of public relations in promoting films .....	53
3.11 Conclusion.....	55
<b>CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>56</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	56
4.2 Research paradigm .....	56
4.2.1 Positivist paradigm .....	56
4.2.2 Pragmatic paradigm.....	57
4.2.3 Interpretivism paradigm .....	57
4.3 Research methodology .....	57
4.4 Research design.....	58
4.5 Research approaches .....	59
4.5.1 Quantitative research approach .....	59
4.5.2 Qualitative research approach .....	59
4.6 Target population and sample size .....	60
4.6.1 Target population.....	60
4.6.2 Sample size .....	61
4.7 Sampling method and techniques.....	61
4.7.1 Sampling technique .....	61
4.7.2 Inclusion and exclusion criteria.....	62
4.8 Data collection instruments.....	62
4.9 Trustworthiness .....	63
4.10 Pilot study.....	64

4.11 Data collection process.....	65
4.12 Data analysis .....	65
4.13 Ethical considerations .....	66
4.14 Conclusion.....	67
<b>CHAPTER 5: DATA PRESENTATION .....</b>	<b>68</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	68
5.2 Section A: Demographic characteristics of the participants .....	68
5.2.1 Age range of participants.....	69
5.2.2 Gender distribution of participants .....	70
5.2.3 Designation/position of participants.....	70
5.2.4 Years of working in the Durban film industry .....	71
5.3 Findings.....	71
5.4 SECTION B: Competitiveness of the Durban film industry.....	72
5.4.1 Sub-Theme 1: Performance of the Durban film industry .....	72
5.4.2 Sub-Theme 2: National competitiveness of the Durban film industry.....	74
5.4.3 Sub-Theme 3: International competitiveness .....	76
5.5 SECTION C: Role of public relations in improving competitiveness of the Durban film industry .....	77
5.5.1 Sub-Theme 4: Level of public relation campaigns to promote local films .....	78
5.5.2 Sub-Theme 5: Potential of public relations to advance the Durban film industry ..	79
5.5.3 Sub-theme 6: Raising public awareness .....	80
5.5.4 Sub-theme 7: Develop and maintain relationships.....	82
5.5.5 Sub-Theme 8: Seeking external support.....	83
5.6 SECTION D: Public relations-related challenges .....	84
5.6.1 Sub-Theme 9: Lack of global awareness of the Durban film industry.....	84
5.6.2 Sub-Theme 10: Poor networking.....	86
5.6.3 Sub-Theme 11: Reputation.....	86
5.6.4 Sub-Theme 12: Perceptions of the people.....	87
5.6.5 Sub-Theme 13: Tastes and preferences .....	88
5.6.6 Sub-Theme 14: Poor relationships with the local people or international audience	89
5.6.7 Sub-Theme 15: Lack of sponsorships .....	89
5.6.8 Sub-Theme 16: Lack of collaboration .....	91
5.7 Conclusion.....	91

CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS .....	93
6.1 Introduction .....	93
6.2 Competitiveness of the Durban film industry .....	93
6.3 Role of public relations in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI .....	94
6.3.1 Raising public awareness .....	94
6.3.2 Develop and maintain relationships .....	95
6.3.3 Seeking external support .....	96
6.4 Public relations-related challenges .....	96
6.4.1 Lack of awareness .....	96
6.4.2 Lack of sponsorship.....	97
6.4.3 Perceptions and relationships with local people.....	97
6.4.4 Poor networking .....	98
6.4.5 Reputation.....	99
6.4.6 Tastes and preferences.....	99
6.4.7 Lack of collaboration.....	100
6.5 Conclusion.....	100
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	101
7.1 Introduction .....	101
7.2 Summary of the findings .....	101
7.2.1 Competitiveness of the Durban film industry .....	101
7.2.1.1 Summary of findings from the literature .....	101
7.2.1.2 Empirical findings.....	101
7.2.2 Role of public relations in enhancing the competitiveness of DFI.....	102
7.2.2.1 Summary of findings from the literature .....	102
7.2.2.2 Empirical findings.....	102
7.2.3 Public relations-related challenges in the film industry .....	103
7.2.3.1 Summary of findings from the literature .....	103
7.2.3.2 Empirical findings.....	104
7.3 Conclusions .....	104
7.4 Recommendations .....	105
7.4.1 Collaborations with various other stakeholders .....	105
7.4.2 Awareness campaign programmes .....	105
7.4.3 Financial sponsorships.....	106

7.4.4 Adapt to the film industry changes.....	106
7.4.5 Leverage networks.....	107
7.4.6 Training more unemployed individuals.....	107
7.5 Limitations .....	107
7.6 Areas of further research .....	108
7.7 Conclusion.....	108
REFERENCES .....	110
APPENDICES .....	124

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 5.1 : Summary of demographic characteristics of participants.....	68
Table 5.2 : Summary of identified themes .....	72

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 : Local film (Keeping up with Kadasmys) .....	10
Figure 2.2 : Comparative analysis of film industries .....	20
Figure 2.3 : Historical growth of the Durban film industry .....	22
Figure 3.1 : Public relations strategies flowchart.....	38
Figure 3.2 : Durban film mart (1) .....	45
Figure 3.3 : Durban film mart (2) .....	46
Figure 5.1 : Age range of participants .....	69
Figure 5.2 : Gender distribution of participants.....	70
Figure 5.3 : Designation/position of participants.....	70
Figure 5.4 : Years of working in the Durban film industry .....	71

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix A : Interview guide.....	124
Appendix B : Consent letter.....	126
Appendix C : Gatekeeper permission letter .....	127
Appendix D : Ethical clearance .....	127
Appendix 5 : Editing certificate.....	129

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

DFI	Durban Film Industry
DFO	Durban Film Office
DFM	Durban Film Mart
DIFF	Durban International Film Festival
PR	Public Relations

# **CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION**

## **1.1 Introduction**

In the film industry, public relations (PR) aims to generate awareness for productions and create interest among distributors, film festivals, moviegoers, and social influencers. According to Gengan (2022: 102), public relations is crucial for success in any industry, including the world of film. In an industry where perception and visibility are vital, PR professionals work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure that movies and their stars receive the recognition they deserve. PR agencies specialise in branding and communication, and know how to make productions newsworthy and relevant to today's audiences. They also provide crisis management planning and response services to ensure that a production's message remains clear and impactful. This study is focused on the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the Durban film industry (DFI). This chapter provides an orientation to the study, covering the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives, rationale for the study, limitations and delimitation of the study.

## **1.2 Background of the study**

In the fiercely competitive film industry, where countless movies are competing for recognition, proficient PR can have a substantial impact (Collins and Power 2019). Film PR refers to the strategic handling of communication between a film production or distribution company and its intended audience, as well as the media and other interested parties (Aoki and dos Santos 2020). Its objective is to cultivate a favourable perception and generate excitement surrounding a film, its cast, and its creators. The ultimate aim of film PR is to garner positive publicity, enhance audience involvement, and ultimately boost ticket sales. It aids in establishing awareness, generating enthusiasm, and fostering anticipation for forthcoming releases. Whether it is a high-budget blockbuster supported by a major studio or a low-budget independent film, film PR experts utilise diverse strategies and techniques to guarantee that the films they represent shine amidst a saturated market (Collins and Power 2019).

The Durban Film Office (DFO), established by the eThekweni Municipality, plays a pivotal role in supporting and promoting the DFI. It offers services such as location scouting,

permitting assistance, and industry networking events, fostering a conducive environment for film production and attracting local and international projects (Durban Film Office 2023). Collaborative efforts within the DFI, such as partnerships between production companies, local government, and community organisations, contribute to its growth and competitiveness. These collaborations facilitate the pooling of resources, talent, and expertise, fostering a collaborative and supportive environment for filmmakers (Durban Film Office 2023). The Durban Film Mart (DFM), an annual event hosted by the DFO, serves as a platform for networking, project pitching, and accessing funding opportunities, further enhancing the industry's competitiveness and creative potential (Durban Film Office 2023).

The DFI plays a competitive role within the South African film industry, competing with Cape Town and Johannesburg (Coetzee 2019). According to (Coetzee 2019), the film industry in Durban plays a huge role in promoting films in and around the city of Durban. Durban is very well known for hosting a very prestigious event known as the Durban International Film Festival (DIFF) (Mboti 2011). The DIFF is widely regarded as one of the leading film festivals on the African continent and a vital event on the international film calendar. The DIFF plays a role in contributing to expanding filmmaker networks, attracting local and international media, creating public awareness of South African and African cinema, and promoting and celebrating African cinema, all the while highlighting the possibilities of local film production and stimulating the growth of the film industry (Drum 2020). Cape Town is still the premier film production destination, and Johannesburg is the second, with Durban coming in third.

There is a lot of potential that resides within the PR industry that can assist in improving the recognition of the DFI. According to Guan (2020), the PR industry can use various approaches to gain interest from the public both locally and internationally for any film being produced. These include hosting press conferences to announce the release of a new film, coordinating social events for movie announcements, releasing trailers, teaser promotion campaigns, newsletters, press materials, organising cast appearances on talk shows, and setting up cast and crew interviews with well-known social media influencers on social media (PwC Nigeria 2017). Working with social media influencers creates interest among the viewers, which places the industry on the map.

In 2016, the KwaZulu-Natal film industry within which the DFI is located, contributed R327 million to the gross domestic product of the country and the employment rate in the industry

grew by 7% in the years 2016 to 2019. The KZN film industry contributes positively to numerous sectors and industries such as tourism and transport sectors as well as catering and hospitality industries (KwaZulu-Natal Film Commission 2020). The film industry encourages on-the-job learning which enables low-skilled individuals to access the job market, therefore, the job creation mandate is achieved (KwaZulu-Natal Film Commission 2020). The Durban-based Uzalo television series has made a significant economic impact on the local industry. The television series has contributed towards the growth of the economy in various ways such as in the development of local talent, an increase in job creation and growing investment. The direct impact on local businesses totalled R204.23 million over the five years since 2019 to 2023, the indirect impact was R189.08 million. The number of employees that were directly employed by Uzalo was 365 and indirect employees were 270 (KwaZulu-Natal Film Commission 2020)

Chibike and Nkomo (2022: 77) emphasise that PR practitioners are required to effectively carry out their responsibilities but the DFI has discovered that there is a lack of industry awareness which significantly hinders the role of PR, especially in developing countries (Kayembe and Nel 2019: 89). This has made it difficult for PR to fulfil its duties, such as managing PR issues, press releases, managing budgets and corporate communication because of lack of communication infrastructure (Coetzee 2019: 191). Furthermore, Fista and Nugraheni (2022: 251) point out that there has been a decline in the film industry due to various factors including piracy and competition from foreign films. This situation is also evident in the DFI. This makes the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI very challenging.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

The DFI has enormous potential, however, the lack of adequate infrastructure, poor marketing and PR, insufficient resources, and lack of exposure, have undermined this sector and many perceive this as a missed opportunity (Drew 2019). Jooste (2019) affirms this by stating that the DFI cannot generate enough volume on its own and cannot compete with the international market due to a lack of awareness campaigns, and relationships with PR practitioners in other industries. Therefore, the unfavourable performance of the DFI in terms of the lack of sufficient promotional work, is noticeable (Drew 2019).

Previous research conducted by Jumbari (2022) and Chaka and Adanlawo (2022) delved into the realm of PR and communication strategies aimed at promoting individual films through

media coverage and events. These studies shed light on the tactics employed for short-term publicity campaigns. However, there is a lack of awareness regarding the ongoing strategic communication required to bolster the competitiveness and long-term viability of regional film industries (Jumbari 2022). Although these studies have contributed valuable insights, there has been minimal investigation into the strategic use of PR by the local film industry to establish itself as a desirable filming location and thriving centre of film production. Hence, this study sought to cover the literature gap that has been identified on the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI (Coetzee 2019: 191).

When considering a film, most people tend to focus on elements such as acting, special effects, videography, music, sound, and story. However, the marketing, advertising, and PR efforts that contribute to the success of a movie are often overlooked. Film communications, although less glamorous compared to acting or production, play a significant role in the industry. The increasing investment in PR is a testament to its positive impact on various performance indicators across different organisational activities.

#### **1.4 Aim and objectives**

This study aimed to explore the role of public relations in enhancing the competitiveness of the Durban film industry.

The objectives of the study were:

- To analyse the competitiveness of the Durban film industry.
- To describe the role being played by public relations in enhancing the competitiveness of the Durban film industry.
- To identify public relations-related challenges that are possibly affecting the competitiveness of the Durban film industry.

#### **1.5 Research questions**

The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. How competitive is the Durban film industry?
2. What is the role played by public relations in enhancing the competitiveness of the Durban film industry?

3. What are the challenges that could be hindering the effective competitiveness of the Durban film industry?

## **1.6 Rationale of the study**

(Jooste 2019) states that the DFI cannot reach its peak without PR, it needs other factors to assist it to succeed and without these factors, it could be very difficult for the industry to achieve its objectives. Smith (2020) states that if there is a lack of performance in the local film industry it becomes very difficult to get adequate support from the marketing and PR department especially if outsourced. In that way PR contributes positively towards enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI.

This study aspires to make a contribution to the body of existing literature and provide recommendations to stakeholders involved in the DFI because the industry is not as competitive as it should be, because it is a crucial sector of the economy. The DFI possesses the potential to be the best, and with the assistance of PR tools and other strategies such as marketing the industry, it can thrive (Jooste 2019).

## **1.7 Theoretical framework**

Swaen and George (2024) explain that a conceptual framework serves to demonstrate the intended outcomes of a study by identifying variables and illustrating the causal connections among them. Trafford (2008), and Miles and Huberman (1994) theory, is considered as representations of ideas that guide researchers in understanding a complex phenomenon under investigation.

This study focused on the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI. The theoretical framework for this study incorporates the resource-based view (RBV) and stakeholder theory to provide a comprehensive understanding of how firms can achieve and sustain competitive advantage. The RBV focuses on the internal resources and capabilities that are unique, valuable, and difficult to replicate, which drive a firm's strategic success. Stakeholder theory complements this by emphasising the importance of engaging and managing relationships with various stakeholders to enhance overall organisational performance and reputation. Together, these theories offer a robust foundation for analysing the dynamics of competitive advantage in the DFI.

## **1.8 Methodology**

This study followed an exploratory research design, using a qualitative approach. The target population was employees from the DFI as well as external stakeholders who engage with the DFI. Data was gathered through online semi-structured interviews. In addition to this, data collection was complimented by personal observations of the researcher. To analyse the data, a thematic analysis was performed.

## **1.9 Delimitation of the study**

The study was confined to stakeholders within the DFI. The DFI stakeholders consisted of project and senior managers as well as writers, producers, directors, actors and PR practitioners. The DFO personnel who were located in Durban were the purposive sample that the researcher used. They might not accurately reflect the opinions of all workers and other interested parties in the film business or other places. The DFO markets and promotes the city of Durban as a premier destination for television, film, photography and digital media, while also taking care of and prioritising the local content creators that continue to develop a creative film and entertainment community. The DFO was created with a mandate to be a service centre for all film permitting in the city. The DFO also assists in connecting creatives with film crews for filming, among other services (Durban Film Office 2022).

## **1.10 Layout of the chapters**

This dissertation consists of seven chapters and an outline of each chapter is provided below.

### **Chapter 1: Orientation**

This chapter laid out the orientation of the study. It highlighted the background of the study in terms of PR and DFI with a focus on improving the visibility of the PR roles in the film industry. In addition, the statement of the problem, objectives and research questions, rationale for the study, the theoretical framework, summary of the research methodology, delimitations of the study as well as the layout of the chapters in the study were described.

### **Chapter 2: Literature review: The Durban film industry dynamics**

This chapter focuses on presenting the literature associated with the competitiveness of the DFI, growth and future projections. The role of promotional communication and its relevance

to the film industry. It further discusses the models and theoretical framework relevant to the study and elaborates on the theoretical framework that offers a clear perspective on the impact of PR. The chapter explores the concept of competitiveness, considering the growth history and future projections of the DFI.

### **Chapter 3: The role of public relations in promoting films**

This chapter explores the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the film industry. The theoretical foundations of PR and its fit within the context of promoting films will be examined. The chapter discusses the PR-related challenges the DFI encounters. Possible solutions to address these challenges using PR tools are explored.

### **Chapter 4: Research methodology**

This chapter focuses on the research methodology which was employed in this study, covering aspects such as research paradigm, methodology and research design and approach used. The target population, sampling methods, sample size, inclusion and exclusion criteria, data collection instrument, data collection, trustworthiness, pilot study, data collection process, data analysis and ethical considerations are outlined.

### **Chapter 5: Data presentation**

The focus of this chapter is to present and analyse the research findings. All interview feedback was examined and considered to be valuable to be used in this study. The demographic characteristics of the participants are described first, followed by the presentation of findings on the competitiveness of DFI, the role and potential, as well as the significance of PR in the film industry. The PR-related challenges are presented as well as the possible interventions.

### **Chapter 6: Analysis and discussion of findings**

The results were discussed in this chapter and the literature presented in Chapters 2 and 3 was used to support the findings or to highlight where there are inconsistencies with the findings regarding the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI.

### **Chapter 7: Conclusions and recommendations**

This last part of the study focused on providing a summary of the findings from the literature review and the empirical findings to determine the extent to which the objectives were

achieved. Practical and insightful recommendations that can contribute towards stirring the role of PR in DFI competitiveness were presented as well as recommendations for further research.

### **1.11 Chapter conclusion**

The orientation of this study was presented in this chapter, providing the context of the study and the aims and objectives. The next chapter presents a review of the literature concerning PR and the DFI and provides the theoretical framework for the research.

# **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW: THE DURBAN FILM INDUSTRY DYNAMICS**

## **2.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter provided an overview of the study. Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 are devoted to reviewing the literature pertinent to this study. Chapter 2 examines the literature associated with the competitiveness of the DFI, its growth history, and future projections. It then discusses film communications, the role of promotion and communication in the success of films, and the relevance of PR in this industry. Additionally, it introduces communication models and the theoretical framework relevant to the study. Chapter 3 delves into the literature specifically related to the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI and further elaborates the theoretical framework that offers a clear perspective on the impact of PR. Chapter 2 first provides an overview of the film industry as a whole, followed by a focused examination of the South African film industry, with a specific emphasis on the DFI. The chapter explores the concept of competitiveness, considering the growth history and future projections of the DFI.

## **2.2 Defining the film concept**

According to Salsabila, Simanjuntak and Sutrisno (2022: 87), a film is best described as a movie or as pictures in motion, which is a series of moving images shown on a screen, usually with audio, that tells a story. Bakilapadavu (2018: 56) maintains when describing of the film concept by stating that the meaning is its essence is the theme, story, plot, characters, and the numerous elements of film language as used. Careful attention to these aspects allows the viewers to go beyond the surface-level meaning of any film. Film form or film structure is the total system that the viewer perceives in the film. It is the overall system of relations that we can perceive among the various elements in the whole film (Seah *et al.* 2021: 9167). When people watch a film, it is perceived as a complete whole, even though it is developed by joining many fragments of various elements. If careful attention is paid to the structure of the film, viewers are able to look at the individual parts and try to explain why they are in the film and how in a uniquely cinematic way the entire film functions and has its effect on the viewer (Bakilapadavu 2018: 142). Trimarchi (2020) views film as a good avenue to measure and

reflect the views of society. From this perspective, controlling the ideological output is important for a mission to decolonise the mind.



**Figure 2.1: Local film (Keeping up with Kadasmys)**

Figure 2.1 provides a visual of a film that was filmed at Durban's beachfront during the shooting of Keeping up with the Kandasamys. The local film is a product of Durban as it featured actors and actresses from the city and utilised various locations in the city (Mackenzie 2017).

The paramount goal is to accumulate capital for encouraging or motivating a new media system. This system should be decolonised and equipped to proclaim new stories from voices that have been historically marginalised and treated as inferior. Hanum *et al.* (2022: 98) define film as a story recorded by a camera as a set of moving images or pictures shown at a cinema or on television. The authors say further that film is a form of entertainment that presents a story through audio and a sequence of visuals giving the illusion of continuous movement. Salsabila, Simanjuntak and Sutrisno (2022: 98) argue that film is more than just entertainment; film can also act or be perceived as an educational platform. Depending on the genre, films are watched at schools to educate children, for example, an educator invites students to watch the film like the Sound of Music and after the students have completed watching the film the students undergo a literature test or an examination based on the film that was watched, prepared by the teacher. It is imperative to be attentive while observing a film. For this study, film, also referred to as a movie or a motion picture, is a series of moving images shown on a screen, typically accompanied by audio, to create a narrative or convey a story. This medium

combines three powerful elements: image, story, and sound, to give context and meaning to the narrative being presented.

### **2.2.1 Purpose of film**

Nasirin and Pithaloka (2022: 28) maintain that the purpose of the film is visual art that stimulates experiences and conveys stories, ideas, feelings, opinions, beauty or ambience through the images that move in motion. Pohl *et al.*, Messner, Kaufmann, Escalé, Holzer, Leuthold and Grange (2020: 85) further indicate that one cannot distinguish between a movie and a film because a film or movie both refer to pictures as a medium of expression where a series of pictures give the illusion of motion when projected onto a screen. Mikos (2013) states that film is inclusive of individual motion images and art produced by recording images from the world with cameras. Films also encompass the creation of pictures using animation techniques or special effects. Mikos (2013) defines film by stating that traditional films are a combination of images which are referred to as frames.

A film is a combination of three powerful elements, namely image, story, and sound to give context and meaning to the story being narrated. Films convey to the viewers and audience stories about themes of everyday experiences such as love, hope, death, righteousness, immorality, violence, and peace (Pohl *et al.* 2020: 86). When these images are shown rapidly in succession, mainly in animated films, a viewer has the illusion that motion is occurring. These films are presented to viewers using various distinct approaches to address different issues. They can be inspiring works of art that are imaginative, expressive, formally significant, and creative. However, these films may also have technical, moral, or social imperfections (Aoki and dos Santos 2022: 119).

Li *et al.* (2021: 4167) explain the eight elements that a film should consist of, namely the theme, screenwriting, visual design, cinematography, editing, sound and music, acting, and directing.

- Theme: Theme is defined as the topic or idea that recurs in or pervades a work of art or literature and can be classified as a genre. Examples of themes that are commonly used in the film are horror, romance, comedy, and musicals (Li *et al.* 2021: 4167).
- Screenwriting: Screenwriting or scriptwriting is the process of writing stories in a screenplay medium. Script writing includes writing down the movements, actions, expressions and dialogue of the characters in the screenplay. The process of writing a novel, a poem, or an essay is entirely different from script writing (Mistry 2021: 3). To

express oneself effectively on the screen, particular formatting methods are required. Screenplay format is utilised to express the story visually. Scriptwriters or screenwriters write for film, television, video games, and online web series.

- Visual: Li *et al.* (2021: 4168) describe visuals as something that can be seen, or what individuals can see with their sight. Film is described as a movie or motion images, in a series of moving images that are shown on screen to create the illusion of motion. A movie is a combination of sound that is synchronized, dialogue music and sound effects describes an image, and a piece of music is used to illustrate or accompany the visuals, for example, seeing an image of birds chirping, accompanied by the audio or sound of chirping birds.
- Design: Li *et al.* (2021: 4169) describe design as an art form, a method of human expression constructed according to a plan, following a system of highly developed procedures to imbue objects, performances, and experiences with meaning.
- Cinematography: Cinematography is described as the art or science of motion-picture photography (Li *et al.* 2021: 4169).
- Editing: Assembling items or creations such as a moving picture or tape recording by cutting and rearranging to perfection (Li *et al.* 2021: 4170).
- Sound and music: Li *et al.* (2021: 4171) describe sound as the audio, i.e., recorded auditory material. Music is described as vocal, instrumental, or mechanical sounds with rhythm, melody, or harmony, which could be either choral, piano or recorded music.
- Acting: Li *et al.* (2021: 4172) describe art as the practice of representing a character on stage or in front of cameras, formally known as stage or screen acting.
- Directing: Li *et al.* (2021: 4174) interpret directing as training and leading the performances of actors and actresses on how to portray a scene that is being acted out.

Film can be used to reach an extensive audience, to educate and inspire change through engaging audiences and reflecting society. Social film drama unites people in a common sense of humanity and shared responsibility, which gives it added power to help foster positive change in society. Studies reveal the influence of films on people's beliefs and opinions, stereotypes and attitudes. Movies can have a significant impact on gender and ethnic stereotypes, change attitudes towards certain groups of people and form new opinions on various issues. The DFI is a small but growing part of the film industry in South Africa, and

the films projected within the city for the people of the city might have played a role in shaping the minds of the citizens (Steedman 2021: 11).

### **2.2.2 Evolution and growth of the global film industry**

The film industry has undergone a remarkable evolution and experienced significant growth since its inception. From the early days of silent films to the advent of sound, colour, and digital technologies, the industry has continuously transformed to meet the demands of changing audiences and advancements in technology (Tinits and Sobchuk 2020: 26). The evolution of the film industry can be attributed to several key factors that have shaped its development over time.

Firstly, the development of film technology itself has played a crucial role in the industry's evolution. The invention of the motion picture camera by Thomas Edison and the Lumière brothers in the late 19th century paved the way for the emergence of the film medium (Geva 2021: 33). The transition from silent films to "talkies" with the introduction of synchronised sound in the late 1920s marked a significant milestone in the industry's growth and popularity (Collins and Power 2019: 287).

Furthermore, the film industry has been influenced by socio-cultural and economic factors that have contributed to its expansion. The rise of Hollywood in the early 20th century as the centre of the American film industry brought with it a new era of mass production and global distribution (McMahon 2023: 1-34). Hollywood studios, such as Warner Bros., Paramount, and MGM, capitalised on the growing popularity of cinema and established a dominant position in the global film market (Korsgaard 2019: 573). Additionally, changes in audience preferences and viewing habits have shaped the evolution of the film industry. The emergence of television in the mid-20th century posed a significant challenge to the film industry, as it offered a new form of entertainment within the confines of people's homes (Bordwell and Thompson 2010: 539). In response, the film industry adapted by exploring new genres, embracing technological advancements, and enhancing the cinematic experience to attract and retain audiences (Collins and Power 2019: 287).

Globalisation and advances in digital technology have revolutionised film production, distribution, and exhibition on a global scale. The accessibility of digital cameras, editing software, and online platforms has democratised the filmmaking process, allowing independent

filmmakers and international productions to reach wider audiences (Hafeez and Ara 2016). The growth of streaming services, such as Netflix and Amazon Prime, has further disrupted traditional distribution models and opened up new avenues for content consumption ( Hafeez and Ara 2016).

The global film industry is a dynamic and ever-changing landscape influenced by various trends and factors. Understanding these trends and dynamics is crucial for comprehending the broader context in which the DFI operates. This section explores key trends that have shaped the global film industry in recent years. One significant trend is the rise of international collaborations and co-productions in the film industry. As global markets become increasingly interconnected, filmmakers and production companies are seeking partnerships across borders to access new audiences and resources (Lee 2022: 15). Co-productions offer opportunities to share costs, expertise, and cultural perspectives, leading to the creation of diverse and culturally rich films (Fenwick 2021: 838). This trend has fostered cross-cultural exchange and expanded the reach of films beyond their country of origin.

Another notable trend is the impact of digital technology on film production, distribution, and exhibition. The digitisation of filmmaking processes has lowered production costs, enabled innovative storytelling techniques, and empowered independent filmmakers to create and distribute their work (Gómez 2019: 57). Digital platforms and streaming services have transformed the way films are consumed, allowing audiences to access content anytime, anywhere (Kryvovyazyuk *et al.* 2020: 50). This shift in viewing habits has prompted changes in distribution models and challenged traditional cinema exhibitions.

Furthermore, the increasing influence of online streaming services has disrupted the traditional film distribution landscape. Platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+ have not only become major players in content distribution but have also entered film production and financing (Verhoeven *et al.* 2020: 234460). These streaming giants offer original content, cater to niche audiences, and provide a global platform for filmmakers to showcase their work (Kryvovyazyuk *et al.* 2020: 52). This trend has led to a diversification of content and increased competition within the industry.

Additionally, the demand for diverse and inclusive representation in films has gained prominence in recent years. Audiences and industry stakeholders are calling for greater representation of underrepresented groups, including women, people of colour, and LGBTQ+

communities (Cover 2024). This trend has pushed filmmakers and production companies to embrace diversity in storytelling, casting, and behind-the-scenes roles, contributing to a more inclusive and authentic cinematic landscape (Cover 2024). Moreover, the global film industry has witnessed an increased focus on sustainability and environmentally conscious practices. Filmmaking, due to its resource-intensive nature, has a significant ecological footprint (Paterson 2020: 162). In response, industry initiatives and organisations have emerged to promote eco-friendly production practices, reduce waste, and minimise carbon emissions (Paterson 2020: 164). This trend reflects a growing recognition of the industry's responsibility to address environmental challenges and contribute to sustainable development.

All in all, the global film industry is shaped by various trends and dynamics that impact the production, distribution, and exhibition of films. The rise of international collaborations, digital technology, online streaming services, demand for diversity, and sustainability considerations are among the key trends that have influenced the industry in recent years. Understanding these trends provides valuable insights into the broader context in which the DFI operates and opens avenues for exploring strategies to enhance its competitiveness.

### **2.3 The South African film industry**

The DFI operates within the broader South African film industry, which has experienced significant growth and recognition in recent years. South Africa has emerged as a prominent player in the global film market, attracting international productions and showcasing local talent (Ebrahim 2020: 20). Understanding the position of the DFI within the South African context provides valuable insights into its competitiveness and potential.

The South African film industry has a diverse and vibrant landscape, encompassing a wide range of genres, themes, and storytelling approaches. It is known for its rich cultural heritage, talented filmmakers, and unique narratives that reflect the country's history, social issues, and cultural diversity (Mhlambi 2020: 959-961). The industry has gained international acclaim through films such as Tsotsi, District 9, and Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom, which have garnered critical acclaim and received global recognition (Botha 2016: 94).

Within the South African film industry, the DFI holds a significant position. Durban, located in the KwaZulu-Natal province, has emerged as a hub for film production, hosting local and international film shoots, and film festivals, and providing a conducive environment for the

growth of the film industry. The city's scenic locations, cultural heritage, and vibrant communities have attracted filmmakers and production companies, contributing to the development and visibility of the DFI.

### **2.3.1 The Durban film industry**

The DFI holds a distinct position within the broader South African film landscape. Located in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban has emerged as a significant hub for film production, attracting local and international filmmakers with its diverse locations, skilled workforce, and supportive infrastructure. Durban boasts a unique blend of natural beauty, urban landscapes, and cultural richness, providing a wide range of settings for film production. From its stunning coastline and picturesque beaches to its vibrant cityscape and historical landmarks, Durban offers a versatile backdrop that can cater to various storytelling needs (Durban Film Office 2023). The city's diverse cultural heritage and multicultural communities also contribute to the richness and authenticity of films produced in the region.

Furthermore, the DFI benefits from a skilled workforce and a supportive ecosystem. The city hosts film schools, training programmes, and production facilities that nurture local talent and provide opportunities for skill development (Durban Film Office 2023). The DFO, established by the eThekweni Municipality, plays a pivotal role in supporting and promoting the DFI. It offers services such as location scouting, permitting assistance, and industry networking events, fostering a conducive environment for film production and attracting local and international projects (Durban Film Office 2023).

Collaborative efforts within the DFI, such as partnerships between production companies, local government, and community organisations, contribute to its growth and competitiveness. These collaborations facilitate the pooling of resources, talent, and expertise, fostering a collaborative and supportive environment for filmmakers (Durban Film Office 2023). The DFM, an annual event hosted by the DFO, serves as a platform for networking, project pitching, and accessing funding opportunities, further enhancing the industry's competitiveness and creative potential (Durban Film Office 2023).

### **2.3.2 Competitiveness of the Durban film industry**

Assessing the competitiveness of the DFI involves evaluating its ability to attract investments, produce high-quality films, compete in the global market, and provide a conducive

environment for filmmakers and industry professionals. Several factors contribute to the competitiveness of the DFI. Poole and van Zyl (2020: 478) found that one aspect of competitiveness is the availability of production infrastructure and support services. The presence of sound stages, production facilities, post-production studios, equipment rental services, and skilled technicians enhances the industry's competitiveness by providing necessary resources for filmmakers (Steedman 2021: 11). The DFI needs to continuously develop and upgrade its infrastructure to meet the evolving needs of the industry and attract local and international productions.

Another crucial factor is the availability of funding and financial incentives (Poole and van Zyl 2020: 478). Access to funding is vital for film production, and the DFI needs to provide avenues for financing, such as grants, loans, and partnerships with private investors or production companies. Additionally, government incentives and tax rebates play a significant role in attracting local and international productions to Durban (Gengan 2022: 102). A supportive financial environment can enhance the competitiveness of the DFI and encourage investment in local productions.

Furthermore, talent development and skills training are essential for maintaining competitiveness. The availability of skilled filmmakers, actors, technicians, and industry professionals is crucial for the production of high-quality films. The DFI should foster talent development through film schools, training programmes, and industry initiatives that provide opportunities for aspiring filmmakers to enhance their skills and gain practical experience (Ebrahim 2020: 42).

### **2.3.2.1 Comparing the Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town film industries**

According to Poole and van Zyl (2020: 478), the DFI trails behind the Johannesburg film industry as Durban is considered to be less film-friendly than the cities of Johannesburg and Cape Town. The DFO and the KwaZulu-Natal Film Commission are highly engaged in trying to re-invigorate the DFI.

The main weakness among other weaknesses that seems to be hindering the growth of the DFI is the lack of a fully networked local support industry. The value chain of the city of Durban reveals a major weakness in the circulation and delivery phase of the city's film industry. Many citizens of Durban who possess a passion for pursuing their dreams in film tend to relocate to

either Johannesburg or Cape Town, claiming that Durban lacks the potential for career growth and does not possess enough opportunities. The DFI competes with the film industry in Cape Town and Johannesburg (Mhlambi 2020: 971). According to Melnick (2022: 279) films in Durban play a huge role in promoting the film industry in and around the city of Durban. Durban is very well known for hosting a very prestigious event known as the Durban International Film Festival (DIFF) (Danielle 2021: 56). The DIFF is widely regarded as one of the leading film festivals on the African continent and is a vital event on the international film calendar. The DIFF plays a role in contributing to expanding filmmaker networks, attracting local and international media, creating public awareness of South African and African cinema, and promoting and celebrating African cinema that highlights the possibilities of local film production and stimulates the growth of the film industry (Noqamza 2020: 142).

The DIFF plays a pivotal role in enhancing the competitiveness of and promoting the DFI. This prestigious event provides a valuable platform for building filmmaker networks, generating public awareness about South African and African cinema, promoting the value of local productions, and ultimately stimulating growth in the local film industry (Noqamza 2020: 142).

Specifically, DIFF attracts both local and international media attention, showcasing the possibilities of film production in Durban to wider audiences. The festival provides opportunities for local filmmakers to exhibit their work, connect with potential collaborators and industry professionals, and gain greater visibility and acclaim. Such opportunities and exposure can be vital for attracting investment, distribution deals, and future growth opportunities, thereby contributing to the overall competitiveness of Durban as a filming hub (Durban Film Office 2023).

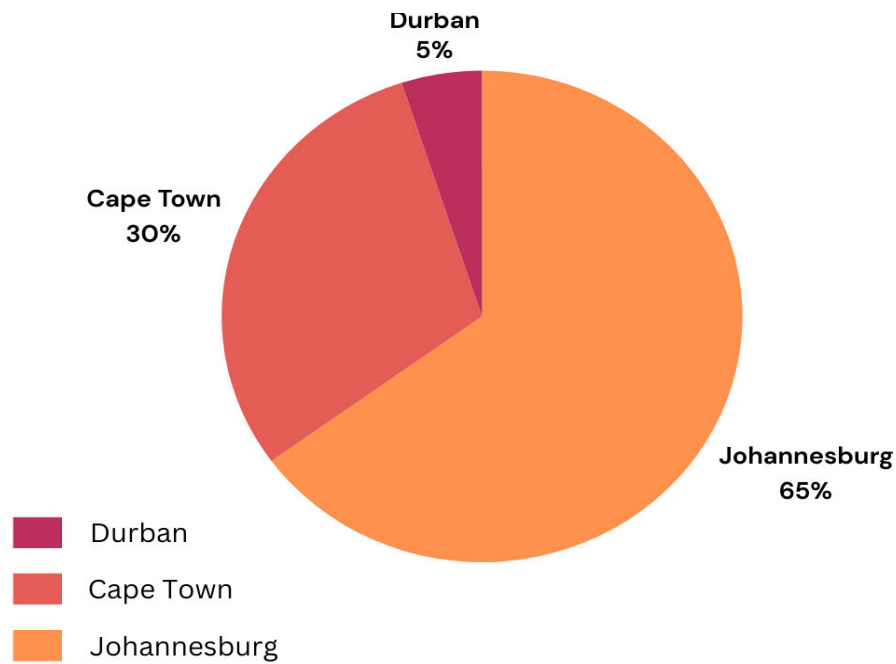
As an influential annual event that celebrates African cinema and sparks meaningful cultural exchange, DIFF also stimulates demand for African and locally produced films. By highlighting the creativity, diverse perspectives, and authentic storytelling reflected in these films, DIFF shapes audience preferences and creates a supportive environment for the local industry to thrive (Durban Film Office 2023). The festival's role in promoting the value proposition of South African and Durban productions is an important component of enhancing the competitiveness and sustainability of the regional film industry over the long term.

According to the DFO (2023), the DIIF is a valuable meeting place for filmmakers and industry personnel and the initiation of potential partnerships necessary for the cohesive emergence and

development of a film industry in the continent of Africa. A new addition to the festival programme is the DFM, which is an African co-production market presented by the DFO and the DIFF to contribute to the promotion of African content to the global markets and encouraging partnerships between African filmmakers. Danielle (2021) states that the city of Durban is flourishing and writes that in 1995 the ground-breaking Greater Durban Television was the first community television station to go on air in South Africa. The experimental project placed Durban at the forefront of efforts to establish permanent community television stations in the country.

Moyer-Duncan (2021: 489) indicates that the powerhouse of the South African film industry is the city of Johannesburg because production companies such as the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), M-Net and various production companies are based in Johannesburg. Almost all of the South African productions such as film and television shows are filmed in Johannesburg, Johannesburg is regarded as the local Hollywood and as the New York of South Africa. Many creatives have relocated to the 'Hollywood' of South Africa because they believe that the grass is greener on that side. The first South African film was produced in Johannesburg on the 9th of May 1896.

According to Parker (2022: 33), the majority of the remaining productions that are not filmed in Johannesburg are filmed in Cape Town. The city of Cape Town is ranked as the best film location in South Africa and is favoured by international film-makers for reasons such as its vast range of film locations, as well as favourable weather and long daylight hours during the summer which film directors find is as a cost advantage. The city of Cape Town has hosted several commercials and feature films with the city ranking as the fifth busiest film industry in the world in the year 2021. Figure 2.2 shows that Cape Town accounts for 30% of South Africa's R2 billion annual film industry, but Durban is emerging as a sought-after location.



**Figure 2.2: Comparative analysis of film industries**  
**Source: (Melnick 2022: 292)**

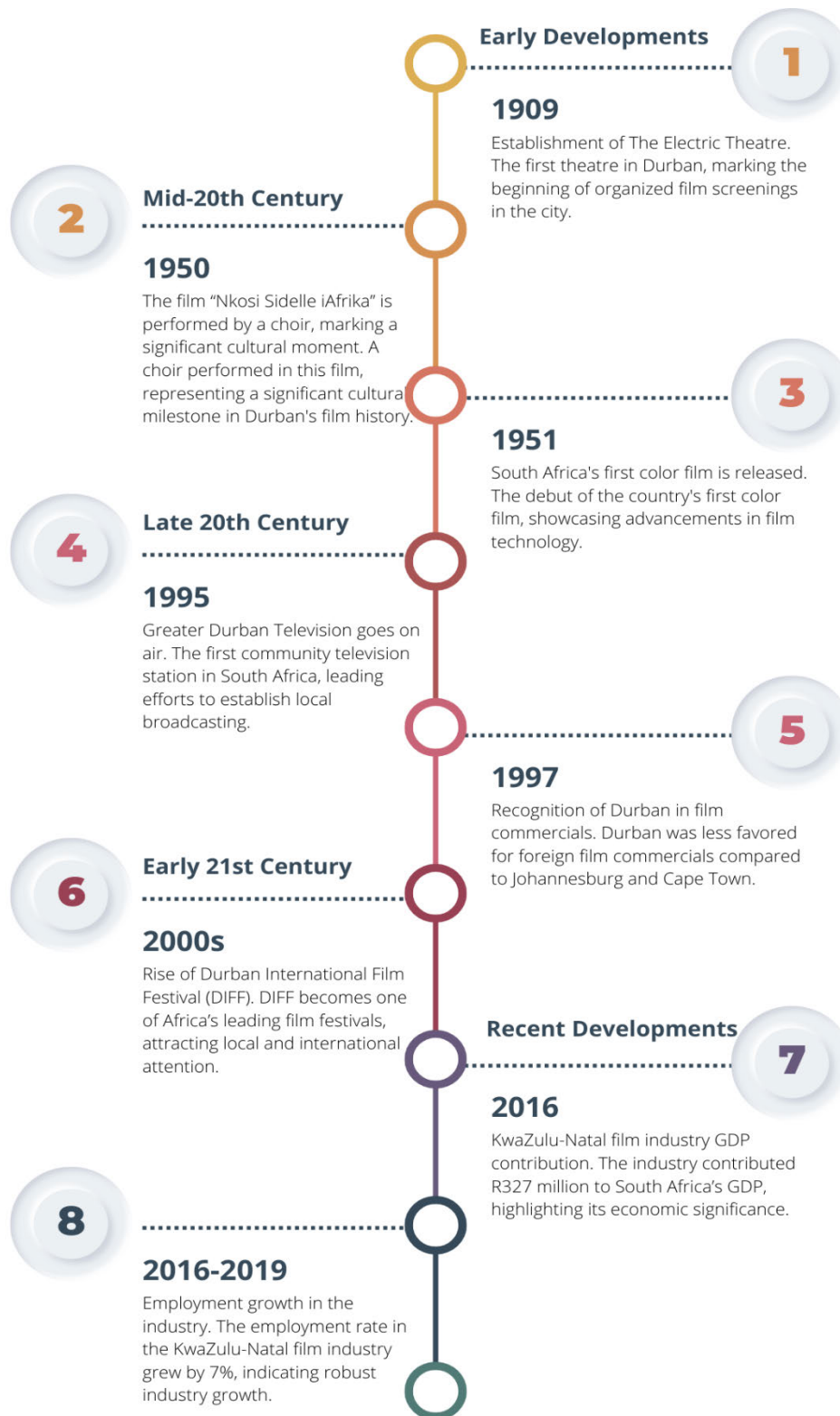
Figure 2.2 presents a comparative analysis of the film industries in the three major South African cities of Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban, showing that the proportion of the industry occurring in Durban is very small at the moment (Melnick 2022: 292). The city of Durban may or may not reach its potential. This analysis underscores the challenges faced by the DFI in competing with the more established film hubs of Johannesburg and Cape Town. Johannesburg's overwhelming share reflects its well-developed infrastructure, abundant resources, and strong industry presence, which attract the majority of film productions. Cape Town also benefits from favourable filming conditions and international recognition, contributing to its substantial share. In contrast, Durban's minimal representation points to the need for strategic PR efforts to enhance its competitiveness. By implementing robust PR strategies, as discussed in the current research, Durban can improve its visibility, attract more productions, and potentially increase its share in the South African film industry.

South Africa possesses the infrastructure and a positive economic environment to support a growing film industry which will result in a positive impact on the South African film industry (South African Cultural Observatory 2024). The Africa Film Drama Art (AFDA 2024) is a film school with the highest profile in the country and is the most productive educational producer of films and places a strong emphasis on audience research. More than 200 films have been

produced by the scholars of AFDA. Audience consumption is low which is a threat to the national industry and a lot needs to be done to create a demand for local content (KwaZulu-Natal Film Commission 2020).

. The absence of quality local productions leads to international film domination, however, the South African audience prefers to watch films that they feel they can identify with and represent them (Udakide 2023). The support industry is in a shambles, making it difficult and expensive for filmmakers to create quality products. The South African audience reflects a lack of confidence in South African filmmakers, which increases the pressure on them to deliver quality products (Tomaseli and Ngcobo 2018). Funding movies is equal to funding once-off products; the products are temporary and the jobs created are also temporary. The income is unpredictable, and products may lose money so it is rather advisable to invest in permanent projects such as the cinema and service infrastructures and producers to be able to build the economy (Jenster 2020).

### 2.3.3 The growth and trajectory of the film industry in Durban



**Figure 2.3: Historical growth of the Durban film industry**

Source: South African History Online (SAHO) (2011)

Figure 2.3 provides a timeline highlighting the key milestones and developments in the history of the DFI. This chronological overview encapsulates significant events from the early 20th century to recent times, illustrating the evolution and growth of the industry. Furthermore, the growth history of the DFI provides insights into its trajectory, milestones, and potential for future development. While specific data on the DFI may be limited, an examination of the overall growth of the South African film industry can offer some perspective. In recent years, the South African film industry has experienced significant growth and recognition on the international stage. The success of South African films at international film festivals, the increase in local productions, and the expansion of cinema infrastructure indicate positive growth trends (Botha 2016: 114). The South African government's support through policies, incentives, and funding initiatives has contributed to the growth of the industry.

Looking ahead, projections for the DFI are optimistic. The city's unique cultural heritage, diverse locations, and vibrant communities offer ample opportunities for storytelling and production. The growth of the global film market, the rise of digital distribution platforms, and the increasing demand for diverse and authentic content present avenues for the DFI to expand its reach and competitiveness. However, realising these projections requires strategic planning, collaboration, and continuous investment in infrastructure, talent development, and promotion of the DFI (Botha 2016: 118).

According to South African History Online (SAHO) (2011) South Africa established its first kinetoscope to the public on the 19th of April 1895 in Johannesburg making South Africa one of the first countries in the world to see and hear sound motion pictures. In the year 1899 after the declaration of the South African Anglo-Boer war, the use of film was discovered and the war was recorded on film. Most of these discoveries took place in Johannesburg.

As shown in Figure 2.3, in the 1900s, the first sport film was screened in the city of Cape Town which was a cricket match in which England played South Africa. The Electric Theatre was the first theatre to be established in the city of Durban in July 1909 (SAHO 2011). In the years 1916 and 1922 not only were African theatres discovered, African Film Productions (AFP) produced forty-three films in the space of three years. In the year 1950 "Nkosi Sikelel iAfrika" was first performed by a choir in a film and in the year 1951 South Africa's first film in colour was released to the public.

The Nu Metro Cinema group was established, at the city of Johannesburg in 1988 In 1992 Darrel James Roodt directed Sarafina and worked with famous actors such as Leleti Khumalo, Miriam Makeba and Whoopi Goldberg who were cast members of the film (SAHO 2011). The film Sarafina was filmed in Soweto and told a story about the Soweto Uprising. In 1997, Cape Town was a highly popular destination for shooting foreign film commercials, but the city of Durban was not a desired destination for shooting foreign film commercials. In the 2000s the highly admired film Mr Bones was produced by Anant Singh, not only did the perform well in South Africa, but also in Spain and Germany (SAHO 2011). The production of feature films in South Africa continued to grow, especially in the city of Cape Town. The non-government organisation the Film Resources Unit which was based in Johannesburg, played an important role by distributing socially relevant films of African origin, and through signing deals with successful producers and broadcasters such as Video Vision, M-Net and SABC (Saks 2010). While the South African film industry has achieved many accolades both locally and internationally, there is still a puzzle as to why and how the local film industry is not yet in the same ranking as the Hollywood and Bollywood film industry (IQOQO 2022).

#### **2.4 Challenges hindering the growth of the South African film industry**

There are a handful of challenges that are notorious in the South African film industry, such as piracy, lack of funding and a lack of training opportunities (Thopacu 2020: 235). Ferreira (2020: 203) also mentions the Westernisation of the South African movie industry as a challenge to this industry. The author further comments that various South African scriptwriters tend to emulate Hollywood storylines and ways of life when creating stories.

The KwaZulu-Natal Film Commission as well as the DFO is engaged in promoting and marketing the KwaZulu-Natal province as a global destination for film production. Both of these entities operate principally in Durban and have been engaging in projects such as marketing and advertising and promotion branding and marketing, familiarising themselves with tours of locations and facilities.

Ramesh and Jaggi (2022: 37) identify the following as some of the challenges of the South African movie industry: a small domestic market; few opportunities to export South African film and television products; a lack of understanding of the needs of the market by South African filmmakers, and, lastly, inadequate coordination and absence of standards in training provision. Nikitina, Nikitin and Yakupov (2021: 1090) raise a further setback to the South

African film industry, namely, piracy. The South African film industry lost an estimated R50m due to piracy in 2016.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

Chapter 2 examined the literature that is associated with the competitiveness of the DFI, growth history and projections for the future. This chapter provided an overview of the film industry as a whole, followed by an examination of the South African film industry with a specific emphasis on the DFI, and delved into the concept of competitiveness, considering the growth history and projections of the DFI. Chapter 3 delves into the literature associated with the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of this industry and discusses the theoretical framework that provided a lens through which to view the role of PR.

# **CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW: THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN PROMOTING FILMS**

## **3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter explored the competitiveness of the DFI, growth history and future projection, as well as comparing it with other local film industries such as Cape Town and Johannesburg. This chapter explores the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the film industry. The theoretical foundations of PR and its fit within the context of promoting films is examined. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the PR-related challenges the DFI encounters. Possible solutions to address these challenges using PR tools are explored. By shedding light on the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI, this literature review seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the strategic communication practices that can help the industry to thrive and remain competitive in an increasingly globalised and competitive film market. Notably, the chapter covers the theoretical framework of the study to provide the lens through which to view the issue under investigation.

## **3.2 The scope of public relations**

Kent and Li (2020: 18) explain that PR is a communication process that builds and maintains relationships which are mutual and beneficial between organisations and the public. PR practice is the art and social science of analysing trends, predicting their consequences, and counselling the leaders of organisations regarding a planned programme of action which will serve both the organisation and the public interest (VanDyke and Lee 2020: 53). Chen, Hung-Baesecke and Chen (2020: 78) state that the purpose of PR in the space of management of social work institutions is to improve the social status of social services so that the public has a positive view of the social institution, which will result in improved social effects of the services provided.

According to Smith (2020), PR is a management tool that utilises various forms of communication to identify similar views or interests of different social groups, promoting the formation of partnerships and friendly relations between the social service, clients and the public. Public relations ensures the achievement of mutual understanding based on truth and

full public awareness, and ultimately forms a positive public opinion and a favourable image for the social service ( Akhmadieva *et al.* 2021). The historians of PR indicate that the goal of communication which is to influence public opinion and human behaviour is as ancient as civilisation. Elliot and Willis (2020) argue that the PR function is perceived as an attempt to sweep under the carpet any negative representations of the organisation. Smith (2020) claims that while a few institutions may misuse the PR function for negative ends or to benefit their hidden agenda, PR is just a way of directing public attention to the quality of a product and the services made available. Elliot and Willis (2020) emphasise the fact that, during the twenty-first century, transforming organisations to be aligned with their stakeholders' needs and wants is the most compelling and justifiably meaningful element of the PR function.

### **3.3 Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework for this study incorporates the resource-based view (RBV) and stakeholder theory to provide a comprehensive understanding of how firms can achieve and sustain competitive advantage. The RBV focuses on the internal resources and capabilities that are unique, valuable, and difficult to replicate, which drive a firm's strategic success. Stakeholder theory complements this by emphasising the importance of engaging and managing relationships with various stakeholders to enhance overall organisational performance and reputation. Together, these theories offer a robust foundation for analysing the dynamics of competitive advantage in the DFI.

#### **3.3.1 Stakeholder theory**

Stakeholder theory posits that a company's responsibility extends beyond its shareholders to include a broader group of stakeholders. Stakeholders are defined as any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives (Freeman2022). This theory challenges the traditional shareholder-centric view, arguing that a company's success is intertwined with the well-being of its stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, communities, and the environment. The historical development of stakeholder theory can be traced back to the mid-20th century, with its roots in the broader field of corporate social responsibility. However, it was not until the 1980s that the theory gained significant traction, largely due to the work of R. Edward Freeman. In his seminal book "Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach" (1984), Freeman articulated the

foundational concepts of stakeholder theory, challenging the prevailing shareholder-centric paradigm.

Freeman (2022) highlight that stakeholder theory emerged as an alternative to the orthodox view of corporate governance, which sees corporations as entities primarily accountable to shareholders. This theory contends that focusing solely on shareholders' interests can lead to short-termism and neglect of other essential contributors to a company's long-term success. Therefore, managing stakeholders involves balancing various interests to create value for all parties involved (Jenster 2020).

According to Jones and Harrison (2019), stakeholder theory provides a framework for understanding the ethical dimensions of business practices. It emphasises that companies should not only be driven by profit maximisation but also consider the impact of their decisions on different stakeholder groups. This approach aligns with the principles of corporate social responsibility and sustainable development, promoting a more holistic view of business ethics (Barney and Harrison 2020).

Ketokivi and Mahoney (2016) argue that stakeholder theory integrates economic and ethical considerations, offering a more comprehensive perspective on organisational management. By recognising the interconnectedness of stakeholders, companies can build stronger, more resilient relationships that contribute to long-term success and sustainability (MacKay, Chia, and Nair 2021). Therefore, stakeholder theory has evolved from a conceptual framework into a robust approach that informs both academic research and practical management. Its historical development reflects a growing recognition of the interconnectedness between businesses and their broader social and environmental contexts, advocating for a more responsible and sustainable approach to corporate governance (Freeman 2022).

### **3.3.1.1 Stakeholder engagement**

Stakeholder engagement involves actively communicating with and involving stakeholders in decision-making processes. Businesses need to understand and address the needs and concerns of their stakeholders to foster trust and collaboration (Freeman 2022). Engaging stakeholders means creating opportunities for dialogue, participation, and feedback, which can lead to more informed and acceptable decisions (Jones, Harrison and Felps 2018).

Effective stakeholder engagement can also help identify potential risks and opportunities that might not be apparent from a purely internal perspective. By incorporating diverse viewpoints, companies can develop more robust strategies and improve their overall performance (MacKay, Chia, and Nair 2021). In the context of the DFI, engaging stakeholders such as local communities, government agencies, and industry professionals is crucial for gaining support and ensuring the sustainability of film projects.

### **3.3.1.2 Stakeholder relationships**

Building strong stakeholder relationships is fundamental to the success of any organisation. Stakeholder theory emphasises the importance of nurturing these relationships to create value for all parties involved (Freeman 2022). Positive relationships with stakeholders can lead to increased loyalty, support, and collaboration, which are vital for achieving long-term goals.

Jones and Harrison (2019) highlight that strong stakeholder relationships are built on trust, mutual respect, and ongoing communication. For the DFI, fostering relationships with local talent, investors, and audiences can enhance the industry's growth and reputation. Maintaining open lines of communication and being responsive to stakeholder needs can significantly contribute to building these relationships.

### **3.3.1.3 Building reputation and favourable perceptions among stakeholders**

A company's reputation is a valuable asset that can influence stakeholder perceptions and behaviour. Building a positive reputation involves consistently meeting stakeholder expectations and demonstrating a commitment to ethical practices (Freeman 2022). A strong reputation can attract investors, customers, and partners, and can also serve as a buffer during crises. Creating favourable perceptions among stakeholders requires transparent communication and actions that align with the company's values and promises. Jones, Harrison and Felps (2018) argue that companies must engage in activities that showcase their commitment to social and environmental responsibilities. For the DFI, promoting local culture, supporting community initiatives, and ensuring fair treatment of workers can help create a positive image and attract broader support.

#### **3.3.1.4 Networks and industry connections**

Developing networks and industry connections is essential for gaining access to resources, information, and opportunities. Stakeholder theory suggests that businesses should leverage these connections to create value and enhance their competitive advantage (Barney and Harrison 2020). Strong networks can provide support, advice, and collaboration opportunities that are crucial for growth and innovation. For the DFI, building connections with other film industries, government bodies, and international organisations can open up new markets and funding sources. MacKay, Chia and Nair (2021) emphasise that these networks can also facilitate knowledge sharing and the adoption of best practices, which are vital for staying competitive in a global market.

#### **3.3.1.5 Stakeholder perceptions**

Understanding stakeholder perceptions is crucial for managing relationships and making informed decisions. Stakeholder perceptions are shaped by their experiences, interactions, and the information they receive about the company (Freeman 2022). Positive perceptions can lead to increased trust, loyalty, and support, while negative perceptions can harm the company's reputation and performance. Regularly assessing stakeholder perceptions through surveys, feedback mechanisms, and engagement activities can help companies identify areas for improvement and address concerns promptly (Jones and Harrison 2019). In the DFI, understanding how local communities, audiences, and partners perceive film projects can guide better decision-making and improve overall satisfaction.

#### **3.3.1.6 Effective communication**

Effective communication is at the heart of successful stakeholder engagement and relationship management. It involves conveying clear, accurate, and timely information to stakeholders and actively listening to their feedback (Freeman 2022). Good communication practices can prevent misunderstandings, build trust, and foster a collaborative environment. Jones, Harrison and Felps (2018) suggest that companies should use multiple communication channels to reach different stakeholder groups and ensure that their messages are tailored to the audience's needs and preferences. For the DFI, using social media, community meetings, and industry events can enhance communication efforts and strengthen stakeholder relationships.

### **3.3.1.7 Relationship management**

Relationship management involves strategically managing interactions with stakeholders to achieve mutual benefits. It requires a proactive approach to identifying stakeholder needs, building rapport, and maintaining ongoing dialogue (Freeman 2022). Effective relationship management can lead to long-term partnerships, increased loyalty, and better business outcomes. In the context of the DFI, managing relationships with local talent, investors, and audiences is crucial for project success. By prioritising stakeholder interests and maintaining transparent and respectful communication, the industry can build strong, lasting relationships that support its growth and sustainability (Jones and Harrison 2019).

### **3.3.2 Resource-based view**

The RBV is a theoretical framework that posits that a firm's competitive advantage is primarily derived from the resources it controls. These resources must be VRIN to provide a sustainable competitive edge (Barney 1991). The RBV emphasises that internal resources and capabilities are crucial for a firm's strategic positioning and long-term success. According to Yang and Lirn (2017), the RBV has been particularly useful in understanding logistics performance in the shipping industry, highlighting the importance of internal resources in enhancing operational efficiency. The RBV framework asserts that firms achieve superior performance by effectively utilising their unique resources and capabilities, which are not easily replicated by competitors. Yu *et al.* (2018) demonstrated this in their study on data-driven supply chain capabilities, showing how specific resources can significantly impact overall performance. Baghdadi (2021) further explained the RBV by proposing research on resource management in startup firms, emphasising the adaptability and resourcefulness required to maintain a competitive advantage in dynamic environments. In the context of the DFI, PR can be seen as a strategic resource that enhances competitiveness by managing relationships, building reputation, and creating favourable perceptions among stakeholders. RBV would help in analysing how effective PR practices contribute to the industry's competitiveness by leveraging a company's intangible assets such as reputation, networks, and industry connections.

#### **3.3.2.1 Understanding competitive advantage through resources**

The RBV aligns with the research objective of understanding how the DFI can achieve a competitive advantage. By focusing on the unique resources that local film companies possess,

such as cultural narratives, talent, and production capabilities, the RBV provides a framework for identifying and leveraging these assets to differentiate from international competitors. As Steiner *et al.* (2017) highlight, applying the RBV to specialised contexts, such as film industries, can help in forming strategic alliances that enhance competitiveness.

### **3.3.2.2 Identifying valuable and rare resources**

The RBV's emphasis on valuable and rare resources directly supports the research study's aim to pinpoint key assets within the DFI that can drive competitive advantage. Baia, Ferreira, Rodrigues (2020) discuss how identifying and nurturing rare resources, such as local storytelling talent and unique cultural perspectives, can provide a significant edge in the market. This focus aligns with the research objective of showcasing the unique attributes of Durban's film industry to attract investment and audience interest.

### **3.3.2.3 Emphasising inimitability and non-substitutability**

The research aims to demonstrate the sustainability of the competitive advantage of the DFI by emphasising the inimitable and non-substitutable nature of its resources. Khaksar *et al.* (2023: 241) argue that resources which cannot be easily replicated or substituted by competitors are crucial for maintaining long-term success. By highlighting the unique cultural heritage and local expertise of DFI, the current research study can show how these elements create barriers to entry for international film producers, ensuring the durability of the competitive advantage.

### **3.3.2.4 Enhancing strategic decision-making**

The RBV framework aids researchers in making informed strategic decisions by evaluating the firm's resources against the VRIN criteria. This approach ensures that the research not only identifies key resources but also suggests ways to effectively deploy them for maximum impact. As Yu *et al.* (2018) illustrate, using the RBV to assess supply chain capabilities leads to more strategic resource allocation and improved performance, which can be translated to the context of film production and distribution.

### **3.3.2.5 Leveraging dynamic capabilities**

While the RBV focuses on static resources, integrating it with the concept of dynamic capabilities—how firms adapt and renew their resources—can provide a comprehensive view of maintaining competitiveness in a changing environment. Baghdadi (2021) emphasises the

need for start-up firms to develop resource management strategies that adapt to market shifts, a principle that can be applied to the evolving landscape of the DFI. This integration supports the research objective of ensuring the industry's resilience and adaptability.

### **3.3.2.6 Supporting empirical validation**

The RBV provides a robust theoretical foundation for empirical studies, allowing researchers to systematically analyse how specific resources contribute to competitive advantage. Pereira and Bamel (2021) suggest that extending the RBV with empirical data enhances its applicability and relevance. This methodological approach aligns with the research study's goal of empirically validating the impact of identified resources on the competitiveness of the DFI.

Thus, the RBV offers a comprehensive framework that aligns closely with the research objectives. By focusing on the identification, valuation, and strategic deployment of unique resources, the RBV helped the researcher demonstrate how the DFI can achieve and sustain a competitive advantage. Through understanding VRIN resources, and integrating dynamic capabilities, the research can provide actionable insights and empirical validation, ultimately contributing to the industry's growth and success.

## **3.4 Constructs from the theories**

The theoretical frameworks of the RBV and stakeholder theory highlight various key issues and themes crucial for the understanding and advancement of the DFI. These theories guide us in exploring and addressing several important aspects, which are detailed in the subsequent sections. Below, we outline the specific headings and their relevance as derived from the RBV and stakeholder theory.

### **3.4.1 Resource-based view**

#### **1. Understanding competitive advantage through resources**

- RBV emphasises identifying and utilising VRIN resources within the DFI. This theory's influence can be seen in sections discussing the unique cultural narratives, local talent, and production capabilities as critical assets.

## **2. Identifying valuable and rare resources**

- RBV supports the research aim of pinpointing key assets within the DFI that drive competitive advantage, as seen in sections discussing unique local storytelling talent and distinctive cultural elements.

## **3. Emphasising inimitability and non-substitutability**

- The theory underscores the importance of resources that cannot be easily replicated or substituted, ensuring a sustainable competitive advantage. This is reflected in sections about maintaining a unique cultural heritage and local expertise.

## **4. Enhancing strategic decision-making**

- RBV provides a framework for making informed strategic decisions by evaluating resources against the VRIN criteria, reflected in sections on strategic resource allocation and performance improvement.

## **5. Leveraging dynamic capabilities**

- Integrating RBV with dynamic capabilities ensures the DFI can adapt and renew its resources in response to market changes. This is addressed in sections discussing the industry's resilience and adaptability.

## **6. Supporting empirical validation**

- RBV offers a theoretical foundation for empirical studies, validating the impact of identified resources on competitiveness, as seen in sections discussing empirical validation of industry resources.

### **3.4.2 Stakeholder theory**

#### **1. Stakeholder engagement**

- Stakeholder theory emphasises the importance of engaging and involving stakeholders in decision-making processes. This is reflected in sections on the role of PR in engaging stakeholders through traditional and new media channels.

## **2. Stakeholder relationships**

- Building strong relationships with stakeholders, such as local communities, government agencies, and industry professionals, is crucial. This is discussed in sections on media relations, event organising, and sponsorships.

## **3. Building reputation and creating favourable perceptions among stakeholders**

- The theory highlights the need for a positive reputation and favourable stakeholder perceptions, essential for attracting investment and audience interest. This is evident in sections on effective communication and promotional activities.

## **4. Networks and industry connections**

- Developing robust networks and industry connections enhances competitive advantage. This is discussed in sections on organising events, exhibitions, and trade fairs to foster collaborations.

## **5. Stakeholder perceptions**

- Understanding and managing stakeholder perceptions are critical for maintaining positive relationships. This is reflected in sections on monitoring public sentiment through new media and traditional media channels.

## **6. Effective communication**

- Effective communication is key to successful stakeholder engagement and relationship management. This is addressed in sections on traditional media, new media, writing, and editing.

## **7. Relationship management**

- Stakeholder Theory advocates for strategic management of interactions with stakeholders to achieve mutual benefits. This is discussed in sections on event management, sponsorships, and promotional activities.

These issues and themes, derived from the RBV and stakeholder theory, will be discussed in detail in the following sections to provide a comprehensive understanding of how they impact

and shape the DFI. Each heading will explore the specific challenges and opportunities brought about by these theoretical perspectives, aligning them with the practical realities of PR and communication strategies within the industry.

### **3.5 Public relations and communication**

Public relations and communication are intrinsically linked, as the success of any PR effort relies heavily on effective communication strategies. PR professionals must navigate various communication channels, both traditional and new, to reach their target audiences and achieve their objectives. In this section, we will explore the role of traditional media and new media in the context of PR and how practitioners can leverage these channels to enhance their communication efforts.

#### **3.5.1 Traditional media**

Traditional media, such as newspapers, magazines, television, and radio, have long been the backbone of PR communication. These channels offer a wide reach and the ability to target specific demographics, making them valuable tools for PR practitioners. Press releases, interviews, and media events are common tactics used to gain coverage in traditional media outlets.

To effectively utilise traditional media, PR professionals must cultivate strong relationships with journalists and editors. This involves understanding their needs, providing them with newsworthy content, and being responsive to their inquiries. Crafting compelling press releases, organising press conferences, and arranging interviews with key spokespeople are essential skills for PR practitioners working with traditional media.

However, the rise of digital technologies has led to a decline in traditional media consumption, particularly among younger audiences. As a result, PR professionals must adapt their strategies to ensure their messages reach their intended targets. This may involve integrating traditional media tactics with digital channels, such as promoting press coverage on social media or leveraging online news platforms to extend the reach of their content. Despite the challenges posed by the changing media landscape, traditional media remains a valuable tool for PR practitioners. By understanding the strengths and limitations of these channels and developing targeted communication strategies, PR professionals can effectively engage their audiences and achieve their communication goals.

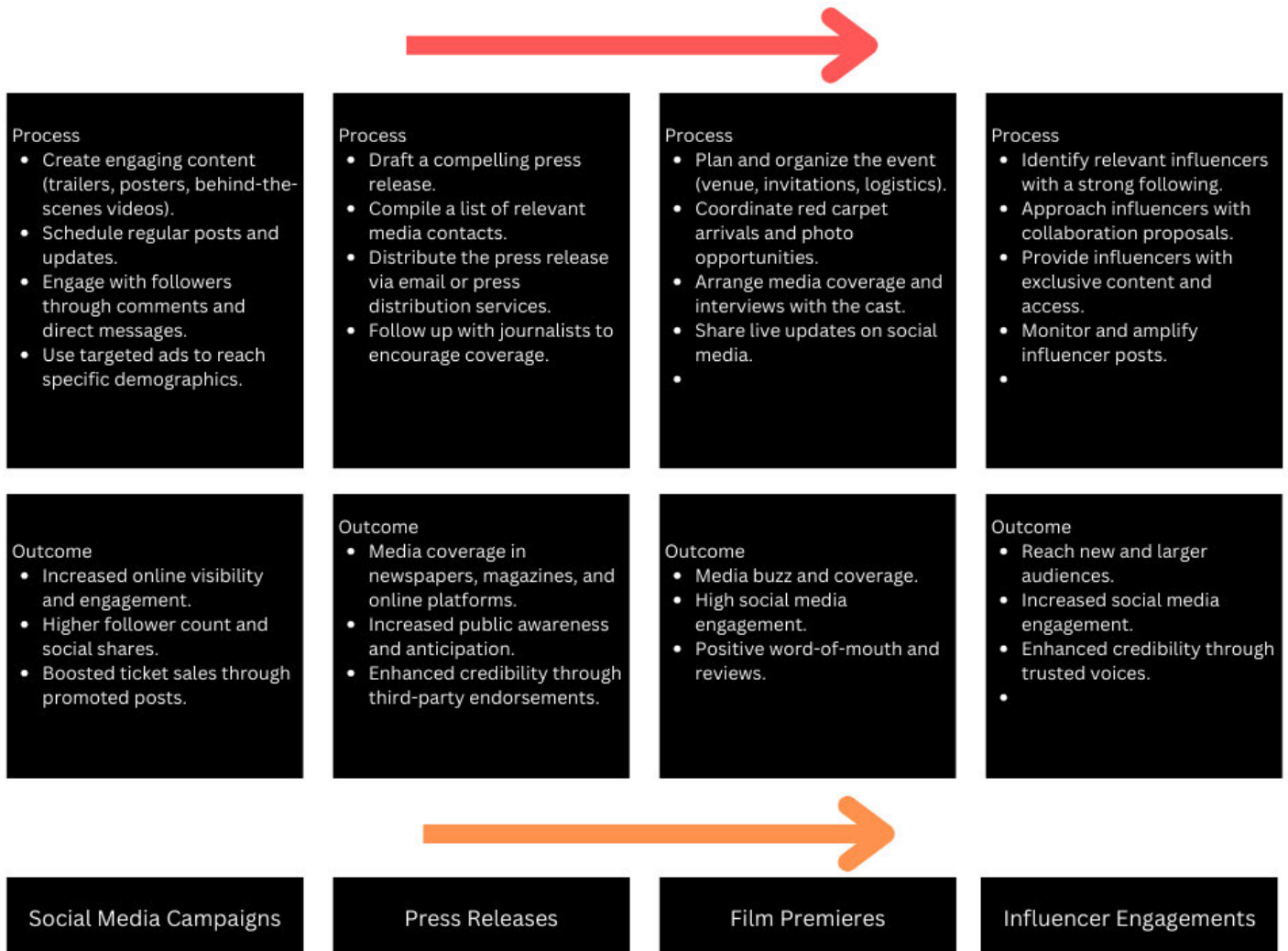
### **3.5.2 New media**

The advent of new media, particularly social media and other digital platforms, has revolutionised the way PR professionals communicate with their audiences. New media offers a range of advantages, including the ability to directly engage with stakeholders, to share content in real-time, and to monitor public sentiment. Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, have become essential tools for PR practitioners. These channels allow organisations to build and maintain relationships with their audiences, share news and updates, and respond to inquiries and concerns promptly. PR professionals can also use social media to monitor public conversations about their brand, industry, and competitors, gaining valuable insights into stakeholder perceptions and needs. In addition to social media, other new media channels such as blogs, podcasts, and video-sharing platforms, offer PR practitioners new ways to tell their stories and engage their audiences. These channels allow for more in-depth, multimedia content that can showcase an organisation's expertise, values, and personality.

However, the use of new media in PR also presents challenges. The rapid pace of online conversations and the potential for misinformation to spread quickly requires PR professionals to be vigilant and prepared to respond to crises in real-time. Additionally, the abundance of content available online can make it difficult for organisations to cut through the noise and reach their target audiences. To effectively leverage new media in PR, practitioners must develop a deep understanding of their audience's preferences and behaviours online. This involves creating compelling, shareable content, engaging in authentic conversations, and adapting quickly to changes in the digital landscape. By embracing the opportunities presented by new media and integrating them into their communication strategies, PR professionals can build stronger, more dynamic relationships with their stakeholders.

### 3.6 Techniques in PR relevant to the film industry

Public relations practitioners employ a wide range of techniques and tactics to effectively communicate with various stakeholders and achieve organisational objectives.



**Figure 3.1: Public relations strategies flowchart**

Source: xxxxxxxxxxxx

Figure 3.1 outlines the processes and expected outcomes of four essential PR strategies in promoting films: social media campaigns, press releases, film premieres, and influencer engagement. Social media campaigns involve creating engaging content, scheduling regular posts, interacting with followers, and using targeted ads, resulting in increased online visibility, higher follower counts, and boosted ticket sales. Press releases require the drafting of compelling releases, distributing them to media contacts, and following up with journalists to gain media coverage, which enhances public awareness and credibility. Film premieres involve organising the event, coordinating media coverage, and sharing live updates to generate media

buzz, high social media engagement, and positive reviews. Influencer engagement focuses on collaborating with influencers, providing them with exclusive content, and amplifying their posts to reach larger audiences and enhance credibility through trusted voices.

### **3.6.1 Media relations and placement**

Oparaugo (2021: 32) indicates that media relations involve coordinating with the media for the sake of informing the public about the organisation and its mission in a credible manner. One of the key functions that PR practitioners are highly engaged in is media relations (Fitzpatrick and Weissman 2021: 401). This function expects the PR practitioners to fulfil the duty of liaising with the news media, magazines, trade publications and freelance writers to get the media to publish or broadcast news about the organisation. This task entails the PR practitioner acting as a spokesperson for the organisation, especially when responding to the media on behalf of the organisation (Ngondo and Klyueva 2020: 46).

### **3.6.2 Organising**

In relation to the DFI, organising events and activities is a crucial function for PR practitioners. As Gesualdi (2019: 372) defines it, organising involves making arrangements or preparations for an event or activity. Public relations professionals in the DFI are tasked with organising functions such as film festivals, premieres, screenings, panel discussions, networking events, and industry award ceremonies (Ngondo and Klyueva 2020: 51).

The ability to plan and execute successful film-related events is a valuable skill for PR professionals in this industry. These events provide unique opportunities to engage with stakeholders, including filmmakers, actors, industry professionals, media, and moviegoers, while building relationships and promoting the DFI (Suh, Hoang and Hijal-Moghrabi 2021). Effective event organisation requires a comprehensive understanding of the target audience within the film community, their interests, and preferences, as well as meticulous attention to detail in coordinating various elements such as venue selection, logistics, speaker management, and on-site coordination (Oparaugo 2021).

Organising events in the DFI involves several critical components. First, PR practitioners must conceptualise the event, aligning it with the industry's goals and objectives, such as promoting local talent, showcasing Durban's film locations, or facilitating networking opportunities

(Ngondo and Klyueva 2020). This includes defining the event's purpose, target audience (e.g., filmmakers, critics, investors), and desired outcomes.

Next, practitioners must handle logistical arrangements specific to film events, such as securing suitable screening venues, managing guest lists and accreditations, coordinating with filmmakers and talent, and overseeing event production elements like audio-visual equipment and stage setups (Arceneaux, Borden and Golan 2019). Attention to detail is crucial in ensuring a polished and professional event experience that reflects the calibre of the DFI.

Furthermore, PR professionals play a vital role in promoting and marketing film events through various channels, including traditional media, social media, and targeted outreach efforts within the film community (Gardiana, Rahmanto and Satyawati 2022). Effective promotion is essential for attracting the desired attendance and generating buzz around the event, which can contribute to the overall visibility and reputation of the DFI.

During film events, PR practitioners are responsible for managing on-site operations, facilitating networking opportunities, coordinating media interviews and coverage, and ensuring that the event runs smoothly (Suh, Hoang and Hijal-Moghrabi 2021). They may also be involved in managing crisis communication if any issues arise, safeguarding the reputation of the event and the DFI.

Post-event, PR professionals must evaluate the event's success, analyse feedback from attendees and stakeholders, and report on the outcomes achieved in terms of promoting the DFI (Fehrer, Baker and Carroll 2022). This evaluation process informs future event planning and helps refine strategies for continuous improvement and growth within the local film community.

By showcasing their organisational skills, attention to detail, and ability to execute successful film-related events, PR practitioners can contribute significantly to the DFI's communication efforts, stakeholder engagement, and overall competitiveness within the broader South African and international film landscapes.

### **3.6.3 Writing**

Ngondo and Klyueva (2020: 51) observe that a range of written skills are required to target the public through written communication. Suh, Hoang and Hijal-Moghrabi (2021: 220) highlight

that PR practitioners should be proficient in certain functions such as compiling a press release, writing newsletters, reports, scripts, film scripts, radio and television copies, corporate advertisements, product information and magazine articles.

#### **3.6.4 Editing**

According to Arceneaux, Borden and Golan (2019: 128), editing is preparing written material for publication by correcting, condensing or modifying it. Editing is an additional skill of writing and research that a PR practitioner should possess. PR practitioners should be familiar with editing publications, employee newsletters, shareholders' reports and other communications intended for internal and external stakeholders.

#### **3.6.5 Production**

According to Gardiana, Rahmanto and Satyawati (2022: 107), production is viewed as multifaceted and very challenging for PR practitioners, as it entails creating communication by applying the knowledge and skills of multimedia such as art, photography, designing for brochures, booklets, reports, corporate advertisements, and occasional publications, recording and editing audio and video tapes, and preparing audio-visual presentations.

#### **3.6.6 Speaking**

Effective speaking skills are paramount for PR practitioners. As Arceneaux, Borden and Golan (2019: 133) suggest, the process of assembling information equips organisations to plan programmes in response to public and problem situations, assess their effectiveness during implementation, and evaluate their overall impact. This process often involves public speaking engagements, where PR practitioners act as representatives and spokespeople for the industry.

For PR practitioners in the DFI, speaking opportunities may arise in various contexts. One crucial aspect is representing the industry at events, such as film festivals, premieres, or industry conferences. During these occasions, PR practitioners may be tasked with delivering speeches, moderating panel discussions, or conducting interviews with filmmakers, actors, and other industry professionals. Their ability to articulate key messages, engage audiences, and promote the DFI's achievements and aspirations is essential.

Additionally, PR practitioners in the film industry may be called upon to speak at educational institutions, workshops, or seminars aimed at nurturing and developing local talent. These

speaking engagements provide opportunities to share insights, offer guidance, and inspire aspiring filmmakers, actors, and industry professionals, contributing to the growth and sustainability of the DFI.

Effective speaking in the context of the film industry also extends to media relations. PR practitioners may be required to conduct interviews with journalists, critics, and media personalities, representing the industry and promoting specific films, events, or initiatives. Their ability to communicate effectively, handle tough questions, and maintain composure under pressure is crucial in shaping public perception and generating positive media coverage.

Furthermore, speaking skills are invaluable when engaging with stakeholders such as government officials, investors, or sponsors. PR practitioners may be tasked with delivering presentations or pitches to secure funding, support, or partnerships that are vital for the growth and competitiveness of the DFI. Their ability to articulate the industry's vision, potential, and value proposition can significantly impact the success of these endeavours.

To excel in speaking engagements, PR practitioners in the DFI must possess a deep understanding of the industry, its challenges, and its aspirations. They must stay up-to-date with the latest trends, developments, and emerging talents within the local film community. Additionally, they must cultivate strong public speaking skills, including confidence, articulation, body language, and the ability to connect with diverse audiences.

By mastering the art of speaking, PR practitioners can effectively represent and advocate for the DFI, fostering relationships with stakeholders, inspiring aspiring talents, and ultimately contributing to the industry's growth, recognition, and competitiveness on both national and international stages.

### **3.6.7 Training**

Training involves working with executives and other representatives of the organisation to prepare them and equip them with the skills for engaging with the media and for presentations and other public appearances (Hoffmann 2021: 155-156). Public relations practitioners can also assist with in-service staff development.

### **3.6.8 Effective communication**

Effective communication is paramount in PR practice, as it enables practitioners to convey messages, build understanding, and achieve desired outcomes. According to Cutlip *et al.* (2006), seven key concepts determine effective communication:

1. **Credibility:** The credibility of the source or communicator is crucial for the message to be received and accepted by the audience.
2. **Context:** The communication programme and the supportive environment in which it operates play a significant role in its effectiveness.
3. **Content:** The meaning and relevance of the message to the receiver are critical for capturing their attention and eliciting the desired response.
4. **Clarity:** Both the sender and the receiver must have a clear understanding of the words and language used in the communication.
5. **Continuity and consistency:** Effective communication requires a continuous and consistent approach to reinforce the message and build trust with the audience.
6. **Channels:** Utilising appropriate channels of communication that are familiar and respected by the receiver enhances the effectiveness of the message.
7. **Capability of the audience:** The communication must be tailored to the capabilities and characteristics of the target audience to ensure successful comprehension and engagement.

Effective communication in PR involves careful consideration of these seven C's, as well as the 5 Ws and H (who, what, where, when, why, and how) that form the basis of media communication (Cutlip *et al.* 2006). Additionally, in a multicultural context like South Africa, cross-cultural communication skills are crucial for PR practitioners to promote understanding and tolerance among diverse audiences (Tubbs *et al.* 2011).

By mastering the principles of effective communication, PR practitioners can craft compelling messages, select appropriate channels, and foster meaningful connections with their stakeholders, ultimately enhancing the success of their communication efforts.

### **3.6.9 PR and event management**

Event management is a critical aspect of PR practice, as events provide a platform for engaging with stakeholders, building relationships, and promoting organisational objectives. Public

relations practitioners play a pivotal role in conceptualising, planning, and executing events that align with their organisation's communication strategies (Ngondo and Klyueva 2020).

Successful event management requires a comprehensive understanding of the target audience, their interests, and preferences. PR practitioners must carefully select the type of event, whether this be a conference, trade show, product launch, or community engagement initiative, to ensure maximum impact and relevance. Effective event planning involves coordinating various elements such as venue selection, logistics, speaker management, and on-site coordination (Oparaugo 2021).

Events offer a unique opportunity for PR practitioners to create immersive experiences that resonate with stakeholders. By incorporating interactive elements, engaging activities, and compelling content, PR professionals can facilitate meaningful connections and foster lasting impressions. Furthermore, events serve as platforms for networking, enabling practitioners to cultivate relationships with key influencers, industry experts, and potential partners (Ngondo and Klyueva 2020).

In the digital age, PR practitioners must also consider integrating virtual or hybrid event components to cater to diverse audiences and leverage technology for enhanced engagement. Live streaming, virtual exhibitions, and interactive social media campaigns can extend the reach of events and facilitate real-time interactions with remote participants (Gesualdi 2019).

Effective event management requires meticulous planning, attention to detail, and a deep understanding of the organisation's communication objectives. By seamlessly executing events, PR practitioners can reinforce brand messaging, foster stakeholder engagement, and ultimately contribute to the organisation's overall success (Suh, Hoang and Hijal-Moghrabi 2021).

### **3.6.10 Exhibitions and trade fairs**

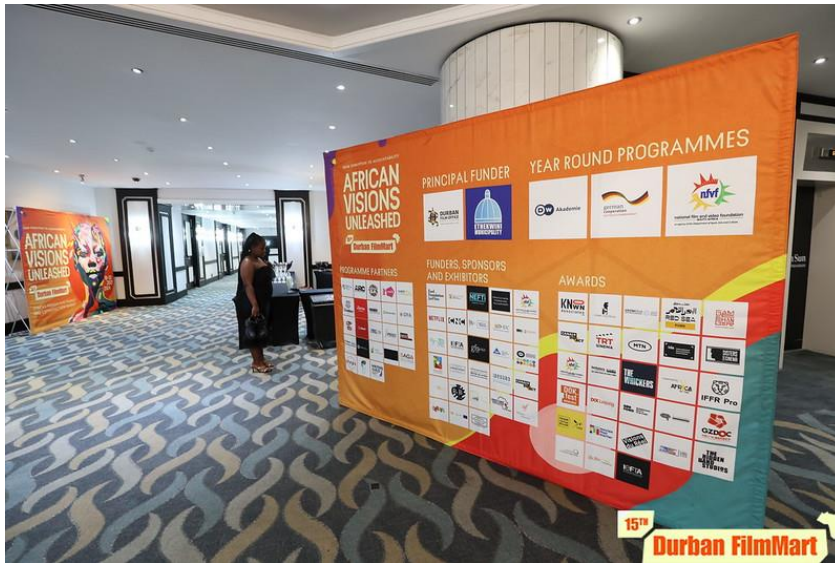
Exhibitions and trade fairs should play a significant role in the PR strategy of the DFI. These events provide valuable platforms for filmmakers, producers, and industry professionals to showcase their work, network with potential partners, and promote the region as a desirable filming location (Mersham, Rensburg and Skinner 2009: 218). By participating in exhibitions and trade fairs, the DFI can enhance its visibility, attract investment, and foster collaborations with local and international stakeholders.

One of the most prominent events for the DFI is the DIFF. This annual event showcases a diverse range of films from South Africa and around the world, providing a platform for filmmakers to exhibit their work and engage with audiences (Durban Film Mart. 2023). The festival also includes industry workshops, panel discussions, and networking events, creating opportunities for filmmakers to connect with distributors, investors, and potential collaborators.

In addition to DIFF, the DFM is another key event for the industry (Figure 3.2 and Figure 3.3). The DFM is a co-production and finance market that aims to facilitate partnerships between African filmmakers and international industry professionals (Durban Film Office 2023). By participating in the DFM, filmmakers from Durban and the surrounding region can pitch their projects to potential investors, secure funding, and establish co-production agreements.



Figure 3.2: Durban film mart (1)



**Figure 3.3: Durban film mart (2)**

Figure 3.2 and Figure 3.3 shows the 15th edition of the Durban FilmMart (DFM) under the theme "African Visions Unleashed." The event, scheduled from July 19-22, 2024, focuses on African cinema and creative storytelling. The visual branding is vibrant, with colorful artwork symbolizing African identity and creativity, and emphasizes the significance of African narratives in the global film industry (Burns 2024).

The Durban International Film Festival (DIFF) and the Durban FilmMart (DFM) are two distinct but interconnected events that both take place in Durban, South Africa (KZNFC 2019). DIFF is primarily a platform for showcasing films. It is one of the oldest and most prestigious film festivals in Africa, offering screenings of feature films, documentaries, and short films from around the world, with a special focus on African cinema, (Durban Film Mart 2023). The festival serves as a space for filmmakers, audiences, and industry professionals to come together, appreciate cinema, and discuss the art and craft of filmmaking. The Durban FilmMart is an industry event that runs concurrently with DIFF but serves a different purpose. DFM is focused on the business side of filmmaking., providing a platform for African filmmakers to pitch their projects to potential funders, producers, distributors, and other key industry stakeholders. It is aimed at facilitating co-production opportunities, funding, and networking for African film projects. (Botha 2016: 118). In summary, while DIFF is about celebrating and showcasing completed films, DFM is about the development, funding, and promotion of future film projects (Durban Film Office 2023).

Exhibitions and trade fairs also provide opportunities for the DFI to showcase its infrastructure, services, and locations to international producers and filmmakers. The DFO, a division of the eThekweni Municipality, regularly participates in international trade fairs such as the Cannes Film Festival and the Berlin International Film Festival (Durban Film Office 2023). By promoting Durban as a film-friendly destination with diverse locations, skilled crew, and competitive incentives, the DFO aims to attract international productions to the region.

Exhibitions and trade fairs offer a platform for the DFI to promote its unique cultural heritage and stories. By showcasing films that reflect the region's diverse narratives and perspectives, the industry can differentiate itself from other filming destinations and attract projects that seek authentic, localised content (Botha 2016: 118). This not only contributes to the growth of the local film industry but also helps to preserve and promote Durban's cultural identity on a global stage.

However, to maximise the benefits of exhibitions and trade fairs, the DFI must develop targeted strategies and allocate sufficient resources. This includes creating compelling promotional materials, such as location-scouting videos and industry directories, to showcase the region's offerings (Jefkins1998: 142). It also involves providing support and assistance to local filmmakers to help them navigate the complexities of international markets and co-production agreements.

Overall, exhibitions and trade fairs are essential components of the PR strategy for the DFI. By participating in events such as the DIFF and the DFM, the industry can enhance its visibility, attract investment, and foster collaborations with local and international stakeholders. Moreover, by showcasing its unique cultural heritage and stories, the DFI can differentiate itself from other filming destinations and contribute to the preservation and promotion of the region's cultural identity.

### **3.6.11 Sponsorships**

In addition to brand exposure, sponsorships can also facilitate audience engagement and community outreach. By collaborating with sponsors on promotional activities, such as competitions, screenings, and workshops, the DFI can create opportunities for direct interaction with audiences and build stronger connections with local communities (Durban Film Office

2023). This can help to foster a sense of pride and ownership in the local film industry and encourage greater participation and support from the public.

However, to effectively leverage sponsorships for PR purposes, the DFI must develop strategic partnerships that align with its values and objectives. This involves identifying sponsors who share similar goals and target audiences, and creating mutually beneficial agreements that deliver value for both parties (Mersham, Rensburg and Skinner 2009: 222). Careful management of sponsor relationships is necessary to ensure that they are sustainable and to maintain the integrity of the industry's creative vision and reputation.

Moreover, the DFI needs to be transparent and accountable in its use of sponsorship funds, ensuring that they are allocated effectively and in line with agreed-upon objectives. This includes regular reporting and evaluation of sponsorship outcomes, and clear communication with sponsors about the impact and value of their support (Watson and Noble 2014: 178).

Sponsorships are a valuable tool for the DFI to secure financial support, enhance brand exposure, and engage audiences. By developing strategic partnerships with sponsors, the industry can create mutually beneficial relationships that contribute to its growth and sustainability. However, effective sponsorship management requires careful alignment of values, transparency in the use of funds, and regular evaluation and communication of outcomes.

### **3.6.12 Promotional activities**

Promotional activities are an essential component of the PR strategy for the DFI, playing a crucial role in raising awareness, generating interest, and driving audience engagement. These activities encompass a wide range of tactics, including advertising, media relations, social media campaigns, and special events (Mersham, Rensburg and Skinner 2009: 223). By effectively implementing promotional activities, the DFI can enhance its visibility, attract new audiences, and build stronger relationships with key stakeholders.

One of the primary goals of promotional activities in the DFI is to generate buzz and anticipation around upcoming films and events. This can be achieved through a combination of traditional and digital marketing tactics, such as print and online advertising, social media campaigns, and media relations (Jefkins 1998: 144). For example, in the lead-up to the DIFF, the organisers can launch a series of promotional activities to build excitement and encourage

attendance, such as releasing teaser trailers, hosting press conferences, and running ticket giveaways on social media (Nala 2022).

Promotional activities can also be used to highlight the unique selling points and competitive advantages of the DFI. By showcasing the region's diverse locations, skilled crew, and attractive incentives, promotional campaigns can help position Durban as a desirable filming destination for local and international productions (Botha 2016: 120). This can be achieved through targeted marketing materials, such as location-scouting videos, industry directories, and testimonials from successful productions that have been filmed in the region (Durban Film Office 2023).

In addition to promoting specific films and events, promotional activities can also be used to engage and educate audiences about the broader cultural and social significance of the DFI. This can include initiatives such as school outreach programmes, community screenings, and workshops that explore the role of film in shaping cultural identity, promoting social change, and creating economic opportunities (Mersham, Rensburg and Skinner 2009: 224). By fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of the industry's value and impact, these promotional activities can help to build a stronger base of support and advocacy among local communities.

However, to be effective, promotional activities in the DFI must be carefully planned and executed, with clear objectives, target audiences, and messaging (Watson and Noble 2014: 179). This requires a deep understanding of the industry's unique strengths and challenges, as well as the needs and preferences of different stakeholder groups. It also involves ongoing monitoring and evaluation of promotional campaigns to assess their impact and identify areas for improvement.

Moreover, promotional activities should be integrated with other PR functions, such as media relations, stakeholder management, and event management, to create a cohesive and mutually reinforcing strategy (Mersham, Rensburg and Skinner 2009: 225). This requires close collaboration and communication between different teams and departments, as well as a willingness to adapt and innovate in response to changing market conditions and audience expectations.

Thus, promotional activities are a vital tool for the DFI to raise awareness, generate interest, and engage audiences. By effectively leveraging a range of marketing and communication tactics, the industry can enhance its visibility, attract new audiences, and build stronger relationships with key stakeholders. However, successful promotional activities require careful planning, execution, and integration with other PR functions, as well as ongoing monitoring and evaluation to assess their impact and identify areas for improvement.

### **3.7 Roles of film festivals and awards**

Film festivals and awards play a crucial role in the film industry, promoting films, facilitating networking opportunities, and recognising excellence in filmmaking. These events serve as platforms for filmmakers to showcase their work, reach a wider audience, and attract industry professionals, distributors, and investors (Vallejo 2020: 155). Film festivals and awards contribute to the competitiveness of the industry in several ways. Firstly, film festivals provide a vital space for the exhibition of films that may not have access to mainstream distribution channels. Independent and international films, documentaries, and experimental works often find exposure and recognition at film festivals (Burgess 2020: 225). By showcasing diverse and innovative films, festivals contribute to a more inclusive and vibrant cinematic landscape.

Secondly, film festivals serve as networking platforms, bringing together filmmakers, producers, distributors, and other industry professionals. These events create opportunities for collaboration, co-production, and funding (Peirano 2020: 55). Filmmakers can connect with potential partners, gain industry insights, and navigate the complexities of the film market. Film festivals foster dialogue, exchange of ideas, and the sharing of best practices, contributing to the overall development and competitiveness of the industry.

Thirdly, film awards recognise and celebrate outstanding achievements in filmmaking. They provide validation, prestige, and visibility to films and filmmakers (Vallejo 2020: 155). Awards such as the Academy Awards (Oscars), Cannes Film Festival, and Berlin International Film Festival elevate films and filmmakers to international recognition, enhancing their marketability and attracting investment opportunities (Formenti, Pitassio and Sampietro 2022: 21). Film awards contribute to the promotion and competitiveness of the industry by highlighting exceptional talent and creative achievements.

### **3.8 Distribution and exhibition models in the film industry**

According to Curi and Casquino (2022: 273), distribution and exhibition models play a crucial role in the film industry, determining how films reach audiences and generate revenue. The evolution of these models has been influenced by technological advancements, changing consumer preferences, and market dynamics. Understanding the distribution and exhibition landscape is vital for assessing the competitiveness of the DFI.

Traditional distribution models involved the release of films in cinemas through physical prints or reels. Cinemas acted as the primary exhibition venues, and film distribution was managed by studios and distributors (Barnett 2018: 82). However, the rise of digital technology and online platforms has disrupted traditional models. The emergence of video-on-demand services and streaming platforms has provided alternative channels for film distribution (Barnett 2018: 84). Films can now be released simultaneously in cinemas and on digital platforms, catering to different audience preferences and expanding revenue streams.

Additionally, the globalisation of the film industry has led to the adoption of diverse distribution strategies. Films are often released internationally to capitalise on global markets (Johnston and Frith 2022: 1923). Coordinated worldwide releases and localised marketing campaigns have become common practice, targeting specific regions and audiences (Curi and Casquino 2022: 279). Distribution models need to consider cultural sensitivities, language preferences, and regional market dynamics to ensure successful releases and maximise audience reach.

Moreover, the exhibition landscape has expanded beyond traditional cinemas. Multiplexes, art-house cinemas, pop-up cinemas, and outdoor screenings offer diverse viewing experiences to cater to different audience segments (Johnston and Frith 2022: 1923). Furthermore, film festivals serve as important exhibition platforms, providing opportunities for films to be screened and discovered by audiences and industry professionals (Lim 2019). The Durban International Film Festival, for example, showcases local and international films, contributing to the visibility and promotion of the DFI.

### **3.9 Role of public relations in enhancing competitiveness**

All the functions and roles of PR in organisations that have been discussed so far also apply to PR in the film industry. Kambhampati (2020: 99) expresses that the purpose of the PR function

in the film industry is to create awareness of productions so as to generate interest in those films by distributors, film festivals, moviegoers, film critics, and social media influencers. Public relations agencies are highly respected experts in branding and communication, with great knowledge of how to make productions newsworthy and relevant to current audiences (Jumbari 2022: 88). The author goes on to say that PR also specialises in crisis management planning and response services to ensure that a production's message does not get misunderstood. Publicists rely on their established network of contacts and connections as well as seek new marketing opportunities to promote film productions and maximise their coverage through a wide variety of platforms, with the film industry being one of the biggest players in the space of entertainment (Chaka and Adanlawo 2022: 6-9).

According to Chaka and Adanlawo (2022: 14), public relations refers to the communication conducted by an organisation to support the development and maintain relationships that are mutually beneficial among stakeholders and the general public. In any industry, PR works with reputation management, publication production, branding corporate advertising, sponsorship management as well the rendering of promotional activities and risk management (Adanlawo and Chaka 2022: 33). Chibike and Nkomo (2022: 55) highlight the end-to-end role of PR practitioners in managing internal workplace relations, as well as corporate communications as an extension between the brand and the public. Media relations are included in the PR role because their purpose is to increase public knowledge of an organisation's activities by relaying and scaffolding information to build relationships (Adanlawo and Chaka 2022: 33).

The role of the publicist is to distribute information, with a major focal point being official press releases related to a film. The effectiveness of press releases for locally produced films as well as the role of PR management as a guiding force in this area was investigated in the current study (Bakre and Mudzanani 2022: 213). At first glance, and in comparison, to large-scale film arenas like Hollywood, the PR role within the South African film industry is largely unnoticed. Is this foreshadowing something that can be resolved and is South Africa fit for the challenge? According to Ogunnubi, Aja and Awosusi (2022: 238), the commissioning of influencers is popular in gaining the attention of the public, though not enough 'hype' is created around a film release, partly due to insufficient time frames.

Chaka and Adanlawo (2022: 19) comment that in this era of the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), social media plays a pivotal role in ensuring social media presence, exposure, and

accessibility of the brand for customers. The 4IR is defined as the period we are currently living in which is one of rapid technological growth and changing the way we live through technology (Jumbari 2022: 89). Employees claim that the 4IR has contributed to a better working experience, which saves time, allows workers to work remotely, and improves productivity (Chibike and Nkomo 2022: 64). However, Sutherland (2020) argues that the 4IR has created more problems than solutions because it has resulted in many employees losing their jobs, and being replaced by smart technology. This presents various ethical issues, and contributes to the high unemployment rate in South Africa. Social media plays a role in publicising South African films and the 4IR, which is now a game changer, encouraging digital interaction but less physical interaction.

The function of PR and marketing are interrelated but not the same; however, the PR function does possess a few marketing elements, and scholars tend to confuse the two functions, (Ogunyombo and Ogbonna 2021: 90-93). Bakre and Mudzanani (2022: 213) assert that marketing promotes the shift of products and services from the producer and provider to the consumer or client, and the PR function assists an organisation and its public to adapt mutually to each other. The goal of marketing as a function is sales.

The main reasons for the DFI not reaching its fullest potential have been identified as:

- People not knowing about the facility, resulting in inadequate marketing;
- Preference for ownership of equipment instead of renting equipment;
- Mismatch between what is offered and what the filmmakers need; and
- Affordability for emerging filmmakers (KZNFC 2019).

### **3.10 Role of public relations in promoting films**

The South African film industry is worth R3.5 billion to the economy every year (Ellis 2021). The most lucrative form of production in post-apartheid South Africa has been facilitation, most local producers host international films, provide crews, search for locations and cast extras for clients. The local film industry is capable of doing more and making sure that local films are as lucrative as facilitating international films. Film contribute significantly to the entertainment industry, however, not all films succeed with high profit margins (Kambhampati 2020). The success of the industry can be attributed to aspects such as writing, the quality of the production, or the quality of the acting delivered by the actors within a film. Baggott (2014) comments that these aspects contribute to how audiences, critics and media receive a film.

Unfortunately, these aspects commonly overshadow one of the most vital functions contributing to the success of a film which is promotion and PR.

There is so much potential that resides within the PR industry that can improve the recognition of the local film industry. The PR industry can use various ways of generating interest among the public both locally and internationally for any film being produced. There are various ways to announce the release of a new film, including:

- Hosting press conferences;
- Coordinating social events for movie announcements;
- Releasing trailers,
- Teaser promotion campaigns,
- Newsletters,
- Press releases,
- Organising cast appearances on talk shows, and
- Setting up cast and crew interviews with well-known social media influencers on social media (PwC Nigeria 2017).

This multifaceted approach can get people talking and wanting to know more, which puts the industry on the map.

Maloney (2024) claims that PR has an enormous impact on our opinions and decisions as citizens and consumers as they influence the buying decisions of consumers who may end up choosing to purchase or distribute local films or international films. Yi, Cha and Amenuvor (2021) suggest that before selling a product, service or business, great PR should be considered, as this may have a positive or a negative impact on sales of a product or business.

The Member of the Executive Council for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs in KwaZulu-Natal, (KwaZulu Natal Film Commission. 2020), affirms that during the KwaZulu-Natal Film Commission's financial year, the entity performed pleasingly well in positioning the province as a film destination of choice, through aggressive marketing and promotion of locations and facilities, training programmes for filmmakers, establishing partnerships with key role players in the film industry to promote filming, and establishment of a film cluster to make sure that filmmakers can access resources and tools of the trade at reasonable costs. The KwaZulu-Natal Film Commission blends their PR department with the marketing department under one umbrella, unlike other corporate

organisations that separate the two functions. The sales business unit in collaboration with the marketing and communications manager, is tasked with positioning the KwaZulu-Natal province as one of the best locations for film, as well as positioning the KwaZulu-Natal Film Commission as a leading film commission in the African market. The PR function must be involved in all of these tasks, but it does not guarantee overnight success.

The main purpose of the office of the Chief Operations Officer is to promote the region through appropriate marketing and communication strategies, which encompasses PR elements that focus on the development of the film industry through human capital development, investment promotion and development, and implementation of a marketing and PR strategy aimed at identification and promotion of the organisation with certain countries that are leaders in the film industry.

### **3.11 Conclusion**

This chapter has comprehensively explored the pivotal role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI. By examining both traditional and new media strategies, it has highlighted the importance of effective communication and stakeholder engagement. The theoretical foundations of stakeholder theory and the RBV provide a robust framework for understanding how PR strategies can drive industry growth, public awareness, and market reach. Additionally, the chapter identified key PR techniques, including media relations, organising events, and leveraging social media, which are essential for promoting films. Ultimately, the conceptual framework developed in this chapter serves as a guide for analysing and improving the implementation of PR strategies to foster the sustainable growth and competitiveness of the DFI.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The literature review chapters acknowledged the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI. This chapter focuses on the research methodology which was employed in this study. Aspects such as research design, target population, sampling methods, sample size, research instrument, data collection, data analysis, pilot study and trustworthiness as well as ethical considerations are discussed. More so, this study adopted the qualitative research approach whereby interviews were conducted to solicit answers from interviewees.

### **4.2 Research paradigm**

Creswell and Creswell (2018) assert that choosing the topic, the relevant problem and the paradigm are the first steps in conducting successful research. The definition of a paradigm is "a fundamental system of assumptions that directs behaviour". A research paradigm is a way of thinking that gives the researcher guidance as to the methods and study design to use (Leavy 2017; Mokonyane-Motha and de Jager (2023). A paradigm offers a conceptual foundation for a sensible interpretation of the social environment (Jill and Hussey (2014), and can also be described as a collective generalisation in the norms and beliefs of a community of specialists who are interested in reality and knowledge (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2016). Positivism, interpretivism or constructivism, participative or advocacy, and pragmatic worldviews are the four main paradigms, according to Creswell and Creswell (2018).

#### **4.2.1 Positivist paradigm**

The social world can be comprehended objectively, according to positivists (Jill and Hussey 2019). Experimentation, observation, and measurement are the methods used to acquire knowledge. Herzog, Handke and Hitters (2019), point out that positivists' approaches can assist policymakers anticipate the impacts of cultural interventions, thereby making informed decisions.

### **4.2.2 Pragmatic paradigm**

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018: 10), the pragmatic approach opposes the idea that social scientific inquiry can access a reality by utilising a single study methodology. The approach advocates that instead of focusing on using a single research method, researchers should use all possible approaches to comprehend it. The discussion of subjective meanings is made, both historically and socially which refers to the idea that individual's interpretations and understandings of phenomena is influenced by their by their experiences within certain historical and social contexts (Creswell and Creswell 2018). Such interpretations allow the researcher to concentrate on a multiplicity of viewpoints rather than the growth of a select group of categories or concepts. The goal is to investigate participants' perspectives on the situation being studied.

### **4.2.3 Interpretivism paradigm**

The interpretivist philosophy was chosen as the best option since it aims to understand how PR play its role in the DFI. The analysis of numbers cannot be used to accomplish this kind of goal. Instead, the chosen paradigm necessitates a thorough analysis of one's opinion. The interpretivism paradigm relies on a conversation between the researchers and their subjects so as to gain an understanding that is distinctive to a certain time and environment and cannot be generalised (Creswell and Creswell 2018). Interviews, observation, and textual analysis are all examples of interpretivism methodologies. Interpretivism emanates from the belief that reality is based on influence, complexity and is socially constructed. Therefore, society can only understand someone's reality through their experience of that reality, and that reality may be different from another person's perspective and is shaped by the individual's historical or social outlook (Yanow 2016). Farrow *et al.* (2020), established a few examples of interpretive methods for analysing data, which include various kinds of data discourse analysis and some methods of generating and analysing data, such as participant observation/ethnography, case studies, and grounded theory.

## **4.3 Research methodology**

According to Jill and Hussey (2014), research methodology is a general research strategy that specifies how a research project will be carried out and, among other things, the methods that will be used. To put it another way, research methodology is a means for gathering data and

information that will be utilised to support a variety of decisions and activities. Research technique refers to the systematic process used to answer research questions through sampling, data collection and data analysis, whereas research methodology refers to the entire approach to research that is connected to a paradigm or theoretical framework (Creswell and Creswell 2018). To organise and broaden our understanding of a certain research technique, it can be thought of as a system of norms, concepts, and formal conditions that underpin and direct scientific investigation (Busetto, Wick and Gumbinger 2020: 2). The data collection, analysis, and interpretation procedures for the scientific investigation are specified in the research methodology (Andrade 2022).

#### **4.4 Research design**

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), research design is a plan or blueprint that outlines the way a research study will be tackled. The layout depicts the steps that will be taken when collecting, analysing, and interpreting data relevant to the research problem. According to Bloomfield and Fisher (2019), the research design directs the systematic plan for analysing the research problem. In this regard, there are different research designs such as exploratory, explanatory and descriptive designs.

**Explanatory research design** – Explanatory studies aim to explain the relationship that exists among variables. This approach helps to find the intersectionality that exists among the components of the phenomenon under study (Antwi and Hanza 2015). This research design seeks to define the phenomenon through the application of statistics.

**Exploratory research design** – According to Hirose and Creswell (2023) exploratory research is a research design that aims at finding out what is happening concerning the phenomenon under study through an in-depth literature review, interviews with experts of the area under study and focus group discussion to gain new views about the phenomenon. The exploratory research design is usually used in research studies where little is known about the phenomenon under study (Jill and Hussey 2019). This deep insight, therefore, provides new opportunities as it leads to new subjects that will be studied again. Braun and Clarke (2019) state that the explanatory research design assists research students in exploring the topic or problem under study. Explanatory research design is also important in studies where the researcher has limited or no previous data related to the phenomena. Explanatory research design is the appropriate

research design as it explores the problem investigated, regarding the role that PR plays in the DFI.

**Descriptive research design** – Gundry and Deterding (2019) state that the purpose of descriptive design is to describe a population, situation or phenomenon accurately and systematically. Descriptive design answers what, where, when and how questions excluding the why questions. A descriptive research design can use a plethora of research methods to investigate one or more variables. This design provides an accurate description of the characteristics and behaviours of a particular population or subject.

#### **4.5 Research approaches**

The three types of research approaches are quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2023; Creswell and Creswell 2018). Hirose and Creswell (2023) suggest that mixed methods research incorporates aspects of qualitative and quantitative research. Mixed methods includes the advantages of both methodologies so can aid the researcher in obtaining a more comprehensive picture than a solitary quantitative or qualitative study (Creswell and Creswell 2018). In the behavioural, health, and social sciences, mixed methods research is frequently employed, particularly in multidisciplinary contexts and complicated situational or social research (Busetto, Wick and Gumbinger, 2020).

##### **4.5.1 Quantitative research approach**

As proposed by Jopling (2019), data collection and analysis are the two main components of quantitative research. Patterns and averages can be found, forecasts can be made, causality can be tested, and results can be extrapolated to larger groups. The natural and social sciences frequently employ quantitative research (Gundry and Deterding 2019). This approach focuses on statistical analysis, hypothesis testing, and explanation (Jopling 2019). As a result, measures of quantity, intensity, and frequency are essential components of this method. Dhall (2019: 109) clarifies that the goal of quantitative research is to look at the relationships between variables.

##### **4.5.2 Qualitative research approach**

In qualitative research, non-numerical data (such as writing, video, or audio) are gathered and analysed to better comprehend concepts, beliefs, or experiences (Andrade 2022). It can be

utilised to uncover intricate details about a situation or to spark fresh study concepts. In the humanities and social sciences, qualitative research is frequently employed (Dhall: 2019). By utilising a particular set of research techniques, such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, qualitative research enables researchers to investigate people's experiences in detail (Hirose and Creswell: 2023). Every qualitative study aims to explore, describe, and explain. One or more of these objectives should be served by the study design (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2023). Additionally, qualitative techniques deal with the cultural and social constructions of their variables.

The research approach of this study is qualitative. As Braun and Clarke (2019) point out, the term "quality" emphasises actions that are not subjected to experimentation or quantified in terms of number, volume, or frequency. The use of a qualitative research methodology has the advantage that it allows researchers to investigate participants' lived experiences in a way that quantitative researchers are unlikely to be able to do (Ichendu 2020). The qualitative approach allows for in-depth conversations with the participants regarding the research topic, the researcher can obtain relevant and crucial information from participants, and it becomes easier to recognise a pattern, especially from more experienced participants. Hence, the researcher aimed to approach participants with five or more years of experience. The researcher was able to gain greater and unanticipated insight through interviews about PR and the DFI.

#### **4.6 Target population and sample size**

This section defines the specific group of individuals from the DFI who were the focus of this study and outlines the criteria and methodology used to determine the sample size for data collection.

##### **4.6.1 Target population**

The target population is defined as the objects/individuals of interest to a researcher (Merriam and Tisdell 2016). The individuals who are drawn from a target population are referred to as participants or respondents (Rahi 2017). The target population of this study was 41 individuals, consisting of 25 employees from the PR department at DFOs and 16 others who work within the film industry and are situated within the DFOs, such as directors, actors and scriptwriters.

#### **4.6.2 Sample size**

Berndt (2020) describes a sample size as the total number of participants or respondents taking part in a study. Before selecting a sample size, a researcher should define the population applicable to the research, choose a sample frame (applicable to non-probability sampling); establish the modalities for choosing the sample size units, select an actual unit of the sample size, select a sample size method and conduct a pre-test (Busetto, Wick and Gumbinger 2020: 8). Berndt (2020) argues that a sample size in a qualitative study can be determined when saturation is attained. Hence, the researchers used a sample size of 16 participants consisting of nine employees from the Department of Public Relations at the DFO and six other informants from the internal stakeholders who are situated within the DFO.

#### **4.7 Sampling method and techniques**

Sampling is a method for selecting a predetermined population's subset, or relatively few representative things or people (Sharma 2017). The sample plan for a study is influenced by the research topic and goal. Leavy (2017) asserts that sampling is a crucial phase in the research process because it influences the validity of the conclusions that the researcher draws from the data. Samples are appropriate population quantities drawn from the particular community or group that the researcher has chosen Sileyew (2019). According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016), there are two main types of sampling methods, probability sampling and non-probability sampling method. A distinction between these two methods is that in the probability sampling method every item, unit or individual is given an equal chance of selection, which is not the case in the non-probability sampling method. The study used the non-probability sampling technique.

##### **4.7.1 Sampling technique**

Among the types of non-probability sampling techniques, the researcher used the purposive sampling technique. The term "purposeful sampling" describes the deliberate selection of a participant based on the traits they have (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2016; Cypress, 2018). These sampling techniques rely on the researcher's judgement in deciding which units to study; examples include persons, cases, or organisations (Cronje 2020). According to Sileyew (2019), selecting the main participants requires deliberate or non-probability sampling. Theoretical saturation is frequently used to define a purposive sample (Creswell and Creswell 2018).

#### **4.7.2 Inclusion and exclusion criteria**

The study was confined to stakeholders within the DFO. Hence, stakeholders who were not within the DFO were excluded from the study. DFO employees who were involved in the film industry and PR and who had been actively involved for five years or more were included in the study. DFO member employees who were part of other departments such as finance, security, secretaries and human resources and have been working in the industry for less than five years were excluded because they may not have had the necessary insight regarding the study.

#### **4.8 Data collection instruments**

There is widespread consensus in the methodology community, according to Hürlimann (2019: 111), that the method selected for data collecting may have an impact on the calibre of response. Additionally, the method used can have an impact on respondents' attitudes and behaviours, which could then affect the data's quality (Gundry and Deterding 2019: 314). Data can be collected from primary and secondary sources (Jopling 2019). Secondary sources of data are collected from published information already existing somewhere else. Primary data is collected through direct enquiries and the data is raw. Regarding this research, a primary data collection method was used. Primary data collection method includes instruments such as interviews, questionnaires, experiments and focus group discussions (Gundry and Deterding 2019).

In this study, interviews were used to collect data. An interview is a qualitative research method that relies on asking questions to collect data (Gundry and Deterding 2019). Interviews involve two or more people, one of whom is the interviewer asking the questions. Interviews are considered to be the most common measuring instrument within the social and managerial sciences (Jopling 2019). In-depth interviews served as the research instrument in this current study. The interview guide (Appendix A) was designed and drafted by the researcher, with guidance and insights from the literature. It consisted of direct and indirect questions which were linked to the study's aim and objectives.

Open-ended questions were utilised to enable the qualitative methodology to give in-depth probing of the participants' initial responses. Participants were free to express their ideas about how they believed PR can aid in increasing organisational competitiveness through the use of

open-ended questions in this study. According to Al-Ababneh (2020), the benefit of open-ended questions is that participants are not constrained to a preselected viewpoint.

Understanding participants' perceptions of the phenomenon is the main goal. In contrast to other research instruments, interviews are essential for gathering less quantifiable data from direct sources. They enable academics to offer relatable narratives and viewpoints and even to directly cite significant contributors.

#### **4.9 Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness of a research report lies at the heart of issues conventionally discussed as validity and reliability Adler (2022: 598). Four factors—confirmability, dependability, credibility, and transferability are used to define trustworthiness (Gundry and Deterding 2019).

- The degree to which the results are the result of the investigation rather than reflecting the researcher's bias is known as confirmability.
- The degree to which the results are consistent with the data gathered is known as dependability.
- The degree to which the research's findings accord with reality determines its credibility.
- The results transferability refers to how well they can be used in different situations (Gengan 2023).

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016), confirmability has to do with the degree of objectivity in the research study conclusions. This typically occurs when all conclusions and findings are based solely on the participant's responses and are not affected by any potential bias or covert researcher goals. An audit trail that details each step of the data analysis that was done and provides justification for the choices taken can be provided by the study to demonstrate the accuracy of the research. In this study each segment of the evaluation of the data that the study collected from primary and secondary sources of information was independently documented and the consistency between these two portions was maintained.

According to Gundry and Deterding (2019), dependability has to do with how likely it is that other researchers will be able to duplicate the study and reach the same conclusions. Many come to a similar conclusion based on the information already available on the internet and the volume of prior studies conducted on PR and organisational competitiveness in many places

across the world. It is safe to say that similar conclusions will be established if this study is duplicated.

By examining the evidence from the sources and using it to construct justifications for the themes to conclude the study, the study used triangulation of diverse information, approaches, and theories to maintain the credibility of the research (Creswell and Creswell 2018). To bolster the findings of the interviews, information gathered through observation, unstructured conversations and documentation were examined collectively.

#### **4.10 Pilot study**

Jill and Hussey (2019) define a pilot study as an initial, limited-scale "rehearsal" in which a researcher tests the methodologies that will be applied to the research project. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), this phrase describes the procedure used to assess the viability of a specific study phenomenon. Pre-testing or pilot studies are essential because they enable the observation of study-related issues. A pilot study is a technique of conducting a preliminary investigation, going through the complete research procedure with a small sample. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016), a study pilot helps to confirm the following:

- Duration of the interview
- Detailed directions
- Uncertain or confusing questions
- Questions that the participant finds uncomfortable
- Were there any significant topics left out in your opinion?
- Order of questions
- Any additional feedback from participants

The pilot study was conducted by engaging in conversation with external stakeholders and employees from the PR department of the DFO. In that way, it was easy to determine if this study would serve its purpose and achieve its objectives. These conversations were conducted virtually via Zoom and Microsoft Teams. The pilot study was done using a sample of three participants from both internal and external stakeholders, a PR officer, a director and a development programmes officer.

According to the pilot study's findings, all of the interview schedule questions were fully understood by the participants. They were successful in offering solutions that were pertinent

to the study's issue. The interview guide was used for the primary study exactly as it was; no changes were made to it.

#### **4.11 Data collection process**

The main data collection came through interviews conducted from 4 February to 14 February 2024. Between 4 to 6 February, interviews were conducted with three employees at the DFO and from 4 February to 14 February the researcher interviewed twelve external stakeholders (actors, directors, writers, producers and PR officers) using Microsoft Teams. The participants engaged in online interviews on Microsoft Teams. The researcher used online interviews for easy recording of the interviews. The participants granted the researcher permission to record the interviews. All interviews were recorded on audio, then full transcripts were produced.

The occurrence of theoretical saturation serves as a deciding factor to end data collection and aids in determining the sample size (Creswell and Creswell 2018) and participant count. A voice recorder from a cellphone was used to record the face-to-face interviews which were transcribed. Interviews were conducted with 16 stakeholders who work with the DFO and nine DFO personnel. The DFO gatekeeper helped in the selection of each of these participants. The gatekeepers gave the researcher the names of employees and stakeholders as well as their phone numbers so they could set up interviews with the participants at a time that worked for them. According to Jill and Hussey (2019: 214), the participants must share the same environment, lifestyle, and attributes as well as similar traits, hence the choice of the DFO.

#### **4.12 Data analysis**

According to Jopling (2019: 61), data analysis is the process of looking at, cleaning, and modelling data to learn information and come to conclusions that will support the study's goals and answer its central issue. Data analysis entails a rigorous evaluation and interpretation of the data to support the key conclusions (Javadi and Zarea 2016: 33). To accomplish the research objectives in qualitative research, analysis entails locating common patterns in the responses and critically analysing objectives (Busetto, Wick and Gumbinger 2020). Thematic analysis and narrative analysis are the two types of qualitative analysis that are most frequently utilised. Both demand an unstructured strategy. Therefore, thematic analysis was used to analyse the data as described by Alharahsheh and Pius (2020: 39).

Thematic analysis, first introduced by Braun and Clarke in 2006, has become the most often used method for analysing data in qualitative research (Braun and Clarke 2019). This approach has been widely applied throughout the world. Data patterns are found and reported on through the thematic analysis. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) cite thematic analysis as a tool for analysing semi-structured interviews and also as a strategy for studying qualitative data. The technique, according to Javadi and Zarea (2016), allows for the emergence of themes, patterns, and ideas that the researcher can subsequently interpret. Additionally, a group of texts, including interview transcripts, can be subjected to thematic analysis (Herzog, Handke and Hitters 2019). Thematic analysis was therefore helpful in this investigation. Understanding people's experiences with or opinions on workplace inequality and discrimination within organisations is one of the research's main goals. As a result, the thematic analysis strategy was appropriate for this study. Braun and Clarke (2019) claim that it enables the coding and categorisation of data into themes. The similarities and differences between processed data can be shown and categorised. The procedure includes coding, categorising, and noticing trends to accomplish this (Ichendu 2020: 174).

#### **4.13 Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations are one of the most significant aspects of a study. The major ethical issues relating to research are, beneficence, which implies a researcher should not cause any harm to a research participant; respect for the participant's privacy; respect for confidentiality and anonymity, and informed consent (Iovino and Tsitsianis 2020). The researcher adhered to all of these ethical standards during the study.

Ethics is defined by Gengan (2023) as standards of conduct guiding moral choices between the researcher and participants of a study. Boateng (2024) states that the grounds of ethics in research are to guarantee that participants of the study do not suffer any negative consequences that may emerge from research activities. Professionalism in the conduct of research, to ensuring that one complies with the terms and conditions of conducting research, is taken seriously. Therefore, the researcher did not participate in any actions which were detrimental to the image of the institution where the study was conducted (Durban Film Office 2023). Ethical requirements were complied with, following the Durban University of Technology's ethical recommendations.

The researcher contacted the DFO gatekeepers in February 2023 to let them know when the data would be collected. Prospective participants were assured of confidentiality, that no names of participants would be released. The study was made known to the participants through a letter of information. A consent form was also signed by participants to indicate their acceptance to take part in the study. In addition, because I frequently encountered and spoke with them at work, the researcher was well-known to the majority of employees.

#### **4.14 Conclusion**

The research approach of this study was qualitative, as the use of a qualitative research methodology has the advantage that it allows researchers to investigate participants' experiences and observations within the industry in a way that quantitative researchers are unlikely to be able to do (Ichendu 2020). Therefore, in this study interviews were used to collect data. An interview is a qualitative research method that relies on asking questions to collect data (Gundry and Deterding 2019). The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcribed data was then used to formulate themes via NVIVO. The target population consisted of employees from the public relations department of the DFO and others who work within the film industry and are situated within the DFO, such as directors, actors and scriptwriters. The sample size for the pilot study consisted of three individuals.

This chapter presented an overview of the research methodology employed for this study. It provided detailed explanations of the target population, sampling method sample size, research instrument, data collection, data analysis, pilot study, trustworthiness and ethical considerations were discussed.

## CHAPTER 5: DATA PRESENTATION

### 5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the research methodology that was used in this study, including the research approach, philosophy, strategy, sampling technique and sample size used. In addition, the data collection and analysis processes that were followed were also outlined in detail. The focus of this chapter presentation and analysis of the research findings. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed using the thematic analysis tool. All interview feedback was examined and considered to be valuable so was used. The demographic characteristics of the participants are described first, followed by the presentation of findings on the competitiveness of DFI, the role and potential, as well as the significance of PR in the film industry. The PR-related challenges are also presented as well as the possible interventions.

### 5.2 Section A: Demographic characteristics of the participants

The demographic characteristics of the participants who took part in this study were analysed and the findings are presented in the following sub-sections. Table 5.1 presents a summary of the demographic characteristics of the participants.

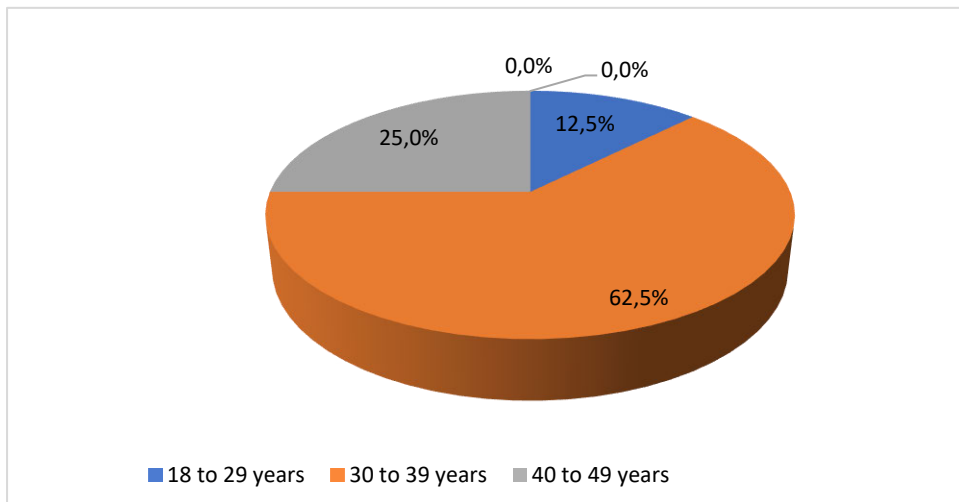
**Table 5.1: Summary of demographic characteristics of participants**

	Age Range	Gender	Designation/Position	Years of working in DFI
1	30 – 39	Female	Actress	6 - 10 years
2	30 – 39	Female	Actress	6 - 10 years
3	40 – 49	Male	Director	16 + years
4	18 – 29	Male	Director	6 - 10 years
5	30 – 39	Male	Film producer	0 - 5 years
6	30 – 39	Male	Film producer	0 – 5 years
7	30 – 39	Male	Film Writer	0 - 5 years
8	40 – 49	Male	Film Writer	0 - 5 years
9	40 – 49	Male	Project Manager	11 - 15 years
10	30 – 39	Female	Public Relations Practitioners	0 - 5 years
11	30 – 39	Male	Public Relations Practitioners	0 - 5 years
12	30 – 39	Female	Public Relations Practitioners	6 - 10 years
13	18 – 29	Female	Public Relations Practitioners	6 - 10 years
14	30 – 39	Female	Public Relations Practitioners	11 - 15 years

15	30 – 39	Female	Public Relations Practitioners	6 - 10 years
16	40 – 49	Female	Senior Manager	6 - 10 years

### 5.2.1 Age range of participants

The age ranges of the participants are illustrated in Figure 5.1.

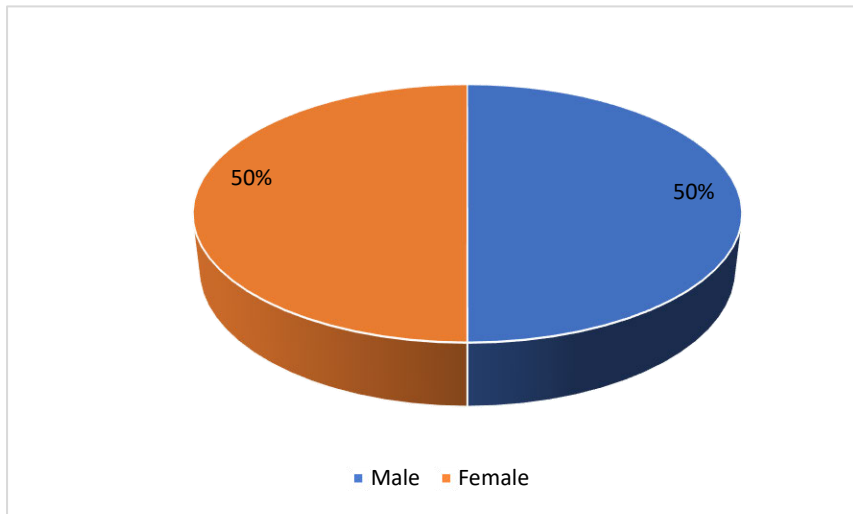


**Figure 5.1: Age range of participants**

Figure 5.1 shows that the majority of the participants (62%) were between the ages of 30 to 39 years, followed by the age groups 40 to 49 years (25.0%) and 18 to 29 years (12.5%). The results revealed that in the DFI the majority of the actors, producers, writers, and executives were below the age of 50 years at the time of the study.

### 5.2.2 Gender distribution of participants

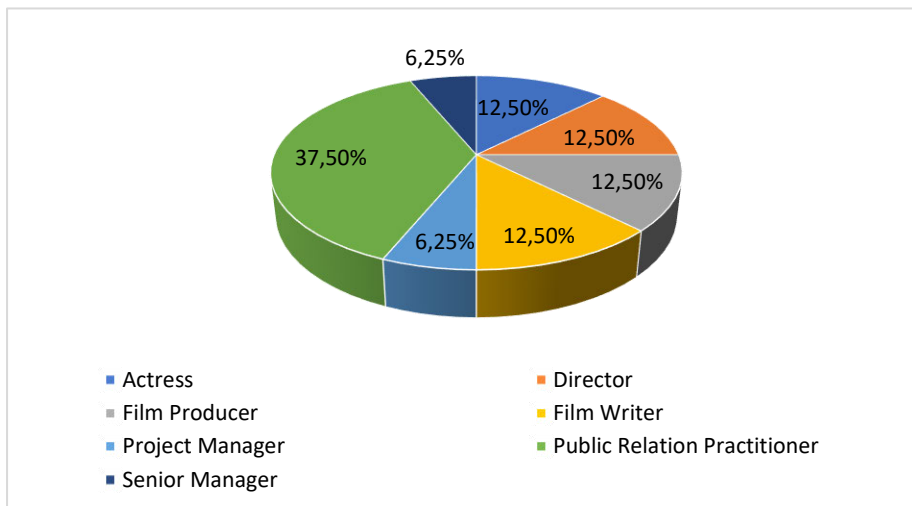
The gender of the participants is illustrated in Figure 5.2.



**Figure 5.2: Gender distribution of participants**

Figure 5.2 shows that the gender distribution of the participants was equal with 50% (n = 8) for both males and females. Therefore, males and females are equally active in the DFI.

### 5.2.3 Designation/position of participants



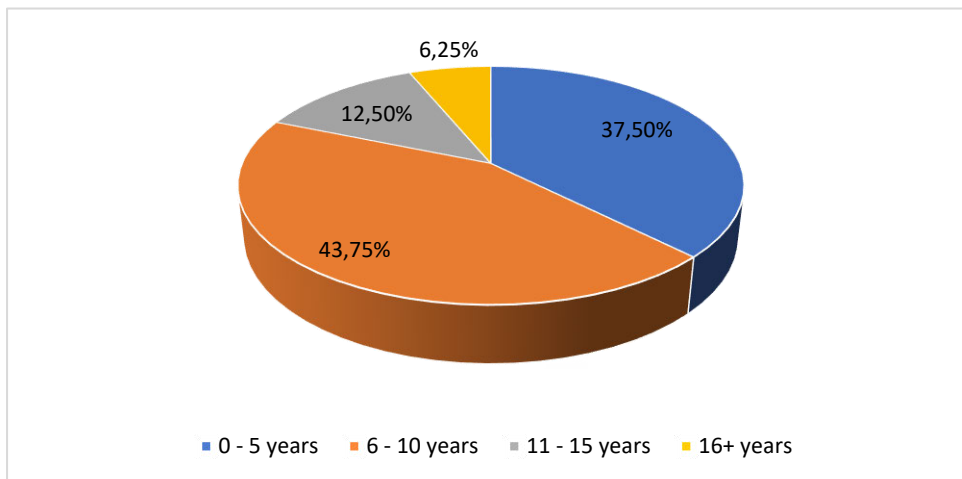
**Figure 5.3: Designation/position of participants**

Figure 5.3 shows that the majority of the participants (37.5%, n = 6) were PR practitioners. There were four categories with 12.5% (n = 2) each, namely, actress, director, film producer

and film writer. Other categories were project manager and senior manager each with 6.25% (n = 1). The results reveal a variety of perspectives from a range of stakeholders in the industry.

#### 5.2.4 Years of working in the Durban film industry

Figure 5.4 shows the results from the analysis of the years spent by participants working in the DFI.



**Figure 5.4: Years of working in the Durban film industry**

Figure 5.4 shows that 43.75% (n = 7) of the participants had been working at in the DFI sector for between 6 and 10 years, 37.5% (n = 6 for 0 to 5 years, 12.5% for 11 to 15 years, and 6.25% for more than 16 years. This information is important for the study since the period of working in the DFI reveals the level of experience and exposure to the dynamics in the system under investigation.

### 5.3 Findings

The data was gathered from 16 participants who were considered key informants on the subject matter. These consisted of different film industry players and partners such as actors, directors, writers, producers and PR practitioners. All these participants were from the DFI. The primary focus of the study was to assess the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI through gaining insights on the topic from participants in the industry. The thematic data analysis tool was most suitable for this study; hence the responses were analysed and dominant patterns and themes were identified. The process began with transcribing the interviews then coding, which involved assigning labels or names to specific sections or units with related

meanings. This was followed by sorting out the various codes identified as potential themes. Table 5.2 indicates the recurring themes identified from the interviewees' responses.

**Table 5.2: Summary of identified themes**

Main theme	Sub-themes
COMPETITIVENESS OF THE DURBAN FILM INDUSTRY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance of the DFI</li> <li>• National competitiveness of the DFI</li> <li>• International competitiveness</li> </ul>
ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN IMPROVING COMPETITIVENESS OF DFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of PR campaigns to promote local films</li> <li>• The potential of PR to advance DFI</li> <li>• Raising public awareness</li> <li>• Develop and maintain relationships</li> <li>• Seeking external support</li> </ul>
PR RELATED CHALLENGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of global awareness of the DFI</li> <li>• Poor networking</li> <li>• Reputation</li> <li>• Perceptions of the people</li> <li>• Poor relationships with the local people or international audience</li> <li>• Lack of sponsorships</li> <li>• Tastes and preferences</li> <li>• Lack of collaboration</li> </ul>

#### **5.4 SECTION B: Competitiveness of the Durban film industry**

The focus of this section is to reveal the current situation in DFI and how competitive it is as compared to other industries in the region and the world. Participants were asked several questions and were expected to provide sufficient information regarding the competitiveness of the DFI. The emerged commonalities among the responses were developed into themes as presented in the following sections.

##### **5.4.1 Sub-Theme 1: Performance of the Durban film industry**

The majority of the participants expressed that the performance of DFI is fairly good but there is room for improvement. The participants expressed that some of the films produced by DFI are doing very well in the market, but the volume of films produced by DFI is very low. Participants also expressed concerns for support to sustain and improve their performance. Some of the sentiments from the participants are captured below.

Participant 9 summarised the whole performance situation in the DFI as follows:

*Yes and no. I'm saying yes and no because we have seen quite a lot of filmmakers from Durban going to other provinces because we do not have the facilities that they need here in Durban, such as your studios. I mean I visited Cape Town last year and we visited more than seven studios in Cape Town but here we don't have such studios. Studios that anyone who is a filmmaker can get access to but here we only have the production companies that come and establish themselves with those studios that they use but not for any other purposes such as renting out space for other film-makers to come and make, do editing, or do post-production in those facilities. It's only for them. And by the way, they do not even do post-production here, their post-production is done in Cape Town or Joburg. I'll just make an example about Uzalo. And that way, Uzalo has been here since 2016 but their post-production is done in Joburg and that is where the money is. But, on the other side, we are at a competitive advantage in terms of the weather.... And also in terms of the cultural diversity here, you'll find here there are Indians, Zulus, Xhosas, you name them, and they are all here. And we've got the beach, we've got the good topography. I mean we've got all those other attraction points in terms of, we've got the Mabhida Stadium, we've got the game reserves, we've got your Ushaka Marine and all those other amenities. So, it is indeed, we are in the right space, but we need a lot of support either from governments or the private sector so that we can manage to keep the skills that we have. Also, another thing is we have our television and drama schools such as AFDA, DUT, you name them so there is quite a lot of talent here that puts us at an advantage although we've got limitations into having the facilities which we can use in terms of post-production because even big international production companies who do come to KZN, looking at our filming locations, they are good but the only disadvantage is that they will come shoot the films and when they need their post-production they can't because we don't have those facilities, so they have to go now back to Joburg where they can be able to access such facilities. So yeah.*

Participant 6 said:

*Yes. Durban has a growing film industry as it is recognised by veteran filmmakers. Durban has produced several TV shows such as Umkhokha, Sbongile & the Dlaminis and Adulding. Films like Unhand Lwethu (Our Love) are produced in Durban by experienced filmmakers and actors in the industry.*

Participant 3 supported this view:

*Yes, I do I think it's very good at producing and it is very visible on the market. The Durban film industry is great and there are some undernourished gems, the talent which is crew and cast and in the next 2 years it will come along.*

However, Participant 12 brought a different point of view.

*Uhhmm, poor performance. I don't think so because I think the things that I'm seeing on TV or hearing about are mostly filmed in Johannesburg or Cape Town. There hasn't been anything that I have seen recently where I knew that it was made in Durban or maybe there was a big buzz about it that it was filmed in Durban. I see people from Durban featuring in films and TV series but as for the Durban film industry ... Probably the music industry is doing better than the Durban film industry.*

The participants indicated that the DFI is performing fairly well in the film industry but there is room for improvement since the full potential of the DFI has not been realised yet. The majority of the participants were positive about the performance of DFI but also indicated that more support is required to promote this industry and make it more competitive with Cape Town and Johannesburg which have more facilities like studios for post-production work. Films such as Umkhokha, Sbongile & the Dlaminis, Adulging, and Unhand Lwethu (Our Love) were identified as having been produced in Durban. Infrastructure available in Durban includes buildings, facilities, equipment and database for film production. This is however not enough since more revenue is generated from post-production activities. The DFI is full of potential and there are many success stories and successful films that were produced in Durban. The potential however has not been fully tapped.

#### **5.4.2 Sub-Theme 2: National competitiveness of the Durban film industry**

The DFI is not solely operating in the sector, other centres are also operating, for example, Johannesburg, Cape Town Gqerbeha, and many more. The majority of the participants expressed the opinion that DFI is locally competitive within the province of KwaZulu-Natal, and also competes nationally against other successful industries. Thus, it is comparable to other film industries in the country. Participants revealed the great contribution of the DFI to the national film industry, which is a testament to its competitiveness even though it lags behind other more successful industries from other provinces.

Participant 16:

*Durban film industry is very competitive. It is one of the top 3, with Cape Town and Gauteng as the contenders. Durban is up and coming, providing a new home for serialised shows – Umkhokha, Uzalo, Imbewu, hostel, Sibongile and the Dlamini's, Durban Gen. Filming in Durban is on the rise – noticeably, talent and crew from other provinces are gravitating towards the city.*

Participant 11:

*I think it is very competitive. A lot of films have been aired on different platforms. However, it is still struggling due to a lack of sponsors, lack of adequate infrastructure, despite the talent that Durban has. It is still not well visible as compared to larger industries.*

Participant 2:

*The Durban film industry has grown to stand a chance to be competitive and has the potential to grow even above and beyond the level it is at the present moment. Many ways have been introduced by the Durban film industry to heighten the competitiveness of the industry – For example; creating more production houses that produce South African productions and having more workshops and learning festivals where the industry comes together with the purpose of showcasing productions, learning, and inspiration and rejuvenating the Durban film industry. Such progress is highly notable, and sees potential in the Durban film industry being competitive shortly.*

However, some participants felt that the Durban industry is not yet very competitive in the local filming sector. Participant 4 stated:

*No. I don't think it's competitive enough yet, purely because the industry hasn't existed long enough, more people are trying to learn the skill of filmmaking. This then automatically becomes a community of people trying to learn and grow versus competitive people. In the relation of it being competitive against Joburg or Cape Town, I think the Durban film industry falls flat and is unable to compete against those industries.*

Participant 5:

*I think it is not yet very competitive, given the situation in the entertainment area. I believe we are still behind and a lot needs to be done at the national level so that local hubs can be improved.*

Against the responses from the participants, it is clear that DFI is fairly competitive in the local film industry, but at the national level, it lags behind other successful industries such as Cape Town and Johannesburg. There are still opportunities that can be embraced to improve the extent of competitiveness. However, given the geographic expanse of South Africa and Durban coming approximately third in position, it shows great strides coming from this industry. Despite the third position, some of the talent produced in Durban feature in most of the films produced nationally thus performing a meaningful role in the competitiveness of the national film industry. As such, the contribution of the DFI to the film industry of South Africa is noteworthy.

### **5.4.3 Sub-Theme 3: International competitiveness**

The findings showed that the DFI has focused on local productions. It was revealed that the DFI is not yet there to outcompete others internationally, there is still a lot to do in terms of infrastructure and support to ensure the standards improve.

Participant 1:

*Historically, Durban has had a growing film industry with a focus on local productions, international collaborations, and film festivals. Competitiveness can be influenced by factors such as infrastructure, government support and funding, to name a few. Since 2021 the Durban Film industry has developed and become a little more competitive. We have seen a rise in locally shot and produced shows and growth in local filmmakers. Yes, I believe that the Durban film industry is growing in its competitiveness.*

Participant 2:

*An industry's performance is influenced by many factors that are very different from Hollywood, Bollywood and the local industry, which would make it difficult to compare. Hollywood has been around for a long time and has good infrastructure, access to funding and state-of-the-art equipment which is an advantage compared to our growing industry.*

Participant 6:

*Local film industry doesn't have what Hollywood and Bollywood have, which is a supporting audience. Local audiences have familiarised themselves with Hollywood and Bollywood films. They are willing to pay for tickets and go watch these films in cinemas. But when it comes to local films, it's not the same.*

Participant 10:

*Durban has the talent and creativity to produce remarkable and internationally competitive films. But larger promotion and distribution budgets are required for the industry to compete on a global scale.*

Participant 4:

*Currently, I'd say no because we haven't found our identity in the film industry yet because many of us are influenced by other cultures than our own. So, what you have is a bunch of local creatives who are making work that is vastly different than the one in Cape Town, purely because they are influenced by different cultures such as Western, British and Korean.*

The above sentiments showed that the DFI is less competitive internationally than it is locally. There are a lot of gaps that need to be filled by the DFI to be able to compete well with the internationally recognised industry. The DFI name is not well promoted in the national and international space, so more work is required to position the DFI as competitive enough. The DFI has talent but it migrates to other places. Durban also has the advantage of topographic features of interest as well as several places of attraction such as game reserves, the proximity to the ocean and other notable features such as Ushaka Marine World and Moses Mabhida stadium. To conclude this section, the results of the study have revealed that the DFI is locally competitive due to several productions that came from Durban, talent endowment, and the existence of relevant infrastructure to support the system. However, the DFI lags in terms of national competitiveness whereby Cape Town and Johannesburg top the list. However, a third position in the national film industry shows a great contribution of the DFI in the national output, compared to other provinces and areas which are not even mentioned because there is little that comes from them. In terms of international competitiveness, the DFI is far behind because it is not well established or promoted as an internationally competitive industry because the infrastructure and lack of enough promotion of the industry are some of the limitations.

## **5.5 SECTION C: Role of public relations in improving competitiveness of the Durban film industry**

The focus of this section was to provide a level of awareness and understanding of the role that PR plays in the film industry. The following themes were identified during the analysis of data.

### 5.5.1 Sub-Theme 4: Level of public relation campaigns to promote local films

The responses from the participants revealed that PR has a significant role to play in campaigns that are focused on promoting local films and content. This is supported by excerpts from the interviews which appear below.

Participant 15:

*Given the small budgets they have, I do believe they are doing the best they can. However, it's essential to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of these campaigns and their impact on achieving the desired goals, such as enhancing the visibility and reputation of the Durban film industry. By regularly assessing and refining PR strategies, the Durban film industry can ensure that its PR efforts are maximising their impact and effectively enhancing its global presence.*

Participant 11 expressed that the PR campaigns are not yet advanced in promoting local films by stating:

*The DFI is trying but not yet at the same level with other competitive film industries such as Johannesburg. DFI is faced with challenges both politically, financially and socially. We need to get more deals from local and international companies to improve distribution of the films.*

Participant 16:

*PR campaigns are not doing enough. However, it is not so much the PR industry that is responsible for PR awareness campaigns for films, but agencies are commissioned/hired by the film production company releasing a film to build and implement PR awareness campaigns on the film. However, production companies do not budget enough as part of their finance plan.*

In addition to the sentiments of the participants, the majority of them have indicated that PR campaigns in DFI still have a lot of opportunity to improve in promoting local films.

Participant 1:

*I think there is always room for improvement and growth in an ever-changing and evolving industry, we must also keep changing and evolving.*

The findings have shown that PR has a significant role in the film industry. The role ranges from creating awareness campaigns and promoting new films to enhancing visibility and reputation. The DFI has not been successful in its awareness campaigns due to several

challenges that were identified by the participants such as lack of resources and support. This means that DFI PR practitioners have not been able to fully complete their work successfully. This has hindered DFI from being visible on a global scale. Due to the identified challenges, the level of PR work is very low in promoting the DFI, but it is crucial for the success of the film industry. This leaves a lot of room for improvement for DFI to promote its offerings through intensifying PR efforts and harnessing other communication strategies in a strategic and integrated manner. Thus, the PR practitioners in the DFI still have a huge responsibility and span of work to ensure that the Durban name is visible on the international market.

### **5.5.2 Sub-Theme 5: Potential of public relations to advance the Durban film industry**

The findings show that the PR has great potential to advance the DFI. This was mentioned by the majority of the participants. However, the majority of the participants also expressed that there are still other interventions that are required to fully experience the potential to advance the DFI.

Participant 16:

*Yes, there is great potential. Investment and funding need to be ploughed into this industry. We need the PR industry to create PR campaigns to grow the film and TV industry.*

Participant 12:

*I think so, I think you know more than just writing articles, PR can act as a stakeholder, and relationship management tool as well, where PR can be what's responsible for building relationships between the Durban film industry and other industries outside of South Africa and I don't think people know that PR can play that role, but yes, I think there is room for that.*

Participant 13:

*Yes, there is, we can start by adopting a little more of the styles Hollywood has been using, for example, hosting movie premieres around the country.*

Participant 8:

*Yes, new programmes must be developed centred around inclusive participation in the industry.*

The above excerpts from the participants indicate that PR has a major role to play in the filming industry. As indicated by the participants, PR efforts include acting as a stakeholder,

relationship management, responsibility for building relationships between the DFI and other industries outside of South Africa, hosting movie premieres around the country and ensuring collaboration, thus, inclusive participation in the industry. The DFI has been doing movie premieres, but, the majority of them are only done in Durban and there were no other premier functions around the country to increase awareness of its products. In addition, the DFI has been calling for collaboration from interested parties to partner with it, more specifically providing financial support. However, only a few large companies are working with DFI.

### **5.5.3 Sub-theme 6: Raising public awareness**

A common thread among all participants was that PR can play a significant role of raising awareness. The responses from all the participants revealed that PR is responsible for enhancing awareness. All of the participants mentioned that good PR improves the awareness and interests of the external stakeholders through good branding and communication regarding the productions.

Participant 15:

*Investing in public relations can indeed be crucial for enhancing the visibility and reputation of the Durban film industry on a global scale. Here are several reasons why: it focuses on building awareness, establishing credibility .... Overall, investing in PR can be instrumental in elevating the global presence and reputation of the Durban film industry, ultimately leading to increased opportunities for growth, collaboration, and success.*

Participant 14:

*Yes, it does. Besides building a good reputation for the Durban film industry, another core element PR should be doing is publicising the industry as a whole and we barely hear of it here in Durban let alone in other provinces.*

Participant 3:

*It does, it is an awareness tool, and it lets people know. It lets people know in our industry.*

Participant 8:

*It ensures that the larger population and stakeholders are informed of the services of the film industry and participate in the success of the industry.*

One of the participants who is a PR practitioner in the industry expressed the view that PR is not visible at the DFI because there have been no articles or communication promoting Durban productions to the world. Participant 12 stated:

*I think it would create awareness and that's why I'm saying there's nothing that I have seen that has shown me, I haven't seen an article that says 'Young Durban producer makes it to global stage'. I haven't seen those headlines, it could be that I'm missing them but I feel like the role of public relations would probably be to highlight the work that is being done and highlight specific individuals, we all love a good human story and I'm not seeing that.*

In addition to that, another participant expressed that PR is responsible for pushing production to the international level. Participant 11 stated:

*Yes, ensuring a good relationship between the film industry and the public, promoting the film industry locally and internationally, and overseeing business contracts. As practitioners in the industry, our role is to promote and push production to national and international levels. We are there to present the films to the public, raising awareness, seeking finances, promotions, business deals (advertises) and other tasks.*

Also, PR practitioners expressed that they are responsible for promoting awareness through different platforms as well as finding other distribution deals. Participant 10 said:

*Public relations play an important role in promoting Durban films internationally through media coverage, film festivals, distribution deals etc. This raises the profile and makes people aware of the high-quality films being produced. PR plays a huge role through promotional campaigns that raise the profile of SA film overseas - this leads to distribution deals, licensing, investment etc. that grows the industry.*

The findings revealed that PR is also responsible for enhancing public awareness of the DFI. However, despite the responsibility of enhancing public awareness, PR was not able to effectively perform its role due to limited resources. Participants indicated that not many awareness campaigns are being conducted in Durban to promote the film industry. What PR should be doing is publicising the industry as a whole, but it is barely heard of locally in Durban, let alone in other provinces. Film festivals are the easiest and most obvious way to connect with people from the entertainment industry. It was revealed that PR ensures that the larger population and stakeholders are informed of the services of the film industry and participate in the success of the industry. However, the public at large on a national and

international level are not aware of the DFI productions. Adding to that, only a few articles or publications are visible from Durban. Thus, it shows that a lot needs to be done to ensure PR fulfils its role.

#### **5.5.4 Sub-theme 7: Develop and maintain relationships**

The findings also revealed that the creation of relationships and the management of these relationships is the responsibility of PR managers.

Participant 5:

*Public relations is important in the industry. Every production is for the people. It is PR's responsibility to make sure they have established good relationships with the public, sponsors, promoters and other interested partners.*

In the same understanding, Participant 6 shared the view that:

*PR is also responsible for creating good relationships with all stakeholders and the general public. I also think that to sustain the relationship, the majority of the task lies with the public relations managers.*

Participant 15:

*The crucial role played by the public relations industry is to disseminate information on the existence of the Durban film industry and influence the audience's perception. I have seen recruits coming because there is good representation out there. We should attract and invest in new talent as they represent the generation of tomorrow.*

Participant 1:

*Yes, public relations can play a significant role in ensuring the success of the Durban film industry and its projects and its talents, as well as reputation management. PR can help manage the industry's reputation by actively engaging with the public and industry networking. PR practitioners can facilitate networking opportunities within the industry by organising events such as networking sessions, workshops etc. Lastly promoting film festivals and events. Durban hosts various film festivals and events throughout the year, therefore PR can promote these gatherings, attract international attention and encourage participation from filmmakers, industry experts and film enthusiasts worldwide.*

The results show that PR plays an important role in the film industry of establishing and developing relationships. Many PRs make a conscious effort to communicate regularly with their partners, despite busy schedules and other demands on their time. This can help keep the relationship strong and prevent misunderstandings or miscommunication. PR professionals utilise various strategies such as press releases, media pitches, talent interviews, red-carpet events, film festival participation, social media campaigns, influencer collaborations, and strategic partnerships to create and develop relationships between the stakeholders in the industry (Coetzee 2019: 191).

### **5.5.5 Sub-Theme 8: Seeking external support**

A clear understanding was demonstrated by the participants in this study that in addition to the roles of PR, PR practitioners also perform the role of seeking support from stakeholders. The majority expressed that PR practitioners play an important role in seeking support from the relevant stakeholders.

Participant 7:

*PR must go to the public and seek support, make films known to the public, perform corporate communication activities, and increase the number of audiences, thus increasing publicity.*

Participant 1:

*The public relations industry plays a crucial role in enhancing the global existence of the Durban film industry. The PR industry should build the reputation of Durban as a film destination by highlighting Durban's unique and diverse locations, its infrastructure and its potential as a film destination. By showcasing local talent and productions and promoting local films. PR can also advocate for government support and incentives by effectively communicating the economic and cultural benefits of a thriving film industry.*

Participant 9 supported the view by saying:

*I think PR plays a key role especially when it comes to sponsorship of our projects. The public relations practitioners are the ones to represent the brand in the public. They seek financial support from the government as well. PR is more about getting favours from the public rather than selling the productions. I think it can play an important role in enhancing our global existence by spotlighting more personal narratives that showcase talents of artists as opposed to Romcoms and light-hearted movies that more often than not fail to show cinema.*

Participant 15 added that:

*Overall, public relations plays a pivotal role in ensuring the success of the Durban film industry by promoting visibility, managing reputation, engaging stakeholders, promoting talent, facilitating market access, and advocating for supportive policies and infrastructure. Effective PR strategies contribute to the growth, sustainability, and global competitiveness of the Durban film industry, positioning it for long-term success and recognition. PR can also help facilitate market access and distribution opportunities for Durban film industry products. By promoting films, festivals, and industry events, PR efforts attract interest from distributors, exhibitors, and international markets, expanding the reach and impact of Durban-produced content.*

It is the role of the PR in the film industry to seek support from all the stakeholders in the industry. The stakeholders include government, private organisations and the public. Public relations play a crucial role in the success of any industry, and the world of film is no exception. In an industry where perception and visibility are key, film PR professionals are the unsung heroes working behind the scenes to ensure that movies and their stars receive the attention they deserve. In the world of films, PR and building strong relationships with the media is paramount. The media acts as a powerful conduit for spreading the word about films, amplifying their reach, and generating buzz.

## **5.6 SECTION D: Public relations-related challenges**

The focus of this section is to present the findings from the primary research regarding PR-related challenges that are faced in the DFI.

### **5.6.1 Sub-Theme 9: Lack of global awareness of the Durban film industry**

The primary research revealed that the challenge faced by the DFI is a lack of global awareness. The majority of the participants expressed that PR needs to have a clear understanding of the global film industry, the current trends and news. This helps to become competitive on a global scale. However, participants mentioned that in Durban, PR practitioners could be hosting press conferences for those films, which is hardly done, including press releases and movie premieres. However, they are not able to do that due to a lack of finances. They hardly do PR work. The following sentiments were shared by the participants regarding global awareness.

Participant 13:

*Make more awareness of film industries.*

Participant 1:

*Awareness, audience engagement, credibility, increased back-office performance, and industry growth. It's important to note that the PR industry can have a positive impact on the local film industry. It's a factor among many factors that influence many films.*

Participant 5:

*The PR team is trying, the main challenge that I have observed is a lack of support at the national level. The government should put more effort into improving the entertainment industry. Due to improved digital communication, there are not much of traditional campaigns being done by the PRPs*

Participant 6:

*Public relations show that Durban is a multitude of aspects. From tourism to the film industry. Soapies and TV shows have proved this point. Such as Uzalo, filmed in Durban, which is one of the most watched soapies in South Africa.*

Participant 8:

*Most definitely. South Africa has produced good quality, award-winning films, such as Tsotsi which is known internationally. This proves a point that South Africa has potential in creating international standard films.*

Participant 11:

*Public relations play an important role in promoting Durban films internationally through media coverage, film festivals, distribution deals etc. This raises the profile and makes people aware of the high-quality films being produced.*

The findings indicate that PR in the DFI is faced with a lack of global awareness, which can be attributed to insufficient resources and support. It is commonly acknowledged that we are currently living in a globalised era, where the term 'globalisation' is used to describe almost everything. Additionally, for various reasons, foreign film directors, actors, and crews have been employed in different capacities since early times. In some cases, entire filmmaking crews would travel to other countries to take advantage of unique landscapes.

### **5.6.2 Sub-Theme 10: Poor networking**

The results also revealed that PR in the DFI is faced with poor networking. This was deduced from the participants who expressed concern about poor networking due to limited opportunities, limited resources and exposure. The majority of the interviewed participants expressed that the main challenge facing PR in DFI is poor networking. The sentiments captured from the participants are as follows:

Participant 10:

*The Durban film industry faces challenges in competing globally due to budget constraints and ... compared to larger film industries. However, there is a lot of talent and creativity that allows locally-produced films to find success. However, all this will require enough financial budget.*

Participant 11:

*Challenges include lack of financing/investment, limited distribution networks, and need for updated equipment/facilities. Targeted interventions in these areas could have a big impact. Lack of financing and infrastructure prevents South African film from reaching the scale of bigger industries. But the creativity and skill exist - with targeted interventions, the industry can expand dramatically.*

Participant 13:

*They are failing to produce good films that will assist the viewers on different fields and they lack public relations*

Participant 15:

*Durban's film industry produced some world-class films and talent, however lacks the budgets and global reach like Hollywood and Bollywood. More investment and distribution deals are needed to grow the industry.*

### **5.6.3 Sub-Theme 11: Reputation**

One of the main success factors of the film industry is a good reputation. However, the results established that the DFI is characterised by a poor reputation. The participants shared the sentiment that a poor reputation is a result of poor infrastructure. The sentiments of the participants were supported by each other.

Participant 8 :

*Given the small budgets they have, I do believe they are doing the best they can. However, it's essential to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of these campaigns and their impact on achieving the desired goals, such as enhancing the visibility and reputation of the Durban film industry.*

Participant 14:

*I'd say it is to build a good reputation for the Durban film industry and to find ways to maintain the reputation. PR also comes into play by finding ways to get the films out there.*

Participant 16:

*Yes, it does, besides building a good reputation for the Durban film industry, another core element PR should be doing is publicising the industry as a whole and we barely hear of it here in Durban let alone in other provinces.*

Participant 1:

*As an ever-growing industry, the challenges vary. There needs to be systems that can deal with the ever-changing industry. Regulations in place that will curb other challenges from even arising.*

Participant 2:

*Shortage of equipment (cameras, editing software and sound recorders) are also part of the factors leading to reputation challenges. Many talents do not want to associate themselves with the DFI, they run away to other cities with better opportunities.*

#### **5.6.4 Sub-Theme 12: Perceptions of the people**

The study results indicate that that the majority of the PR practitioners' functionality is affected by the perceptions of people regarding the DFI productions. The majority of the participants indicated that many upcoming artists are relocating to other cities like Cape Town and Johannesburg. The main motive behind the talent migration is the perceptions that people had concerning the DFI. The majority of the practitioners were very concerned about the migration of talent from the DFI to other towns, especially, Johannesburg and Cape Town. Participants mentioned that the migration of talent is another challenge facing the DFI.

Participant 13:

*The mentality is that to make it in the industry one must relocate to Johannesburg.*

Participant 6:

*Local film industry don't have what Hollywood and Bollywood have which is a supporting audience. Local audiences have familiarised themselves with Hollywood and Bollywood films. They are willing to pay for tickets and go watch these films in cinemas. But when it comes to local films, it's not the same.*

Participant 8:

*Mostly by making South African films a pride and joy, just like how they do in Nollywood. Their films are supported by fellow Nigerians and their film industry has grown into the largest film industry in Africa. It is through public relations that their industry could grow large.*

Feature films often focus on government, yet our comprehension of how these portrayals influence public perception of state institutions remains restricted. Film critics have long been influential in shaping public opinion and guiding consumer preferences. They serve as the primary evaluators of films in society, with audiences paying close attention to their reviews when selecting which movies to view.

### **5.6.5 Sub-Theme 13: Tastes and preferences**

In addition to the above, another participant also mentioned that most locals always prefer international films from overseas like Hollywood. This has made the work of PR difficult in pushing the local content to be competitive on a global scale.

Participant 12:

*... and I think consumption as well, I think as South Africans we probably don't consume as much of our content as we do international content. If you were to just look at Twitter and pole "What are you guys watching this weekend?" The list will be 80% American stuff, so I think that we are doing a disservice, but with Netflix now opening the floor with South African content, I think that we are going to get there and I think Netflix is going to be the platform that helps the South African film industry and content to be seen so that we end up somewhere on the list.*

### **5.6.6 Sub-Theme 14: Poor relationships with the local people or international audience**

The responses from the participants show that PR's relationship with the local people and international audience is not effective. The participants expressed the concern that local people and international audiences and viewers should provide adequate support to the DFI.

Participant 1

*Absolutely – an expanded PR focus on the film industry could secure international deals, promote films/talent, and lobby for funding - leading to major growth.*

Participant 14:

*Ensuring good relationship between the film industry and the public. Promoting the film industry locally and internationally.*

Participant 8:

*PR must work as a two-way communication tool. To make information to be understood by the public.*

Participant 10:

*It ensures that the larger population and stakeholders are informed of the services of the film industry and participate in the success of the industry.*

### **5.6.7 Sub-Theme 15: Lack of sponsorships**

The responses from the participants revealed that there is a lack of sponsorships which is preventing PR from fully performing their duties and responsibilities. The analysis of the responses from the participants revealed that DFI is lacking support from the community and stakeholders to be competitive. The extracts from the participants are as follows:

Participant 5:

*Insufficient support from the government and no support from local organisations.*

Participant 6:

*Yes, lack of support might be pointed to the fact that the government may not see that films do more than just amuse. There are requisite government support interventions that can take the industry to competitive levels.*

Participant 13:

*Maybe our government can intervene more in terms of supporting and protecting our investments. Also, I feel the funding in the film industry is monitored well, those well connected are the ones getting funding and not those who are deserving.*

Participant 2:

*It is hard to boldly pick who is at fault because in my opinion, not getting support is not a fault of a certain side. It is hard to say the Durban film industry is at fault whereas it is known that they are doing the best they can with the little that they can access. The PR industry cannot be put to blame either because they do fulfil their mandate, regardless of the questionable quality of the content they work with. So, I think "fault" is a rather negative term to attribute to the work done by these respective industries.*

Participant 10:

*Support it's likely a joint function - the film industry needs bigger budgets and investment to produce content that can compete globally. Meanwhile, PR needs greater funding for international campaigns.*

The sentiment from the participants also highlighted that support from the government can also be in the form of subsidies. Participant 7 said:

*Government must assist with the subsidy. Also, the top management must intervene to assist where the PR is lacking to assist.*

Participant 11:

*It's likely a joint function - the film industry needs bigger budgets and investment to produce content that can compete globally. Meanwhile, PR needs greater funding for international campaigns.*

The support provided by a company may not necessarily be in the form of monetary funds, as they can contribute through their available resources, such as products or services (Chibike and Nkomo 2022). Regardless of what they bring to the table, obtaining sponsorship for your project is crucial in initiating the production process. Coetzee (2019) suggested that supporting a cinema event is an excellent method to expose your brand to this specific audience and cultivate recognition and fondness for your brand.

### **5.6.8 Sub-Theme 16: Lack of collaboration**

The response from the participants revealed that PR is faced with a lack of international networks internationally which is impeding the competitiveness of the DFI. This can be attributed to a lack of skills among the stakeholders in DFI. The responses from the participants were extracted and illustrated as follows.

Participant 9:

*The PR and film industries must learn what Hollywood and Bollywood are doing. They also need to collaborate with other film industries who are making great stories.*

Participant 13:

*No - the Durban film industries do not see the PR as a serious function to the organisation; it will be advisable for management to merge it with the marketing department to make it more effective.*

Participant 11:

*It's likely a joint function - the film industry needs bigger budgets and investment to produce content that can compete globally. Meanwhile, PR needs greater funding for international campaigns*

The study findings indicated that collaboration plays a crucial role in filmmaking, as highlighted by the participants' feedback. The process of creating a film is intricate and relies heavily on effective collaboration and communication across various roles and departments (Brunner and Smallwood 2019). Despite this, numerous filmmakers encounter challenges in forming a unified and efficient film team, leading to errors that may impact the overall quality and success of their endeavours (Chen and Liu 2023). Enhanced collaboration significantly enhances the likelihood of achieving a successful film, as it involves the coordination of diverse teams and departments to bring a shared vision to life.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

It was revealed that DFI is a locally competitive industry which is doing a lot of good work and has certain advantages such as the existence of talents and an infrastructure base. At a national level, the DFI is outcompeted by other industries such as Cape Town and Johannesburg. However, its contribution to the national film industry is notable. The study

concluded that there are several roles that PR plays in the film industry. It was found that PR is responsible for raising public awareness, developing and maintaining relationships and seeking external support from the stakeholders. The PR practitioners must fulfil these roles to ensure the competitiveness of the film industry. In addition, the study also concluded that there are several challenges related to PR that the film industry is facing which were identified as a lack of global awareness of the DFI, poor networking, reputation, poor perception of the people, taste and preferences, poor relationships with the local people or international, lack of sponsorships and lack of collaboration. Therefore, this shows that adequate funding is required as well as talent-retaining programmes and skills development. The chapter concluded that collaboration with other country's film industries is important to achieve competitiveness.

The following Chapter discusses the findings.

## **CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter focused on presenting the findings from the primary research. The focus of this chapter is to analyse, interpret and discuss the findings of the study as outlined in the themes and sub-themes presented in the previous chapter. The discussion will refer to the literature to establish whether there is agreement or disagreement in the findings. Above all, this discussion occurs in the light of the aim of this study which is to explore the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the Durban film industry.

### **6.2 Competitiveness of the Durban film industry**

Findings are that the DFI is competitive to a certain extent but there are gaps in competitiveness. The results showed that the DFI is fairly competitive locally, but has not realised its potential due to several challenges it is facing. The results are in line with Poole and van Zyl (2020: 478) who emphasised the importance of individuals in the film industry, such as filmmakers, writers, actors, or any other creative role, prioritising the cultivation of new talent. They stressed the need to actively seek out and nurture emerging talent to contribute to the growth of the industry. Noqamza (2020: 142) also mentioned that in order to stay competitive, it is crucial to have sufficient filming infrastructure, resources, and support from all stakeholders. These stakeholders play a vital role in providing financial assistance to implement talent development programmes. The findings also revealed that more production infrastructure is required as well as support from the stakeholders. The need for development and skills training is essential for maintaining competitiveness.

Participants said that to be more competitive, the DFI should focus on campaigns. According to Brunner and Smallwood (2019: 259), film campaigns are the responsibility of the PR in the film industry to make the productions public. The focus is to raise awareness among the viewers and the sponsors. Gesualdi (2019: 372) mentioned that campaigns are also there to increase visibility and ensure they reach the intended audience. The majority of the participants expressed the concern that PR campaigns are doing well but there is still room for improvement. A successful film campaign requires a deep understanding of the target audience,

a creative and innovative approach, and a commitment to building relationships with key players in the industry. From captivating campaigns that spark anticipation to red-carpet events that mesmerise the world, PR's role is undeniable – it is the magic that elevates films from the celluloid to the hearts of audiences, creating moments that transcend time.

The DFI needs to continuously develop and upgrade its infrastructure to meet the evolving needs of the industry and attract local and international productions. It should foster talent development through film schools, training programmes, and industry initiatives that provide opportunities for aspiring filmmakers to enhance their skills and gain practical experience (Ebrahim 2020: 42). Access to funding is vital for film production, and the DFI needs to provide avenues for financing, such as grants, loans, and partnerships with private investors or production companies.

Additionally, government incentives and tax rebates play a significant role in attracting local and international productions to Durban (Gengan 2022: 102). As found in this study, the DFI is not yet accessible from the rural areas, therefore, it is important to have more online platforms that can be used by the majority to access the productions. According to Melnick (2022: 279), online platforms such as websites, applications, and social media channels that enable people in different locations to access the content, connect with the PR teams as well as provide their ideas, are very important. Online platforms are a crucial avenue for promoting new talent (Li *et al.* 2021: 4172). Furthermore, for the DFI to be able to compete regionally and internationally, funders must invest in developing modern filming infrastructure. This will improve the competitiveness of the local film industry so that it can be recognised globally and compete with other industries such as Bollywood, Hollywood, Nollywood and Korean.

### **6.3 Role of public relations in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI**

The focus of this section is to provide an analysis and discussion of the findings from the primary research as well as the findings from the literature review. The aim is to establish whether the results are consistent with the findings by other researchers.

#### **6.3.1 Raising public awareness**

The results revealed that PR is responsible for enhancing awareness. Public relations improve the interests of the external stakeholders through good branding and communication regarding production. Fehrer, Baker and Carroll (2022: 65) state that PR has a significant role to play in

influencing the perceptions of the public and improving engagement with the productions. Brunner and Smallwood (2019: 259) also state that effective PR has a crucial effect on the rate of success of film productions. The results show that PR plays a significant role through effective communication to raise awareness of the DFI productions. Raising awareness also provides an opportunity for the players to identify and nurture fine talent for future generations. Maupa (2021: 25) proposed that PR practitioners and management should establish effective communication with the workers as well as the stakeholders. This helps to make the DFI visible through different platforms. Fitzpatrick and Weissman (2021: 401) observe that PR management through media involves a lot of work to ensure that the public is well-informed about production projects that are coming out. Suh, Hoang and Hijal-Moghrabi (2021: 220) note that PR practitioners should be highly engaged in social media because, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, every communication has become digital and all brands are built on media platforms. Therefore, effective management of media also helps to build and grow the brand through awareness campaigns.

### **6.3.2 Develop and maintain relationships**

The study found that the creation of relationships and the management of these relationships is the responsibility of PR managers. According to Ngondo and Klyueva (2020: 51), relationship management is the skill to effectively communicate, influence, and collaborate with others to accomplish shared objectives and address conflicts. Additionally, relationship management entails establishing and sustaining favourable connections with individuals or organisations, including clients, co-workers, and stakeholders. Gesualdi (2019: 372) emphasised that relationship management encompasses proficient communication, comprehending needs, resolving conflicts, and nurturing trust to establish mutually advantageous relationships. Kent and Li (2020: 18) explain that PR is a communication process that builds and maintains relationships which are mutual and beneficial between organisations and the public. Relationship management is a key asset for film executives, enabling them to establish credibility and connection with their team and collaborators, encourage and empower their staff and actors, handle negotiations and oversee agreements, finances, and timelines, address feedback and critiques positively, settle conflicts and avoid miscommunications, foster a supportive and efficient work environment, boost their standing and connections in the field, and produce top-notch and captivating movies that meet the expectations of their clients and viewers.

### **6.3.3 Seeking external support**

Brunner and Smallwood (2019: 257) assert that the key responsibility of a PR practitioner is to build and maintain a pleasant environment for an organisation. Marketing is a management process/function in the same way that PR is, working to attract and satisfy clients on a long-term basis to achieve the objectives of the organisation (Valentini 2021: 19). Arceneaux, Borden and Golan (2019: 128) state that adequate support should be provided to the film industry. Film production sponsorship has become more complex due to new technologies. As revealed by Brunner and Smallwood (2019: 257), film investors play a vital role in the filmmaking process by offering essential financial resources to cover a range of expenses, including pre-production, production, post-production, marketing, and distribution. Their invaluable support empowers filmmakers to transform their creative vision into reality and connect with audiences globally. Public relations practitioners are entrusted with the task of sourcing sponsorship deals, diligently reaching out to organisations and individuals who possess the capacity and interest to invest in the film industry or a specific project.

## **6.4 Public relations-related challenges**

It is crucial to keep up with the latest PR trends to effectively navigate the intricate challenges of the PR industry, which is constantly evolving. Public relations has never been an easy job to handle. The main challenge lies in inadequate financial resources, lack of support, inadequate filming infrastructure and migration of talent.

### **6.4.1 Lack of awareness**

The results revealed that the main challenge facing PR in the DFI is a lack of awareness by the local and the international public of the DFI due to inadequate financial resources. The study found that to effectively and continuously engage with the public requires finances. The technology and facilities used to keep the public updated as well as acquiring new relationships require funding. The findings were aligned with the results of Bakre and Mudzanani (2022: 213) who revealed that budget constraints as well as financial restrictions within the film industry, hinder the awareness campaigns as well as the quality of service delivered by PR. The study also revealed that the industry has enough funding however, there is a misuse of the funds by local small filmmakers. The challenge is that these small film-makers do not have adequate equipment to produce and engage with other film industries as well as putting the

name DFI on the map (Bakre and Mudzanani 2022: 213). For this reason, funds are channelled to those with the capacity to produce films. Securing financing is an essential aspect of the filmmaking process, and is a process which also helps to raise awareness among the industry players as well as the public (Kayembe and Nel 2019: 89). Without adequate funding, certain crucial aspects of filmmaking become extremely challenging.

#### **6.4.2 Lack of sponsorship**

Securing the appropriate sponsors for a film endeavour entails more than just acquiring financial backing and assistance; it also involves establishing a productive and trustworthy bond with a prospective investor (Bakre and Mudzanani 2022). According to Agbaenyi and Chimezie (2019: 46), adequate sponsorship from local and international stakeholders is important to improve productivity, encourage skills and career development as well as enhance engagement. Therefore, it is important to continuously offer support to the local film industry. A supportive environment is important for the success of any project, organisation or industry. The findings converge on the opinion that DFI lacks support from the community and stakeholders to be competitive. Sadare, Moothi and Daramola (2022: 163) postulate that as employees seek support, the organisation should also consistently seek support from partners and the community. Coetzee (2019: 191) found that employees in the entertainment and film industry experience depression twice as much as those in other industries. The government needs to provide adequate support through policy reforms which support investment opportunities in the film industry. According to Fista and Nugraheni (2022: 251), many factors contribute to the fall of the film industry, including piracy and foreign films.

#### **6.4.3 Perceptions and relationships with local people**

The results revealed the migration of talent from the DFI to other cities, especially Johannesburg and Cape Town, due to their perceptions. McIntyre *et al.* (2023: 193) expressed that the migration of talent is common internationally as well. The findings show that the majority of newly identified talent are migrating from Durban to other cities where they will start their careers. The results highlighted that participants were frustrated as this has been the challenge that PR has been experiencing for a while and it is hindering the competitiveness of the industry in Durban. The findings show that DFI should focus on building the confidence of the staff to stay in Durban. The study shows that when employees believe in the efforts DFI, the employees will stay and support all initiatives to develop themselves. As alluded to by

Sawadogo (2021: 399), the shortage of talent remains relevant in the industry. Thopacu (2020: 246) expressed that rural-urban or inter-urban migration is common among the youth. It was found from the study also that the majority of those migrating to other cities are below 40 years of age. Leaders are facing challenges in identifying avenues for fostering connections and cultivating a unified culture. Many of the younger employees joined the workforce amidst the pandemic and find themselves caught up in the ongoing debate regarding the most optimal working models, whether fully flexible environments or structured hybrid approaches. Another hindrance that contributes to the lack of faith in the local film is the number of South African artists who have relocated to mainly the United States of America to pursue their dreams, which gives the impression that there is no room for growth in the local industry. Fista and Nugraheni (2022: 251) mention that South African casting directors tend to hire an international artist to create a local film when they can cast local talent; in the movie Sarafina, our local screens were graced with the presence of an American artist, Whoopi Goldberg.

#### **6.4.4 Poor networking**

Networking is about fostering connections between different cultures in the workplace. Sadare, Moothi and Daramola (2022: 163) alluded that attending local networking events presents a valuable opportunity to connect with professionals in the industry who share the same expertise. Building relationships in person tends to be more effective than online interactions, although approaching someone face-to-face can be daunting (Cairns *et al.* 2020). Additionally, a comprehensive approach is suggested to address the unique challenges faced by the local film industry in South Africa, going beyond just relying on star power. Furthermore, the government is also committed to supporting international filmmakers through streamlined licensing processes and tax incentives. The government's backing, along with the resources available at Cape Town Film Studios, events like the Durban International Film Festival, and the emergence of streaming platforms, have all played a role in the industry's expansion and increased global presence. According to Ramesh and Jaggi (2022: 37), networking enables others to introduce you to potential opportunities that you might have overlooked. Instead of solely focusing on personal growth, it is beneficial to accept assistance from others. Business relationships can lead to acquiring new customers, forming partnerships, and various other advantages (Thopacu 2020: 235). Even the competitors possess valuable insights that can benefit the film industry.

#### **6.4.5 Reputation**

Bakre and Mudzanani (2022: 213) alluded to the fact that various factors contribute to the reputation of a corporation. Apart from the perceived quality of their products or services, several other sources can shape a company's reputation. These include third-party certifications, ratings, reviews, awards, and even the amount of media attention received (Bakre and Mudzinani 2022: 213). Marketing, distribution, and the overall quality of films are some examples of such factors. In some cases, films may have good quality but lack effective marketing and distribution strategies, resulting in limited awareness among the audience. On the other hand, some films may simply have poor production value or acting performances, leading to a decline in viewership (Thopacu 2020: 235). A company's reputation is strengthened when it is positively regarded by stakeholders across various categories. However, negative incidents such as employee allegations and reports can significantly damage a company's reputation (Ferreira 2020: 203). For instance, in the case of the oil company BP, inadequate maintenance and inspection practices, as well as the failure to address potential corrosion issues, led to the Prudhoe Bay problem, the problem was an oil spill at a pipeline owned by BP. These events, along with others, have had a detrimental impact on BP's reputation, as is evident from media coverage.

#### **6.4.6 Tastes and preferences**

Aharoni and Ayalon (2022: 7565) state that the primary objective of film marketing is to maximise the film's audience and, consequently, its revenue potential. The companies that experience the most success in the market are those whose market share is expanding, who continuously adapt their offerings to meet customer needs, and who maintain a high standard of consumer care and communication within the target market (Wilson *et al.* 2020). Despite its apparent simplicity, achieving this goal is far from easy. The film industry involves a multifaceted marketing process that spans from new product development (conceptualising the film) to production, distribution, and exhibition (Agbaenyi and Chimezie 2019: 46). Furthermore, it is crucial to comprehend consumer preferences to tailor an effective communication strategy.

#### **6.4.7 Lack of collaboration**

Kayembe and Nel (2019: 89) indicated that establishing strong global connections is a crucial competency for professionals in higher education during the 21st century. Regardless of whether as a researcher, educator, student, or administrator, engaging in partnerships and dialogues with individuals from diverse nations and cultures can be advantageous (Ferreira 2020: 204). Effective communication serves as the cornerstone of any relationship, particularly when navigating through various languages, time zones, and communication methods. Therefore, enhancing communication abilities with local communities and other involved parties is imperative for DFI (Mokofe 2022: 65). Cultivating trust and rapport can aid in surmounting obstacles, resolving disputes, and promoting cooperation. Collaborating with international counterparts demands adaptability, receptiveness, and a readiness to acquire new knowledge.

#### **6.5 Conclusion**

The primary focus of this chapter was to thoroughly examine and deliberate upon the discoveries and outcomes presented in the preceding chapter. The literature reviewed the significance of the competitiveness of the film industry. It was also highlighted that PR campaigns have a significant impact on the competitiveness of the film industry. Aligned with the findings of the study, the literature highlighted the important roles of PR in improving the competitiveness of the film industry. The discussed roles included PR campaigns, raising awareness, developing and maintaining relationships and seeking external support. Furthermore, the PR-related challenges found in this study included a lack of global awareness of the DFI, poor networking, reputation, perceptions of the people, poor relationships with the local people or international audience, lack of sponsorships, taste and preferences as well as lack of collaboration.

# **CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **7.1 Introduction**

The focus of this chapter is on presenting the conclusions and recommendations emanating from this study. The chapter starts by outlining the summary drawn from the literature review and then the summary from the empirical study. This summary is provided as per the research objectives. Thereafter, limitations and areas of further research are presented.

## **7.2 Summary of the findings**

The purpose of the study was to explore the role of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI. To achieve the aim of the study, there were three research questions and research objectives which were set to address the problem under investigation.

### **7.2.1 Competitiveness of the Durban film industry**

#### **7.2.1.1 Summary of findings from the literature**

The literature review revealed that to ensure improved performance in the film industry it is important to recognise new talent (Kayembe and Nel 2019: 89). This is important in the film industry to identify and nurture talent. Diang'a (2020: 201) postulates that this in return ensures that film industry competitiveness is improved. The literature revealed that access to funding is important to improve the performance and competitiveness of the film industry (Steedman 2021: 11). This helps to improve the filming infrastructure and produce quality films. It was also found by Mokofe (2022: 368) that online platforms are important to improve awareness and access to DFI productions. The potential of the film industry to be competitive relies on the funding opportunities and the support available (Mhlambi 2020: 971). Access to funding is vital for film production, and the DFI needs to provide avenues for financing, such as grants, loans, and partnerships with private investors or production companies.

#### **7.2.1.2 Empirical findings**

The first objective of this study was to analyse the competitiveness of the DFI. The study found that the stakeholders in the industry have a great understanding of the level of competitiveness at which the DFI is currently performing. DFI is fairly competitive at its local level, however,

there is still room for further improvement of the DFI's competitiveness at national and international level. The results also revealed that DFI is performing fairly well despite the PR-related challenges faced. The study found that there are a lot of film-makers from Durban who are doing well and others are in different provinces where they are doing well. Despite different locations, the DFI is still performing effectively at the local level. The study also revealed that DFI is very competitive as it is one of the top three players in the country, however, its competitiveness is still low in the national and international space. It was also found that the DFI has the potential to compete with the national, regional and international film industries. The findings showed the majority of the stakeholders in the industry are aware of the level of competitiveness of the DFI. The findings revealed that DFI is fairly competitive and has room for improvement at the national and international levels. Given these findings, the first objective was achieved to a great extent.

## **7.2.2 Role of public relations in enhancing the competitiveness of DFI**

### **7.2.2.1 Summary of findings from the literature**

The literature found that PR has an important role to play in the film industry. Maupa (2021: 25) highlighted that PR is responsible for building personal and organisational brands and ensuring that everyone is aware and supportive of the industry. PR carries a great communication responsibility in ensuring that the public is aware of most activities within the industry (Noqamza 2020: 142). Ensuring effective communication is important to raise effective and competitive awareness in the industry (Mashapa 2022: 160). Additionally, PR also has the role of sourcing sponsors and partners (Fista and Nugraheni 2022: 251). Oparaugo (2021: 27) explains that public relations is a communication process that builds and maintains relationships which are mutual and beneficial between organisations and the public. PR is responsible for managing all the partnerships and contracts as well as relationships with the public (Smith 2020). Effective management of these relationships is key to the leaders in the industry (Han 2022: 175). Elliot and Willis (2020) further indicated that PR is also important in seeking support from stakeholders.

### **7.2.2.2 Empirical findings**

The second objective of the study was to describe the role being played by PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI. The results obtained from the primary research showed that

the participants in the film industry are aware of the role of PR and its importance in raising the competitiveness of the DFI. Primary research shows that PR campaigns are not doing well in the local film industry. The study found that PR should put in extra effort. It is focused on raising public awareness, developing and maintaining relationships, and seeking support from all stakeholders. The participants (filmmakers, writers, producers, and actors) emphasised that PR is responsible for seeking support from the government, companies and individual sponsors. In addition, it was also found that PR is important to ensure new relationships from local partners, and regional and international organisations. Additionally, it was found that PR helps to manage the industry's reputation by actively engaging with the public and, thirdly industry networking. PR practitioners can facilitate networking opportunities within the industry by organising events such as networking sessions and workshops. This objective analysed the roles and the responsibility of PR in enhancing the competitiveness of the DFI. Several roles of PR practitioners were identified. The results show that the second objective was well achieved.

### **7.2.3 Public relations-related challenges in the film industry**

#### **7.2.3.1 Summary of findings from the literature**

The literature revealed that PR is not only about media relations but also represents the delivery of information between organisations and their public or audiences. However, some challenges are related to PR which also affect the effectiveness of the PR functions. Firstly, young audiences are becoming more interested in streamable content that they can watch on phones and tablets (Sawadogo 2021: 399). Coetzee (2019: 1928) stated that consumers tend to pay closer attention to aspects of a film that align with their preferred genre, thus providing them with a tailored approach to the film market. Huan and Deng (2021: 34-38) pointed out that due to a lack of relationships with the local people or international, PR is finding it difficult to engage and communicate with audiences. Webb (2021: 1983) mentioned that PR is also affected by a lack of sponsorship which limits the functions of PR to enhance competitiveness in the film industry. Agbaenyi and Chimezie (2019: 46) stress that a lack of global awareness of the film industry affects PR in fulfilling its roles. Furthermore, Aharoni and Ayalon (2022: 7564) expressed that PR-related challenges include poor networking, the bad reputation of the industry and the perceptions of people regarding the roles of PR in the film industry.

### **7.2.3.2 Empirical findings**

The third objective of the study was to identify PR-related challenges that are possibly affecting the competitiveness of the DFI. The study found that the people in the DFI have a better understanding of the challenges. These challenges are however limiting the PR practitioners to fully practice their roles and responsibility to improve competitiveness of the DFI in the country and outside. The common PR-related challenges pointed out by participants included lack of global awareness of the DFI, poor networking, bad reputation, perceptions of the people regarding the DFI, taste and preferences, poor relationships with local people and international people, lack of sponsorships and lack of collaboration. Despite its location in a recreational environment, the majority of players are moving to other urban areas to offer their talents. Hence, the DFI is being left behind and cannot compete regionally due to a lack of mature actors, writers, producers and other key players. Targeted interventions in these areas could have a big impact. Furthermore, it can be traced back to the government that does not fully sponsor the entertainment industry.

The last objective of the study was to identify PR-related challenges that are possibly affecting the competitiveness of the DFI. Provision of more adequate resources to undertake campaigns, awareness road shows and collaborate in the international film industry, collaborations with various other stakeholders from the national and international film industry as well as conducting awareness campaigns in the film industry, will lead to the successful progress of the DFI, as well as competitive advantage. The last objective was therefore achieved.

### **7.3 Conclusions**

From the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

- The DFI is a fairly competitive industry from within, given factors such as infrastructure, talent, topographies and other successful films produced in Durban.
- PR has a tremendous role to play in enhancing the competitiveness of the film industry and individual productions. The success of films is not only based on talent and creativity alone, PR efforts are required to garner public awareness and interest.
- The level of PR campaigns to raise awareness locally and internationally is not adequate in the DFI due to challenges related to the lack of sufficient budgets.
- PR is responsible for enhancing public awareness of the film industry, developing and maintaining relationships and seeking support from all stakeholders.

- Establishing relationships with the stakeholders in the industry is important for the film industry to enhance competitiveness.
- PR facilitate industry networking and engages with the public to manage the reputation of the DFI at local and national as well as international levels.
- The DFI shows great potential to be recognised regionally and internationally and is well promoted through PR and other platforms.
- The challenges faced include a lack of global awareness, poor networking and bad reputation. Changes in taste and preferences and poor relationships with local and international stakeholders limit the competitiveness of the DFI.

## **7.4 Recommendations**

This section provides recommendations to DFI on how PR can enhance the competitiveness of the film industry.

### **7.4.1 Collaborations with various other stakeholders**

Collaboration is vital for every filmmaker, be it a director, PR, producer, writer, editor, or any other position in the film industry (Valentini 2021: 19). Partnering with other filmmakers and industry professionals can enhance skills, broaden networks, uncover new opportunities, and produce higher quality films (Thopacu 2020: 235). It is recommended that PR in DFI should collaborate with other practitioners from other film industries such as Johannesburg and Cape Town as well as international film industries. This will help to bring new skills and ways of doing their roles in the DFI, thus, enhancing competitiveness. The amount of PR work carried out in the film industry is fragmented in nature as individuals mainly work to promote their productions as a way of competing against each other. Individuals can collaborate in efforts to promote the industry as a whole rather than focus on individual exploits. When resources are put together and the promotion carried out in a coordinated manner, more impact and reach can be achieved.

### **7.4.2 Awareness campaign programmes**

Awareness programmes through campaigns were found not to be effective in reaching the audience. This means that awareness programmes that provide the PR the opportunities to reach the public are limited. A lot of efforts put in by the PR are not visible out there because of inadequate platforms and opportunities. PR should be provided with the resources they need

to ensure effective awareness campaigns are carried out at a national and international level. There are great opportunities for the DFI to be competitive at national, regional and international levels. Crane (2013: 8) states that PR campaigns help to raise awareness of the organisation or industry to the general public. They also foster good relationships with the public.

### **7.4.3 Financial sponsorships**

It was found that the competitiveness of the DFI can be enhanced through intensifying PR efforts by availing adequate financial resources/budgets. It is therefore recommended that several stakeholders such as the government, companies and individuals should support the DFI with financial resources. Maupa (2021: 25) mentioned that the government should provide support through subsidies and grants. In addition, the government should also invest in the film industry by improving infrastructure such as establishing studios in the local communities. (Gesualdi 2019: 372). In the same way that there are local libraries in different communities, the same model can be used to improve the infrastructure in the film industry by establishing studios and renting out equipment required for shooting films. Young and talented individuals may lack access to the right equipment because it requires substantial investments which individuals may not be able to afford, especially if they are not unemployed at the time. Brunner and Smallwood (2019: 259) it was suggested that sponsorship should also come from companies and individuals to support filming projects. The stakeholders should be aware that there is a lot of potential to get high return on their investments. This will also help the PR in the DFI to effectively campaign at the national and international levels.

### **7.4.4 Adapt to the film industry changes**

The film industry is constantly changing and evolving and the PR practitioners should be as well. PR needs to be aware of the trends, preferences and expectations of the audience and the market and adapt the film production accordingly. This also calls for DFI players to tweak the productions and add extra features to make them more relevant and engaging or appealing to the audience. This will make the role of PR practitioners easy to fulfil. Brunner and Smallwood (2019: 261) also suggested that by remaining responsive to consumer demands and industry shifts, one can ensure that one's film resonates with viewers, stands out in the market, and maximises its impact. Embracing change and being proactive in adapting a film to meet

evolving trends are key strategies for success in the ever-changing landscape of the film industry.

#### **7.4.5 Leverage networks**

Utilise PR professional connections to gain a competitive advantage. PR should seek guidance and form partnerships with colleagues, mentors, and industry experts. These relationships can provide fresh perspectives, potential collaborations, and access to previously unavailable resources. By effectively utilising the professional network, PR practitioners can unlock new opportunities and establish a presence in areas where other film industry competitors currently excel. Also, the film sector is constantly evolving, and ongoing education is essential for maintaining a competitive edge. Participating in workshops, webinars, and industry gatherings is crucial for staying abreast of the latest strategies and trends. Promoting additional education and training for your team can help cultivate a culture of progress and creativity.

#### **7.4.6 Training more unemployed individuals**

Training more unemployed individuals in that way there will be a decline in the unemployment rate boost in the economy. The main objective is to train individuals on how to conduct PR, which will contribute towards excellent PR for films. Training of new minds is a necessity as the dynamic industry needs fresh ideas, in addition to training of the current parties involved in the PR industry. The existing filmmakers should also receive training from well-renowned international PR practitioners. This will encourage the existing practitioners to do better and also obtain more skills. More research studies should be implemented to find core resolutions in both PR and film.

#### **7.5 Limitations**

The study was dominated by participants who had not been in DFI for a long time. The study was reliant on the honest answers of respondents, which may not have occurred in some instances due to various unknown reasons. The study could have assessed the market environment to determine the impact of PR efforts in the DFI. That however would require a longitudinal study that carries on over an extended period. The views of the public were not incorporated in the study to reveal their sentiments on how they were exposed to films in the DFI and also how they were introduced to the international films that they consume more than local films. The trends that are here presented cannot be generalised to other film industries

without exercising caution because the industries are unique. The study was not comparative and it only based on the competitiveness of the DFI on its merits. It could have considered other industries such as Johannesburg and Cape Town to determine their performance as well and compare it to the DFI.

## **7.6 Areas of further research**

Further research is required to investigate the methods that can be implemented by PR in delivering their roles in the film industry across the countries. The target audience of films is not limited to the local people; other stakeholders in other environments need to be considered and PR ways of appealing to those people identified. Further research is required to determine how international films managed to penetrate the local markets and gain more interest and attention than local films. The best practices of international films need to be determined to guide young talented individuals and the film industry at large. The communications discipline is not limited to PR, several avenues such as marketing, advertising and personal selling are all means of reaching out to the public. Further research can inform how these platforms can be harnessed to promote the DFI. Social media has become a buzzword in every industry and is also actively used to create awareness of films. It should be investigated as to how it adds value to the film industry.

## **7.7 Conclusion**

The focus of this chapter was to provide conclusions and recommendations for the study. The chapter began with a summary of the findings. Several conclusions were made on the findings from both primary study and literature reviews. The level of competitiveness of the DFI is fairly good and shows great potential to improve in the film market should the necessary support be afforded. The study concluded that the role of PR in enhancing this competitiveness is of paramount importance but requires productivity and support. PR is significant in improving awareness, developing and maintaining relationships with different stakeholders, as well as seeking support for the industry. However, PR in the DFI is faced with related challenges such as a lack of global awareness, poor networking, bad reputation, negative perceptions of the people, changing tastes and preferences, poor relationships with the local people or international audience, lack of sponsorships, and lack of collaborations with other film industries and distribution agents. Programmes should be put in place to attract and retain identified talent and provide adequate opportunities for training and developments. This is

important to create an environment that is favourable to all the players in the industry to collaborate and work together. The study also recommended that PR practitioners should come up with effective campaigning programmes that should be used to create relationships and collaborations with different industries.

## REFERENCES

- Adanlawo, E. F. and Chaka, M. 2022. Internal corporate communication as a public relations function to improve organisational reputation. *Journal of African Films and Diaspora Studies*, 5(1): 33.
- Agbaenyi, A. N. and Chimezie, A. O. 2019. Nigeria and South Africa: A study of unequal investment relations. *International Journal of Innovative Research and Advanced Studies*, 6(4): 46.
- Adler, R. H. 2022. Trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of Human Lactation*, 38(4): 598-602.
- AFDA. 2024. Why AFDA? Available: <https://afda.co.za/about/why-afda/> (Accessed 15 August 2024).
- Aharoni Lira, S. and Ayalon, L. 2022. The wounded lion—ageism and masculinity in the Israeli film industry. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13: 7564.
- Akhmadieva, R. S., Mikhaylovsky, M. N., Simonova, M. M., Nizamutdinova, S. M., Prokopyev, A. I. and Ostanina, S. S. 2021. Public relations in organizations in sportsman students view: development of management tools or healthy and friendly relations formation. *Journal of Human Sport and Exercise*, 16(3proc): S1272-S1279.
- Al-Ababneh, M. M. 2020. Linking ontology, epistemology and research methodology. *Science & Philosophy*, 8(1): 75-91.
- Alharahsheh, H. H. and Pius, A. 2020. A review of key paradigms: positivism vs interpretivism. *Global Academic Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2(3): 39-43.
- Andrade, C. 2022. Research design: cohort studies. *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine*, 44(2): 189-191.
- Antwi, S. K. and Hamza, K. 2015. Qualitative and quantitative research paradigms in business research: a philosophical reflection. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 7(3): 217- 225.
- Aoki, V. C. G. and dos Santos, S. S. S. 2020. Film analysis in management: a journey through the metaphors of the concept of leadership. *Revista de Gestão*, 27(2): 119-134.
- Arceneaux, P., Borden, J. and Golan, G. 2019. The news management function of political public relations. In: Stromback, J. and Kioussis, S. eds. *Political public relations*. London: Routledge, 126-145.

- Baggott, L. A. 2014. The shifting role of the animation critic in a new media, socially connected world. Doctoral thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Baghdadi, F. A-Z., A. A-R. A. 2021. A tangible enhancement of color in the design of animated film backgrounds, and its effect on increasing the efficiency of visual communication. *International Journal of Design and Fashion Studies*, 4(1): 206-227.
- Baia, E., Ferreira, J. J. and Rodrigues, R. 2020. Value and rareness of resources and capabilities as sources of competitive advantage and superior performance. *Knowledge Management Research & Practice*, 18(3): 249-262.
- Bakilapadavu. G. 2018. *Film language: film form and meaning*. Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani, India.
- Bakre, O. and Mudzanani, T. 2022. An exploration of the use of marketing public relations at the apartheid museum in Johannesburg, South Africa. *African Journal of Business and Economic Research*, 17(3): 213.
- Barney, J. 1991. Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management*, 17(1): 99-120.
- Barney, J. B. and Harrison, J. S. 2020. Stakeholder theory at the crossroads. *Business & Society*, 59(2): 203-212.
- Barnett, M. 2018. Human rights, humanitarianism, and the practices of humanity. *International Theory*, 10(3): 314-349.
- Berndt, A. E. 2020. Sampling methods. *Journal of Human Lactation*, 36(2): 224-226.
- Bloomfield, J. and Fisher, M. J. 2019. Quantitative research design. *Journal of the Australasian Rehabilitation Nurses Association*, 22(2): 27-30.
- Boateng, S. K. 2024. A case study: what leadership competencies do cybersecurity managers need in the post-COVID-19 remote work environment. Doctoral thesis, Marymount University, Arlington, VA, USA.
- Botha, M. 2016. *South African Cinema 1896-2010*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. 2019. Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4): 589-597. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806> (Accessed 12 September 2020).
- Brunner, B. R. and Smallwood, A. M. 2019. Prioritizing public interest in public relations: public interest relations. *Public Relations Inquiry*, 8(3): 245-264.
- Burgess, D. 2020. Capturing film festival buzz: the methodological dilemma of measuring symbolic value. *NECSUS\_European Journal of Media Studies*, 9(2): 225-247.

- Burns, J., 2024. Cinema-Going in the South Asian Diaspora: Indian Films, Entrepreneurs and Audiences in Trinidad and Durban, South Africa. In *The Palgrave Handbook of Comparative New Cinema Histories* (pp. 337-357). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Busetto, L., Wick, W. and Gumbinger, C. 2020. How to use and assess qualitative research methods. *Neurological Research and Practice*, 2: 1-10.
- Cairns, M. R., Ebinger, M., Stinson, C., Jordan, J. and Spring 2020. Introduction to ethnographic methods students at Southern Methodist University, 2020. COVID-19 and human connection: collaborative research on loneliness and online worlds from a socially-distanced Academy. *Human Organization*, 79(4): 281-291.
- Chaka, M. and Adanlawo, E. F. 2022. Role of public relations (PR) in nation-building: a case study of South Africa. *Journal of Nation-Building & Policy Studies*, 6(3): 5-21.
- Chen, R. and Liu, Y. 2023. A study on Chinese audience's receptive behaviour towards Chinese and Western cultural hybridity films based on grounded theory—taking Disney's animated film *Turning Red* as an example. *Behavioural Sciences*, 13(2): 135.
- Chen, Y. R. R., Hung-Baesecke, C. J. F. and Chen, X. 2020. Moving forward the dialogic theory of public relations: concepts, methods and applications of organization-public dialogue. *Public Relations Review*, 46(1): 101878.
- Chibike, J. J. and Nkomo, T. 2022. Public relations education and cultural sensitivity in the digital epoch: a case of the National University of Science and Technology's Journalism and Media Studies Department. *Journal of African Education*, 3(3): 55-78.
- Coetzee, M. 2019. Cinematography, crystal valves and American cultural imperialism: the role played by IW Schlessinger's media organisation at the genesis of South Africa's film and radio industries 1913-1937. Doctoral thesis, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.
- Collins, P. and Power, D. 2019. A co-evolving cultural cluster in the periphery: film and TV production in Galway, Ireland. *City, Culture and Society*, 18: 100287.
- Cover, R. 2024. Making queer content visible: approaches and assumptions of Australian film and television stakeholders working with LGBTQ+ content. *Media International Australia*, 190(1): 116-132.
- Crane, A. 2013. Modern slavery as a management practice: exploring the conditions and capabilities for human exploitation. *Academy of Management Review*, 38(1): 49-69.
- Creswell, J. and Creswell, J. 2018. *Research design, qualitative, quantitative & mixed methods approaches*. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Creswell, J. W. and Poth, C. N. 2018. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cronje, J. 2020. Designing questions for research design and design research in e-learning. *Journal of e-Learning*, 18(1): 13-14.
- Curi, J. T. and Casquino, Y. S. 2022. Digital transformation in the distribution and exhibition channels of auteur cinema. In: Reis, J. L., Peter, M. K., Cayolla, R., Bogdanović, Z. (eds). *Marketing and smart technologies*. Proceedings of ICMaTech 2021, Volume 2 (pp. 273-284). Singapore: Springer Singapore.
- Cutlip, R. G., Baker, B. A., Geronilla, K. B., Mercer, R. R., Kashon, M. L., Miller, G. R., Murlasits, Z. and Alway, S. E. 2006. Chronic exposure to stretch–shortening contractions results in skeletal muscle adaptation in young rats and maladaptation in old rats. *Applied Physiology, Nutrition, and Metabolism*, 31(5): 573-587.
- Cypress, B. 2018. Qualitative research methods: a phenomenological focus. *Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing*, 37(6): 302-309.
- Dhall, P. 2019. Quantitative data analysis. In: Subudhi, R. and Mishra, S. eds. *Methodological issues in management research: advances, challenges, and the way ahead*. Leeds: Emerald Publishing Limited, 109-125.
- Diang'a, R. 2020. African agency through film. In: Munyi E. N., Mwambari D. and Ylönen, A. eds. *Beyond history: African agency in development, diplomacy, and conflict resolution*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, pp.197-216.
- Drew, S. D. 2019. The decolonisation of the political economy of new media institutions in Africa: a case study on the Pan-African film industry. Master's dissertation, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Durban Film Mart. 2023. Durban Film Mart website programme. Available at: <https://durbanfilmmart.co.za/dfm-2023-website-programme/> (Accessed: 29 July 2023).
- Durban Film Office. 2023 *Filming in Durban, Durban Film Office*. Available at: <https://film.durban.gov.za/pages/filming-in-durban> (Accessed: 17 June 2023).
- Durban Film Office. 2022. Available: <https://film.durban.gov.za/>. (Accessed: 08 December 2019).
- Ebrahim, H. 2020. Cinematic side streams: a political economy of small cinemas in South Africa. *Communication*, 46(3): 20-42.
- Elliott, F. and Willis, A. 2020. Rapidly shifting landscapes: two case studies in the UK distribution and exhibition of Chinese language films in the twenty-first century. In: Feng, L.

- and Ason, J eds. *Renegotiating film genres in East Asian cinemas and beyond*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 17-40.
- Ellis, A. D. 2021. Transforming education with Black diaspora film and filmmaking practice. *Journal of African Cinemas*, 13(1): 29-41.
- Farrow, R. Iniesto, F., Weller, M. and Pitt, R. 2020. *Research methods handbook*. Milton Keynes: Open University.
- Fehrer, J. A., Baker, J. J. and Carroll, C. E. 2022. The role of public relations in shaping service ecosystems for social change. *Journal of Service Management*, 33(4): 614-633.
- Fenwick, J. 2021. Urban regeneration and stakeholder dynamics in the formation, growth and maintenance of the Sheffield International Documentary Festival in the 1990s. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 41(4): 838-863.
- Ferreira, S. 2020. Wine tourism development: life cycles of wine routes, wine resorts and lifestyles in the Cape Wine lands. In: Rogerson, J. and Visser, G. eds. *New directions in South African tourism geographies*. Cham: Springer, 203-226.
- Fista, B. R. S. and Nugraheni, Y. 2022. Public relations officer on screen: An analysis of professional practices of public relations officers in the industry. *LONTAR: Journal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 10(2).
- Fitzpatrick, K. R. and Weissman, P. L. 2021. Public relations in the age of data: corporate perspectives on social media analytics (SMA). *Journal of Communication Management*, 25(4): 401-416.
- Formenti, C., Pitassio, F. and Sampietro, S. 2022. "What Am I Doing Here?" Film festivals, awards shows, and stars during the COVID-19 emergency. *Cinergie–Il Cinema e le altre Arti*, 21: 21-33.
- Freeman, B. A. 2022. Convergence and diversification in the domain of institutional policy: the aftermath of Dawkins' reforms. Doctoral thesis, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.
- Gardiana, M. D., Rahmanto, A. N. and Satyawan, I. A. 2022. The role of public relations practitioners in improving the service quality of Universitas Sebelas Maret. In *7th International Conference on Social and Political Sciences (ICoSaPS 2022)*. Atlantis Press, 107-114.
- Gengan, R. 2022. Creative leadership and management in the KwaZulu-Natal film industry. Doctoral thesis, Durban University of Technology, Durban, South Africa.

- Gengan, R. 2023. Innovative entrepreneurship through creative outputs for emerging filmmakers in South Africa: a conceptual framework. *African Journal of Inter/Multidisciplinary Studies*, 5(1): 1.
- Gesualdi, M. 2019. Revisiting the relationship between public relations and marketing: encroachment and social media. *Public Relations Review*, 45(2): 372-382.
- Geva, D. 2021. *A philosophical history of documentary, 1895–1959*. Cham: Springer.
- Gómez, R. 2019. The Mexican film industry 2000–2018: resurgence or assimilation? In: Nichols, R. and Martinez, G. eds. *Political economy of media industries* (pp. 57-82). London: Routledge.
- Guan, Y. 2020. Impact of the Film Industry Promotion Law on the significant growth of the Chinese film industry. In: Li, Q., Guan, Y., & Lu, H. eds. *Development of the global film industry: industrial competition and cooperation in the context of globalization*. London: Routledge, 204-213.
- Gundry, D. and Deterding, S. 2019. Validity threats in quantitative data collection with games: a narrative survey. *Simulation & Gaming*, 50(3): 302-328.
- Hafeez, E. and Ara, A. 2016. History and evolution of Indian film industry. *Journal of History and Social Sciences*, 7(2).
- Han, X. 2022, May. Reasons for the kitschism of film industry in China: perspective of culture industry theory. In *2022 International Conference on Comprehensive Art and Cultural Communication (CACC 2022)*. Atlantis Press, 175-180.
- Hanum, A. M., Simanjuntak, M. B., Mayuni, I. and Zuriyati, Z. 2022. The meaning of family love in a family film. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Inovasi Pendidikan*, Palangka Raya, 15 Maret 2022.
- Herzog, C., Handke, C. and Hitters, E. 2019. Analyzing talk and text II: thematic analysis. In: Van den Bulck, H., Puppis, M., Donders, K., Van Audenhove, L. eds. *The Palgrave Handbook of Methods for media policy research*. Cham: Springer, 385-401.
- Hirose, M. and Creswell, J. W. 2023. Applying core quality criteria of mixed methods research to an empirical study. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 17(1): 12-28.
- Hoffmann, C. R. 2021. Cut to the chase—how multimodal cohesion secures narrative orientation in film trailers. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 44: 100539.
- Huan, C. and Deng, M. 2021. Partners or predators? A corpus-based study of China's image in South African Media. *African Journalism Studies*, 42(3): 34-50.

- Hürlimann, C. 2019. Research philosophy and ethics. In: *Valuation of renewable energy investments*. Wiesbaden: Springer Gabler, 111-126.
- Ichendu, C. 2020. Morality and ethics in research. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, 8(3): 171-174.
- IQOQO. 2022. Interfacing South Africa's creative industries: The film industry in South Africa: poised for greatness. Available: <https://iqoqo.org/film-story-template/> (Accessed: 18 September 2024).
- Jenster, A. 2020. Assessment of production opportunities in Eastern European emerging film markets: A comparative multi-case study analysis (Master's thesis, Universidade Catolica Portuguesa (Portugal)).
- Jooste, R. 2019. SA film industry still not getting the picture. *Daily Maverick*, 08 December. Available: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2019-12-08-sa-film-industry-still-not-getting-the-the-big-picture-> (Accessed 18 July 2021)
- Javadi, M. and Zarea, K. 2016. Understanding thematic analysis and its pitfall. *Journal of Client Care*, 1(1): 34-40. Available: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307179806\\_Understanding\\_Thematic\\_Analysis\\_and\\_its\\_Pitfall](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307179806_Understanding_Thematic_Analysis_and_its_Pitfall) (Accessed 31 October 2020).
- Jefkins, F. 1998. *Public relations techniques*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Jill, C. and Hussey, R. 2014. *Business research: a practical guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Johnston, K. M. and Frith, P. 2022. Beyond the "exhibition straight-jacket": how British amateur film clubs created an alternative distribution and exhibition network, 1923–1933. *Film History: An International Journal*, 34(3): 46-70.
- Jones, T. M. and Harrison, J. S. 2019. Sustainable wealth creation: applying instrumental stakeholder theory to the improvement of social welfare. In: Harrison, J. S., Barney, J. B., Freeman, R. E. and Phillips, R. A. eds. *The Cambridge handbook of stakeholder theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 72-91.
- Jopling, M. 2019. Using quantitative data. In: Lambert, M. ed. *Practical research methods in education*. London: Routledge, 55-66.
- Jumbari, L. 2022. The role of public relations in enhancing corporate image of government institutions: a case study of Kenya Films and Classification Board. Doctoral thesis, University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya.

- Kambhampati, Y. 2020. Public relations in film making industry a case of Tollywood. Doctoral thesis, Osmania University, Hyderabad, India.
- Kayembe, C. and Nel, D. 2019. Challenges and opportunities for education in the Fourth Industrial Revolution. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 11(3): 79-94.
- Kent, M. L. and Li, C. 2020. Toward a normative social media theory for public relations. *Public Relations Review*, 46(1): 101857.
- Ketokivi, M. and Mahoney, J. T. 2016. Transaction cost economics as a constructive stakeholder theory. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 15(1): 123-138.
- Khaksar, S. M. S., Chu, M. T., Rozario, S. and Slade, B. 2023. Knowledge-based dynamic capabilities and knowledge worker productivity in professional service firms the moderating role of organisational culture. *Knowledge Management Research & Practice*, 21(2): 241-258.
- Korsgaard, M. B. 2019. Audiovisual literacy and the ghost of silent cinema in contemporary YouTube clips. *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, 36(7): 573-583.
- Kryvovyazyuk, I., Vakhovych, I., Kaminska, I. and Dorosh, V. 2020. Managerial innovations in the methodology of solving export-import activity problems and ensuring international corporations' business excellence. *Calitatea*, 21(178): 50-55.
- KwaZulu-Natal Film Commission. 2020. *Vision, mission and values*. Available: <https://kznfilm.co.za/vision-mission/> (Accessed: 22 September 2022).
- Leavy, P. 2017. *Research design: quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-based, and community-based participatory research approaches*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Lee, H. 2022. From festival films to film festivals: Korean Cinema at European film festivals. In: Lee, H. ed. *Korean film and festivals: global transcultural flows*. London: Routledge, 15-40.
- Li, H., Mu, P., Li, J. and Wang, Q. 2021. Inverse desert beetle-like ZIF-8/PAN composite nanofibrous membrane for highly efficient separation of oil-in-water emulsions. *Journal of Materials Chemistry A*, 9(7): 4167-4175.
- Lim, M. K. 2019. *Philippine cinema and the cultural economy of distribution*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Iovino, F. and Tsitsianis, N., 2020. The methodology of the research. In: Iovino, F. and Tsitsianis, N. eds. *Changes in European energy markets*. Leeds: Emerald Publishing Limited, 79-95.

- MacKay, B., Chia, R. and Nair, A.K. 2021. Strategy-in-practices: a process philosophical approach to understanding strategy emergence and organizational outcomes. *Human Relations*, 74(9): 1337-1369.
- Mackenzie, L. 2017. Local film does Durban proud. Available: <https://www.citizen.co.za/highway-mail/uncategorized/2017/03/08/local-film-does-durban-proud/> (Accessed 29 July 2024).
- Maloney, H. B. J. 2024. Ennio Morricone's film music in the Western genre. Doctoral thesis, University of Nottingham, Nottingham, UK: 30-33..
- Mashapa, E. 2022. The impact of technology on media content regulation. *World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 16(6).
- Maupa, T. 2021. The role of public relations in organizational crisis management. *Journal of Communication Management*, 25(1): 23-38.
- Mboti, N. 2011. The media cities project: Is Durban 'film friendly'?. Durban: The Centre For Culture, Media & Society, University of Kwazulu-Natal.
- McIntyre, P., Fulton, J., Kerrigan, S. and Meany, M. 2023. *Entrepreneurship in the creative industries: how innovative agents, skills and networks interact*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- McMahon, J., 2023. Star Power and Risk: A Political Economic Study of Casting Trends in Hollywood. *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, pp.1-34.
- Melnick, R. 2022. *Hollywood's embassies: how movie theatres projected power around the world*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Merriam, S. and Tisdell, E. 2016. *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Mersham, G. M., Rensburg, R. S., and Skinner, J. C. (2009). *Public relations, development and social investment: A Southern African perspective*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Mhlambi, T. N. 2020. Sound in urban public space: loudspeaker broadcasts in Johannesburg and Durban in South Africa, 1940s. *Cultural Studies*, 34(6): 959-978.
- Mikos, L. 2013. Analysis of film. In: Flick, U. ed. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative data analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 409-423.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications, Inc.
- Mistry, J. 2021. Decolonizing processes in film education. *Film Education Journal*, 4(1): 1-13.

- Mokonyane-Motha, M. M. and de Jager, T. 2023. Artificial intelligence as a tool to reduce graduates' unemployment needs. *International Journal of Social Science Research and Review*, 6(10): 130-143.
- Mokofe, W. M. 2022. From precarity to pandemic: how the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated poverty, unemployment, and inequality in South Africa. *Law, Democracy & Development*, 26(1).
- Moyer-Duncan, C., 2021. South African film since apartheid. In: *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nasirin, C. and Pithaloka, D. 2022. Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes Konsep Kekerasan Dalam Film the Raid 2 Berandal. *Journal of Discourse and Media Research*, 1(01): 28-43.
- Ngondo, P. S. and Klyueva, A. 2020. An exploratory study of public relations roles in Zimbabwe. *Public Relations Review*, 46(5): 101961.
- Nikitina, T. I., Nikitin, A. A. and Yakupov, B. I. 2021. Trends in the methodology of media consumption study in the field of cinema in Russia. *Propósitos y Representaciones*, 9(SPE2): e1090-e1090.
- Ogunnubi, O., Aja, U. A. and Awosusi, O. E. 2022. Afrophobia and cultural diplomacy in Nigeria-South Africa relations: The role of the creative industries. In: Afolabi, T., Ogunnubi, O. and Ukuma, S. T. eds. *Re-centering cultural performance and orange economy in post-colonial Africa: policy, soft power, and sustainability*. Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore, 229-251.
- Ogunyombo, O. E. and Ogbonna, G. C. 2021. Perspectives of Lagos State public relations professionals on sexual portrayals and expressions of housemates in Big Brother Naija reality show. *SAU Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, 6(1): 90-102.
- Oparaugo, B. 2021. Role of public relations in corporate image building and sustenance. *International Journal of Applied Research in Business and Management*, 2(1): 26-37.
- Parker, A. 2022. Places of gold: imaginaries of aspiration in Johannesburg films. In: Ballard, R. Mapukata, S, Crompton, S., Mosselson, A., Parker, A. and Sulley, R. eds. *South African urban imaginaries: cases from Johannesburg*. Johannesburg: GCRO, 33.
- Paterson, R. 2020. Music video and commercials production in the UK screen industries: an overlooked dynamo of innovation and success. *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, Dossier, *Music Videos in the British Screen Industries and Screen Heritage*, 19: 178-183.
- Peirano, M. P. 2020. Connecting and sharing experiences: Chilean documentary film professionals at the film festival circuit. In: Vallejo, A. and Winton, E. eds. *Documentary film*

*festivals Vol. 2: Changes, challenges, professional perspectives*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 55-72.

Pereira, V. and Bamel, U. 2021. Extending the resource and knowledge based view: a critical analysis into its theoretical evolution and future research directions. *Journal of Business Research*, 132: 557-570.

Pohl, D., Messner, A., Kaufmann, F., Escalé, M. R., Holzer, J., Leuthold, J. and Grange, R. 2020. 100-GBd waveguide Bragg grating modulator in thin-film lithium niobate. *IEEE Photonics Technology Letters*, 33(2): 85-88.

Poole, C. and van Zyl, C. 2020. Cape Town as a film tourism destination: towards a smart city framework. In: *Culture, people and technology: the driving forces for tourism cities*. Proceedings of 8th ITSA Biennial Conference 2020, 478.

PwC Nigeria. 2017. The Nigerian film industry. Available:

<https://www.pwc.com/ng/en/publications/spotlight-the-nigerian-film-industry.html>.

(Accessed: 17 July 2021).

Rahi, S. 2017. Research design and methods: a systematic review of research paradigms, sampling issues and instruments development. *International Journal of Economics & Management Sciences*, 6(2): 1-5.

Ramesh, A. and Jaggi, R. K. 2022. The contemporary film public relations ecosystem in India stars to stories. *International Journal of Indian Culture and Business Management*, 25(1): 17-37.

Sadare, O. O., Moothi, K. and Daramola, M. O. 2022. The role of the library in actualising United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in South Africa. In: Janse Van Vuren, A. ed. *Academic libraries: reflecting on crisis, the fourth industrial revolution and the way forward* Johannesburg: University of Johannesburg, 161-179.

Saks, L. 2010. *Cinema in a democratic South Africa: the race for representation*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Salsabila, D., Simanjuntak, M. B. and Sutrisno, S. 2022. The Personality of the main characters in the film "Mulan" Director Niki Caro. In: *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Inovasi Pendidikan*, Palangka Raya, 15 Maret 2022.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. 2016. *Research methods for business students*. 6th ed. London: Pearson Education.

Saunders, M. N., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. 2023. *Saunders research methods*. London: Pearson Higher Ed.

Sawadogo, B. 2021. In defense of African film studies. *Black Camera*, 12(2): 399-404.

Seah, M. Q., Khoo, Y. S., Lau, W. J., Goh, P. S. and Ismail, A. F. 2021. The new concept of thin-film composite nanofiltration membrane fabrication using a mist-based interfacial polymerization technique. *Industrial & Engineering Chemistry Research*, 60(25): 9167-9178.

Sharma, G. 2017. Pros and cons of different sampling techniques. *International Journal of Applied Research*, 3(7): 749-752.

Sileyew, K. J. 2019. Research design and methodology. In: *Cyberspace*. IntechOpen. Available: <https://www.intechopen.com/chapters/68505> (Accessed 11 November 2020).

Smith. D. 2019. PR team: definition, structure & role in your business. Available: [PR Team: Definition, Structure & Role in Your Business | Bizfluent](#) (Accessed 5 September 2022).

Smith, R. D. 2020. *Strategic planning for public relations*. London: Routledge.

South African History Online (SAHO). 2011. South African history timeline. Available: [AHistory of the South African Film Industry timeline 1895-2003 | South African History Online \(sahistory.org.za\)](#) (Accessed 18 June 2022).

South African Cultural Observatory. 2024. NFVF study reveals SA film industry has a positive impact on the economy. Available: <https://www.southafricanculturalobservatory.org.za/article/nfvf-study-reveals-sa-film-industry-has-a-positive-impact-on-the-economy> (Accessed 15 August 2017).

Steedman, R. 2021. Promoting the film industry in Kenya: state support versus entrepreneurial innovation. In: Hracs, B.J., Comunian, R. and England, L. eds. *Developing creative economies in Africa: spaces and working practices*. London: Routledge, 11-23.

Steiner, B., Lan, K., Unterschultz, J. and Boxall, P. 2017. Applying the resource-based view to alliance formation in specialized supply chains. *Journal of Strategy and Management*, 10(3): 262-292.

Suh, J., Hoang, T. and Hijal-Moghrabi, I. 2021. Nonprofit external communications: general management, public relations, or fundraising tool? *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs*, 7(2): 220-239.

Sutherland, E. 2020. The fourth industrial revolution—the case of South Africa. *Politikon*, 47(2): 233-252.

Swaen, B. and George, T. 2024. What Is a Conceptual Framework? | Tips & Examples. Available: <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/conceptual-framework/> (Accessed 14 August 2024).

- Thopacu, H. 2020. Validating South Africa's copyright reform through the lens of US GSP: The need to abolish reciprocal requirements. *SAIIA Policy Insights*, 84, May.
- Tinits, P. and Sobchuk, O. 2020. Open-ended cumulative cultural evolution of Hollywood film crews. *Evolutionary Human Sciences*, 2: e26.
- Trafford, V. 2008. Conceptual frameworks as a threshold concept in doctorateness. In: Land, R., Meyer, J. H. F. and Smith, J. eds. *Threshold concepts within the discipline*. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 273-288.
- Trimarchi, M. 2020. Once upon a time in movie theatres: how the film industry is re-writing its screenplay. Doctoral thesis, Universita Di Bologna, Bologna, Italy.
- Tubbs, R. S., Beckman, J., Naftel, R. P., Chern, J. J., Wellons, J. C., Rozzelle, C. J., Blount, J. P. and Oakes, W. J. 2011. Institutional experience with 500 cases of surgically treated pediatric Chiari malformation Type I. *Journal of Neurosurgery: Pediatrics*, 7(3): 248-256.
- Tomaselli, K.G. and Ngcobo, N., 2018. Hard to Get, film friendliness and local production. *Journal of African Cinemas*, 10(1-2), pp.31-50.
- Ukadike, N.F., 2023. *Black African Cinema*. Univ of California Press: 29-30.
- Valentini, C. 2021. Public relations and social influence: understanding the roots of a contested profession. In: Valentini, C. ed. *Public Relations*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 3-20.
- Vallejo, A. 2020. Rethinking the canon: the role of film festivals in shaping film history. *Studies in European Cinema*, 17(2): 155-169.
- VanDyke, M. S. and Lee, N. M. 2020. Science public relations: the parallel, interwoven, and contrasting trajectories of public relations and science communication theory and practice. *Public Relations Review*, 46(4): 101953.
- Verhoeven, D., Musial, K., Palmer, S., Taylor, S., Abidi, S., Zemaityte, V. and Simpson, L. 2020. Controlling for openness in the male-dominated collaborative networks of the global film industry. *PloS One*, 15(6): e0234460.
- Watson, T., and Noble, P. (2014). *Evaluating public relations: a guide to planning, research and measurement*. 3rd ed. London: Kogan Page Publishers.
- Webb, M. C. 2021. People before profit? Ford, General Motors and the spirit of the Sullivan Principles in apartheid South Africa (1976–84). *Ethnic Studies Review*, 44(3): 64-87.
- Wilson, A., Zeithaml, V., Bitner, M. J. and Gremler, D. 2020. *EBK: services marketing: integrating customer service across the firm*. 4th ed. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

Yang, C. S. and Lirn, T. C. 2017. Revisiting the resource-based view on logistics performance in the shipping industry. *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, 47(9): 884-905.

Yanow, D. 2016. *Introduction to interpretive (-qualitative) methodologies and methods*. Montreal: Concordia University.

Yi, H.T., Cha, Y.B. and Amenuvor, F.E., 2021. Effects of sales-related capabilities of personal selling organizations on individual sales capability, sales behaviors and sales performance in cosmetics personal selling channels. *Sustainability*, 13(7), p.3937.

Yu, S. Z., Niu, W. B., Wu, S. L., Ma, W. and Zhang, S. F. 2018. Robust and flexible thermal-plasticizing 3D shaped composite films with invariable and brilliant structural color. *Journal of Materials Chemistry C*, 6(47): 12814-12821.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Interview guide

The role of public relations in enhancing the competitiveness of the Durban film industry.

### SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

1.1 Age

1.2 Gender

1.3 Designation/ Position

1.4 Years working in DFI

### SECTION B: THE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE DURBAN FILM INDUSTRY.

2.1 Kindly describe the performance of the DFI

2.2 Rate the Durban film industry against Johannesburg, Cape Town, or other local film industries.

2.2.1 According to statistics of the 2020 South Africa Fact Sheet. The cities of Johannesburg and Cape Town are known as the film capitals of South Africa and Durban is not featured, why do you think that is that so?

2.3 Rate the performance of the DFI against Hollywood, Bollywood or other regional film industries.

2.4 Compare the DFI against any other International film industry?

2.5 Do you then consider the Durban film industry to be competitive enough?

### SECTION C: THE ROLE BEING PLAYED BY PUBLIC RELATIONS IN ENHANCING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE DURBAN FILM INDUSTRY.

3.1 What is the role played by public relations in enhancing the competitiveness of the Durban film industry?

3.2 In your opinion, do you think the public relations industry is doing enough PR campaigns for our local films?

3.3 Is there potential within the PR industry that can lead to advancing the Durban film industry?

3.4 What is the potential impact that the public relations industry can make on the local film industry?

3.5 Can the Durban Film industry be successful without the assistance of public relations?

#### SECTION D: PUBLIC RELATIONS-RELATED CHALLENGES

4.1 What PR-related challenges are faced by the Durban film industry?

4.2 Is the current performance of the Durban film industry attributable to PR work or other challenges?

4.3 What PR interventions are required to promote the DFI?

4.4 Will it be possible for the Durban film industry experts and public relations practitioners to cooperate to advance the Durban film industry?

4.5 Will the collaboration of the Durban film industry experts and public relations practitioners ensure the success of the Durban film industry?

4.6 What can be done, or changed by both PR and the film industry for the Durban film industry to be more competitive?

## Appendix B: Consent letter



### CONSENT

#### Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Philiswa Shongwe, about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: \_\_\_\_\_,
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

## **Appendix C: Gatekeeper permission letter**



30 November 2023

### **Permission to conduct survey**

Good day Miss Philiswa Shongwe

This is a letter to kindly inform you that I Mr Fezile Peko on behalf of the Durban Film Office, have granted you permission to conduct your survey for your research study at our organisation the Durban Film Office. We are looking forward to working with you throughout your study.

Kind regards

Fezile Peko  
Acting Senior Manager

## **Appendix D: Ethical clearance**



Institutional Research Ethics Committee  
Research and Postgraduate Support Directorate  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Berwyn Court  
Gate 1, Steve Biko Campus  
Durban University of Technology  
P O Box 1334, Durban, South Africa, 4001  
Tel: 031 373 2375  
Email: lavishad@dut.ac.za  
[http://www.dut.ac.za/research/institutional\\_research\\_ethics](http://www.dut.ac.za/research/institutional_research_ethics)  
[www.dut.ac.za](http://www.dut.ac.za)

23 January 2024

Ms P Shongwe  
88 Glen Road  
Montclair  
4001

Dear Ms Shongwe

**The role of public relations in enhancing the competitiveness of the Durban film industry**

**Ethics Clearance Number: IREC 130/23**

The DUT-Institutional Research Ethics Committee acknowledges receipt of your final data collection tool for review.

We are pleased to inform you that the data collection tool has been approved. Kindly ensure that participants used for the pilot study are not part of the main study.

In addition, the DUT-IREC acknowledges receipt of your gatekeeper permission letter.

Please note that **FULL APPROVAL** is granted to your research proposal. You may proceed with data collection.

Any adverse events [serious or minor] which occur in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration must be reported to the DUT-IREC according to the DUT-IREC SOP's.

Please note that any deviations from the approved proposal require the approval of the DUT-IREC as outlined in the DUT-IREC SOP's.

**It is compulsory for a student or researcher to apply for recertification on an annual basis. The failure to do so will result in withdrawal of ethics clearance. It is the responsibility of the researcher and the supervisor to apply for recertification.**

**Please note that you are required to submit a Notification of Completion of Study form together with an abstract to the DUT-IREC office on completion of your study.**

Yours Sincerely

Dr K Padayachy  
Deputy Chairperson: DUT-IREC

## Appendix 5: Editing certificate

### **DR RICHARD STEELE**

BA HDE MTech(Hom)

**HOMEOPATH**

Registration No. A07309 HM

Practice No. 0807524

**Freelance academic editor**

**Associate member: Professional Editors'**

**Guild, South Africa**

154 Magenta Place

Gxarha [Morgan Bay]

5292

Eastern Cape

082-928-6208

rsteele@vodamail.co.za

rsteele201@outlook.com

---

### **EDITING CERTIFICATE**

Re: **Philiswa Nomfundo Shongwe**

For editing DUT master's dissertation: **The role of public relations in enhancing the competitiveness of the Durban film industry**

I confirm that I have edited this dissertation and the references for clarity and language. I returned the document to the author with track changes so correct implementation of the changes and clarifications requested in the text and references is the responsibility of the author. I am a freelance editor specialising in proofreading and editing academic documents. My original tertiary degree which I obtained at the University of Cape Town was a B.A. with English as a major and I went on to complete an H.D.E. (P.G.) Sec. with English as my teaching subject. I was a part-time lecturer in the Department of Homoeopathy at the Durban University of Technology for 13 years and supervised many master's degree dissertations during that period.

Dr Richard Steele

**13 August 2024**

*per email*

# P.SHONGWE Final dissertation 1-7

22/08/2024

## ORIGINALITY REPORT

12%

SIMILARITY INDEX

8%

INTERNET SOURCES

3%

PUBLICATIONS

7%

STUDENT PAPERS

## PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to Mancosa Student Paper	1%
2	spitzsolutions.com Internet Source	<1%
3	Submitted to Durban University of Technology Student Paper	<1%
4	nevadafilm.com Internet Source	<1%
5	Submitted to Regenesys Business School Student Paper	<1%
6	www.researchgate.net Internet Source	<1%
7	kznfilm.co.za.dedi957.jnb3.host-h.net Internet Source	<1%
8	film.durban.gov.za Internet Source	<1%
9	ir.dut.ac.za Internet Source	<1%

22/08/2024