

# An empirical approach on national exporter development programme (Nedp) on emerging exporters in Gauteng province South Africa

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## Keywords

Exporter, Emerging, National, South Africa, Development, Programmes, Gauteng.

## Abstract

*The current intensive global competition compels exporters to adapt to innovative ways of doing business to remain competitive. Many exporters are unable to meet international regulatory requirements to service their exports. South African government has implemented growth-enhancing reforms that aim at igniting economic activity while promoting industrialisation and transformation to broadening the exporter base of the country. This article sought to find out the effects of the National Exporter Development Programme (NEDP) on South African emerging exporters within Gauteng Province. The NEDP as well as the Provincial Investment and Promotion Agencies are very critical in supporting emerging exporters in the Gauteng province.*

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First submission received: 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Revised submission received: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Accepted: 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023

## 1. Introduction

Exporting plays an important role in contributing to the growth and development of the economy. Exporting is considered as the main driver of economic growth and development in every country (Matthee & Heymans, 2013). Freixanet and Churakova (2018) suggested that exporting provides several benefits to the national economies such as the increase in employment and competitiveness. Exponential growth in international trade has led to intensified global competition. Growing demand of goods globally equally increases interrelatedness among countries (Markusen, Melvin, Kaemper, & Maskus, 1995). According to Racela, Chaikittisilpa and Thounrungrroje (2007:153), exporting creates opportunities for businesses to expand and explore their competitive edge through market positioning.

Globalisation has given rise to exporting as a means of entry mode into foreign markets. Exporting is critical to nation's economic growth (Jalali, 2012). Improved global demand of South African goods and services create a need to increase exports to drive economic growth and job creation (Gauteng Socio-Economic Review and Outlook, 2018).

Development of South Africa's export capabilities has been an important aspect of economic policy (Valodia, Goode, & Macheke, 2002). In a country like South Africa, Small Medium Enterprise (SMMEs) play a vital role in increasing an export-led growth (April, 2015). South Africa has adopted a radical economic transformation approach which seeks to promote structural transformation towards

development of SMMEs, ensure rapid sustainable growth and attract foreign direct investment (Official Guide to South Africa, 2018/19).

There is a wide range of exporter development programmes in South Africa offered by all spheres of government, private sector and donors. One of these programmes is the NEDP designed to contribute towards the positioning of South Africa as a reliable trade partner through effective exporter development and a training programme.

The research reflects on government's effort in bridging the economic gap. The research considered that if the economy of the country is to thrive, the SMMEs and emerging exporters should benefit from the government support. This study captures the effects of the export support measures on the emerging exporters and the benefits thereof. The research also projects the benefits of the export support programmes offered to the emerging exporters.

## 2. Literature Review

The export performance of a country is regarded as one of the key driving forces towards development. The volume of export activity in the global economy has increased as exporting has become easier with gradual decline in trade barriers. With the growing pace of globalisation, competition on a global scale has become increasingly intense. Hill (2013:6) defined globalisation as sourcing of goods and services from locations around the world to take advantage of national differences. Globalisation encourages firms from developed countries to move manufacturing facilities to less developed countries.

The number of multinational enterprises in the world has doubled since 1990. Chabowski and Mena (2017) argued that the new players are introducing entirely new business models that are reflective of their unique home country's business climate, market structure, and management.

### 2.1 Essence of international trade to economy

International trade is a significant element for every economy as it stimulates the internal development of the country. It builds country's competitive advantage and allows for several sources of gains as opposed to non-export countries (Feenstra, 2018). International trade promotes economic transformation through demand and supply side effects that maximise business development and performance. Jalali (2012:122) suggested that exporting is an important aspect of trade as it contributes to economic growth and improves the balance of payments.

International trade on its own requires resources, knowledge and understanding of international trade operations. Exporting firms need managerial skills and experience to contribute to export capability (April, 2015). Managerial skills and capabilities include the ability to create, maintain, negotiate, and develop appropriate relationships with customers in export markets (Morgan, Kaleka, & Katsikeas, 2004). Venturing into export market requires entrepreneurs with a global mind-set, prior to international experience. International trade requires an export-focused economic development strategy based on market-oriented policies that provide enabling conditions for exporters (Asongu & Odhiambo, 2018).

Exporting creates opportunities for businesses to expand and explore their competitive edge globally. Sousa (2004) inferred that an increased globalisation leads to numerous firms going beyond their domestic markets to focus on high-growth export markets for expansion and to ensure their very survival. However, international trade does not go without risks and new market entrants often fail on their debut. Leonidou, Katsikeas and Costatine (1996) maintained that increasing globalisation often expose SMMEs to tough competition and potential exploitation that can lead to withdrawal in international trading.

There are also benefits that come as a result of exporting. It broadens global market share that can potentially stimulate a higher sales volume and eventually provides the possibility of a higher production volume (Anderson, 2011). Globalisation exposes exporters to international best practices, market

opportunities and reduce export barriers. Irani and Salimi (2019:49) inferred that exporting creates opportunities for market diversification for companies and government. Globalisation creates an attractive growth path for expansion (Ali & Ndubisi, 2009).

## ***2.2 Stakeholders in the export space***

International trade requires firms to carefully examine their resources and capabilities prior to “going global”. Prospective exporters need to have an understating of various services from both government and private sector so that they can assist with their export endeavours. International trade promotion activities are shared among several entities in any country. There is a need to have a central institution providing policy framework and mechanism for co-ordination among various organisations involved in international trade services.

Export development and promotion organisations have a significant role in laying the groundwork for exporters. The creation of export promotion agencies is crucial to boost the exports from SMMEs (Gil, Llorca, & Serrano, 2007). Governments and other trade associations provide export promotion programs to help firms, especially emerging exporters to overcome these limitations (Francis & Collins-Dodd, 2004).

### ***2.2.1 Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)***

Before venturing into international trade, firms ought to assess the global environment to understand how it differs from their local market. The accumulation of experience during exporting leads SMMEs to a better knowledge of business opportunities both domestically and internationally (April, 2015). The DTI plays a critical role in the development and promotion of exports. It has created an enabling ground to encourage exporters’ meaningful participation in international trade environment. The department is a driving force behind the economic development and global competitiveness in the country. The DTI developed an appropriate industry framework for export training programmes and also provides both financial and non-financial support to companies and export councils under the export support programmes (Salinger, Borat, Flaherty, & Keswell, 1999). The DTI has led the development of export promotion strategies aimed at increasing sales of domestic products in foreign markets (Titus, Dada, & Ajao, 2013). The department rigorously leads facilitation and development of sustainable, competitive enterprises through the provision of incentive programmes that support national economic priorities.

### ***2.2.2 Provincial Investment and Promotion Agencies (PIPAs)***

Investment and trade promotion agencies have a significant role in laying the groundwork for an export promotion programmes (Olaru, 2015). Difficult business conditions for SMMEs can represent a significant risk to economic growth and prosperity (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2010). As such, PIPAs should have a strategy for developing a sound broad-based export development and promotion environment where one of their roles should be to facilitate export promotion measures that include building a positive perception, attracting investments, providing incentives, and implementing effective distribution of information to investors and potential buyers.

South Africa provides highly developed economic infrastructure and markets for the development of entrepreneurial and investment environment (Pietersen, 2011). Njoroge (2010) argued that every country should have an economic development strategy which include export development and promotion. The PIPAs serve as an industry interface in attracting FDI into the country and promoting economic activities in their respective provinces (Olaru, 2015). PIPAs play an instrumental role in helping firms achieve superior export performance (Wang, Chen, Wang, & Li, 2017).

GGDA is an economic entity of Gauteng Department of Economic Development. Its mandate is to support the department through leadership and facilitation of investments that contribute to sustainable job creation in the province (Gauteng Growth and Development Agency, 2017/18). Key to this is the facilitation of trade, investment, export training, market intelligence, facilitating access to incentives and coordination of exhibitions. GGDA renders a specialised export services aimed at providing exporters with skills in various foreign trade techniques while helping them to become more competitive in the international market (Olaru, 2015).

### ***2.2.3 Small Enterprise Development Agency (Seda)***

Seda is mandated with the development, support, and promotion of small enterprises throughout the country. It focuses on promotion and development of entrepreneurship by providing customised non-financial business support services that result in business growth and sustainability. Seda leads an export development programme that aims to develop and generate competitive and export ready SMMEs that can grow markets both locally and globally (Small Enterprise Development Agency, 2017/18).

### ***2.2.4 Tshwane Economic Development Agency (TEDA)***

TEDA is an economic development entity of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (CoT) mandated with the development and promotion of economy in the city. It facilitates the development of emerging exporters to penetrate the international market through a comprehensive export training intervention. (Tshwane Economic Development Agency, 2019).

### ***2.2.5 Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF)***

DAFF runs a business development scheme called SA-GAP Certification Programme. The programme assists smallholder producers of fresh produce to access both local and international markets by producing good quality products that comply with food safety and quality standards as required by the market (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2014/15).

### ***2.2.6 Export Councils***

Export Councils represent forum of companies under similar sector sharing common goals. They are governed by section 21 of the companies Act to improve communication and co-operation within different industrial sectors in terms of strategies for penetrating international markets (Department of Trade and Industry, 2018). Companies can collectively develop export strategies for the sector concerned to target export markets through the assistance of the export councils (Van Aarde, 2007). Export Councils are an integral part of government's plan to grow export, diversify product offering and broaden markets. These forums serve as a platform for companies to connect directly with DTI (Martincus, Carballo, & Andres, 2010).

## ***2.3 Export incentive schemes***

Although there is no universal definition of export incentive, various definitions exist. Francis and Collins-Dodd (2004) defined export incentive and assistance as those programs provided by governments to help firms, especially SMMEs to overcome real or perceived obstacles to exporting. Export incentive programmes refer to all public measures designed to assist firms' exporting activity (Ali et al., 2009). Van Aarde (2007) defined it as public policy measures and/or initiatives from government as well as private organisations to assist exporters enhance exporting activity in the foreign market. South African government has devoted resources undoing the ineffective export incentives and replacing them with potentially competitive subsidies (Valodia et al., 2002). The assistance come in a form of incentive schemes

offered to both emerging and potential exporters by the DTI. There is a need for the export development and promotion organisations to offer direct support towards emerging exporters through export training programmes that will supplement other incentive programmes (Irish Marketing Review, 2000). Governments are now increasingly offering a wide range of export promotion programmes with the aim of assisting SMMEs in their export activities (Haddoud, 2017).

South African government provide various export incentives in order to encourage exporters to remain globally competitive. According to Venter et al. (2007:209), competitive advantage is achieved when a domestic firm successfully matches capabilities of its international counterparts. Export assistance helps exporters develop their organisational capabilities and competencies to exploit opportunities for internationalisation. Several export promotion schemes were introduced to give positive discrimination in favour of export sales (Wade, 1990).

### **2.3.1 Global Exporter Passport Programme (GEPP)**

The GEPP provide export development programmes to enterprises that wish to expand their exporting prospects. This programme aims to prepare companies to be export ready and sustainable in export markets. The GEPP is delivered in partnership with various stakeholders countrywide. The training is offered in four phases including both formal and informal workshops. The formal workshops are accredited with South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). The programme seeks to revitalise exporting as a key component of growing South African economy (Department of Trade and Industry, 2016).

### **2.3.2 Export Marketing and Investment Assistance (EMIA)**

The purpose of the EMIA scheme is to partially compensate exporters for costs incurred in respect to activities aimed at developing export markets for South African products and services and to attract foreign direct investment. Potential exporters are assisted by the DTI to participate in National Pavilions, Outward Selling Missions as well as Investment and Trade Initiatives (Department of Trade and Industry, 2016).

### **2.3.3 Sector Specific Assistance Scheme (SSAS)**

SSAS is a reimbursable (80:20) cost-sharing grant that offers financial support to export councils, joint action groups and industry associations. The scheme is designed to assist emerging exporters to penetrate the export market. The primary purpose of the programme includes developing an industry sector that stimulates job creation, developing new export markets, broadening the exporter base and promoting broader participation of SMMEs into the economy (Department of Trade and Industry, 2016).

### **2.3.4 SA-GAP Certification Programme for Smallholder Producers of Fresh Produce**

The main objective of the SA-GAP Certification Programme is to assist smallholder farms of fresh produce to access both local and international markets by producing good quality products that comply with food safety and quality standards as required by the market. It focusses on improving participation of smallholder producers in the mainstream agricultural economy by enhancing competitiveness and increased participation in international markets (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 2016)

## **3. Methodology**

This study adopted a quantitative research approach using existing data collected from various sources. In this instance the focus was on emerging exporters from Gauteng province. The envisioned result is to assemble data through a series of representations which include review of different documents

to reach conclusive results. We drew a sample from group of companies who have participated in the GEPP within the province.

### **3.1 Research Design**

Research design involves a set of decisions regarding what topic to be studied, among what population, with what research methods, for what purpose (Babbie, 2008) . This study adopted a quantitative research approach since it used existing data collected from various sources (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The selection of a quantitative research methodology is based on the interest to study the effects of the NEDP on South African emerging exporters within Gauteng province using secondary data. The envisioned result included assembling data through a series of representations which include review of different documents to reach conclusive results.

### **3.2 Data collection**

Secondary sources are secondhand information removed from the original event which give accounts witnessed by others but not directly by the researcher (Salkind, 2018). It involves data collected by one researcher and reanalysed or used by another researcher for a different purpose. Data collected from secondary sources reflect the assumptions and biases of the people who wrote them (Leedy et al., 2014). Coldwell and Herbst (2004:102) maintained that classifying data into groups help to reduce large volume of raw information into more manageable form. Leedy et al. (2010:296) suggested that any data should end by bringing closure to the interpretation summarising the findings and conclusion pertaining to the problem.

### **3.3 Data Analysis**

Data analysis in the study included descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analyses. Statistical data analysis used the SPSS tool as a platform to perform quantitative analysis.

#### **3.3.1 Descriptive statistics**

Descriptive statistics is be used to measure the central tendency measures. It includes the range, the mean, the variance and the standard deviation together with the analysis of the skewness.

#### **3.3.2 Correlation analysis**

Correlation analysis is used to determine the level of connection between research variables. Leedy et al. (2014) argued that statistical measure is required to find if the relationship between variables is strong/weak or positive/negative. This study sought to determine the connection between the frequency of emerging exporters and the NEDP and the PIPAs.

#### **3.3.3 Regression analysis**

Based on the information collected from the DTI website, the independent variable is represented by the trade exports (TE) and the dependent variables include the main export index (MEI) and the product price index (PPI).

The regression equation will be written as follow:

$$TE = \beta_0 + \beta_1MEI + \beta_2PPI + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

Where the term TE is the predicted score of the National Exporter development programme (NEDP). The MEI and PPI are the predictor variables while the  $\beta$ s are the weights (regression coefficients) associated with the predictors and the term  $\varepsilon$  represents the error term.

Regression analysis will be applied to identify the degree of significance between the independent and the dependent at a significance level of 5% ( $\alpha = 5\%$ ) to conclude on hypothesis testing. If P-Value  $< \alpha$ , reject the null hypothesis. If P-Value  $> \alpha$ , accept the null hypothesis. The following hypotheses will be analysed in this study:

**Ho1:** The National Exporter Development Programme can significantly affect South African emerging exporters within the Gauteng province.

**HA1:** The National Exporter Development Programme cannot significantly affect South African emerging exporters within the Gauteng province.

**Ho2:** The Provincial Investment and Promotion Agencies can significantly affect South African emerging exporters within the Gauteng province.

**HA2:** The Provincial Investment and Promotion Agencies cannot significantly affect South African emerging exporters within the Gauteng province.

## 4. Statistical Analysis

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.1 shows that the variable means of the main exports index, the price index and trade exports are respectively 98.8, 95.3333 and 93.966. The positive skewness of the main exports index shows that the normal distribution has a right tail since the value is far from zero. The main exports and the price index have a normal distribution with a left tail because of a negative skewness.

*Table Error! No text of specified style in document..1: Descriptive statistics*

	Main exports Index	Price Index	Trade exports
Mean	98.8	95.33333333	93.96666667
Standard Error	3.470350607	1.93419521	2.383508152
Median	96	96	96.3
Standard Deviation	6.010823571	3.350124376	4.12835722
Sample Variance	36.13	11.22333333	17.04333333
Skewness	1.641351326	-0.860027736	-1.730907582
Range	11	6.6	7.2
Minimum	94.7	91.7	89.2
Maximum	105.7	98.3	96.4
Sum	296.4	286	281.9
Count	3	3	3

Source: Own Compilation

### 4.2 Correlation Analysis

Table 4.2 shows that there is a positive and strong relationship between trade exports, main exports index and the price index with a correlation coefficient of 0.580903 and 0.93501.

*Table Error! No text of specified style in document..2: Correlation analysis*

Correlation	Main exports Index	Price Index	Trade exports
Main exports Index	1		
Price Index	0.831802	1	
Trade exports	0.580903	0.93501	1

Source: Own Compilation

### 4.3 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis involves the analysis of the summary outputs, the ANOVA table, and the regression statistics. Table 4.3 depicts that 66.96% of the trade exports behaviour is explained by main exports index and the product price index.

*Table Error! No text of specified style in document..3: Summary outputs*

Summary outputs	
Multiple R	0.6698473
R Square	0.669694624
Adjusted R Square	0.669389248
Standard Error	0.433507183
Observations	3

Source: Own Compilation

#### 4.3.1 ANOVA table

Table 4.4 below displays the degree of significance between research variables. The correlation between trade exports, main exports index and the price index is not only strong but significant as well since the significance of equals 0.046305 less than 0.05.

*Table Error! No text of specified style in document..4: ANOVA table*

	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	2	1230.42414	615.212071	4273	0.046305
Residual	2	0.87585695	0.28792847		
Total	4	1430.8			

Source: Own Compilation

#### 4.3.2 Regression Statistics

Table 4.5 shows that main exports index and price index respectively have a significant P-value equals to 0.0372 and 0.0478. This means that a good main exports index and a suitable price index contribute to optimise trade exports performance especially for emerging exporters.

*Table Error! No text of specified style in document..5: Regression Statistics*

	Coefficients	Standard Error	P-value
Intercept	-0.975938103	0.284220287	0.140485921
Main exports Index (MEI)	-0.438791322	0.07016838	0.037283321
Price Index (PPI)	1.807076446	0.061128132	0.047807642

Source: Own Compilation

#### Hypotheses Summary

Hypotheses	Description	P-Value	Decisions
Ho1	The National Exporter Development Programme can significantly affect South African emerging exporters within the Gauteng province.	0.037283321 < 0.05	Reject the Null Hypothesis
Ho2	The Provincial Investment and Promotion Agencies can significantly affect South African emerging exporters within the Gauteng province.	0.047807642 < 0.05	Reject the Null Hypothesis

Source: Own Compilation



### Hypotheses Summary

Based on the regression coefficients displayed in the above table, the regression model becomes:

$$TE = \beta_0 + \beta_1 MEI + \beta_2 PPI + \varepsilon \quad (2)$$

$$TE = -0.975938103 - 0.0438791322 MEI + 1.807076446 PPI + \varepsilon \quad (3)$$

Regression equation (3) means that the coefficient of the MEI should be at least 1 to have a positive trade export since the price cannot be null or negative. Figure 4.1 below shows that the trade exports evolve according to the behaviour of the main exports and the product price index.



Source: Own Compilation

Figure Error! No text of specified style in document..1: Trade exports

### 4.3 Discussion

#### 4.3.1 NEDP and Emerging Exporters

Over 200 emerging exporters were trained under the GEPP between 2016 and 2018. It is evident that this programme provides needed support and knowledge required to penetrate the international market. This is proven by the number of companies trained and those who participated in trade missions and exhibitions.

The research found that most companies who attended the training sessions were fully satisfied with the new approach. The findings also suggest that the current export support programmes play a critical role in developing enterprises to acquire relevant export knowledge. This is evident on the number of companies trained by the GGDA. In total, 262 enterprises more than the actual target of 240 were assisted through export readiness programmes (Gauteng Growth and Development Agency, 2017/18).

#### 4.3.2 Export Capacity Building

There is wide range of exporter development programmes in South Africa offered by all three spheres of government, private sectors, tertiary education institutions and donors. Various training institutions offer self-diagnostic export readiness tools to help exporters gauge their readiness level. GGDA recognises the importance of creating an export culture in the province by ensuring the provision of trade information services such as an export portal. Training remains viable tools for exporters' development. The focal point of the training is to develop emerging exporters to be export-ready and penetrate export market with ease while addressing their export needs.

## 5. Conclusion

Increasing export is among the highest priorities of government. The provision of wide range of export support measures is a major part of enterprise development. The research provided evidence that establishment of an export culture requires a concerted effort from across the value-chain.

Statistical analysis revealed that there is a positive and strong relationship between trade exports, main exports index and the price index with a correlation coefficient of 0.580903 and 0.93501, respectively. Findings showed that 66.96% of the trade exports behaviour is explained by main exports index and the product price index. The regression analysis showed that the relationship is not only positive and strong but significant as well since the significance of equals 0.046305 less than 0.05. It additionally indicated that main exports index and price index respectively have a significant P-value equals to 0.0372 and 0.0478. This means that a good main exports index and a suitable price index contribute to optimise trade exports performance especially for emerging exporters. Based on the quantitative analysis, research results highlighted that the NEDP as well as the GGDA are very critical in supporting emerging exporters in the Gauteng province.

Exporting enables firms to make greater use of their existing capacity and achieve a level of growth otherwise not possible. The study has revealed that the current export support programmes are the most important aspects in building enterprises and acquiring relevant export knowledge. Export development and promotion programmes yield many benefits both on a macro and company level. This export commitment is particularly important for emerging exporters to traverse the difficult and lengthy experiential capability-building process (Johanson & Vahlne, 1990).

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