KELLOGG
RURAL LEADERSHIP
PROGRAMME

Harvard Case Method for Early Career Professionals in the New Zealand Primary Industries

Kellogg Rural Leadership Programme

Course 51 2024

Louis Batley

I wish to thank the Kellogg Rural Leadership Programme Investing Partners for their continued support.

Strategic Partners

Programme Partners

Service Partners

Disclaimer

In submitting this report, the Kellogg Scholar has agreed to the publication of this material in its submitted form.

This report is a product of the learning journey taken by participants during the Kellogg Rural Leadership Programme, with the purpose of incorporating and developing tools and skills around research, critical analysis, network generation, synthesis and applying recommendations to a topic of their choice. The report also provides the background for a presentation made to colleagues and industry on the topic in the final phase of the Programme.

Scholars are encouraged to present their report findings in a style and structure that ensures accessibility and uptake by their target audience.

This publication has been produced by the scholar in good faith on the basis of information available at the date of publication. On occasions, data, information, and sources may be hidden or protected to ensure confidentially and that individuals and organisations cannot be identified.

Readers are responsible for assessing the relevance and accuracy of the content of this publication & the Programme or the scholar cannot be liable for any costs incurred or arising by reason of any person using or relying solely on the information in this publication.

Scholar contact details may be obtained through the New Zealand Rural Leadership Trust for media, speaking and research purposes.

Contents

Executive Summary

The world is becoming more complex, with increased geopolitical volatility. The New Zealand primary sector is heavily exposed to this volatility through trade, so future leaders must be skilled in navigating complex environments.

Research has highlighted a gap in leadership development, especially at an early career professional level in the New Zealand primary sector (Parsons and Nelson, 2023). Furthermore, there is a disconnect between the available programmes.

One such programme is the Strategic Thinking for Agrifood Management Programme (STAMP). This programme is unique in New Zealand. It uses the Harvard Case Method (HCM), a form of teaching case studies, and case study competitions to develop strategic thinking and leadership skills in the primary sector for early career professionals. This research aims to understand the benefits of using these methods, using STAMP as a research case study. The objectives of this study were to:

- Identify skills and benefits developed from the programme.
- Understand the advantages and disadvantages of the programme.
- Identify what additional factors outside of the case studies were important in the programme's effectiveness.
- Identify what could be improved.

A literature review of the HCM and case study competitions was done to see what skills the programme can improve and what is required for the teaching method to be effective. This informed the eleven semi-structured interviews with STAMP participants, which were analysed using thematic analysis. Included in the interviews was a short Likert scale questionnaire on what skills and benefits they believe they got from the scholarship.

The analysis indicated that the HCM and case study competitions effectively improve soft skills, such as confidence and critical thinking abilities, as well as analytical skills, building networks and gaining knowledge around the global agrifood system. All these skills are helpful for strategic thinking and leadership development, especially soft skills. For effective learning to occur, there needs to be the proper environmental conditions, such as a good learning environment where people can openly discuss ideas. In addition to this, in-person field trips effectively improved the participants' learning experience and helped to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Some recommended steps that the New Zealand primary sector could adopt for capability development in early career professionals include:

1. Implement the Harvard Case Method and case study competitions into leadership development programmes for the Primary Sector
2. Optimise environmental conditions for learning in HCM courses (Figure 4).
3. Provide greater availability for facilitator training in HCM.

Recommended steps for STAMP include:

4. Follow up on this research in 10 years to identify how STAMP contributed to participants' career development.
5. Use past participants for mentoring.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the New Zealand Rural Leadership Trust for its valuable work in improving skills and confidence within the sector.

To Annie, Lisa, Lyndsey, Patrick, and Scott, thank you for organising the course. The experience has been fantastic, and the programme was run incredibly well. The knowledge you shared made the course highly valuable.

Thank you to the people I spoke with to help shape the project: Hamish, Peter, Phil, Mary, Lee-Anne, and Dean. It was great getting guidance from you all.

Thank you to AgFirst for supporting me and helping me develop. Erica and James, your support is highly appreciated.

To the STAMP participants interviewed and the wider cohort, thank you for everything you taught me and for the times we had. To Nicola, Elena, Abby, Jo, and Victoria, thank you for the time you gave and for the conversations we had. Hopefully, this report sheds some light on the value of the programme.

To the Kellogg 51 cohort. A group of amazing people who I had the privilege of learning with. I look forward to keeping in touch and seeing where you go and hopefully working together again.

To my family and especially my partner, Sophie, thank you for supporting me through my career and development. I hope I make you proud.

Finally, to my godmother Liz, thank you for your ongoing feedback on the report and encouragement. I am very lucky to have someone like you in my life

Introduction

The New Zealand primary sector is responsible for 81.9 % of New Zealand's merchandise exports in the year to 30 June 2023, 10.5% of gross domestic product (GDP) and 13.1% of employment (MPI, 2023). Most food and fibre produced in New Zealand is exported, so the country relies on a global rules-based system, especially given the country's relatively small size. This rules-based system was established post World War II and is a set of norms and principles regarding global security, the economy and governance to encourage peaceful, predictable, and cooperative behaviour among states (Cimmino and Kroenig, 2020). However, this rules-based system is being challenged and redefined (Parsons et al., 2024). In conjunction with external factors, such as climate change, the global environment is becoming volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA). In this environment, risks interact with each other in unpredictable ways.

Given the primary sector's high exposure to volatile environments and risks (both upside and downside), the need for strategic thinking, critical analysis, and an understanding of the broader primary sector is more pressing than ever. This urgency underscores the compelling argument for leadership development training in the primary sector for early career professionals.

The report The State of Leader Development in New Zealand's Food and Fibre Sector (Parsons and Nelson, 2023) explains that labour markets in the New Zealand primary sector have been traditionally based around free-market principles with little investment in development. They quoted that there is a strong desire to increase collaboration across the primary sector and to broaden its leaders' people skills, perspectives, systems, and strategic thinking. They also believe that the available programmes appear disconnected from each other. Alternatively, Cullinan (2024) explored pathways to governance and found that there is a need to identify emerging leaders to help them fast-track into either director or non-governance roles.

One such leadership programme is the Strategic Thinking for Agrifood Management Programme (STAMP). This programme utilises the Harvard Case Method (HCM), a teaching method using case studies, and case study competitions to develop strategic thinking and awareness in the New Zealand primary sector from both a domestic and global perspective. The HCM requires participants to read a case, analyse it, and then discuss it. Alternatively, case study competitions require teams to analyse a case and present their analysis and recommendations under competitive conditions. This research aims to identify if the HCM and case study competitions are effective and can benefit early career professionals in the New Zealand primary sector.

Aim/Objectives

The research project aimed to understand how the Harvard Case Method, a form of case teaching, and case study competitions, can benefit people in the primary sector, especially emerging leaders, and the sector itself. The research question was:

1. *How effective is the Harvard Case Method, including case study competitions, in developing strategic thinking and leadership skills for early career professionals in the New Zealand primary sector?*
2. *How could this approach be improved?*

This research uses case study methodology on the Strategic Thinking for Agrifood Management Programme (STAMP), which utilises the HCM and case study

competitions with early career professionals in the primary sector. The objectives of this research were:

- Identify skills and benefits developed from the programme.
- Understand the advantages and disadvantages of the programme.
- Identify what additional factors outside the case studies were important to the programme's effectiveness.
- Identify what could be improved.

Literature Review

Case Studies

Case studies on industries or industry sectors can either be research-based or taught (Yin, 2014). Research case studies are used in qualitative and quantitative research, focusing on a topic in a specific location, community, or organisation (Bryman, 2016). In contrast, Yin (2014) states that a teaching case establishes a framework for student discussion and debate. He differentiated the two by noting that research case studies must be focused on the rigorous and fair presentation of empirical data. Although case study analysis is often referred to, case studies will refer to teaching cases throughout the report.

Harvard teaching case studies involve a story, which is "…a description of a real event, which includes a decision, challenge, opportunity, problem or attitude with which a person or people in an organization are faced" (Erskine et al., 1998). The case study is written in a way that leaves the reader wondering what the best way forward is for the company.

The method used to teach the case is the Harvard Case Method (HCM). This was developed by Harvard University. Nohria (2021) explained that Harvard Law School used case teaching in the 1870s, primarily based on a theocratic approach to learning whereby students debate amongst themselves on a case with the lecturer simply guiding or facilitating the conversation instead of lecturing. This method later transitioned into Harvard Medical School (1900) and Harvard Business School (1908). It became more formalised with the first recognised case written in 1921, followed by the development of the formal Harvard Case Method in 1922. This method was later introduced to agribusiness in the 1950s by Ray Goldberg and John Davis. The main goal of the case study was to expose business students to "real-life" problems (Damnjanović and Mijatović, 2017). In higher levels of education, they are used to fast-track individuals to roles in management, including postgraduate studies such as a Master of Business Administration (Rebeiz, 2011).

Case study analysis refers to the formal process of breaking down a case analytically. This involves identifying the problem, applying an analytical framework to examine the business, and then finding solutions that help to solve the problem (Forman and Rymer, 1999). Such frameworks include Porter's five forces, SWOT, or PESTEL analysis.

When students participate in a case study, they act as managers who must make decisions based on incomplete and imperfect information, reflecting a real-life scenario. Importantly, they are held accountable for the quality of their decisions (Rebeiz, 2011).

Harvard Case Method

Herreid (2011) discussed the evolution of the case study teaching methods and their evolution over time. This includes the lecture method, discussion methods, small group method, individual cases, computer-simulated cases, and clicker

cases. This report focuses on the discussion and small group methods. Herreid (2011) notes that the discussion method is the "traditional" case teaching method, whereby a professor or lecturer (facilitator) discusses the case in front of an entire class who has read it previously. The facilitator can encourage case discussion by cross-examining, debates, symposia, trials, or public hearings. The central concept is to get students to participate in discussion, ideally with alternative views. The HCM spans multiple disciplines, including business, accounting, engineering, and agribusiness.

The small group method is undertaken with fewer people and incentivises collaborative or cooperative learning, as Johnson et al. (2006) illustrated. Smaller groups are more effective at "…promoting diversity of opinion and respect for divergent views and improving the expression of ideas" Herreid (2011). The small group method traditionally allowed students to work closely with a mentor and conduct research outside the case, but there are variations. One includes the interrupted case method, discussed in a single lecture, while another is a stepwise fashion, giving additional information to the students after each session.

Case Study Competitions

In addition to HCM teaching, case study competitions are another component of Harvard case studies. Akin to the small group method, students are organised into groups and given a case to analyse and compete against each other (Damnjanović and Mijatović, 2017). Participants critically analyse a real-life problem within a small group of their peers and present their recommendations in a competitive environment. This involves using analytical and managerial skills to develop strategies to address the circumstances outlined in the case (Zhu et al., 2022). Although there is no "right answer" to any case, the chosen recommendation must be based on sound data, analysis, and critical thinking (Foltz et al., 2011). Case study competitions encompass all the aspects of the HCM, but usually without guidance from a tutor or lecturer and in a limited time (Umble et al., 2008; Carter et al., 2019).

Foltz et al. (2011) discussed the benefits of case study competitions. They noted that various professional organisations use case study competitions to engage students with their industry associations and support future professionals in their career development. The first such agribusiness case study competition was through the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) in 1998 in the United States of America. The Food Distribution Research Society (FDRS) followed in 2000, also in the United States, while the International Food and Agribusiness Management Association (IFAMA) held the first global agribusiness case study competition in 2005.

The IFAMA student case study competition involves three categories: young professionals and post-graduate and undergraduate students. There are three rounds of the competition, following the stepwise fashion outlined by Herreid (2011). The first round is four hours of analysis of an initial case study, followed by a fifteen-minute presentation. Those groups who progress to the next round are then given additional information with a similar time to present, and those who progress again repeat the presentation in the finals (Zhu et al., 2022).

Harvard Case Method Learning

The HCM is seen as an effective way of learning for several reasons. The literature consistently highlights problem-based learning, cooperative and active learning, and, to a lesser degree, experiential learning. Most of these themes are based on a student-centred approach. They are usually compared to the traditional teaching pedagogy of lecturing, where there is a one-way flow of information to the students (Rebeiz, 2011).

Problem Based Learning

Problem-based Learning (PBL) is a student-centred approach in which students are given a complex problem to solve together and then reflect on the process. It incorporates real-world issues to promote critical thinking, problem-solving, self-directed learning, and team participation skills (Hmelo and Ferrari, 1997).

Herreid (2011) notes that case studies are simply stories with educational messaging, which can be told in several different ways. Historically, this was defined as problem-based learning. Servant-Miklos (2019) discussed the relationship between the HCM and the problem-based learning method, which McMaster University has more formalised as an additional component derived from the HCM. They noted that both approaches work best with small groups, real-life experiences, and facilitated by good tutors. They also highlight the importance of using real-life examples to help bridge the gap between theory and practice in management. Herreid (2011) mentioned that real-world situations stimulate students' experience, which helps with experiential learning.

Cooperative and Active Learning

Cooperative learning is an instructional form of learning that fosters a sense of collaboration and shared learning, whereby students work in small groups to accomplish a common learning goal under the guidance of a teacher, tutor, or mentor (Gillies, 2020). This form of learning promotes learning from peers and instils a sense of achievement, improving higher-order thinking skills, social and communication skills, and motivates students to learn.

The complex problems that students are provided promote active learning to think, discuss, and investigate problems while creating solutions. This allows students to practice certain skills, problem-solve complex questions, propose solutions, make decisions, and explain ideas, thereby equipping them with practical skills for real-world challenges (Cornell University, N.D.).

Herreid (2011) opines that case studies are a great form of cooperative learning, especially the small group method and that active learning techniques are "…superior to the lecture method.". Other studies mention that case study analysis involves cooperative and active learning when discussing the benefits (Steiner and Laws, 2006; Beckisheva et al., 2015; Damnjanović and Mijatović, 2017).

Herreid (2011) argued that diverse types of case studies should be integrated into the education system to promote cooperative and active learning within the tertiary sector. Specifically, they recommended the "cone of learning" framework from Dale (1969), as illustrated below in Figure 1.

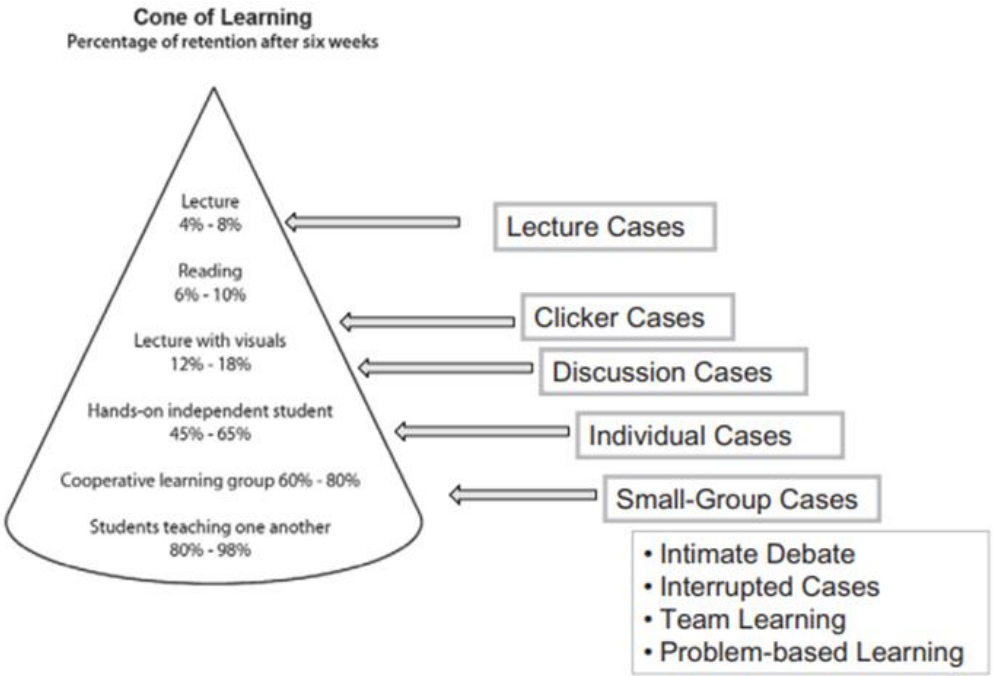

Figure 1: Herreid's (2011) adaption of Dales's (1969) cone of learning, integrating the different types of case studies.

As Herreid (2011) argues, lecturing should be minimised in the education system, and cases should be more integrated. They believe that this is due to peers learning from each other, which is a more effective transfer of information.

Experiential Learning

While only one paper directly references experiential learning (Zhu et al., 2022), most literature discusses learning through experiences. Damnjanović and Mijatović (2017) highlight the significance of case studies in this context, noting that they offer the opportunity to "… learn by doing …", thereby providing a simpler definition of experiential learning. Forman and Rymer (1999) further elaborate on this, expressing that case study analysis is an "… agnostic approach to experiential learning…".

Waller et al. (2017) defined experiential learning as learning by doing. They discussed that learning through experience can be emotionally charged, which can have longer-lasting impacts on people compared to neutral events. They reason that in the brain, the hippocampus (used for memory access) and amygdala (used for processing emotions) become more involved with the experience, and thus make the experience more memorable. Regardless of whether the relationship between the emotion is negative or positive, the research indicated that it needed to be intense. Herreid (2011) notes that the greatest strength of case studies is that "…they put learning into a context that is memorable".

In addition to this, Waller et al. (2017) also highlight that stress can be good at small levels, as it increases adrenaline, which increases heart and respiratory rate, and, to an extent, blood pressure. More neurotransmitters in the prefrontal cortex (planning part of the brain) and hippocampus (memory part of the brain) are released. This creates more cognitive resources for a problem. Alternatively, Kassam et al. (2009) noted that this can trigger challenge and threat stages associated with stress, with the threat stage being too much stress and resulting in decreased decision-making performance. Nevertheless, it can be argued that this can reflect real-world decisions. Useem et al. (2005) discuss the importance of dealing with acute stress and believe that poor preparation and ambiguous authority can lead to poor decision-making. They noted that leaders need to make good and timely decisions in high-stress environments to succeed, emphasizing the importance of good decision-making in challenging situations.

Kolb (1984) believed that knowledge is created and reshaped through reflecting on individual experience. He created a model for experiential learning, with four key aspects:

1. Reflection, critical analysis, and synthesis.
2. Opportunities for students to take initiative, make decisions, and be accountable for the results.
3. Opportunities for students to engage intellectually, creatively, emotionally, socially, or physically.
4. A designed learning experience that allows learning from natural consequences, mistakes, and successes.

Although much of the literature reviewed did not specifically use the term "experiential learning" this framework fits with the HCM of teaching and case study competitions.

Pearse (2009) discussed the role of experiences in developing intellectual capital. Intellectual capital is defined as an increase in human resources and is deemed intangible. Pearse recognised factors that can facilitate or inhibit this process, including valuing reflective processes and having a trusting environment to be able to facilitate discussion. In addition, there needs to be willingness and ability to engage constructively with others for social capital. Perhaps what is highlighted most by Pearce is that intellectual capital is hard to measure and needs the right conditions to flourish, arguably produced by the HCM teaching style.

Baker et al. (2005) discuss the role of conversations as experiential learning, and were responsible for coining the term conversational learning. They defined five key process dialects: apprehension and comprehension, reflection and action, epistemological discourse and ontological recourse, individuality and relationality, and status and solidarity. Conversational learning allows an individual to be open to listening to other points of view and reconsider their point of view, which is a part of the experiential learning principles as outlined by Kolb (1984). It also solidifies the concepts of cooperative learning and emphasises the importance of networking.

Benefits of the Harvard Case Method

The literature noted several benefits from the HCM and case study competitions. Some literature is based on participants' reflections from their personal experiences, while others reviewed literature.

One large benefit of case studies is the exposure to new knowledge (Maier-Lytle et al., 2010). Participants in case studies gain insights into businesses, business models, and different industries both nationally and internationally (Zhu et al., 2022; Foltz et al., 2011; Carter et al., 2019).

Another benefit is that case studies can help bridge the gap between theory and practice (Carter et al., 2019; Umble et al., 2008; Lee et al., 2016). This relates to the ability to use strategic frameworks in real-life situations, enabling complex decision-making to be executed. In addition to this, analytical skills must be used to gain a proper understanding of the business, which is a large component of case study analysis (Foltz et al., 2011). Generally, students already possess analytical skills which are learnt in earlier years of study. Being bereft of such skills, can be a considerable barrier to progressing (Shieh et al., 2012)

The analytical skills that are required include refining and summarising large amounts of information to identify key aspects of the business, including the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Additionally, financial information can be provided in cases. This requires the use of financial skills, such

as standard performance metrics for the business (Rebeiz, 2011; Nohria, 2021; Carter et al., 2019). These skills are especially important in case study competitions when there is time pressure to do a thorough analysis (Zhu et al., 2022). The analysis component is a large factor of strategic thinking.

Rebeiz (2011) notes that the benefits of case study analysis can be broken down into four key categories; conceptual skills (such as decision-making skills), functional skills (such as financial acumen skills), leadership skills (such as communication skills), interpersonal skills (such as teamwork skills), and integration skills. Both Pearse (2009) and Baker et al. (2005) highlight the importance of networking to a degree, which was identified as one of several benefits of case studies and case study competitions.

The main benefit of case studies appears to be soft skills, which were mentioned as a direct impact of case study competitions by Zhu et al. (2022), who focused on the IFAMA student case study competition. Maier-Lytle et al. (2010) went further to note that these included confidence, motivation, responsibility, and teamwork.

Soft Skills

Soft skills are traits and interpersonal skills that allow people to interact effectively with each other. The opposite of soft skills is hard skills, which include knowledge and occupational skills. These can be gained through training, education, and practice (Kenton et al., 2023). Examples include communication, interpersonal skills, leadership, problem-solving, work ethic, time management, and teamwork.

One of the critical themes of case study analysis is the development of soft skills, which can also be called non-cognitive or transferrable skills. These come under emotional intelligence (EI) (Cherniss and Goleman, 2000). These are generally perceived as personal attributes that improve the ability to interact with others, adapt to new situations, and solve problems effectively (Goleman and Boyatzis, 2017).

Gutman and Schoon (2013) note that these skills are related to self-perception, motivation, perseverance, self-control, metacognitive strategies, social competencies, interpersonal interactions, resilience and coping, and creativity. Goleman and Boyatzis (2017) believe that the skills can be split into four domains: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.

The term non-cognitive skills was first coined by the sociologists Bowles and Gintis (1976), who wanted to focus on factors that cannot be measured by cognitive test scores (i.e., intelligence quotient or IQ). These relate to the ability to perceive, understand, use, and manage emotions accurately and should be considered an ability or trait (Cherniss et al., 2016).

Farkas (2003) and Heckman et al. (2006) investigated whether non-cognitive skills impact labour market outcomes, social behaviour, and health. The main finding was that non-cognitive skills can help improve employability, which is especially important when a new technology may make jobs redundant and require new skill sets to be acquired. However, it is difficult to measure the benefits of soft skills (Goleman, 1995; Cherniss et al., 2016; Cherniss and Adler, 2000). It is not well understood if non-cognitive skills are malleable, and most studies appear to focus on one variable instead of multiple variables and fail to analyse causation or correlation between variables (Gutman and Schoon, 2013).

Regarding the use of non-cognitive skills in an educational setting, Cherniss and Adler (2000) found that programs that promote these skills involve a mixture of lectures, discussions, demonstrations, role-playing, and other experiential activities delivered in a group setting. Additionally, the reflection process is an essential

aspect of learning, which can be better offered in a group setting whereby students learn from each other. Herreid (2011) noted that most of these principles align with case study analysis.

The argument for soft skills has been strong in the New Zealand primary sector, especially in informal conversations with industry professionals outside of the literature review. Allen (2024) notes AI's impact on the workforce and argues that soft skills must be considered more.

As Heckman and Rubinstein (2001) stated, "Numerous instances can be cited of people with high IQs who fail to achieve success in life because they lacked self-discipline and of people with low IQs who succeeded by virtue of persistence, reliability, and self-discipline."

An example of this in management is the Peter Principle (Peter and Hull, 1968), whereby people "…rise to their level of incompetence", alluding to promoting people above their level of expertise. In addition, the higher the management level one goes, the greater the requirement for soft skills relative to technical skills. This theory is widely regarded in management and makes the case for professional development, with people often promoted on their technical skills rather than their ability to manage or lead (Corporate Finance Institute, n.d.).

Steiner and Laws (2006) note that case study analysis is a great way to teach students how to approach complex, transdisciplinary problems, and having this experience earlier in their careers can benefit them substantially. They argue that the expectation of being capable of working on simple and complicated issues to working on complex problems has shortened in the workforce, as demonstrated in the Cynefin framework from Snowden and Boone (2007). This framework notes that problems range from ordered to unordered, being simple, complicated, complex, and chaotic. The requirement for thinking changes as there are more possible solutions and information to consider, requiring different ways of thinking. This is illustrated below (Figure 2).

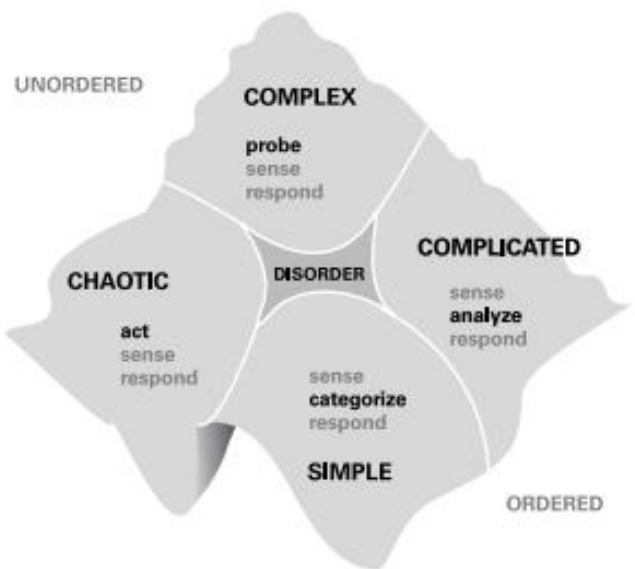

Figure 2: The Cynefin Framework (Snowden and Boone, 2007).

In general, the primary skills gained from case study analysis and competitions were predominantly soft skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, improved communication (both oral and written), leadership, teamwork, confidence, and decision-making (Carter et al., 2019; Lundeberg and Yadava, 2006a, b; Umble et al., 2008; Foltz et al., 2011; Damnjanović and Mijatović, 2017; Rebeiz, 2011; Forman and Rymer, 1999; Maier-Lytle et al., 2010; Zhu et al., 2022; Rebeiz, 2011). Kim et al. (2006) discussed that evidence was unclear for critical thinking. Conversely, other studies argued that it did improve, although noted

that it is inherently challenging to measure (Zhu et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2006; Carter et al., 2019).

Umble et al. (2008) and Damnjanović and Mijatović (2017) both note that the use of case study analysis can also increase student awareness of different business models, broadening their perspectives and being able to understand various problems and solutions Umble et al. (2008).

Both Foltz et al. (2011) and Zhu et al. (2022) examined case study competitions. They noted that competitions can improve time management and negotiation skills and increase general managerial abilities. Foltz et al. (2011) indicated that critical thinking, teamwork, division of labour, research, and decision-making were also required in the designated time frame, all of which are highly valuable to employers. Lee et al. (2016) elaborated that cooperative learning under competitive conditions is an effective learning model.

Damnjanović and Mijatović (2017) believe that case study competitions can internationalise students thinking, while Rebeiz (2011) mentioned that it improves their strategic thinking.

Forman and Rymer (1999) stated that case study analysis can help students better identify problems, develop solutions, and move freely between speaking, reading, writing, and interpreting. In addition, it allows students to apply disciplinary models to better understand complex business problems, think on their feet, and argue succinctly.

Yin (2014) argued that common skills required for analysing case studies include:

- Ability to ask good questions.
- Ability to be a good listener and not be trapped by ideologies or perceptions.
- Adaptive and flexible so that new situations can be seen as opportunities, not threats.
- Have a firm grasp of the issue being studied. This reduces the relevant events and information to be sought to manageable proportions.
- Unbiased by preconceived notions, including from theory. This means being sensitive and responsive to contradictory evidence.

Finally, Carter et al. (2019) noted that employers want students with better critical thinking, complex problem-solving, written and oral communication, and applied knowledge in real-world settings. They also noted that these can be met through case studies.

Requirements of Case Study Teaching

Certain conditions must be met for the benefits of HCM to be effective. Most literature refers to case study teaching rather than case study competitions. However, this learning is essential to attain before competing.

The first consideration is the case study itself. There is variation in the quality of case studies. Foltz et al. (2011) note that the key features of a good case study include a current topic and an interesting problem with complexity. In addition, good supplementary resources that allow the students to do research need to be available. Kim et al. (2006) explain five core attributes that make a good case study: relevant, realistic, engaging, challenging, and instructional.

Another key factor is that the mentor or lecturer facilitates the discussion rather than lectures (Shieh et al., 2012) and that they are well prepared. As Rebeiz (2011) notes, case studies are not likely to benefit in optimal learning outcomes without proper guidance from mentors and, in some cases, may even have negative repercussions on the learning process. Maier-Lytle et al. (2010) argue

that there needs to be people in supporting roles, including assistance from administrators. The most important role is that of the facilitator. Shieh et al. (2012) observe that student preparation is also important, including reading and analysing the case before group work, as without proper preparation, there will be minimal benefit to both the student and facilitator.

The environment is important. It needs to be a safe space where people can discuss ideas without judgment, have a constructive debate, and engage in a reflective process, allowing for experiential learning to occur (Pearce, 2009). Lee et al. (2016) discussed online case-based teaching. They noted that teaching online can be challenging due to the lack of face-to-face interaction and, if not done properly, can reduce the benefits of cooperative learning.

There also needs to be a specific setup for engagement (Shieh et al., 2012). As Rebeiz (2011) indicate, HCM works especially well in an amphitheatre-shaped classroom. This allows students to see and communicate with each other from any vantage point in the room and switch between listening (passive role) and participating (active role).

Rebeiz (2011) argues that groups should have participants from diverse backgrounds. This was echoed by others (Carter et al., 2019; Damnjanović and Mijatović, 2017; Foltz et al., 2011; Zhu et al., 2022). Additionally, the size of the group was also an important factor, with smaller groups often being more effective, although HCM can be done at a larger scale with success (Herreid, 2011).

Literature Summary

In summary, the case study method is an alternative learning style to traditional methods where information is usually one way (vertical). When Harvard Case Studies are correctly done, students participate among themselves and learn from each other in a horizontal learning (cooperative) process. This is generally a reflective process, as Kolb (1984) outlined. This is also a form of experiential learning, which can lead to more emotional experiences and result in students better retaining information.

HCM and case study competitions improve several skills, including soft and analytical, which can lead to intellectual capital improvement, as Pearse (2009) outlined. These skills are also strongly sought after by employees (Allan, 2024) and are leadership traits.

The main limitation of the literature is that it predominantly focuses on using case studies in the tertiary sector to develop skills, so it is often compared to what is available at an undergraduate level. The STAMP scholarship targeted individuals two to three years out of university with some industry experience or some postgraduate expertise. However, one study focused on the postgraduate level, such as the Harvard Executive Master of Business Administration (MBA). STAMP is likely to have more similar attributes, as participants will likely have a reasonable amount of industry experience. When comparing the literature, the outcomes were the same.

HCM in the New Zealand

Some universities in New Zealand teach using HCM or similar. This includes business courses at Waikato and Auckland University, while extracurricular student case study competitions are offered between some universities. The HCM is used at the agricultural universities (both Massey and Lincoln) in some elective courses which are offered to agribusiness students. However, these courses are not offered to all students.

Several leadership development programmes exist in the primary sector, as highlighted by Parsons and Nelson (2023, p. 50). Of the opportunities available in the primary sector (food and fibre leadership organisations), Te Hono boot camp is the only programme that appears to use the HCM other than STAMP.

Thus, there is scope to understand HCM and how it could be better utilised in early career development programmes in the New Zealand primary sector. STAMP is the only early career professional programme that utilises HCM and Case Study Competitions, which are recognised as important for improving skills that are ultimately required for leadership. One of the challenges facing the programme is that HCM is poorly understood by the wider sector, with little industry awareness and limited information available on this.

Strategic Thinking for Agrifood Management Programme

The Strategic Thinking for Agrifood Management Programme (STAMP) provides mentorship for early career professionals or those studying postgraduate in the agrifood sector or related fields. This programme aims to improve the strategic thinking of emerging leaders, broaden their sectorial awareness, and help them build local and global personal and professional networks. This is done using the HCM and case study competitions in conjunction with field trips and discussions with industry leaders.

The programme operates on four weekends a year, two online and two in-person. In-person, participants are taken to different areas in New Zealand to learn about a specific industry. Prior to the weekend, the participants are given two case studies to read and analyse. On the Saturday, these case studies are discussed in the traditional HCM style, whereby a mentor facilitates discussion among participants about the case. Some examples include apiculture, kiwifruit, red meat, wool, arable and alternative proteins. The case studies often involve international businesses from different sectors that face different challenges. The case studies vary from small startup companies to large multinational conglomerates across all parts of the agrifood value chain. This is followed by a field trip to various businesses that show the production and processing of the given product, followed by a discussion with industry leaders about the current challenges of the sector and how they are being addressed. This is then followed by a dinner attended by participants, mentors and sometimes industry leaders.

The following day, participants work in groups to replicate a case study competition. Group members analyse a case study and present the findings and solutions in 15 minutes. Four hours are given for the findings to be submitted before participants present these to the "judges," who are the programme facilitators or mentors. They are then questioned for approximately 10 minutes. After all groups had presented, the mentors gave feedback on the presentations regarding what had been done well and what could have been improved.

Additionally, the STAMP program included field trips and discussions with industry leaders in conjunction with case studies. Some participants were able to compete at the IFAMA conference and attend the conference, where networking opportunities became available. All these factors are outside of the literature reviewed but come under the experiential learning aspect of the program, which is highlighted in learning themes.

The online weekend only takes place on Saturday. A case is discussed online, and an industry leader is invited to discuss problems within an industry. Then, a mini-case study competition is conducted in break-out groups online and presented to judges. The time limit is less (two hours), and the findings are based on

information provided by the initial case and the industry leader. The presentation length was reduced to five minutes.

In addition to the four weekends, participants have the opportunity to compete in the International Food and Agribusiness Management (IFAMA) student case study competition, which takes place at the annual IFAMA international conference. This allows participants to compete against other countries and attend the IFAMA conference.

IFAMA is an international management organization that brings together current and future business, academic, and government leaders and other industry stakeholders to improve the global food and agribusiness system's strategic focus, transparency, sustainability, and responsiveness. IFAMA was formed to stimulate strategic thinking across the full spectrum of the global food system. It is a worldwide networking organisation that acts as a bridge between the agribusiness industry, researchers, educators, government, consumer groups, and non-governmental organizations. The conference involves three days of academic-related presentations, followed by two days of industry presentations (IFAMA, 2024).

The Agricultural and Marketing Research and Development Trust (AGMARDT) funds the programme for up to 30 participants.

This research compares the experiences of STAMP participants with the literature to identify similarities and differences. It does this by investigating the experiences of those who use HCM alongside industry visits and conversations with industry leaders.

Method

The objective of this research was to identify the level of effectiveness of HCM and case study competitions in developing early career strategic thinking and leadership skills in the New Zealand primary sector.

This research project uses STAMP as a research case study to identify what (if any) are the benefits of utilising the HCM, a form of teaching case studies.

Preliminary semi-formal confidential interviews were had with primary sector leaders, academics and HCM professionals to inform the researcher and assist with interview planning.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 previous and current STAMP participants. The questions focused on the programme's skills and benefits and the requirements for its effectiveness, which were informed by the literature review. In addition to this, a verbal questionnaire regarding the skills was done with the use of a Likert scale. The skills were those identified in the literature.

Approximately half of the participants from the 2021 cohort were invited to the interview, of which 11 agreed to participate. Before the interview, a consent form was sent to the participants, informing them that the interview would be transcribed and analysed. Although they would remain anonymous, they could disagree to participate at any stage or refuse to answer any questions.

Interviews were conducted online, using Microsoft Teams or Google Meet. Interview times generally ranged from 20 to 30 minutes and were recorded. Participants were questioned about their experience on STAMP using the following themes:

1. Participants' background, e.g. education, occupation, duration of the programme and why they applied for it.
2. Benefits from the programme.

3. Development of personal skills and competencies because of the programme.
4. Participants' views of the effectiveness of the teaching style on the programme.
5. Suggestions for programme improvement.
6. Long term impacts from the programme.

Interview questions are in Appendix A.

The semi-structured nature of the interview allowed for follow-up questions and for elaboration on key points.

Participants were asked to rate how they believed certain skills had improved or what benefits were offered on the programme. These were rated using a Likert scale from one to nine, whereby one was strongly disagree, five was neutral, and nine was strongly agree. The skills and benefits asked about were critical thinking, soft skills, technical skills, applying theory to real life, self-confidence, understanding of the New Zealand primary sector in a global context, and networking.

The interviews were then transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis. This method is for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns within data (Bryman, 2016). It involves going through a data set (interviews), identifying patterns, systematically coding, deriving themes, and creating a narrative.

Questionnaire scores from the Likert scale were analysed to provide some additional data regarding the skills identified in the literature review. Scores from participants were analysed using the mean, median, and range to provide further depth of information regarding interview findings.

Results

Participants' background and Case study experience

Of the 11 participants, six had a bachelor's degree, one had a postgraduate diploma, and four had masters, of whom two are studying towards doctorates. At the programme's start, most participants had been out of university for two to three years, although some were still studying. Of all the participants, three were from a farming background. Five of the 11 participants were female.

Five studied agricultural-related topics (business, management, or science), one each from horticulture, engineering, food technology, biotechnology, and marketing. The majority worked in the agrifood industry, apart from one in Information Technology (IT), one in academia (agriculture-related), and one studying.

Before the programme, six participants had no experience in the HCM, three had some (from university learning), and two were experienced.

All participants had been on the programme for two to three years and had changed jobs (both within and between organisations) since they started. Most participants were based in New Zealand, but several had moved around the country, and four had left the country since they finished the programme.

The participant's information can be found below in Table 1.

Table 1: Participants' background and experience with Harvard Case Method

Participant	Education	Field	Industry employed in at start	Current Industry employed in	Current Location	Duration of programme (years)	Harvard Case Study Experience	Case Competition
1	Bachelor	Engineering, finance and law	Food processing	Food processing	New Zealand	2	-	Yes
2	Bachelor	AgriCommerce	Horticulture - Graduate Programme	Hort - processing	New Zealand	3	✓	Yes
3	Bachelor	Food Technology	Food processing	Food processing	New Zealand	2	-	No
4	Masters	Business and Management	Hort industry/government	Academic (Lecturer)	New Zealand	2	-	Yes
5	Bachelor	Management and Agribusiness	Primary - consultancy	Primary industry consultancy	Europe	3	✓✓	Yes
6	Masters	Marketing	Academia (studying PhD)	Academia (studying PhD)	New Zealand	2	-	Yes
7	Masters	Horticultural Science	Academia (studying Masters)	Food processing	New Zealand	3	-	Yes
8	Bachelor / PG dip	Science and Biotech, business	Dairy Graduate Programme	Investment analyst	Europe	3	✓✓	Yes
9	Bachelor	AgriCommerce	Dairy Graduate Programme	Investment analyst	North America	3	✓	Yes
10	Masters	AgriCommerce	Primary industry consultancy	Primary industry consultancy	Middle East	2	-	Yes
11	Bachelor	AgriCommerce	Dairy	Management in NGO	New Zealand	2	✓	Yes

Reasons for applying for STAMP and expectations from the programme.

The participants applied for several reasons, but the main reason appeared to be to meet like-minded people, learn about the wider agrifood industry, improve strategic thinking, and develop skills for professional development.

> *It sounded like a great opportunity to be a part of a group or network of engaged and passionate people (Participant 3).*

Participants from non-primary industries backgrounds (or adjacent industries), such as food engineering or science, wanted to better understand all aspects of the agrifood industry as they had not learned about it at university and were not from a farming background.

Some people also applied to have the opportunity to represent New Zealand in a global competition and travel domestically and internationally. One participant noted that "*it was a good way to keep up to date with emerging trends and businesses within the sector*" (Participant 7), while another said they "*wanted to sit down in a room and go through sector problems with a group of people to provide mental stimulation*" (Participant 9).

Benefits from the Programme

Participants highlighted the main benefits of learning the actual case study method, making connections with other participants, mentors, and industry speakers, the experiential aspect of the field trips, and new skill development.

Several participants mentioned that the analysis in HCM case studies "*elevated [their] thinking*" in a more structured way, allowing them to view industry problems differently. The participants commented on how valuable the mentors on the programme were, especially when it came to implementing the methodology and relating it to real world examples. Throughout the interviews, multiple participants acknowledged that they had recently used the Harvard Case Study methodology learned to assess complex decisions within the industry which were making the news.

> *I think at the end of the day, once you learn the methodology, you can apply it to any situation (Participant 4).*

The participants on the programme also valued input from other participants, resulting in great conversations during the break times and outside of the programme. Most of them highlighted that they have called on other participants for work or even to help get a job promotion or new job. Several stated that the diversity among participants benefited their learning and the group dynamics (discussed further in the course evaluation section). One participant revealed that their job did not expose them to a diverse group of people in the agrifood sector, so being involved with STAMP was valuable for this reason.

The field trips were immensely beneficial for allowing industry exposure and for participants to experience what happens in different industries and parts of the country. Many mentioned that although the case studies did a good job of describing a company in an industry, being physically present and seeing how everything worked was highly valuable and made the experience more engaging.

Almost all the participants mentioned the usefulness of being exposed to the wider sector, mentioning that they can become very siloed in their own jobs or industries. The experience gave them an opportunity to better identify different solutions to similar problems in their industry.

It has broadened my perspective and helped me see the bigger picture of the primary industry and stay aware and involved with other sectors, knowing that they are facing similar issues (Participant 2).

Several of the participants emphasised skill development as a benefit, which is elaborated on later in the skills section. The participants who competed in the IFAMA student case study competition observed how valuable both the conference and the opportunity to compete internationally were. They also noted how beneficial it was to travel internationally and gain a different perspective, although this was not the case for all participants since the 2023 IFAMA conference was held in New Zealand. The importance of international travel was able to solidify participants' understanding of where New Zealand fits in the international agrifood chain.

One participant noted that using case studies in conjunction with field trips gave insights into industries and companies that would likely have only been obtained through an internship, which would have been considerably more time-consuming.

Participants who had been part of a graduate programme were asked what STAMP offered, which the graduate programme did not. It appeared that there was considerable variation in the quality of graduate programmes, and therefore the contrast with STAMP. However, the main difference appeared to be that the graduate programmes focused mainly on the what or how, while STAMP focused on the why. In expressing what STAMP could offer, one participant said the following:

What is the purpose of the business, how can it achieve its goals, given the context, what is the best decision for management, and how do you balance stakeholders' needs (Participant 9.

Another noted that their graduate programme had a reasonably comprehensive leadership programme and was done well. However, STAMP was able to provide exposure to other industries, networks, and case study skills, including analytics, presentation, and confidence. They believed that the graduate programme offered real-world experience, allowing them to apply the strategy to a commercial environment.

It was noted that the variation in graduate programmes may have been due to a lack of resourcing from the company. It was also mentioned that the opportunity for graduate programmes was limited to only a few individuals a year and is a domestic experience, while STAMP offers an international experience, which helped to broaden perspectives.

New Zealand agribusiness is small, so how do you create a programme that develops that talent for the industry? STAMP plays an important role. Most New Zealand agribusiness companies are too small for professional development pathways (Participant 10).

In addition to the participants, the organisers and funders of STAMP observed that there was limited opportunity for graduates outside of university to get both professional development and international experience. Hence, STAMP has purposely been targeted at a specific audience who are likely to be future industry leaders to build strategic thinking.

Course Evaluation

This section analyses what participants thought was done well and what could have been done better. It accentuates the aspects that made the programme successful from the participants' perspectives.

What was done well?

All participants stated that the mentors on the programme were very effective at facilitating the learning process, both in advising on case study analysis including the use of frameworks and presentation styles, but also by relating the theory back to real life examples.

Selection for participant diversity in the programme was obvious and added considerable value to the scholarship. This was mentioned by most participants when discussing the breadth of conversations they had in their groups. The main theme was that the diversity of thought, provided by different backgrounds and worldviews, created robust discussion, and introduced aspects which some participants had not considered. Those who mentioned this suggested that it made learning significantly more valuable.

Another aspect was the convenience of the programme, especially since they run over the weekend, and everything was well organised and communicated, allowing working people to participate easily. This was true for both the in-person weekends and online weekends.

> *… even on the virtual weekends, they would go to the extent of sending us like uber vouchers or you know, having food packs arriving at our house … you could have a really busy week, but know that you could just get on that plane, and everything was already sorted for you (Participant 4).*

In addition, the in-person weekends appeared to work well. Participants could see different segments of the industry and the diversity of the case studies, which was valuable as it allowed people to see a range of businesses.

> *[The weekends] expose you to different businesses, business models and ways of thinking around those that you otherwise wouldn't be exposed to (Participant 7).*

Most participants also believed that it was convenient only to have to do four weekends a year, stating that this was not a huge time commitment and that the weekends were so well organised that unless there was a prior commitment, there was little excuse not to attend.

The weekends were also strengthened by the industry speakers who were willing to share information about their respective industry, including current problems which they were facing. Participants declared that there was very little opportunity elsewhere to be able to sit down and discuss problems and opportunities in the sector with such people. This was attributed to the programme's organisation, choosing the right people to speak with which relied on industry contacts. One participant stated a major benefit was hearing two varying opinions on a controversial topic in an industry. They noted that it emphasised the complexity of the problem and gave a very insightful overview of what was happening at the time.

One factor highlighted was that in the case study groups, the more experienced members mentored the less experienced members. Many of the participants referred to this as peer mentoring. They believed they took over the position as they became more experienced.

> *So [they] were kind of taking on the mentor role of the rest of us who had not done it before. By the end of it, I could feel myself shifting more into that role because I had done five [competitions] or so (Participant 4).*

They discussed how peer mentoring helped participants feel welcomed and created a great environment. One participant revealed that they initially felt slightly intimidated to be on the scholarship, suffering from "imposter syndrome," but this was quickly alleviated due to the welcoming environment of the STAMP program.

What could be done better?

Three participants mentioned that they were not confident with the case study methodology. Although the more experienced participants generally mentored their peers in case study competitions by teaching them how to do the analysis and presentations, there was some discussion that an onboarding experience could be beneficial to bring people up to speed. This would include informing new participants about the frameworks and analytical tools available to use. Additionally, some people observed that participants occasionally came unprepared to the weekend without having read the cases prior to the Saturday, noting that there was limited engagement with them and considerably detracted from the experience. Ultimately, participants are responsible for their own learning, so the motivation to learn is a key factor in the programme.

In addition, participants who finished the scholarship believed that there was an opportunity for those who completed the programme to help mentor current programme participants through what they had learnt. They felt that once they left, there was limited opportunity to connect with current participants, which they felt was a shame and would have liked to contribute.

There was a considerable amount of discussion around the use of field trips. Several participants noted that finding a balance between case studies and field trips was hard, believing there were too few field trips. They believed these were valuable as they could get insights into a different industry and apply the case study learning to real life. Additionally, it was effective at breaking up the academic aspect of the weekend, allowing people to have a break.

Some people struggled with the workload, saying that there was not enough time to reflect on what they had learnt. They suggested that a reflection session a week after the event could have been useful. Another mentioned that there was not enough time to engage personally with the other participants, suggesting that arriving on a Friday night for the in-person weekends would be valuable, allowing participants to socialise.

Two participants noted that it would have been better to spend more time investigating individual case studies and discussing the strategies presented in the competition in more depth. They felt as though they were only scratching the surface of the case and that there was a lot more to discuss.

Several participants revealed that they struggled to engage with the course on online weekends.

> *Some of us stare at our screens for 40 hours at least a week anyway, and so coming back on the weekend to stare at my screen again for hours and hours on end wasn't exactly super appealing (Participant 4).*

Although the online weekends provided valuable information and insights, the motivation appeared to be considerably less, whereas the in-person weekends provided a more provocative environment. One participant acknowledged that the online content needed to be short, concise and to the point. Most participants acknowledged that the use of online weekends may have been due to resource constraints and appreciated the effort but said that it was less effective at providing the learning outcomes an in-person weekend did. They also acknowledged that COVID made in-person events hard to organise.

More recent participants noted that the communication from organisers has become less clear, detracting from their experience.

Skills or Competencies Gained

The key skills participants believed were developed were teamwork, presentation skills (PowerPoint slides and improvement in communication) and the confidence to speak to large audiences. The latter involved being able to think quickly when asked questions, having confidence in their abilities, and listening to what other people had to say to come up with a robust concept. Most participants noted the improvement in their soft skills, noting that they were reinforced with the competition format, as people require "skin in the game".

> *Being able to understand how to work within a team under time pressure and really come together and think about the issues. Also, being able to listen and understand people's thoughts and feelings in their perspectives on cases was very valuable (Participant 4).*

An additional analysis skill was the ability to process information better and sort out what is relevant to the situation through better reading and the ability to take a large volume of information and refine it into key points. This was done through the HCM process of strategic frameworks. As mentioned in what was done well, the frameworks were taught well over time, and more experienced participants generally helped less experienced participants understand them.

Most participants believed that using strategic frameworks added structure to their thinking around a problem. They have been able to apply this framework to everyday situations, which was acknowledged as a major improvement in their strategic thinking. This is likely the evidence to suggest the link between bridging theory and reality.

Many participants noted that their use of strategic frameworks, presentation skills, and confidence in speaking to large audiences was not well developed in their jobs, especially for those in more technical roles. They mentioned that since leaving the programme, they have used several of these skills in their careers to help them progress into a new job or role within their company.

One participant emphasised that the programme is an excellent way to move from a technical job into a broader role in their organisations. It is especially valuable for people wanting to progress into upper management or executive roles. However, they believed the programme may be limited to people who want to remain in technical roles. Others felt that communicating and working with others was valuable for any role.

Questionnaire Results

In addition to asking participants what skills and benefits they believed were developed, they were asked to rank the skills on a Likert scale from one to nine, where one was strongly disagree, five was neutral and nine was strongly agree. Ten of the 11 participants partook in this exercise. Table 2 below illustrates the average scores for the participants overall. The data shows that the main benefit from the scholarship was the network which was developed from it, followed by confidence building and a better understanding of New Zealand in a global context regarding the agrifood system.

All skills scored highly, except technical skills, which was close to neutral. This was to be expected as the scholarship does not focus on the development of technical skills as much as it does on the development of other skills. The questions were developed from the literature review and highlight any consistencies or disparities between what exists in the literature.

Table 2: Likert Scores

Rank	Skill/Benefit	Mean Score	Median Score	Range	
				Minimum Score	Maximum Score
1	Network Building	8.3	9	5	9
2	Confidence Building	7.7	8	6	9
3	NZ global context	7.6	8	4	9
4	Apply Critical Thinking	7.4	7	6	8
5	Theory to real life	7.3	8	5	9
6	Soft Skills	7.2	7	5	9
7	Technical Skills	5.9	6	3	8

Overall, views were broadly consistent. One outlier in the data scored low in the global context and technical skills and was neutral in applying theory to real life. This participant has a background in policy for an international company so was heavily exposed to the international context compared with other participants. They remained neutral on linking theory and real life, which was reflected in their view that not enough time was spent on each case study and relating it to the industry. Another participant also observed this for the same reason. However, both participants noted that the programme was highly valuable to them overall.

Two participants were neutral about the programme's usefulness for developing soft skills. One had extensive experience with HCM case studies before the programme, so pointed out that by comparison with STAMP, it added little. The other participants said that they struggled with soft skills in general but also felt it was harder to engage as they were still relatively new on the scholarship compared to other participants, which contributed to this. The participant with extensive experience in case studies also scored neutral on the networking but was referring to networking with industry contacts as opposed to other participants who recognised networking on the programme.

One participant did not compete in the international competition. They had the lowest score in increase in confidence (slightly agree). The other participant who scored lower than average confirmed that they presented to groups often in their job and competed online as opposed to in person (due to COVID), so they did not benefit as much as others in this respect.

Overall, the results indicate that the programme has benefits similar to those in the literature.

Discussion

The findings from this research are largely consistent with those identified in the literature. HCM case study analysis and competitions both appear to be effective at improving skills such as communication, creative thinking, listening, and group work, which are all transferrable and soft skills. Many of these skills developed as part of cooperative learning, whereby participants could learn from each other. As noted in the literature, many of these skills are necessary for leadership.

One key factor identified in this research was that the learning environment in which this took place appeared to help facilitate these skills and benefits. Most participants noted that the collaborative learning environment allowed people to express their opinions without being judged. This meant that they were able to have constructive discussions on topics. The diversity and experience of the participants also improved the quality of discussions, with participants able to draw on personal experience from either their industry or career. Several times, it was mentioned that the most exciting conversations had been with people not from a traditional

agricultural background, so there was a high benefit in HCM case studies on diversity of thought.

However, one experienced participant did not score highly on the Likert scale; they would have added considerable value to the programme as they could share their knowledge and insights with the broader group. Overall, the participant still emphasised that the programme was essential to their development. These findings are consistent with the literature (Rebeiz, 2011; Carter et al., 2019; Damnjanović and Mijatović, 2017; Foltz et al., 2011; Zhu et al., 2022).

One participant believed that the diversity of participants could additionally attract or keep talent in the sector. In contrast, another who had recently joined the agriculture sector observed that the primary industry usually struggles to attract talent.

One key difference from the literature was that the participants in the programme had a reasonable amount of work experience, as most of the literature focused on undergraduate students. This added considerable value to the conversation and, therefore, cooperative and active learning. Participants noted that they were able to draw from real-life experiences. Thus, there may be an opportunity for HCM and case study competitions to be better utilised in early career professionals who have job experience.

Another insight was the leadership factor, whereby more experienced participants "mentored" less experienced participants. Peer mentoring occurred naturally in the programme. Although there was a reasonable amount of literature regarding a mentor, this usually referred to the person facilitating the learning or the group rather than participants mentoring each other. Again, this mentoring relationship helped to create a good learning environment. It is uncertain if participants were selected for variation in experience, but this appeared to be a contributing factor in the programme's success.

Additionally, competing in the international case study competition appeared to have given participants more confidence and the chance to gain international experience through the programme. Many participants had not previously presented to a large crowd and believed that it solidified their skill development as you had "skin in the game". Participants who competed two years ago in Costa Rica noted that they were able to learn more about smallholder farming operations and tropical farm systems. Although this information could be taught in the HCM case studies, the experiential aspect of it was considerably more valuable. The same was true for the weekends, where participants could see the value chain in several New Zealand primary industries, including production and processing.

Alternatively, the competitions themselves were a form of experiential learning (Waller et al., 2017), as participants had to complete a presentation instead of just discussing a case. This process followed Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model.

In terms of the feedback from participants, many highlighted the importance of having in-person weekends compared to online weekends. They mentioned that the programme was considerably more valuable with the addition of field trips where they could see different industries. They noted that this was important, providing a break from doing case study analysis and being able to apply what they had learnt. The field trip aspect is likely to emphasise the experiential aspect of the programme, which, again, is not a part of the HCM itself. Participants thought that without this aspect, the programme would be considerably less appealing.

This was reflected in their frustrations with the online weekends. They elaborated that it was hard to get proper engagement because they were looking at a screen instead of being there in person. No literature was assessed using the online group case study method compared to in-person, but its dynamics would likely have been

different without the person-to-person interactions. This may also reflect that the learning environment created in the in-person weekends cannot be replicated virtually or would require more research on how or if it could be replicated.

One trade-off was the amount of analysis done on a single case. Some participants believed three cases in a weekend was too many and would have preferred to focus on a single case. Additionally, some participants would have liked to have done more analysis on the case study competition presentations for each group to help them understand what could and could not have worked and why. Nevertheless, participants stated that the diversity of case studies exposed them to different business models, problems, and operating environments, which were highly valuable, aligning with current literature (Zhu et al., 2022; Foltz et al., 2011; Carter et al., 2019). Given the time constraints of the programme, there is no correct answer to this dilemma, but it is a trade-off which could be considered.

Participants in the programme thought there could have been more effort to formalise when participants joined and left the programme. They discussed that there is no formal onboarding or offboarding from the programme, and participants who had left the programme felt disappointed that there were no opportunities to share what they had learnt with the remaining or new participants. This could be something to consider for the programme organisers in the future.

Regarding the case studies, the facilitators appeared to have done an excellent job in choosing specific cases across various industries and different business models. Furthermore, using a "theme" or sector on which case studies were focused around appeared to work well. The cases were domestic and international, which helped participants better understand where the New Zealand primary sector was placed internationally. Many participants perceived this to be beneficial. Using domestic and international cases helped identify the strengths and weaknesses of the primary industry and assess the opportunities and threats. Several participants identified that most subsectors in the primary sector face similar problems, although these were framed differently. Others noted that the same was true between countries.

Perhaps the most important outcome of the programme involved teaching participants to apply the frameworks to real-life problems. Most participants stated that they continue to use this form of analysis daily to analyse current issues within the primary sector and in their jobs. This evidence suggests that the case study analysis frameworks taught in the course also help bridge the gap between theory and practice (Carter et al., 2019; Umble et al., 2008; Lee et al., 2016). It also indicates that the programme has helped participants develop better critical thinking skills. These factors suggest the strategic outcome the programme focused on was ultimately achieved.

Figures 3 and 4 below illustrate the benefits of HCM and the factors required to have an effective programme. These were developed from the literature and the interviews. Figure 3 illustrates that the main benefits can be broken down into soft skills, other skills, knowledge and networks. Figure 4 shows that for an HCM programme to be effective, there needs to be a good environment, motivated and experienced participants, a good choice of case studies, good mentors with experience and good networking opportunities.

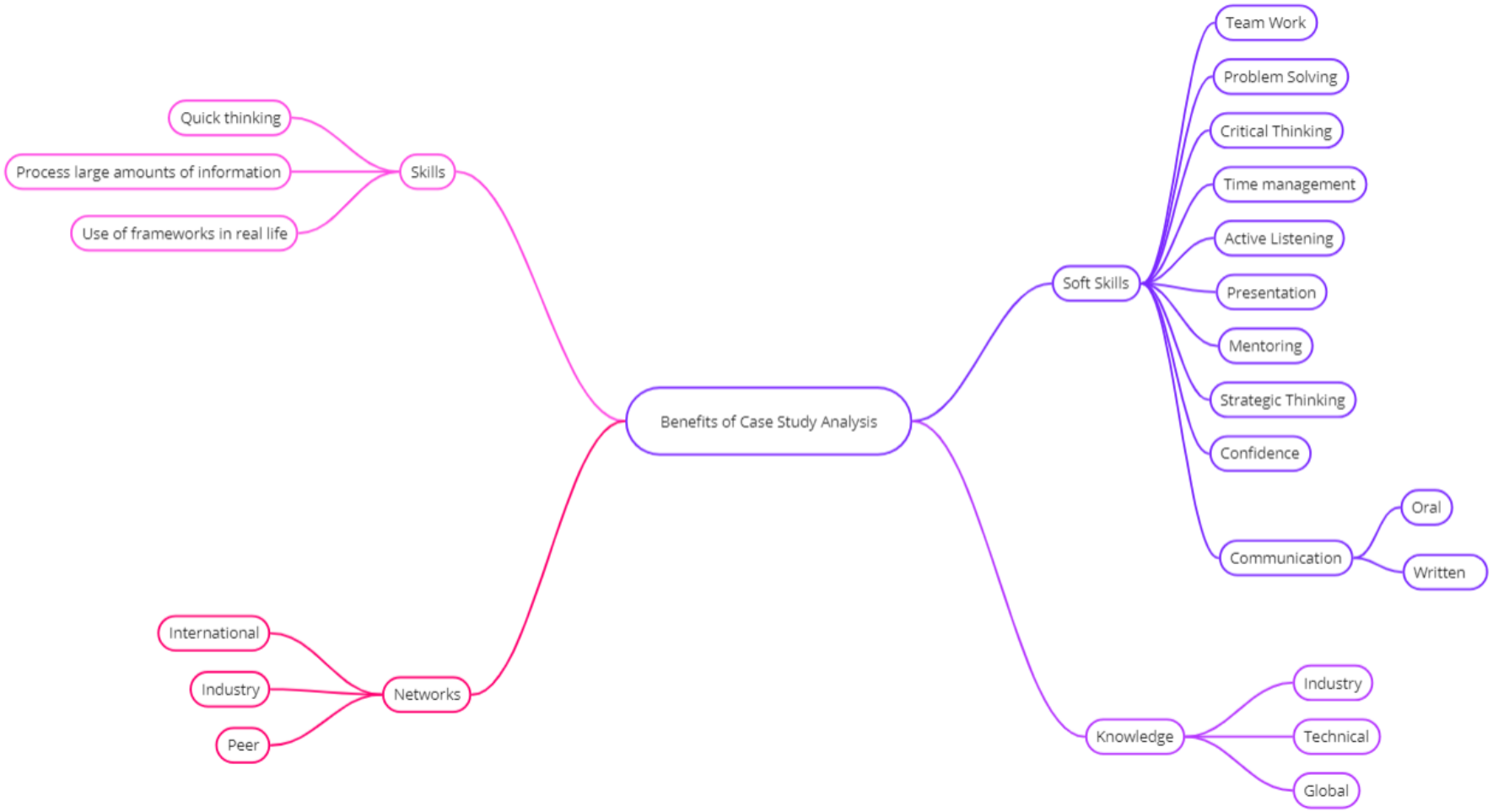

Figure 3: Benefits of Case Study Analysis through STAMP.

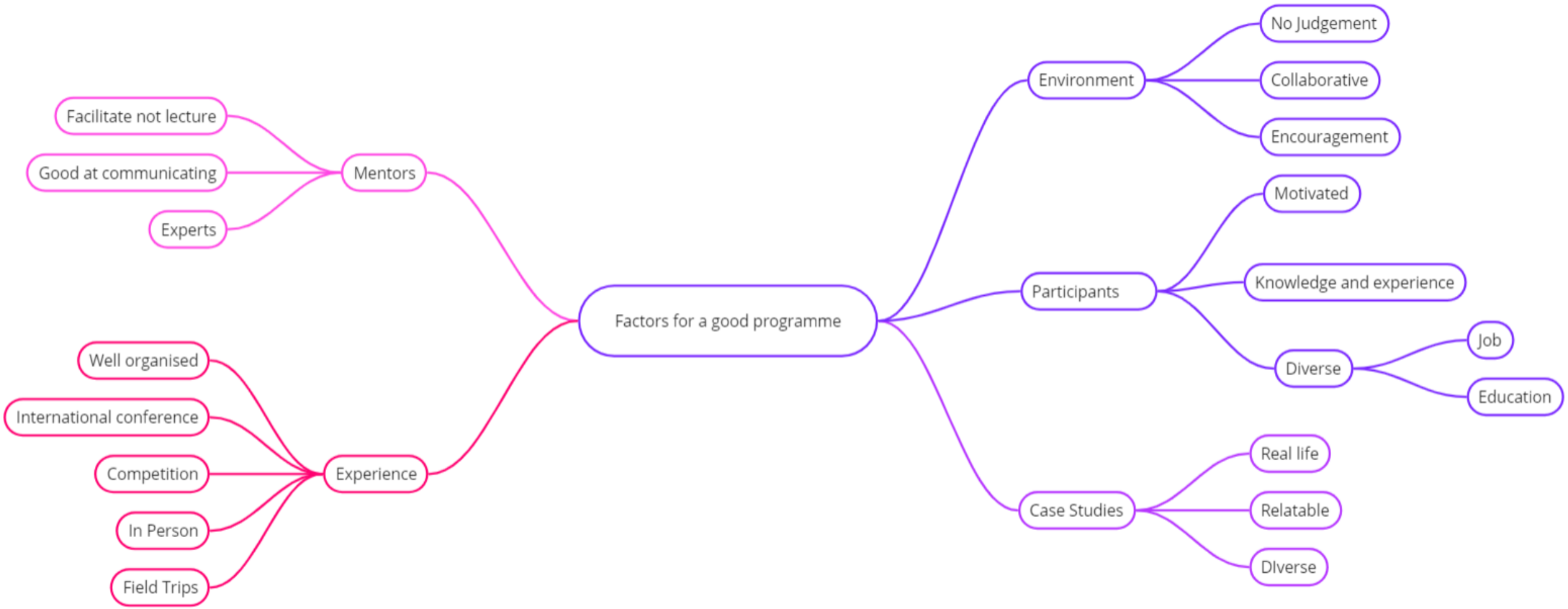

Figure 4: Factors for a good programme.

Limitations of Harvard Case Studies

According to a renowned agribusiness case study author, case studies are expensive to write and require a company to be open and transparent regarding the information that they share. Additionally, it is hard for an academic to progress in their career as academic journals do not usually publish these sorts of case studies. Due to this, it is difficult for some universities to get buy-in.

One key aspect of case studies identified in the literature was the effectiveness of the programme's mentors in facilitating discussion instead of lecture-based teaching. Most participants felt that the mentors did a great job and could draw on their governance or life experience, making the learning experience more valuable. It is worth noting that these key individuals are significant to the programme and may be hard to replace as few people have HCM teaching skills in conjunction with industry knowledge and experience.

Additionally, resourcing the programme (including financing) is a significant limitation in offering this to the industry. The programme is fully funded but relatively costly, particularly the experiential learning component, which adds considerable value, such as the field trips, conversations with industry leaders, and the conference itself. Financing is not mentioned in this report, but it plays a significant role in the programme's achievement.

HCM case studies are only one way to achieve the desired outcomes, elaborated on in the skill development section. There are other ways to achieve the same outcomes, but they have not been discussed in the report.

However, the key findings would likely remain constant if the programme consisted of good facilitators or mentors, an engaged group of experienced participants from diverse backgrounds, and a cooperative learning environment that encourages constructive discussion and debate and facilitates learning. Regardless of the teaching method, learning from each other, cooperative learning, or learning through doing and seeing, experiential learning (field trips) are critical factors in the programme. These factors are effective in helping to develop people into better thinkers, thereby providing better outcomes for the future of the primary sector. This is especially crucial today, given the increasing complexity of the world and the need to collaborate with experts to come up with good solutions.

As we advance, the discussion on professional development should focus on how these aspects can be facilitated into programmes. Ultimately, this will need to come down to the programme coordinators and perhaps the funders. There appears to be an opportunity to better integrate the use of HCM as a learning experience for industry professionals with work experience, as currently, most are targeted towards students with very little work experience.

Future for STAMP

STAMP targeted people working at any level of the agrifood sector who are two to three years out of university and early career professionals. The programme organisers mentioned that few professional development opportunities are available in the sector, especially those that offer international exposure. Some companies offer graduate programmes, but these appear to vary in effectiveness and do not provide the same outcomes as STAMP in terms of benefits and skills. Leadership courses available in the primary sector can be found in Parsons and Nelson (2023, p50).

STAMP is designed to get people from a wide range of backgrounds to come together and analyse problems from a higher level than they are usually exposed to. Several participants likened it to sitting on a senior leadership team and

presenting to a board. They were given information enabling them to see all aspects of the organisation and the industry instead of being siloed into one specific part of the company, which was often the case for many participants. This enabled them to think from a higher level about how all parts of the business work together. These opportunities are generally not offered, especially in early career, requiring several years in the industry before people advance to the levels.

The development offered in STAMP is targeted to get individuals to excel in their careers and, ideally, advance to senior management roles in future and have better governance experience by replicating situations found around a board table. As mentioned, opportunities are limited to do this and to develop the skills required to be good at it. As the funder mentioned, assessing the programme's impact is hard as it will bias towards how successful the participants are. However, the programme aims to accelerate participants' progress, enabling them to advance their careers more quickly. The programme adds significant value to the sector in developing intellectual capital, which is considered an intangible benefit. Thus, it is hard to assess how effective the scholarship is. This research has tried to identify what skills have been developed and the main benefits from the programme, but it is difficult to put this into a return-on-investment metric. The best way this could be done would be to look at where the group alumni are in a decade and identify how vital STAMP was to get to their current career.

The HCM, in conjunction with competitions and field trips, appears to be a very effective method to develop people. One participant suggested that allowing the learning process to go from lecturing to learning from each other could be better utilised at conferences to leverage the considerable wealth of knowledge sitting in the audience to get more engagement and help foster better discussions. Some participants in the group were lucky enough to experience this at the IFAMA conference and mentioned how powerful it was.

Conclusions

The HCM is utilised in various academic and professional settings in New Zealand. STAMP, which effectively utilises HCM and case study competitions, is a promising initiative for early career professionals in the New Zealand primary sector. The programme is effective at developing critical and strategic thinking and leadership skills, which are crucial for the sector, given the complexity of the global environment. Despite these benefits, the HCM is not widely understood within the industry, indicating a need for greater awareness.

STAMP is specifically designed to enhance early career professionals' strategic thinking and sectoral awareness through a combination of mentorship, HCM analyses, case study competitions, field trips, and interactions with industry leaders. The program's unique delivery method, which can include both online and in-person weekends as well as individual learning, ensures a balance of theoretical knowledge and practical learning, making it highly relevant to real-world situations.

Participants in the STAMP program reported significant improvements in strategic thinking and soft skills such as oral presentation and confidence. The diversity of the participants and the peer mentoring aspect were particularly valuable. The HCM and case study competitions fostered robust discussions and provided varied perspectives, enhancing the learning experience. The tools learned also helped structure strategic thinking, further enhancing the learning experience.

Participants highly valued field trips and discussions with industry leaders, as they offered unique insights and enhanced the learning experience. Moreover, the networking opportunities and international exposure from the program, particularly

the IFAMA student case study competition, are additional benefits that excite and motivate participants.

Suggestions for improvements include an onboarding process, increased field trips, better engagement in online weekends, better communication from organisers, and opportunities for alumni to mentor current participants.

In summary, while the use of HCM can effectively help develop essential skills for early career professionals in the New Zealand primary sector, these methods could be extended further in industry training. There are opportunities to enhance participant engagement and program delivery in the STAMP to maximise its impact.

Recommendations

Leadership development in the New Zealand primary sector appears to be disjointed and random, as Parsons and Nelson (2023, p50) have shown. This research highlighted the benefits of using the HCM and case study competitions to develop leadership and strategic thinking skills. While STAMP utilises HCM, awareness of this teaching method in NZ is limited, and therefore the relative benefits are poorly understood. Having shed some light on the STAMP programme, and HCM used in teaching this and the benefits for early career professionals, the following recommendations are suggested.

For the New Zealand Primary Sector:

1. **Implement the Harvard Case Method and case study competitions into leadership development programmes for the Primary Sector**.
   The following approaches could be used.
   - Make courses like STAMP more available and raise awareness of the benefits of HCM teaching courses. Funding needs to be considered. This could come from industry (AGMARDT or other scholarships), employers, and individuals.
   - Incorporating HCM or case study competitions into existing programmes such as Industry graduate programmes and postgraduate study.
   - Encourage industries to send and pay for or subsidise their graduate programme participants to attend courses such as STAMP. This could expose participants to greater diversity (learning from others). It is likely unrealistic for a particular industry to develop its own HCM course. For example, STAMP could include industry participants funded or subsidised by their employer, who will also benefit from their learning.
   - Include HCM as a session(s) in industry conferences. There is considerable intellectual capital in conference audiences that is not utilised other than at networking events. Incorporating HCM session(s) would help facilitate learning, including cross-industry learning opportunities. This will be particularly valuable for early career professionals.

2. **Optimise environmental conditions for learning in HCM courses (Figure 4).**
   Include participants with some industry experience from diverse backgrounds who can discuss complex problems in a cooperative environment, e.g., postgraduate, early career professionals, and business managers. Ideally, the course is in-person rather than online to maximise participant interaction and learning.

3. **Provide greater availability for facilitator training in HCM.**
   Few professionals can facilitate HCM, and professionals have limited opportunities to develop HCM. For example, people in industry development

and extension services may benefit from being able to incorporate HCM into their training. This could be done by:

- Identifying current capacity in the sector.
- Developing a programme to train the trainer.
- Bring overseas experts to present a course for trainers, e.g., from universities and extension services. This is something AGMARDT could consider and may be willing to fund.

For STAMP:

4. **Follow up on this research in 10 years to identify how STAMP contributed to participants' career development.**
   The participants are still early career professionals who have recently completed STAMP; hence, the programme's long-term impact could not be identified. AGMARDT could undertake this since they fund the programme.

5. **Use past participants for mentoring**.
   STAMP should consider utilising past participants' intellectual capital and networks to continue developing a programme. This would require developing an alumni network that could help with the programme's onboarding process.

Limitations

One limitation of this research is that not enough participants were interviewed to get a representative sample. Case study research data is qualitative, not quantitative, so the research has explored in depth but does not quantify data. Results may not necessarily be representative of the wider audience. However, few HCM courses are available in New Zealand, so this will likely provide a good representation of early career professionals in New Zealand.

Furthermore, the sample was self-selecting in that it depended on participants' availability and willingness to participate in the research. Of the 15 approached, 13 responded, of which 11 were interviewed due to time constraints. While this is a limitation, it is likely to have been enough to capture variation in the data.

Another limitation is that many of the participants were on the programme in the middle of COVID. Therefore, more of the course was done online than would have otherwise been the case. This created some limitations to the learning experience.

Additionally, the people on the course have been selected based on ability, so it could be argued that the sample population is biased and not representative of the wider population. However, the sample population was representative of those likely to be attending these types of courses. This research describes the effectiveness of the HCM in targeting early career professionals who show promising potential.

A further limitation is that the study did not investigate people with no tertiary education but vast business or management experience. There appeared to be limited literature on the matter, and all participants in STAMP had tertiary education.

Finally, a considerable limitation is that the interviewed participants have only left the course within the past two years and are still in the early stages of their careers. It may be beneficial to revisit the participants in a decade and ask them how HCM contributed to their career development to understand the effectiveness of the programme better.

References

Allen, J. (2024). *Redefining excellence in agribusiness advisory: the role of the advisor in the modern world*. Nuffield New Zealand farming scholarship.

Baker, A. C., Jensen, P. J., & Kolb, D. A. (2005). Conversation as Experiential Learning. *Management Learning*, 36 (4), 411–427.

Beckisheva, T.G., G.A. Gasparyan and N.A. Kovalenko. 2015. Case study as an active method of teaching Business English. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Science* 166: 292-295.

Bowles, S., & Gintis, H. (1976). *Schooling in capitalist America* (Vol. 75). New York: Basic Books.

Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods: 5th Edition*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, United Kingdom.

Carter, J. D., Burke, M. G., & Hughey, A. (2019). The Influence of Business Case Study Competitions on Students' Perceptions of Learning. *Business and Professional Communication Quarterly*, *82*(4), 475–494.

Cherniss, C., & Adler, M. (2000). Promoting emotional intelligence in organizations: Guidelines to help you design, implement, and evaluate effective programs. *American Society for Training and Development*.

Cherniss, C., & Goleman, D. (2000). Emotional intelligence. In *Annual meeting of the society for industrial and organizational psychology, New Orland, LA, April 15*.

Cherniss, C., Roche, C., & Barbarasch, B. (2016). *Emotional Intelligence*. Encyclopedia of Mental Health, Volume 2, Academic Press, pp 108-115.

Cimmino, J., & Kroenig, M. (2020). *Strategic context: The rules-based international system*. Atlantic Council Strategy Paper Series. Retrieved from: https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/content-series/atlantic-council-strategy-paper-series/strategic-context-the-rules-based-international-system/

Cornell University. (n.d.). Active Learning. Center for Teaching Innovation, Cornell University, New York. Retrieved from: https://teaching.cornell.edu/teaching-resources/active-collaborative-learning/active-learning#:~:text=Active%20learning%20methods%20ask%20students,words%20through%20writing%20and%20discussion.

Corporate Finance Institute. (n.d.). *Peter Principle*. Retrieved from: https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/management/peter-principle/#:~:text=The%20Peter%20Principle%20states%20that,fail%20in%20his%20new%20position.

Cullinan, D. (2024*). Pathways to Governance: enhancing food and fibre sector governance for greater impact*. AGMARDT, Feilding, New Zealand.

Dale, E. *Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching*. (3rd ed.) New York: Dryden Press, 1969.

Damnjanović, V., & Mijatović, I. (2017). Student Perception Of Benefits From Being Engaged In International Case Study Competitions. *Sustainable Business and Management Solutions in Emerging Economies*, 22 (2), 61-71.

Erskine, J.A., Leenders, M.R., & Mauffette-Leenders, L.A. (1998). *Teaching with cases*. London: Ivey Publishing.

Farkas, G. (2003). Cognitive skills and noncognitive traits and behaviors in stratification processes. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 29, 541-562.

Foltz, J., Johnson, A., & Devadoss, S. (2011). Agribusiness Case Study Competitions – Educational, Practical, Challenging, and Rewarding. *NACTA Journal*, *55*(1), 44–49.

Forman, J., & Rymer, J. (1999). The Genre System of the Harvard Case Method. *Business and Technical Communication*, 13 (4), 373 – 400.

Gillies, R. M. (2020). An introduction to cooperative learning. The Education Hub. Retrieved from: https://theeducationhub.org.nz/an-introduction-to-cooperative-learning/

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can Matter More than IQ*, New York: Bantam.

Goleman, D., & Boyatzis, R. E. (2017). Emotional Intelligence Has 12 Elements. Which Do You Need to Work On? *Harvard business review*, 84 (2), 1-5.

Gutman, L. M., & Schoon, I. (2013). *The impact of non-cognitive skills on outcomes for young people*. Institute of Education, University of London.

Heckman, J. J., & Rubinstein, Y (2001). The importance of non-cognitive skills. *The American Economic Review*, 91, 145-149.

Heckman, J. J., Stixrud, J., & Urzua, S. (2006). The effects of cognitive and noncognitive abilities on labour market outcomes and social behavior. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 24(3), 411-482.

Herreid, C. F. (2011). Case study teaching. *New directions for teaching and learning*, 2011(128), 31-40.

Hmelo, C. E. & Ferrari, M. (1997). The problem-based learning tutorial: Cultivating higher order thinking skills. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 20 (4), 401-422.

IFAMA. (2024). *Mission and history*. International Agribusiness Management Association. Retrieved from: https://ifama.org/mission-and-history

Johnson, D., Johnson, R., & Smith, K. (2006). Active Learning: Cooperation in the College Classroom. Edina, Minn. Interaction Book Co., 2006.

Kassam, K.S., Koslov, K., & Mendes, W.B. (2009). Decisions under stress: Stress profiles influence anchoring and adjustment. *Psychological Science*, 20 (11), 1394-1399.

Kenton, W., Kindness, D., & Li, T. (2023). *What Are Soft Skills? Definition, Importance, and Examples*. Investopedia. Retrieved from: https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/soft-skills.asp#citation-2

Kim, S., Phillips, W. R., Pinsky, L., Brock, D., Phillips, K., & Keary, J. (2006). A conceptual framework for developing teaching cases: a review and synthesis of the literature across disciplines. *Medical Education*, 40(9), 867-876.

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Lee, S. J., Ngampornchai, A., Trail-Constant, T., Adril, A. & Srinivasam, S. (2016). Does a case-based online group project increase students' satisfaction with interaction in online courses? *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 17(3), 249-260.

Lundeberg, M., & Yadav, A. (2006a). Assessment of Case Study Teaching: Where Do We Go from Here? Part I. *College Science Teaching*, 35(5), 10–13.

Lundeberg, M., & Yadav, A. (2006b). Assessment of Case Study Teaching: Where Do We Go from Here? Part II. *College Science Teaching*, 35(6), 8–13.

Maier-Lytle, J., McGuire, B. L., & Ehlen, C. E. (2010). Case Study Competitions Give Accounting Students a Competitive Edge. *Management Accounting Quarterly,* 11 (4), 40-47.

MPI. (2023). *Situation and Outlook for Primary Industries*. Ministry for Primary Industries, Wellington, New Zealand.

Nohria, N. (2021). What the case study method really teaches. *Harvard Business Review*, *21*,

Parsons, C.J., Ford, E.J., Williams, J. (2024). *A Path to Realising Leadership Potential in Aotearoa NZ's Food and Fibre Sector*. NZ Rural Leadership Trust, Christchurch, New Zealand.

Parsons, C., & Nelson, E. J. (2023). *The State of Leader Development in New Zealand's Food and Fibre Sector*. NZ Rural Leadership Trust, Christchurch, New Zealand.

Pearse, N. J. (2009). The role of experiences in creating and developing intellectual capital. *Management Research News*, 32 (4), 371-382.

Peter, L. J., and Hull, R. (1968). *The Peter Principle: Why Things Always Go Wrong*. William Morrow and Company, New York, United States of America.

Rebeiz, K. S. (2011). An Insider Perspective on Implementing the Harvard Case Study Method in Business Teaching. *US-China Education Review*, 5, 591-601.

Shieh, R. S., Lyu, J. J., & Cheng, Y. (2012). Implementation of the Harvard case method through a plan–do–check–act framework in a university course, *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 49 (2), 149-160.

Servant-Miklos, V. F. C. (2019). The Harvard Connection: How the Case Method Spawned Problem-Based Learning at McMaster University, Health Professions Education, Volume 5 (3), 163-171.

Snowden, D. J., & Boone, M. E. (2007, November). A Leader's Framework for Decision Making. *Harvard business review*, 85 (11), 68-76.

Steiner, G., & Laws, D. (2006). How appropriate are two established concepts from higher education for solving complex real-world problems? A comparison of the Harvard and the ETH case study approach. *Sustainability in Higher Education*, *7*(3), 322-340.

Umble E. J., Umble M., Artz K. (2008). Enhancing undergraduates' capabilities through team-based competitions: The Edward Jones Challenge. *Decision Sciences: Journal of Innovative Education*, *6*, 1-27

Useem, M., Cook, J., & Sutton, L. (2005). Developing leaders for decision making under stress: Wildland firefighters in the South Canyon fire and its aftermath. *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 4(4), 461-485.

Waller, L., Reitz, M., Poole, E., Riddell, P. M., & Muir, A. (2017). Experiential learning as preparation for leadership: An exploration of the cognitive and physiological processes. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 38(4), 513-529.

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research design and methods (5th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Zhu, Z., Tsai, C.-C., & Wang, Y. (2022). Students' perception towards IFAMA agribusiness case study competition: do culture, discipline, and training experience matter? *The International Food and Agribusiness Management Review*, *25*(4), 555–570.

Appendix A

Interview Questions

Interview Number: _____

Interviewee: _____

This interview is part of a research project I am undertaking through the Kellogg Rural Leadership Programme. The research topic that I have chosen is Can Harvard Case Analysis Benefit the Primary Sector? I aim to interview people from the Strategic Thinking for Agrifood Management Programme (STAMP) to gain their thoughts and opinions on their experience with the programme, which utilises the Harvard Case Analysis. Can I please have permission to record this interview's audio so I can review it later? All recordings will be deleted at the end of the Kellogg Programme.

_____ _____

Name Date

1. What is your highest level of education?
2. What did you study?
    a. What was your job when you started the Strategic Thinking for Agrifood Management Programme (STAMP)?
    b. When were you on the scholarship (timeframe)?
    c. Did you have any experience in doing case studies before, or something similar,
    d. If so to what extent?
    e. Did you compete at the International Food and Agribusiness Management Association (IFAMA) case study competition?
    f. What is your current job?
3. Why did you apply for STAMP?
    a. Did you get this out of STAMP?
4. What was the biggest benefit?
5. What would you liked to have seen more of?
    a. Please explain why?
    b. What worked for you?
    c. What did not work for you?
    d. How would you improve this?
6. What skills or competencies do you think that you gained from this course?
    a. Please explain?
7. How valuable do you think that case studies are as a way of learning?
    a. If so, why?
8. Would you recommend this course to others? If so, who or where should the emphasis be?

9. For the skills which you learnt, do you use them in your current job? If so, how?
10. Were you on a graduate programme? If so, how did your experience with STAMP differ from this?

Over the duration of the course, do you believe that the following skills were taught or improved, and benefits received? Please answer from one to nine, where one is strongly disagree, five is neutral and nine is strongly agree.

1. Critical thinking.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
   Strongly Disagree Neutral Strongly Agree

2. Soft skills (communication, working with others etc.).
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
   Strongly Disagree Neutral Strongly Agree

3. Technical skills.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
   Strongly Disagree Neutral Strongly Agree

4. Applying theory to real-life situations.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
   Strongly Disagree Neutral Strongly Agree

5. Confidence.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
   Strongly Disagree Neutral Strongly Agree

6. Better understanding of NZ in a global context.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
   Strongly Disagree Neutral Strongly Agree

7. Networks or networking.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
   Strongly Disagree Neutral Strongly