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FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING

An assessment on the role of cost and management innovations in creating and sustaining competitive advantage: Case of Jet Stores ”.

BY

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This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Commerce Accounting Honours Degree at Midlands State University.

APRIL 2016

Gweru: Zimbabwe

DECLARATION

I Shallome Mashayangombe, declare that this project “**An assessment on the role of cost and management innovations in creating and sustaining competitive advantage: Case of Jet Stores** ” is my own work and has not been copied from any source without acknowledging the source.

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DEDICATIONS

I dedicate to my father Erick Mashayangombe, you have always wanted to be proud of me and see me accomplish this, this research to you. No hard work goes unrewarded.

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Glory, Honor and Praise be to the Lord Almighty God who has been and is always with me.

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May the Lord our God of mercy richly bless you all in all your endeavors

ABSTRACT

This research sought to investigate the Effectiveness of the role of cost and management innovations in creating and sustaining competitive advantage: Case of Jet Stores ”.

. The study was carried out as a result of the noted persistent loss of business to competitors and inability to fulfill the company’s growth strategy during the period of 2011 to 2014. The research covered a body of literature for a further exhaustive knowledge of cost and management accounting techniques that an entity may adopt to achieve competitiveness and improve performance. A population of 24 respondents to gather relevant information was adopted at Jet.

Descriptive research methods were adopted during the study where questionnaires (92% successful and 8% unsuccessful) and personal interviews (80% successful and 20% unsuccessful) were used for gathering data.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that Jet applies management accounting practices which were conceptually effective but technically ineffective with the current position of the organization. The practices at Jet reflected problems in, lack of documented implementation guidelines, inadequacy of communication to staff, and lack of raw materials and working capital challenges are affecting the implementation of management accounting. The researcher recommended that there should be top management participation in project development, management should provide clearly defined guidelines for the implementation of management accounting and they should consider the adoption of other management accounting techniques like ABC and balanced scorecard.

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Chapter 1

1.1 Background of study

In this period of intensive competition in the global environment and organisations that are based mostly on technology, managers are being pressured to be on the look for ways to enhance and maintain their organisations' competitive advantage (Cokins 1996) . Research in the accounting domain focusing on cost and management also warranted to explore ways in which their contribution to the performance outcomes of firms on how they can be enhanced . Cadez and Guilding (2008) suggest that cost and management accounting have the potential to show a role in creating as well as sustaining a competitive advantage. CIMA, (2010) is of the view that the management accounting innovations are a major driver in enhancing the competitiveness of the organisation. However Marr , Schiuma and Neely (2004) argued that as the commercial environment is characterized by greater global competition , extensive changes in technology and customer demands there is need for companies to clearly define strategies that will maintain and extend their competitive advantage .Although research presents considerable evidence of the importance of competitive advantage to firms ,little work has been done ,particularly in the accounting arena , to identify critical organizational strategies that may contribute to it (Flynn , Schroeder and Sakakibara ,1995 , Pacheco-de-Almeida and Zemsky ,2007) .As such ,Carbonell (2009) argued that the role of cost and management accounting in enhancing competitive advantage also requires evidence of its utility as the empirical literature is essentially silent on its effectiveness Therefore the researcher seeks to establish different evidence on the innovations of cost and management accounting in an effort to create and enhance competitive advantage.

Jet Stores is part of the Edgars group of companies that specialize in the retail of footwear ,clothing and cosmetics . The company is currently facing competition from the emerging outlets for clothing, footwear and cosmetics that include boutiques, flea markets and second hand clothes that are being imported from Mozambique by small enterprise entrepreneurs. This is being witnessed by a decrease in the number of customers and cash sales.

Table 1.1 Customers list extract (Jet stores 2012)

Year	2010	2011	2012
Total number of customers	72 831	73 192	58 693
% increase (decrease) in number of customers		0.5%	(19.8%)

Source: Jet Stores management accounts 2012

Table 1.2 Customers list extract (Jet stores 2014)

Year	2012	2013	2014
Total number of customers	58 693	47 138	36 914
% decrease		(19. 7%)	(21.6%)

Source: Jet stores management accounts 2014

Illustrated by table 1.1 above is the customers' list extract which shows the number of customers that shopped at Jet stores from 2010 to 2012. In 2010 there were 72 831 customers, the number increased in 2011 to 73 192, which was a 0.5% increase over last year. In 2012 there was a sharp decrease of 19.8%, as the number of customers decreased to 58 693. From there onwards the customers kept decreasing as shown by table 1.2. In 2013 they were 47 138 and in 2014 they were 36 914, which were percentage decreases of 19.7% and 21.6% respectively. The period from 2012 is the period when Jet stores competitors emerged, as this is the period when Powersales rebranded to Pep stores and started selling merchandise almost the same with Jet at low prices. It is also the period when boutiques became very popular and many were opened, as well as flea markets that sold clothes from South Africa that were of lower prices. It is also this period that saw many small enterprise entrepreneurs importing second hand clothes from Mozambique that were very cheap.

Table 1.3 Cash sales extract (Jet stores 2014)

Year	2012	2013	2014
Total cash sales	1 100 000	924 000	756 000
% decrease		(16%)	(18.2%)

Source: Jet stores management accounts 2014

As the number of customers decreased so as the cash sales did ,as they decreased in 2013 and 2014 by 16% and 18.2% respectively as shown by the table 1.3 above .All this information about the decrease in the number of customers as well as the cash sales was further complemented by the customer complaints register for 2014 ,in bringing out the fact that competition was behind the decrease in the performance .According to the customers' complaints register of Jet of 2014, complaints were coming from customers on the issue that they were being highly charged compared to other clothing retailers such as Pep on the same products.

In the annual report for 2014 the managing director Linda Masterson mentioned that more focus was to be put on cost control to improve on pricing since efficiencies and streamlining business through acquiring high quality merchandise in the quantities demanded and product assortment had been sought but the company still was facing viability challenges through the profit margins that kept on decreasing , for this could help in lowering costs and hence decreasing product prices that will improve the company's competitive advantage .

1.2Statement of the problem

Jet Stores is currently facing stiff competition from its competitors and hence losing its cash customers mainly proved by the drop in its number of customers and cash sales ,as well as the customer complaints register that showed that customers were complaining of being charged high prices compared as to other clothing retailers .Themba Sibanda the group chairman mentioned in the 2014 outlook that the emerging clothing retail outlets were being a threat to the company since the company was losing its market share to them and hence depressing the company's sales .

1.3 Main research topic

An assessment on the role of cost and management accounting innovations in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage.

1.4 Research objectives

- Identifying the possible causes of why Jet stores is losing its competitive advantage.
- To evaluate strategies placed by management to enhance the organization's competitive advantage.
- Finding out the significance of innovations in management and cost accounting to the competitiveness of the organisation.
- To establish challenges faced by Jet stores in applying management innovations as well as attaining competitive advantage.
- To identify best practices that can be applied in cost and management accounting to improve competitiveness of the organisation.

1.5 Sub research questions

- What are reasons for lost competitive advantage at Jet Stores?
- How are the competitive strategies being applied by Jet working?
- What management accounting practices are in place at Jet?
- What challenges are the management facing in the implementation of cost and management accounting innovations in enhancing a competitive advantage?
- What practices are the best in cost and management accounting in gaining competitive advantage?

1.6 Significance of the study

The research is going to help provide information that is useful to managers and stakeholders in the retail industry. It will help them embrace the importance of the role of cost and management accounting in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage that is productive. This study will also benefit scholars and academics that also have an interest in carrying out their studies in accounting, specifically management accounting as it is going to establish a base for studies that will follow.

1.7 Delimitations of the study

- The study is limited to Jet stores Gweru Branch only.
- Time delimitations: the period of study will be from January 2013 to December 2014.
- The study will also focus on the cost and management function only.

1.8 Research limitations

Due to the retrenchment of some key staff members at Jet, the right to access information that is sufficient and relevant may tend to be difficult ,more so there is probability of accessing information that is manipulated which may be of significance to the study. However an effort will be made by the researcher to use information from trusted sources that are original. The research is going to focus only at Jet and hence may not portray the true traits and characteristics of the whole population, therefore might not be useful and beneficial to other firms. But it must be noted that these limitations does not render the research results not valuable but only calls for further research.

1.9 Definition of terms

- Competitive advantage- are factors differentiating firms from one another in the same (Rohrbeck ,2010) .
- Cost and management accounting-looks at the provision of information that is either financial or non financial so that management will ensure a successful and efficient organizational performance.

1.9.1 Acronyms

RBV Resource based view

CRM Customer relationship management

ABC Activity based costing

1.10 Summary

The researcher in this section gave the background of study ,where she brought out some issues that were pointing out to the fact that Jet stores is losing out its competitive advantage to its

competitors .This has led into decreases in sale as well as its customer base and hence being the main problem. Objectives, research questions, limitations, delimitations and the significance of the study were also mentioned as well as key terminology. The chapter that follows will be focusing on literature about what other authors convey on what other researchers have to say on the area under study.

CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The chapter is going to focus on literature done by other researchers on the same issues that may help enhance the research results. It will also encompass the thoughts, observations and arguments of other existing scholars on the role of cost and management accounting innovations in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage. The objectives of the research outlined in the previous section will be looked at in length.

2.1 The causes for loosing competitive advantage

Rijamampianina et al.(2013) avers that organisations succeed in the business world because of some advantages that they possess over others in the same industry. This benefit that an entity will have over its competitors is described by the term competitive advantage and Kandampully and Duddy (2011) further defines it as the superior ability of an organisation to provide the present as well as future needs of the customers comparing to its rivals.

Huber et al. (2011) believed that the competitiveness of an organization highly depends on the customer values .On the other hand Kortler (2012) argues that strategies pursued by organisations of competing for positions in the industry are only effective if the customer needs, markets and regions are durable and well defined. Argote et al., (2012) is of the view that the upholding of knowledge continuity will go a long way in helping entities creating and enhancing competitive advantage.

According to Beazily (2013) the fragmentation and proliferation of markets, and the life cycles of products accelerating, being in possession of a certain market segment will become less valuable and more difficult. In environments as such the importance of a strategy will no longer lie in the companys' product structure rather on its behavior dynamics. Porter avers that the

earnings of a company should be higher than its cost for it to have a competitive advantage . Porter further goes on to argue that for an organization to be competitive it must have the ability to enlarge its earnings even if there is competitive pressure. Following are the competitive strategies that a company can use to gain its competitive advantage.

2.1.1 High employee turnover

High turnover has become popular in some industries and oftenly employees leave their organisations due to ill treatment and so as customers (Kroll, 2012). She went on to say that systems should drive businesses and one can not look forward to having long term relationships with customers unless it there is establishment of long term employees first. Arie et al., (2013) avers that there is an inverse relationship between a turnover rate too high and high performance as it clearly entails that some of delicate conditions of high performance for example committed workforce is not met .According to Peeters (2010) a high turnover rate jeopardizes service quality and in turn competitive advantage of a firm.

However Cappelli (2010) argues that a labour turnover that is too high helps organisations to actually have skilled and young well educated professionals. Kochan and Osterman (2011) also argues that it has now become a reality that companies are no longer keeping the long term employment with their workers. The leaving of less productive employees may turn out to be more profitable to the company if they are replaced by more productive people (Eric et al.,) .

Shamsuzzohah (2013) avers that the replacement of employees by others normally have a negative impact on the production rate but however if newly recruited employees are of high knowledge that the older ones then the organisation will gain from the replacement of the employees. Inorder to prevent turnover companies have to employ average employees who are less attracted to the labour market externally (Cappelli ,2010). Whilst most people argue that high employee turnover affects the company's performance through the disruptions in existing routines and the loss of the experience accumulated by the employee other suggestions show that this may work for good for firms as they stand a chance to employ new workers that will be innovative and are well motivated (Nelson et al.,2012) . These views that are conflicting bring evidence that effects of high turnover may impact organisations differently depending the environment's nature where the turnover is accumulated. This research will therefore establish if high employee turnover is one of the reasons why Jet stores is losing competitive advantage.

2.1.2 Customer relationship management(CRM)

Kotler et al., (2015) described CRM as a process that builds and maintains the values of customers that are profitable and satisfactory. If customers are satisfied, this may help build relationships that are long lasting and impacts the financial performance of the business. (Nagar et al.,2010) . Investigations have been made on the link between customer satisfaction and its outcomes for example profitability (Mittal and Kamakura ,2011). According to Ittner and Larcker (2013) the investigations made in accounting have proved that customer relationship management is an indicator and intangible asset of organisations' unit revenues in improving competitive advantage. Customers that are satisfied by a firm are more likely to engage in repeat business with the firm and in volumes that are, leading to the firm having competitive advantage over others (Anderson ,et al,20012).

However Lin and Su (2013) are of the view that it is complex to gather client data inorder to improve client data , in order to improve client retention and profitability . Domingo (2010) avers that few or none of the service industry' systems and structures are designed to monitor and maintain customer loyalty. Successful CRM implementations depend on combining focusing on customers , incorporating technology that is CRM based and managing the knowledge into an active CRM strategy, any lack in one of these areas can lead the CRM of the firm's endeavors ineffectual or even attenuated (Maccabe ,2012).

Ampoful (2012) is of the view that quality determines profits, and customers alone define and determine what that quality is and should be. At the same time Peppard (2010) is of the argument that CRM focused activities like knowledge management are inevitable if the leveraging of latest technology is absent. It is therefore in the quest of this study to find out if the management of customer relationship is a causes of the lost of competitive advantage of Jet.

2.1.3 Cost leadership

Jones et al., (2012) avers that inorder for a firm to have cost advantages it must include using technology that is latest, being able to make use of economies of scale , having improvements continuously, the minimization of overheads and having resources from the most favourable sources. The choice by a company to use a strategy based on cost leadership means that the company will put its efforts towards reducing economic costs lower than those of its competitors within the industry. The organisation will be having a competition based on price of the products

with other organisations within the industry hence it is bound to get units of profit that are high thus enhancing competitive advantage (Courage ,2015).

However Porter (2011) argues that organizations that use the cost leadership strategy will experience larger costs so that they maintain their competitive advantage when technological changes become unfavourable. The strategy of cost leadership may be compromised by threats through marketing, imitation, inputs with increased costs and design (Hillman et al., 2013). Because of this fact organizations that wish to use the strategy of cost leadership will have to use the capabilities as well as resources that it possesses so that it develops products that will be cost effective (Shavarini et al.,2013).

According to Minarik (2010) certain factors have to be considered first for the organisation of the implementation of strategy based on cost leadership and these include controls by management, the compensation of policies, structure of the organisation and implementation of the strategies for cost leadership. On the other hand Amos (2015) is of the view that a relative absenteeism of surveying may influence the cost leaders in being disadvantaged compared to other firms at discerning ecological changes that will be critical whilst making light of innovative work can ease back cost leaders capacity to react to changes once they are identified. Therefore it is in the interest of this study to find out if the strategy for cost leadership is a cause for the lost competitive advantage of Jet.

2.1.4 Integrated low cost differentiation strategy

Technological advancements have made the possibility of this strategy (Coulter ,2010). It must be noted that low costs have also been achieved as a result of advancements in technology in using the differential strategy. According to Jones and George (2011) low cost and simultaneously differentiated products have been achieved by organizations below those of its rivals. In support to this Minarik (2010) mentioned having low costs compared to those of the organization's rivals is what the strategy is all about and thus if an organisation wishes to pursue the strategy then low cost is the theme.

However Minarik (2010) also argues that sources of cost advantages that may seem not to be easy at the same time expensive to copy consists of differential access to inputs that will be cost productive and software as well as the hardware for technology may tend to be expensive to copy

if only it is proprietary. Differentiation can also imply hindrances to a market share that is high (Martina ,2013). Karnani (2012) also argues that high differentiation and a position of low cost are substitutes and they are administered by a relationship that is multiplicative which implies the effects of interaction between these two dimensions and hence a firm will not be able to afford the emphasis of a single dimension whilst neglecting the other

On the other hand Barney and Hesterley (2012) argues that integrated low cost differential strategy is an ultimate expression of the individuals and groups' creativity within organisations. The opportunities that are there within a certain industry limits the strategy and the ability as well as willingness of organisations to find ways creatively that can take advantage of the opportunities (Martina ,2013) . The study will thus seek if this strategy was one of the causes of Jet's lost competitive advantage.

2.2 Strategies put in place to improve competitive advantage

According to Emilia Papulova (2012) today's entities should be aware on how to deal with uncertain as well as dynamic environments. In order to be successful, organizations must be strategically aware. Organisations should understand the changes that will be within the competitive environment and find the opportunities to achieve strategic abilities as well as seeking and adapting the improvements in all the business areas, being aware and comprehending the current successes and strategies. Jim Cossin in his book Retailing Strategy defined retail strategy as a word that identifies target market of the retailer, the plan that the retailer intends on using so as to satisfy market targeted's needs and basis the retailer is planning to create and sustain a competitive advantage. If a company is able to make a difference that it can sustain, that company can outshine competitors (Bhatti et al , 2010).

Organisations uses different strategies for competition in business environments but Coutler (2010) is of the view that organisations can employ the unique construction of reflecting the issues at hand as the best strategy. According to Haque et al (2014) a firm can gain competitive advantage if it finds new ways which are efficient and effective compared to those of its rivals inorder to offer value for its customers. In support to this Martina (2013) is of the fact that in most cases organisations face the challenge of having to choose strategies which are best for the entity's resources and strengths and is not easily copied competitors. Grant (2010) understands competitive advantage along the dimensions of durability and immutability.

However Baltzan and Phillips (2010, p.16) argue that an organization's competitive advantage is only temporary for its rivals can find ways to copy its strategies. According to Ettore (2012) the dynamics of a company's product makes a strategy superior and not the its structure. Porter (1998b.481) is of the view that an action that is either offensive or defensive is the one followed by a competitive strategy so as to create a position that is defendable in the industry. This happens this way so that there will be generation a return that is superior on investment and also to keep up effectively with the competitive forces. Therefore this research will seek to establish whether the competitive strategies used at Jet are the best and as well functional.

2.2.1 Low cost strategy

According to Jones and George, 2010 an organization that chose to use the low cost strategy put much of its efforts in trying to lower cost as, even lower than those of its rivals within the industry. The strategy of low cost is oriented highly on competitors and not on customers (Frambech et.al,2013). An organisation that chooses to use the strategy of cost leadership is bound to attain a position of low cost through the emphasis for aggressive building of facilities that are of efficient scale, avoiding marginal accounts for customers, tight overheads and costs and the reduction in areas such as advertising, development and research, sales force and services (Porter ,1998).

The completion for price can be easily copied (Ellis et al., 2013).According to Bani-Hani et al., (2010) the advantage of low prices on products is short lived, especially nowadays when the ever changing technology is changing the boundaries of the business that are already established. Enjoying the competence of a product can only be at the roots of the product. Not ignoring the point that researches have proved that a substantial relationship is there between the performance of the organisation and competitive advantage, the two are different concepts that have a relationship apparently (Ma, 2012).

If an organisation does not choose between differentiation strategies and low cost strategies then it is bound to be caught in between the two without an articulate (Acquaah et al., 2012). In developing countries such as Indonesia, China and Malaysia, the cost leadership strategies are more preferable since their labour costs are lower which implies a production cost that is low as well (Aulakh et al.,2011). Allen et al., (2012) is of the argument that Japan has successfully

applied this strategy as well. The study will therefore sought to establish if the strategy of low cost position is applicable in Zimbabwe especially at Jet stores.

2.2.2 Product differentiation strategy

Pearce et al., (2011) is of the view that the product differentiation strategy is a technique used by entities in the quest of creating competitive advantage for the services or products that it offer through differentiating them from those of its rivals based on the performance, features and other factors which cannot be directly pointed to the price or cost. This difference created should be very difficult to duplicate and hard to create as well. The basic idea of the product differentiation strategy mainly lies in establishing a position in the market that can be identified as unique and can sustain for a long time (Porter 1980). Differentiation of this sought can be established by the firm on the image of the brand, distribution and design (Frambech, 2013). Entities may use the product differentiation strategy as a tool for the creation of competitive advantage so as to offer the services or products that are appreciated by customers and in turn satisfy their needs (Shammot, 2011). Additionally the main idea is on the organisation being able to compete in the industry (Pearce and Robinson ,2010,p. 220).

Slater and Olson (2012) avers that the effectiveness of the product differentiation strategy is reliant on how best the organisation can maintain the equity between the benefits of the product and its costs to the customer in relation to offerings that are competitive. Weaknesses associated with the product differentiation strategy is that a firm's competitors may produce duplicate products from very similar or even better to those of the firm and at the end the products of the rivals end up with no difference. Therefore strategies for product differentiation may be effective in accumulating the loyalty of customers and the charging of prices that are high but however it must be noted that the strategy does not completely eliminate the likelihood of other entrants (Jeff Bordes, 2013). There is also the risk that organisations in an effort to differentiate may end up overdoing it and hence creating a burden on itself by over extending the resources of the firm (Martina, 2010). The argument being that reason the differentiation strategy normally demands an awareness of uniqueness that is not compatible with a market share that is high.

Aulakh et al (2013:76) is of the argument that the product differentiation technique has been applied successfully in organisations of countries that are advanced as they will be having advantages in their financial and technological resources, human capital that is trained, modern

and new systems of management, production methods that are innovative and they best fulfill the circumstances that are necessary to successfully apply a differentiation strategy. On the other hand Barney and Hersterly (2012) are of the view that planning to apply a strategy of differentiation needs special contemplation to the structure of the organisation, policies for compensation, controls of management the implementation of strategies of cost leadership. Therefore the researcher seeks to establish if Jet stores can use the differential strategy successfully.

2.2.3 The resource based view

This view was initiated by Wenerfelt and others in 1984 and it has become a major approach in the reviewing of enhanced competitive advantage. The main idea of this view rest on the fact that organisations compete on the grounds of the resources they own and their capabilities (Peteraf and Bergen, 2012). The emphasis of the resource based view is on the fact that organisations compete with the ultimate elements of a competitive advantage (Peterraf, 2013). Due to the fact that the view looks at the resources as an organisation's major component and its straightforward view of organisations as a cluster of these resources, RBV plainly is reductionist (Kraaijenbrink, 2010).

According to Robert M. Grant (2013), the formulation of an organisation's strategy lies in the capabilities and resources that it has, these are the base on which organisations can lay their character and in turn frame their strategy and also they are the principal determinants of the profitability of an organisation. Wernerfelt (2004) is of the suggestion that the appraisal of firms mainly focusing on the resources an organisation possess could help lead to views that are different from perspectives that are traditional. In the same line of thinking, many researchers that talks about the resource based view give the latest insights to modern management for example Brown (2010) and Barton (2013).

The argument is that if all organisations possess the same resources then it means they would all have the same strategies hence no one can have advantage over the other (Cool et al., 2012, p. 57). Foss (2010) postulates that the resource based view has got a general problem of not being able to locate the suitable unit for investigation. Many influences of the RBV consider a single resource as the appropriate unit of investigation to comprehend the competitive advantage of an organisation. But it must be noted that the decision to use the resource based view as a measure

of competitive advantage may only be ideal if the resources are sufficient and relevantly defined (Foss, 2010). It is Priem and Butler's argument that the statement made by Barney in 1991 that resources that are highly valuable and uncommon can be the basis for competitive advantage may only be rendered true if the notions competitive advantage and valuable are demarcated in similar terms. To answer this criticism Perteraf and Barney are of the proposition that the word competitive advantage cannot be defined in terms of profitability but rather of competitive edge.

Due to the repetition and determination of its value that is exogenous, Priem and Butler (a and b) made the conclusion that the RBV does not have much to help in the clarification and forecasting of the competitive advantage and it endorses that researchers look at the main connections that exist between the environment and resources as the competitive environment signifies what action must be taken and resources means what can be done so as to effectively satisfy customers' needs through. Barney and Clark (2012) are of the view that though the RBV when looking at the resources that an organisation owns it takes into account various types of resources and these include the entity's capital, physical capital and human capital but all are viewed the same. The analysis and investigation of the RBV have shown that the view still leaves some problems not solved in identifying competitive advantage and therefore the researcher will seek to explore and clarify those areas recommended by other scholars to research and to justify the resource based approach being used by Jet.

2.2.4 The Guerilla view of competitive advantage

According to Hutter and Hoffman (2011) the guerilla marketing strategy is an exceptional way of advertising promotions that focuses on having the responsiveness of quite a large number of receivers to the message that will be being advertised at lower costs by making use of the diffusion effect and the surprise. Mughari (2010) is of the view that this strategy has to do with much thinking as it is not only about advertising on TV but rather constantly devising new ways of advertising as well as finding solutions for problems in communication. The best feature for the guerilla view is the use of (Zuo and Veil, 2007). Hutter and Hoffman (2011) are comfortable with the term guerilla effect which they thought is a far much improved expression for activities as such on the market.

While the guerilla strategy can be seen as a good strategy for creating competitive advantage it must be noted that the marketing science views it as controversial whilst at the same time the

marketing scientific literature neglects it (Nufer, 2013, Hutter and Hoffmann , 2011). Contrary Levinson (2013) is also of the argument that organisations must have many areas of interaction with their prospects and customers so that they will stay in the organisation's memory. He is of the belief that campaigns that are long lasting may have the positive effect of producing the expected competitive advantage.

Paksoy and Chang (2010) are of the view that in order for guerilla marketing to be effective, small organisations may be an added advantage. Contrary Levinson (2013) is of the view that a many areas of contact are required by an organisation so that it may establish long lasting relationships with them. The strategy thus requires a budget for marketing that is that is typically low which is most appropriate for medium and small sized entities. The researcher will therefore establish whether the guerilla strategy is appropriate for Jet Stores.

2.3 Significance of management accounting innovations to organizational competitiveness.

According to Hilton and Platt (2011) management accounting is the identification, communication and measurement data so as to obtain the goals of the entity. According to Rababah (2014) there are three aspects namely the facilitators, motivators and catalysts which impact on the innovation procedure of management accounting. According to Mahmoud (2013) the interaction of the three factors that is facilitators, catalysts and motivators have the potential to create change in organisations. The representations aim at drawing the roots for change, change drivers, initiators of change and the hindrances to that change (Christensen et al.,2012). Wanderly et al., (2013) is of the view that factors studies made a significant influence in the management accounting development change research by analyzing the process of change in a broader organizational context .

Abdel Kader and Luther (2008) noted the problem in management accounting because of the implementation percentage that was low but the presentations does not take into account the factors that include facilitators, motivators and catalysts. Modell (2010) went on to say that the drivers for changes are normally attributed to economic or technical factors ,such as market competition or the introduction of new technology ,while the wider social processes involved in the diffusion of new management accounting techniques across organizations are not analyzed in detail . According to Wanderley (2013) factor studies ignore the socio political aspects of organizational life and the way in which these affect management accounting practices .He

further mentioned that little attention is paid to understanding conflicts of interest that might explain management accounting change .

Innes and Mitchell during their research discovered that though catalysts and motivators are capable of bringing about change they can only do so when there are facilitating setting. Cobb et al., (2012) is of the view that the factors presentation is considered best on the elements that are external but they prove to be very fragile on how the change takes place in an organisation and the way it impacts on employees. Therefore the study will seek to find out if these management techniques are significant at Jet Stores .

2.3.1 Motivator factors

According to Rababah (2014) motivator factors are those factors that impacts on innovation and amongst them is the structure of the product cost, competitiveness in the market and the production technology. They first develop then nature the form of the catalyst. According to Innes and Mitchell (2010) motivator catalysts and stimuli often happen during the first stages of change. A research carried out in Iran established that there are factors that are organizational that have a role to motivate the application of management and cost accounting techniques (Ahmadzadeh, 2011).

Innes and Mitchell (2010) suggested that catalysts and motivators work hand in hand to effect change but however may only prove to be effective if there is a conducive environment. According to Brown et al., (2010) the consideration of whether or not the units of operation accounted for innovations in management accounting do not relate to the technological issues such as the cost structure and customization of products. Moreso some environmental factors were found to be of insignificant effect such as competition. This study will therefore seek to establish if the motivator factors have any significance in the implementation of management accounting techniques at Jet.

2.3.2 Facilitator factors

The facilitators and barriers of change help in implementing the process of change (Cobb 2012). According to Thanju (2010) factors that have got an effect on the successful implementation of change in accounting for instance resources for computing, resources for accounting staff and the level of independence from the parent organisation are the facilitators.

However Rababah (2014:177) is of the view managers need facilitator factors but on their own are not sufficient for the best cost and management accounting techniques. Thanju (2010) is also in agreement to that and he avers that facilitators offer management conditions that are good and necessary but however on their own may be insufficient for management accounting.

In a research made by Pearce and Brown (2011) in Ireland they discovered that insufficient training, experience and human resources availability have an impact on the application of cost and management accounting techniques. According to Clarke et al., (2010) he also discovered that the main limitations to the application of cost and management accounting innovations was insufficient experience and resources in Ireland. Thus the researcher will sought to establish the implications of facilitators in the application of cost and management techniques at Jet.

2.3.3 Catalysts factors

According to Tanis (2012) catalyst factors are factors which have a direct relation with changes and the occurrence which goes in line with the timing of the change. Catalyst factors include the launch of a competing product, poor financial performance and loss in market share (Rababah, 2014). Thanju (2010) is of the view that catalysts factors are the factors that have a direct influence in the accounting management of change.

However Innes and Mitchelle (2010) argues that catalysts and motivator factors work together in order to come up with changes but are only effective when facilitating conditions are in existence. Fadzil and Rababah (2012) also argue that diversity of products and growing costs are the ones behind the acceptance and applications of accounting management innovations. The researcher thus focuses on finding out if the catalyst factors have significance in the application of cost and management accounting techniques at Jet.

2.4 The challenges that are being faced in implementing cost and management innovations in creating and sustaining competitive advantage.

In an effort of creating competitive advantages, firms are facing problems in their quest to maintain their competitive advantage. According to Upton (2012) the shortcomings are as a result of deregulations in responses to the life cycle of the product that is short coming from technical discoveries. Challenges being faced in the practices of management and cost accounting include threats of substitute services or products and new entrants, as well as the

bargaining power of customers and suppliers and competitors' rivalry. Rababah (2014) avers that the years that have passed have brought about challenges and changes in the competitive environment that organisations have to encounter.

2.4.1 Threats of new entrants

According to Ndwiga (2011) threats to new entry differ in accordance to the barriers that are there for entrants. The barriers may be strengthened by the differentiation of service and products, requirements for capital and the advantages of cost that are free from the economies of scale (Robinson, 2013).

Robinson (2013) also noted that changes in the environment that are favourable and the novel supply of the services and products usually compromise barriers to entry by an entity. Tatar (2010) avers that in a research that was carried out in Russia it was discovered that the change in technological changes have an effect the barriers to entry that would have been employed by an entity and at the end having an effect on the organisation's competitive advantage. Martin (2014) is of the view that a business that has got any barriers to entry has got low risk of new entrants for instance regulations that are strict and requests for specific knowledge.

According to Greenspan (2015) adding to another organisation's image is very expensive. This state puts a moderate strength on firms. The expenses that are incurred in whatever circumstance in establishing another retail firm and operating it are low to direct. Kumar (2015) noted that barriers to entry are very high in the retail sector. It is therefore in the quest of this study to find out if Jet stores' competitive advantage is being affected by the threats by new entrants.

2.4.2 Bargaining power of customers

According to Courage (2015) the customers' buying power can bring about difficulties to an entity that are serious. This is due to the reason that in most cases the customer usually wants to purchase quality at low prices hence affecting the profitability of the entity (Ndwiga, 2011). Thus organizations should therefore carryout a critical assessment of the powers that customers have on the factors that are independent and establish ideas on how to deal with these factors so that it reduces their impact on the organisation's competitive advantage (Muraleedharan, 2011:665).

On the other hand Simister (2011) in most times there is a trap of being led to think that the purchasing power of customers is aimed at obtaining what they want that is best at lowest prices.

According to Paul (2011) strong customers often insist on having beyond the usual services or favourable financial agreements which in turn makes the customer not being profitable due to the high cost incurred in trying to offer the customer what he or she demands. He goes on saying that customers may be real threats by trying to produce their own products and trying to enter the supplies industry if the prices are not very low. According to Jaquier (2010) the bargaining power of buyers only have effects on cost leaders as their revenues can be reduced by buyer threats .

Rorberta (2015) is of a different view though , he avers that the large numbers of buyers have significant power on the business of buying and selling. Even if it is so the fact that different customers may demand different things and at the same time an individual customer has got less power and thus this neutralizes the situation. As a result forces of buying of the customers are powerless in having an effect on the retail firms. Kumar (2015) is also of the view that exclusively, clients have almost no bargaining power with retailers but however, in general, if customers request high quality items at deal costs, it keeps retailers honest. The researcher will therefore seek to find out if the buying strength of customers is a challenge being faced by Jet.

2.4.3 Bargaining power of suppliers

Russo (2011) asserts that the demand of prices that are high by suppliers cause organisations to have pressure and at the end affecting their competitiveness and performance. The power of suppliers is dependent on their monopoly, their products' importance as well as the power of the other customers that are supplied by that supplier and switching costs for (Porter, 2009b). Organizations should therefore analyze these issues exhaustively so that they can be able to exploit any of the opportunities that are favourable that may come out (Ndwiga, 2011). According to Martin (2014) the power that suppliers have can impact on the competitive advantage of organisations and influence their profitability. Thompson et al., (2012) postulated that if suppliers and their customers would have a good relationship they would create relationships that do not disadvantage the other and hence any effects that are negative that may be caused by suppliers may be reduced to minimum levels.

However Greenspan (2015) is of the view that the vast populace of suppliers can possibly affect firms . Be that as it may, a number of suppliers are competing for the little space in retails. Likewise, supplies are highly accessible from the numerous suppliers thus the suppliers may

have less effect on the retail organisations. In support Martin (2014) says that the market structure changes and the pressure that is being exerted by the anti-cartel has reduced the power of supplies on retail firms.

Kumar et al (2013) avers that clients that operate privately have a very low bargaining power on large retail firms and their power is only significant to small retailers who are not organised. In this way, different retailers confront the feeble power of the bargaining force of suppliers. According to Martin (2014) the bargaining power of suppliers has got much significance and thus require good relations between the buyers and sellers and if the suppliers are few they may yield high significant strengths on buyers. Thus the researcher seeks to find out if the bargaining power of suppliers is one of the problems being faced by Jet.

2.4.4 Leadership

Rumsey (2013) is of the view that for an organisation to have good leadership it must first look at other top leaders. According to Khan (2013) those who supervise subordinates or are in charge are leaders of organisations and these leaders have the power to influence the competitive advantage of a firm through motivating their followers on innovation. Leadership should ensure that appropriate business processes are in place to impact positively on profitability (Li and Sun ,2013) .Romero (2013) also notes that leadership is very crucial in creating and maintaining competitive advantage.

According to Fei and Isa (2010) argues that in a research carried out in Malaysia it was discovered that leadership hardly had any impacts on the competitive advantage of a firm in applying management and cost innovations, but it was rather about the employees working as a team. Romero (2013) is also of the view that some organisations have good performance irregardless having incompetent leadership.

Much of the research that has been carried out shows that there is a significant relationship between the firm's performance and its leadership and the various types of leadership styles have got good and bad outcomes on the organisation's performance (Sun,2010). According to Romero (2013) due to the fact that many leaders do not know their firms' external environment including the opportunities, weaknesses and strengths surrounding them they fail to enhance and create

competitive advantage for their firms. It is therefore the interest of this research to find out if the leadership at Jet is having challenges in maintaining the competitive advantage.

2.4.5 Human resources

According to Li (2010) management of the human resources of an organisation such as the sharing of information, training and management that is participative has not a negative impact on the performance of the organisation. Dess et al., (2010) are of the view that employees or human resources in an organization comprises the degree or extent the knowledge, motivation and skills they have to perform the work well. An optional strategy for the management of human resources has a close relation with the firm's outcomes (Delery and Doty, 2010). Argote and Ingram (2012) are of the view that if management ensure the continuity of knowledge then the organisation is eligible of creating a competitive advantage.

Maclain (2013) conveyed that even though several ways of creating competitive advantage exist, management practices in human resource are often neglected. Whilst the obtaining of competitive advantage by organisations makes them to be in a better position, few gain it and even fewer acquire it through practices in human resources.

According to Stander and Rothmann (2010) human resources especially employee engagements help in gaining competitive advantage in industries but mainly the service industry. Therefore the research will try to find out if human resources is one of the challenges facing Jet.

2.5 Best practices that can be applied in cost and management accounting to improve competitive advantage.

Nowadays the industry is facing many changes in various form and researchers saw the need to look for new and better ways to face the changing environment, and managerial accounting as well is taking a tour in establishing new systems and techniques (Yazdifar & Tsameny, 2005). The management techniques that are traditional are now being replaced by new ones such as activity based costing, strategic management, non-financial measures, strategic cost management, target costing and the balanced score card (Jarvenpaa, 2007:100). Of all the modern techniques the activity based costing is seen to have a significant contribution. Moreover, the most notable contribution is considered to be activity-based costing. Horngren et al., (2013) are of the view that cost and management accounting looks at the various ways of

costing services and products and has the role of assisting the managers with the relevant information that they must use in order to control and plan cost whether in the long run or short run. In the years that have passed many changes that are significant have occurred in practice and research of management accounting. Scaperns (2006:329) states that nowadays are the changing periods for both practioners and researchers in cost and management accounting (Scapens, 2006:329)

2.5.1 Activity based costing

Literature shows that ABC could be used and can benefit the retail industry (Kostakis et al., 2011). Resource drivers are used to allocate expenses of resources that are indirect. The consumption of the various expense objects is represented by activity drivers (Bruggeman, 2010). According to Manoj Kumar (2014) the concurrent output and input characteristic of activity based costing in the environment of today helps in enhancing and creating the dependability and relevance in the measurement of performance.

Rasiah (2011) is of the view that the ABC method of accounting management practice's implementation rate is very low. Velcu (2011) is of the argument that information such as the cost driver data can be got from an organisation's information ERP system. Even after the implementation of different management systems of the organisation, collecting information that is significant from employees has still remained being a challenge (Kostakis et al.,2011) . Mangers may opt not to make use of the word ABC simply for the reason that they see it as a Some managers may be reluctant to use the term ABC because they perceive it as an unwanted mark of cutting costs that is unrealistic and (Askarany and Smith ,2008).

Mool Chand (2014) views ABC as a methodology that creates a list of actions that explain how costs came up for each customer, product or service, rather than as an accounting implementation. However those who are not using ABC fully appreciate their systems that are already in place (Alasaeed 2010) .Drury (2008) noted that the main expenditures in service industries are the overhead costs which are not related to volume. He goes on to recommend that the ABC system should not be used in tracing costs such as overhead costs since they are volume related. Therefore this research will seek to establish whether ABC is the best accounting practice for retail industries.

2.5.2 Standard Costing

According to Stephen Edwards (2013), standard costing is an accounting concept for the recognition of standards for expense components and these preset costs will be matched against the actual ones in order to establish their differences. He also mentioned that the efficient and effective cost control of a business determines to a greater extent the success of an organisation. Ittner and Larcker (2012) avers that the accounting for costs is the method that lies behind management accounting and previously accountants in management's major method was the analysis of variances, which is a method that is used to compare budgeted and actual costs.

Berliner et al., (2011) is of the view that consequences of changes that were continuous in organisations showed that the traditional ways were no longer effective and thus there was need to start implementing the new methods. Critics against the method of standard costing raises concerns on whether the method is still effective in the modern day service industry (Beata et .al, 2010). According to Horngren et al (2012) organisations should set standards that are attainable by the workers and can be accomplished without having to put extra unnecessary efforts so as not to demotivate the workers.

In a research that was carried out by Ernst and Young and IMA (2003) in investigating the present condition of management accounting it was discovered that regardless of new methods being introduced, organisations were still using traditional methods mostly (Manjunath et al, 2011). This study will therefore seek to find out if standard costing can be used at Jet .

2.5.3 The balanced scorecard

The method of the balanced scorecard is a strategy that is being applied by a majority of organisations the environment of business internationally (Andrew Holt, 2013). The name on the balanced scorecard model imitates the will of keeping scores on a group of matters that will keep the stability between long term and short term objectives and also amongst non financial and financial methods (Wu Lin and Tsai , 2010:273). Several researches have proved that the balanced scorecard method is being well used and implemented in various organisations (Rigby and Bilodeau, 2011). A research was done on the CIMA by the IIBS in 2009 and it was discovered that BSC was being widely used and applied by many organisations (CIMA, 2011). Previously in a 2011 survey piloted by Bain and company it was established that the BSC is one of the common methods and its usage was expected to increase (Rigby and Bilodeau ,2011).

Organisations have gone as far as using the BSC as a management strategic system rather than just as a dimension of performance (Bose and Thomas, 2010). In as much as the advocates and proponents of BSC are many, it must be noted that the model does have some criticism. Norreklit (2012) is of the argument that the effect and cause connection among methods that are from the four views of the balanced score card which Kaplan and Norton elaborated is challenging. It is also said to be very difficult to establish performance procedures for new issues (Norreklit, 2013). Furthermore arguments are also raised that in organisations where improvement is very important it is difficult to measure and oftenly new situations would have to be resorted (Norreklit, 2013 ; Schoenfeld, 2012).

According to Hoskisson et al., (2010:362) the BSC will help an entity in obtaining its set goals. Rababah (2014) is of the view that the BSC was reviewed as a performance measurement tool and it has not become an organizing tool. The researcher seeks to establish if BSC can be used by Jet Stores.

2.5.4 Target costing and Kaizen costing.

Target costing is a management system for profit and cost planning that is driven by prices, centered in design, focused on customers and has various functions, whilst kaizen is a system that emphasizes on whether the employees are considering on how to carry out their duties and if there is a better method of doing it (Alireza et al, (2012). According to McAdam et al., (2010) kaizen produces a way that encourages workers to be innovative and thus change may be easy to implement. Ndwiga (2011) is of the view that kaizen and target costing provides organisations with methods that allows it to come out with the best cost effective services and products that help in enhancing the competitive advantage of the firm.

Alireza et al. (2012) argues that Kaizen is to a lesser extent a costing method. The culture in kaizen costing is not easy to implement it calls for the focus of management from the epitome throughout the organisation (Suhaiz 2015). According to Sorin (2013), there is fear within the organisation of losing jobs by employees due to the implementation of cost cutting methods usually brought about by the use of the method of target costing. Kaizen call for top management that sees through the whole organisation.

Several studies that have been carried out by researchers have proved the high usage of the target costing methods in Western countries (Dekker and Smidt, 2013). Specialists are of the view that the approach of target costing has a reputation and its market is strongly oriented (Choe, 2012). The choice between kaizen and target costing contains in coordination to those organisations with cost effective constructing organisations (Afonso et al., 2008). Therefore the study will seek to establish whether the kaizen and target costing method is applicable in Zimbabwean retail sectors especially at Jet.

2.6 Summary

The literature review has analyzed, compared and assessed other reputable authors and researchers' say on the significance of the management and cost techniques in the creation and enhancement of competitive advantage. This chapter addressed the questions of the study using literature of other authors. It provided guidance to the research and furthermore established framework for exploration sections that are to take after. The following part will take a look at the research methodology and research design embraced by the analyst.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is going to look on the research methodology used in this study. Elements that are going to be covered in this chapter include the research design adopted, population of the research, methods of data collection, secondary and primary sources of data, analysis and presentation of data and the summary of the chapter.

3.1 Research Design

According to Creswell (2012) the design for research is the procedure or plan for analysis that will help in the making of decisions from the elaboration of assumptions as well as methods of collection of data and analysis. Creswell (2012) also articulates that a research design expresses the data that is required, the methods which will be made use of analyzing and gathering the data and the ways in which these finding are going to establish the responses to the questions of the research. He takes note of the approaches which can be made use of which are the mixed, quantitative and qualitative approach.

This study is going to employ the mixed approach that encompasses both the quantitative and qualitative approach in assessing the role of cost and management accounting innovations in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage. Plano et al., (2010) is of the view that the approach that is mixed is not just about the collection and analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data but rather making use of both methods in order to come out with a research study that has strength in both approaches.

Inorder to successfully establish the objectives of this study a case study of Jet stores was made use of in the comparisons, interpretations and measurements of the data which was collected. According to Kombo and Tromp (2011:9), this type of study involves the establishment of facts that will in turn bring out the establishment of important findings of solutions and knowledge to investigations in line with the study.

3.1.1 The Mixed Approach

For the purpose of this study the mixed approach was made use of and Bulsara (2012) avers that that the mixed method is an approach for carrying out research that includes analyzing, collecting and integrating qualitative and quantitative data in one study or a program of inquiry. The main reason for using the mixed approach is to maximize on both the qualitative and quantitative method in order to come out with a full understanding of a research problem that will be at hand that either one of them cannot accomplish on its own. Thus this approach will take advantage of the weaknesses of using the quantitative or qualitative method alone.

According to Moss et al., (2015) the use of the mixed approach strengthens the study in a way that neither the use of the qualitative or quantitative approach can more so when observations are linked with statistical analysis they are bound to bring out the a more comprehensive picture. Moss further elaborates that the method brings out more information from which the study can be based on and it can also help in providing other facts for analysis in other researches

3.1.2 Descriptive research design

A descriptive research helps in the description of a phenomenon, challenge or issue under research (Manoharan, 2010). According to Kumar (2011) a research of a descriptive nature designates data and the features of the population that will be being researched on. It overallly makes an effort to come out with the features of the respondents in line to a certain practice or product. It is aimed at a particular objective and thus comes out with distinct.

According to Saunders (2011) the theoretical explanation for the application of the descriptive case study is that the inquiry will pick up a comprehension and understanding about issues that are known, its attributes and structure level in the unit of examination. In such a way the conclusions of the respondents on a certain topic can be obtained without annoying the respondents.

3.1.3 Case study

According to Crowe et al., (2011) a case study is an approach to a research that is made use of so as to establish a multi-faceted and in depth explanation of an issue in the context of real. Yin (2012) is of the view that a case study is the carrying out of an investigation that is empirical and of a current issue within its usual perspective using a number of sources of information. In order

to obtain profound understanding of the role of cost and management accounting in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage particularly at Jet, the case study approach was chosen.

The choice to use this method was made because it was not possible for the researcher to evaluate the role of cost and management accounting in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage in every retail firm in Zimbabwe because of deficient time and furthermore finances. In addition to this, this approach can be piloted by one researcher and it is quite easy to oversee as it spotlights on a particular firm. By embracing the case study approach the researcher created expository as well as serious rational capacities. The researcher was mainly driven to use the case study approach by the fact that information will be easily accessed from the organisation's minutes of meetings as well as correspondences.

3.2 Research population

According to Parker (2012) a population is the total of the targeted group who are subject to the real world of the issue on which the researcher has to convey a message on. Neuman (2011) is also of the view that the overall numbers of participants that are accessible for a research are a population. In other words it is a certain group of interest to the researcher, which he or she wishes to collect data from in order to make a conclusion on a certain area of study. The targeted populace comprises of the Jet staff that is the accounts clerks, the branch manager and supervisors since these are the ones who know about the area of research.

3.2.1 Target population

A target population according to Saunders (2012) a target population is a group of individuals, objects or cases with some distinctiveness that is visible on which the researcher wishes to base the study results. The population targeted by this study comprised of ten employees, consisting of three accounting clerks, one accounts department manager, one supervisor, four customer service assistants and one CEO. All the staff members took part in the study through the use of a census and as such sampling was carried out. This was mainly because the employees at Jet are few and thus a census can easily be carried out without using much time, moreover a census enhances the desired results as the information will be complete.

3.2.2 Census

A census is the accumulation of data from each and everyone in the organisation compared to a sample survey. Kumar (2011) defines as the total enumeration of all objects in a population. The thrust of applying this method is in obtaining explanations of information about events happening at distinct times.

The census method helps the researcher in reducing the errors that are associated with sampling methods. Thus the researcher employed this method because it gives the complete picture of the issue in question that is perfect and more reliable. The table that follows show the population of the participants.

Table 3.1: Population of participants

Position/office	Population	Participants	Collection method
Customer service assistants	4	4	Questionnaire
Sales floor manager	1	1	Questionnaire
Accounts clerks	3	3	Questionnaire
Accounts department managers	1	1	Questionnaire
CEO	1	1	Interview
Total	10	10	–

The collection of information from the total population oftenly results in increased accuracy (Saunders et al., 2012). Because of this reason the total population was targeted including all mangers and customer service assistants. The method of having everyone at Jet to take part in the research gave assurance that perceptions, views and opinions of all the members involved were considered before any conclusions could be drawn. This helped increase reliance on the research

results and boosting confidence in the research finding and thus being the reason for undertaking a census.

3.3 Data sources

Data are the delicate elements in relation to a research and that would have been established by the researcher from the environment of the. There are two specific classes that data can be grouped that is secondary and primary data. In order to accumulate data that is relevant and reliable the researcher made use of some few sources triangulated. Fulfilling of the research objectives was thus made through the use primary and secondary data sources in responding to the research questions.

3.3.1 Primary data

According to Bethlehem and Silivia (2012) raw data that is not organised, analysed or even processed, gathered specifically for the issue in question is primary data. It is data assembled from the source and this type of data is oftenly obtained through interviews, experiments, questionnaires, surveys and focus groups. In this study the researcher employed interviews and questionnaires in obtaining the primary data. This choice was made as primary data is dependable and it can never be outdated as it is gathered for the issue at hand thus can help the researcher in coming out with the clear picture of the issue that will be at hand.

3.3.2 Secondary data

Information that is already in existence and was obtained for a different purpose is secondary data (Saunders, 2012). Secondary data encompasses of data and studies that were made by other researchers for potentially diverse purposes. Primary and secondary data can be used together to come out with a concrete conclusion on a certain topic under study, thus that's the reason why secondary data was employed in this study. The researcher referenced the Jet annual financial statements, journals, periodicals, internet and minutes of meetings. Due to the fact that secondary data is less expensive than primary data the researcher was able to acquire the data in a short space of time. The researcher delighted much in using secondary data as it helped in the evaluation of unexpected and unforeseen new findings.

3.4 Research instruments

According to Godfred (2015) strategies used for fact finding are research instruments. These are tools employed in the gathering of information of a topic under investigation. The researcher made use of interviews and questionnaires as her research tools so as to accumulate the obliged data to answer the questions of the research.

3.4.1 Interviews

An interview was defined by Lindzey (2014) as a conversation between two people but would have been established by the interviewer in an effort to obtain certain information of a topic that will be under study and aimed at answering specified research objectives. The researcher carried out an interview with the branch manager by asking questions that were specified. The validity and reliability of any research project depends to a large extent on the appropriateness of the instruments (Godfred ,2015). Thus people who have the rightful or reasonable knowledge in relation to the research add significance to the research results.

The researcher tackled interviews so as to supplement the questionnaires as interviews are more adaptable. They also allow for the use of creativeness, personal skill as well as ingenuity to encourage staff to uncover more of their attitudes and motives as well as allowing inquisitiveness that facilitates acquisition of information especially on complex and emotional questions. Interviews also consume less time thereby allowing more time for data analysis. There will be certain responses to every one of the questions since help will be promptly accessible for complex questions. The advantages of face to face communication will also be enjoyed through interviews as one can monitor the respondent's body language when discussing sensitive topics ,moreso all questions are likely to be answered in a personal interview.

3.5 Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a systematic and official collection of inquiries that are subject to a particular population from which the researcher desires some information that is relevant (Kothari ,2012) . Questionnaires are distributed to respondents in written format and as such they also need to write down their responses on the questionnaires distributed to them. Self-administered questionnaires were used by the researcher in this study.

Questionnaires are advantageous and at the same time easy to administer and they put no weight on the respondents. They are the best method by which a researcher may obtain information from large numbers of people. The researcher however took great caution in wording and structuring the questions to make sure they were not complicated and biased but easy to answer.

However before designing a questionnaire the researcher must first establish how it is going to be analyzed for it to be a good questionnaire and thus might consume much time in developing it. The researcher briefly explained to the respondents of the questionnaires of what was required of them to do so that she may obtain the rightful information as the respondents might misinterpret the questions. The questionnaires will constitute open ended questions as well as semi structured questions.

3.5.1 Open ended questions

According to Kumar (2011) questions that give respondents the freedom to answer questions asked in any way that they wish because they are not limited to specific answers that will be written down are open ended questions. They require that the respondents be good in the language of the questionnaire in expressing their answers freely and comfortably by writing in paper so that they provide useful information. They remove the certainty of researcher bias and also give the respondents room to give answers they want by having the opportunity to answer freely, which helps in coming out with a more broader view of the issue under study

There is however the probability that the researcher may fail to get or comprehend what the respondent would have been trying to convey on a questionnaire and at the end the information that was being passed may end up being distorted or not being get at all in the use of open ended questions. There is also a great chance of interviewee bias in open ended questions.

3.5.2 Closed questions

Closed ended questions are questions with readily available answers from which the respondent is required to choose one that he or she thinks is best in answering the question. In instances where readily provided answers are there, closed questions are oftenly used. The use of readily available answers is mainly used to get particular information pertaining an issue in the question or to just confirm a point (Saunders, 2012).

Inquiries that are closed regularly requires less motivation and responding to them is less undermining to members that will be participating, they give the respondent aide in answering them. These close ended questions makes sure that the respondents reply in a specific way provided in the questionnaire as ready-made answers will be there thus rendering the reactions to the questions less challenging to analyze and easily obtainable

However in any case, data acquired through closed ended questions often lack depth and assortment. There is also a high chance of bias of the researcher being passed in the questionnaire as the researcher may only provide answers that intrigue him or her most. The fact that the answers are already given gives room that the responses that will be given by the respondent would have been pre conditioned and the response will not be the actual answer that he or she would have provided in the absence of those answers. Kumar (2011), is also of the view that the provision of readily made answers may establish a tendency in the respondent of just ticking the answer even without much consideration of the question.

3.5.3The Likert scale

The likert scale is a psychometric scale which is commonly used in the organization of structured questions. Answers on a likert scale are supposed to be given by respondents through a way of choosing their most favored answers among others on a disagree-agree symmetric scale. The intensity of the respondent’s feelings for asked questions will be recorded on a range and the commonly used one is the point scale that has a range from strongly disagree to strongly agree. In this study the likert scale was made use of in answering the research questions.

Table 3.2: The Likert scale

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Points	5	4	3	2	1

Kumar (2011)

The likert scale brings out the respondent’s emotion or thoughts upon a given issue with a number of stipulated answers. Due to the simplicity of the likert scale information obtained using this method is not challenging to analyze and can be easily established. It is very easy to

understand and complete the questionnaire thus not tiring to respondents. It is also possible to just add a greatly reliant scale.

3.6 Validity and reliability

3.6.1 Validity

According to Saunders (2012) validity is concerned on whether the research findings are true and reflect what they seem to portray. This brings out the fact that a design of a research articulates what it was designed to establish and it does so accurately. It is also concerned that the research design completely addresses the exploration inquiries and goals. Lukka and Modell (2010) are of the view that data may only be said to be valid if it gives the true view of the issue in study. In order to place some reliance on the research instruments, the researcher made use of the experts in the field of the research including the research supervisor. This helped in updating the and changing the examination instruments in order to make sure that the legitimacy of the study is improved. Accordingly this study was thought to be substantial on the grounds that relevant information will be utilized as a part of the analysis of the study.

3.6.2 Reliability

Reliability can be defined as the extent to which measures are free from errors (Peterson, 2012). According to Krishnaswamy et al., (2009) reliability refers to the consistency and stability which an instrument measures and supplies consistent results. Thus the reliability of instruments assures the reduction of measurement errors' likelihood of occurrence. In order to avoid the inherent weaknesses in other instruments such as ambiguity and misunderstanding on how to fill the questionnaires, more than one data collection instrument and method was used.

3.7 Data presentation and analysis

As an initial move towards the examination of the information, the raw data gathered will be sorted and altered. In order to present the findings the researcher will utilize Microsoft excel to classify and build visual charts, data tables and pie diagrams to introduce and dissect the data as well as allowing literature review. The primary data that was collected was sorted and edited as the first step towards its analysis. Questionnaires were grouped and sorted out to the patterns given by respondents and their homogeneity. The reactions from the surveys were composed in accordance with the research questions and descriptive narratives were used to mirror the

circumstances as they happened at Jet. The methods that were used were justified since they were easy to understand and they gave a fair view of the trend as well as clear illustration of summaries of information gathered.

3.8 Summary

This chapter concentrated on the research methodology embraced by the researcher. It illustrated how information will be assembled during the study. Presentation and analysis of the gathered data will be shown in the upcoming chapter.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter there will be a presentation of the information got from the essential research instruments which include questionnaires as well as interviews. The findings and explorations are exhibited and analyzed according to the research objectives. Graphs, tables and pie charts will be made use of so as to present the data collected. Upon these findings shall the conclusions and findings of this study be based on.

4.1 Response rate

An aggregate of nine questionnaires were distributed to the Jet staff and all the nine questionnaires administered were successfully completed and returned by the respondents. This gave a response rate of 100%, of which according to Nulty (2010) if a response rate of 60% or more is achieved then this renders the research findings legitimate and to some extent relevant and reliable. Below is a table that summarizes the response rate of the questionnaires that were distributed.

Table 4.1: Questionnaire response rate

	Customer service assistants	Sales floor manager	Accounts clerks	Accounts department manager	Total
Send/ delivered	4	1	3	1	9
Completed	4	1	3	1	9
Response rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source :Primary data

4.2 Questionnaires response : Presentation and analysis

4.2.1 Causes for loosing competitive advantage

a. High employee turnover

Table 4.2: Response for high employee turnover

Attitude	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Frequency	0	2	2	4	1	9
Rate	0%	22%	22%	44%	12%	100%

Source: Primary data

Table 4.2 above illustrates that 0/9 (0%) strongly agreed, 2/9 (33%) agreed, 2/9 (22%) was uncertain, 4/9 (44%) disagreed and only 1/9 (12%) strongly disagree that high employee turnover causes an organization to lose its competitive advantage.

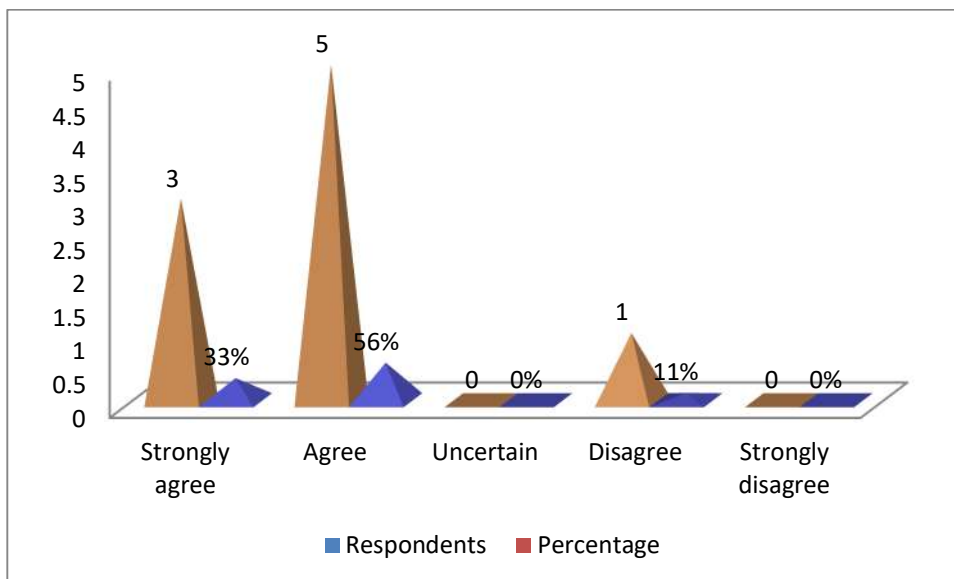
The results shows that 2/9 agrees that high employee turnover can cause a company to loose its competitive advantage and this is in line with what was said by Peeters (2010) who is of the view that if the turnover rate of an organisation is too high then it is capable of affecting the service

quality which in turn will also affect its competitive advantage . 2/9 (22%) was uncertain which is supported by Shamsuzzohah (2013) who avers that the replacement of old employees by new ones may decrease the performance of the organisation in terms of production but however if a condition exists that the newly recruited have more expertise the old then the company may actually gain. 5/9 (56%) respondents disagree of the fact that high employee turnover is a cause for losing competitive advantage ,this is in line with Eric et. al, who argues that if turnover is on those employees that are not productive then the organisation will be better off without them and more profitable.

A mode of 5/9 (56%) disagree that high employee turnover causes the organisation to lose its competitive advantage, this is supported by Cappelli (2010) avers that high labour turnover rate is the benefit enjoyed by the organisation for bringing in new blood to the organisation that will be highly educated and skilled and thus improving the performance of the organisation.

b. Customer relationship management

Fig 4.1: Responses for customer relationship management.



As shown above in fig 4.1, 3/9 (33%) strongly agree, 5/9 (56%) agree, 0/9 (0%) are uncertain, 1/9 (11%) disagree, 0/9 (0%) strongly disagree.

These responses show that 8/9 (88%) respondents agree that customer relationship management has an effect on the competitiveness of an organisation this is supported by Anderson ,et al (2012) who mentioned that customers who are satisfied with the service of an organisation will engage in repeat bussiness with the firm and in large quantities thus helping in creating and sustaining the competitive advantage of a firm. 0/9 are uncertain which shows that all respondent did have an opinion on the issue though the opinions may seem different. 1/9 (11%) disagreed which is in line with Domingo (2010)'s train of thought that the service industry sytem is not of the design to maintain and monitor the loyalty of customers to the organisation.

A mode of 88% agree that customer relationship management at Jet may be a reason for loosing competitive advantage which is in line with Ittner and Larcker (2013) who are of the view that researchers in the accounting field have established that managing the relationships with customers well is an asset to the organisation and a big factor in the attainment of higher revenues thus improving competitive advantage.

c. High priced products than any other clothing retailers

Table 4.3:Responses for high priced products than any other clothing retailers

Attitude	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Frequency	9	0	0	0	0	9
Rate	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%

Source:Primary data

The question sort to find out if the charging of higher prices by Jet than any other clothing retailers is the cause for loosing competitive advantage. In table 4.3 shown above 0/9 were uncertain, 0/9 disagreed, 0/9 strongly disagreed, 0/9 agreed and 9/9 (100%) strongly agreed.

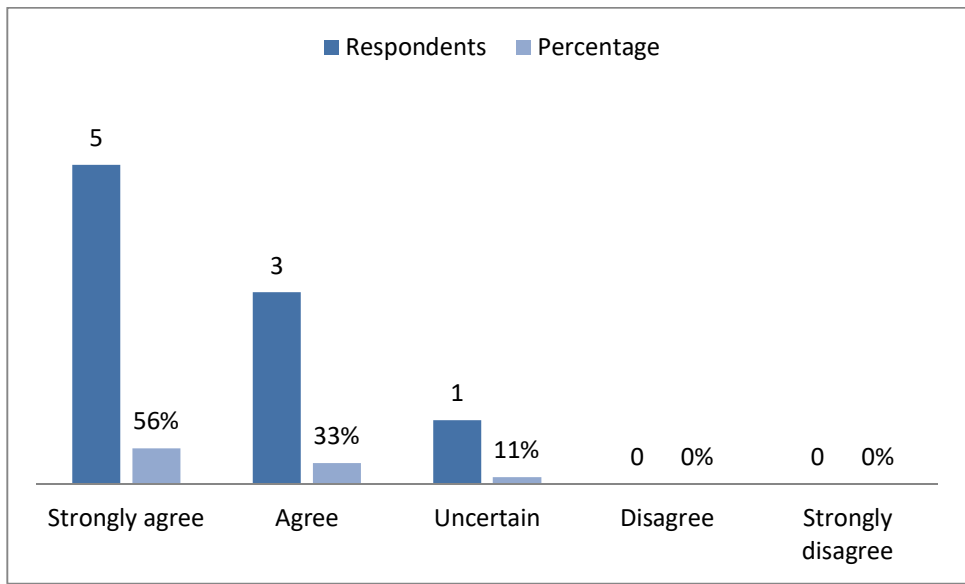
This shows that 9 out of 9 (100%) respondents strongly agreed that the charging of higher prices by Jet than any other clothing retailers is the cause for loosing competitive advantage which is in line with Kaliapen and Hillman's view that threats through imitation, design, marketing and increased cost of inputs may compromise the cost leadership strategy .

No one was uncertain and also 0/9 disagreed, this shows that all respondents had the same opinion.

All the respondents strongly agreed that being the cost leader was a major cause for losing competitive advantage at Jet hence being the modal class. The researcher thus concluded that the charging of higher prices than any other retailers is a cause for losing competitive advantage.

d. The prices that are being charged versus the products being produced

Fig 4.2: Results for the prices that are being charged versus the products being produced.



This question intended to find out if the prices being charged by Jet vis-à-vis the products produced were the cause for losing competitive advantage. Fig 4.2 above illustrates that 5/9

(56%) respondents strongly agree, 3/9 (33%) agree, 1/9 (11%) was uncertain, 0/9 (0%) disagree and 0/9 (0%) strongly disagree.

This shows that 8/9 respondents agreed that the prices charged by Jet resulted in its loss for competitive advantage and this is postulated by Coulter (2010) who notes that for an organization to create its competitive advantage it has to charge low prices and differentiate its products from those of its rivals. 11% were uncertain if the prices charged compared to the quality of the product were the causes for losing competitive advantage, this was supported by Baroto and Abdullah (2011) who argues that quite a number of elements can cause competitive advantage to be lost.

From the research findings it can be concluded that the prices charged at Jet compared to its products are the cause of the loss in competitive advantage which is supported by the mode of 8 out of 9 respondents agreeing.

4.6 Strategies being applied so as to create competitive advantage

a. It is charging the lowest prices

Table 4.4: Results for charging lower prices

Attitude	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Frequency	0	0	2	3	4	9
Rate	0%	0%	22%	33%	45%	100%

Source: Primary data

As illustrated by the table 4.4 0/9 (0%) strongly agreed, 0/9 (0%) agreed, 2/9 (22%) were uncertain, 3/9 (33%) disagreed and 4/9 (45%) strongly disagreed that Jet was charging low prices so as to enhance competitive advantage.

22% of the respondents were uncertain which is supported by Frambach et al (2012) who is of the fact that the supply side should be the major determinant of competitive advantage rather than the demand side. Out of the 9 respondents, 7 of them disagreed of the fact that low prices were being charged by Jet hence being the modal class. This is in line with what was said by Aulakh et al. (2013) who argues that the low cost strategies makes much significance in economies that have low cost of labour and not to any economy or country.

b. The product differentiation strategy

Table 4.5 Results for the product differentiation strategy

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Frequency	3	4	1	1	0	9
Rate	33%	45%	11%	11%	0%	100%

Source: Primary data

The question wanted to seek if Jet was providing distinct products from its competitors so as to create competitive advantage. As the data shows above in table 4.5, 3/9 (33%) strongly agreed, 4/9 (45%) agree, 1/9 (11%) were uncertain, 1/9 (11%) disagree and 0/9 strongly disagreed.

Out of the 9 respondents, 78% agreed that Jet was offering distinct products from its competitors, this view is supported by Shamot (2011) who avers that the differentiation of products can be a competitive way made use of by firms to offer customers products that satisfy their needs. 11% of the respondents were uncertain if the product differentiation strategy was being used by Jet in creating competitive advantage which is in line with Daniela (2012) who argues that the respecting of standards of the environment, usage of technological production and its innovation can sustain competitive advantage. Only 1 of the 9 respondents disagreed and this is seconded by Martina (2012) who is of the view that the differentiation strategy may imply a hinder to high market share.

Therefore a mode of 7/9 respondents was acquired on this question and upon this mode the researcher based the conclusion that Jet is providing clearly distinct products from other retailers.

c. The resource based view

Table 4.6 Results for the resource based view

Attitude	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Frequency	0	2	3	2	2	9
Rate	0%	22%	34%	22%	22%	100%

Source: Primary data

The question sought to find out if Jet possessed competitive resources that are hard to imitate and if the resources helped it to sustain and create competitive advantage. Table 4.6 shows that 2/9 (22%) were uncertain which is supported by Barney and Clark (2012) who avers that all resources are treated by the RBV in the same way whether they are organisational capital, human or physical capital. As shown by the table 4.8 above 0/9 strongly agreed and 2/9 (22%) agreed that the resource based view was being applied at Jet as a competitive strategy. This is seconded by Petteraf and Barney who postulated that the RBV place more emphasis on what the organisation owns in terms of resources as the major elements of competitive advantage.

Further analysis of the data shows that 4 out of the 9 respondents disagreed that Jet was applying the resource based view strategy to create and sustain competitive advantage and thus being the

modal class. This is supported by Cool ,Almeda Costa and Dierickx (2012, p.57) who postulates that if all organisations possess the same resources then it means they is no strategy that exist that is in one entity that is not with the other.

d. The Guerilla view of competitive strategy

Table 4.7 Results for the guerilla view of competitive strategy

Attitude	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Frequency	0	2	3	2	2	9
Rate	0%	22%	34%	22%	22%	100%

The question intended to find out if the constant creation of new competitive strategies could help in creating and sustaining competitive advantage. As shown above in table 4.7, 0/9 strongly agreed, 2/9 (22%) agreed, 3/9 (34%) were uncertain, 2/9 (22%) disagreed and 2/9 (22%) strongly disagreed.

The data presented shows that 2 out of the 9 respondents agreed which is seconded by Coulter (2010) who argues that for organisations to remain competitive in the industry they must continue surprising their customers now and then to keep their competitors off balance. 3 respondents were uncertain if the guerilla view was being applied as a competitive strategy and this is confirmed by Contrary (2013) who suggests that the RBV is most suitable for medium to small organisations.

A mode of 44% disagreed that the guerilla view was being applied at Jet as a tool for creating competitive advantage. This is in line with Levinson (2013) who states that a company should establish many points of interaction with its customers to enable the creation of memories that will remain for long.

4.6 Factors affecting the significance of cost and management accounting creating and sustaining a competitive advantage

a. Market competitiveness

Table 4.8 Results for market competitiveness

Attitude	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Frequency	3	5	0	1	0	9
Rate	33%	55%	11%	11%	0%	100%

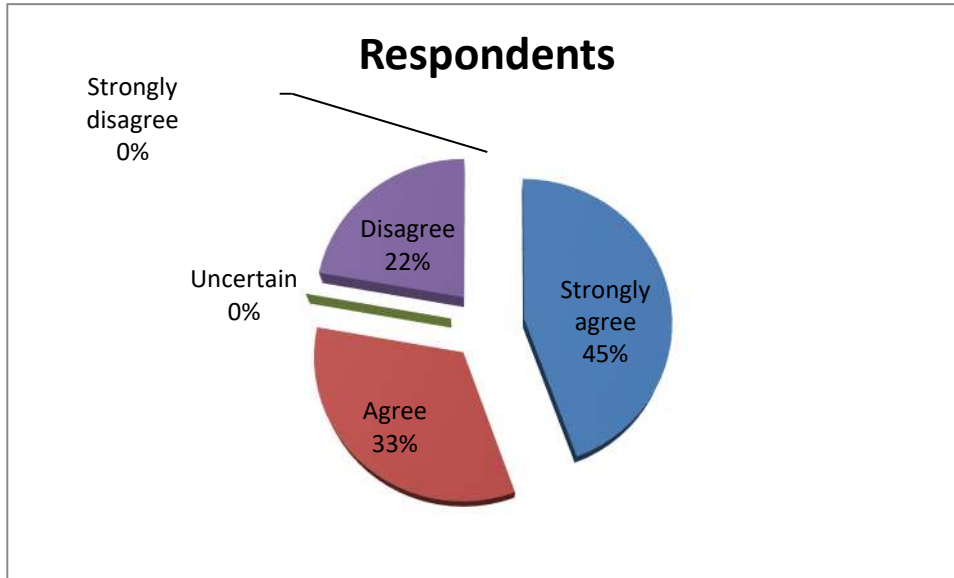
Source: Primary data

The in table 4.6 shows that 1/9 (11%) of the respondents disagreed, 0/9 (0%) were uncertain, 3/9 (33%) strongly agreed and 5/9 (55%) agreed.

Only one respondent out of the 9 that is 11% disagreed that market competitiveness affected the significance of cost and management accounting in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage. This was seconded by Brown et al (2010) who argues that factors including the cost structure of the products, competitiveness in the market, as well as production technology have nothing to do on whether management accounting techniques considered operating units. 8 out of 9 respondents agreed and this is in line with Rababah (2014) who is the view that motivator factors such as the technology of production, competitiveness in the market and the structure of the product cost have an impact on innovation. Therefore from a mode of 88% it can be concluded that market competitiveness is a factor that influence the adoption of cost and management accounting in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage.

b. Product cost structure

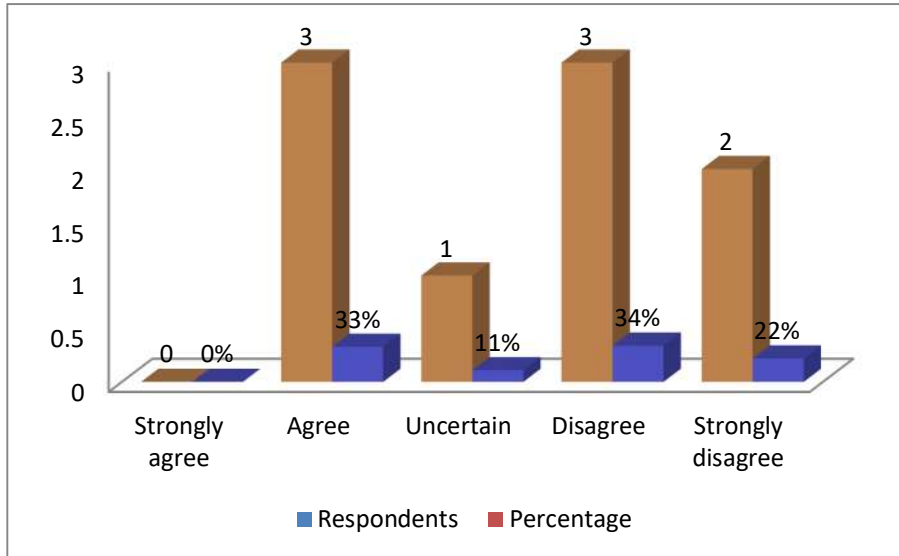
Fig 4.3



The pie chart given above in fig 4.3 gives the evidence that 4/9 (44%) strongly agreed, 3/9 (33%) agreed, 0/9 were uncertain, 2/9 disagreed and 0/9 strongly disagrees. 2/9 disagreed that the product cost structure affects the implementation of cost and management accounting innovations in creating and sustaining competitive advantage and this is supported by Brown et al (2010) who argue that technological factors such as market competitiveness, product cost structure and production technology are not related to whether or not operating units considered management accounting innovations. Overallly 77% agreed and this is seconded by Rababah (2014) who avers that factors of motivation have an effect on the innovativeness of an organisation and they include the cost structure of the product, market competitiveness and technology in production. This mode of 77% clearly depicts that the product cost structure affects management accounting innovations at Jet.

c. Training and availability of resources

Fig 4.4 Results for training and availability of resources



Source: Primary data

The question seek to depict if there is lack of training and sufficient resources which is affecting management accounting innovations. From what is shown above in fig 4.4, 0/9 (0%) strongly agree, 3/9 (34%) agree, 1/9 (11%) was uncertain, 3/9 (34%) disagree and 2/9 (22%) strongly disagree.

33% of the respondents agreed which is seconded by Clarke et al (2010) who stated the shortage of resources and experience were majour hindrances to the application management accounting practices. 56% of the respondents did not agree and this is suported by Rababah (2014) who is of the argument that facilitator factors are not sufficient on their own for innovations in management. It can thus be concluded from the mode of 56% that training and availability of resources did not affect the implementation of cost and management accounting innovations at Jet in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage.

d.Poor financial performance

Table 4.9 Results for poor financial performance

Attitude	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Frequency	5	3	0	1	0	9
Rate	55%	34%	0%	11%	0%	100%

Source: Primary data

From table 4.9 above, 5/9 (56%) strongly agree, 3/9 (34%) agree, 0/9 (0%) were uncertain, 1/9 (11%) disagreed and 0/9 (0%) strongly disagreed.

Only one out of the 9 respondents disagree that poor financial performance was affecting the implementation of management accounting innovations at Jet, this is supported by Fadzil and Rababah (2012) who argues that costs that are ever increasing and the diversity in services or products are the main reasons behind the establishment and application of techniques in management accounting. The rest of the respondents agreed and this is seconded by Rababah (2014) who restated that the loss of market share, financial performance that is poor, new accountants and reduction in profitability are all catalysts factors that have an effect on innovation. From this greater number of respondents agreeing, it can be concluded that poor financial performance affected the implementation of cost and management accounting innovations at Jet.

e. Loss of market share

Fig 4.5: Responses for loss of market share.

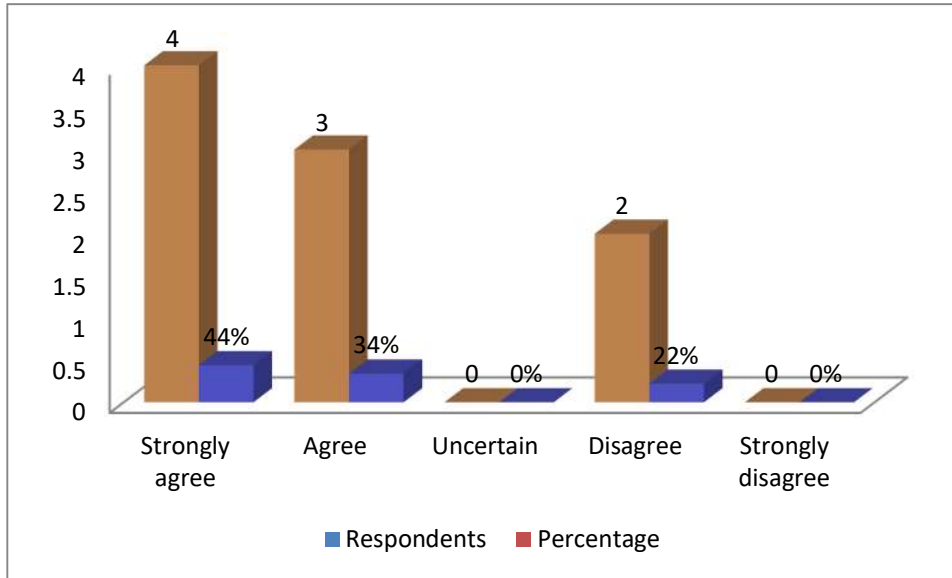
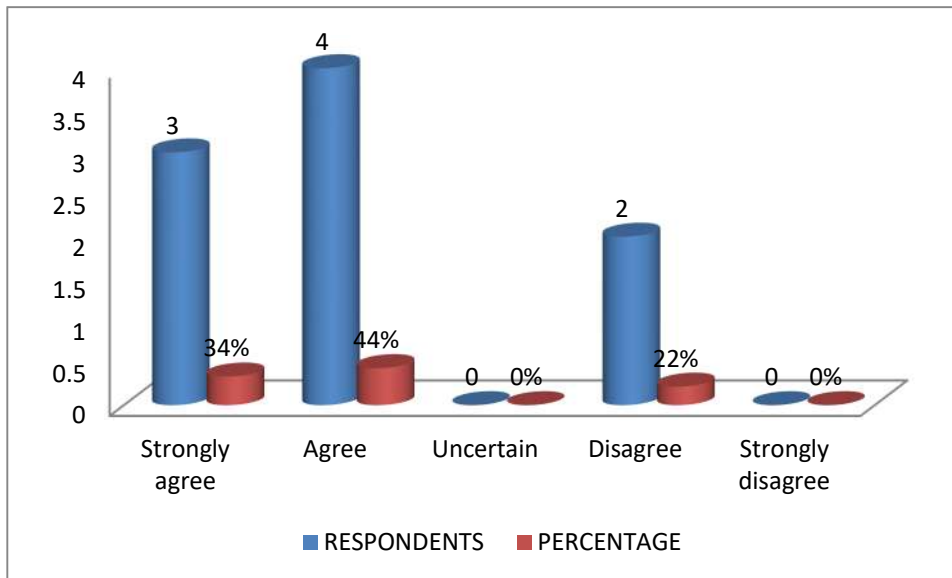


Fig 4.5 above shows that 4/9 (44%) strongly agreed, 3/9 (34%) agree, 0/9 (0%) were uncertain, 2/9 (22%) disagreed and 0/9 (0%) strongly disagreed.

22% disagreed of the fact that the loss of market share affected the implementation of management accounting at Jet. This is supported by Fadzil and Rababah (2012) who argued that the growing costs and diversity of products is a major cause to the adoption and implementation of management accounting innovations. No one was neutral and a total of 78% agreed, this is in line with Rababah (2014) who mentioned that new accountants, decline in profitability, low market share and performing financially bad are catalyst factors which are related to innovation. Therefore it can be concluded from the mode of 7 out of 9 respondents who agreed that the loss of market share by Jet affected the implementation of cost and management accounting .

4.6 Challenges being faced by Jet in implementing cost and management innovations

Fig 4.6 Results for threats of new entrants



Source: Primary data

The question sought to find out if the threats of new entrants were a challenge to management in the implementation of cost and management accounting. Fig 4.6 above shows that 3/9 (34%) strongly agree, 4/9 (44%) agree, 0/9 were uncertain, 2/9 (22%) disagree and 0/9 (0%) strongly disagree.

Out of all the respondents no one was uncertain which is evidenced by the 0%. A total of 78% agreed that new entrants were posing challenges in the implementation of cost and management innovations. This is in support of Ndwiga's (2011) view that threats posed by new entrants may affect the competitive advantage of a firm. 22% of the respondents disagreed and this is seconded by Martin (2014) who avers that if a market has got barriers to entry established then it will be difficult for new entrances, reducing their risk of entering into a business for instance requirements for particular knowledge, strict regulations and prerequisites of high speculation.

From the evidence obtained above, specifically the mode of 7 out of 9 respondents who agree, the researcher was of the conclusion that the threats of new entrants can compromise the implementation of cost and management accounting innovations.

b. Bargaining power of customers

Table 4.10 Results for the bargaining power of customers as a challenge in implementing cost and management innovations.

Attitude	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Frequency	1	2	0	4	2	9
Rate	11%	22%	0%	45%	22%	100%

Source: Primary data

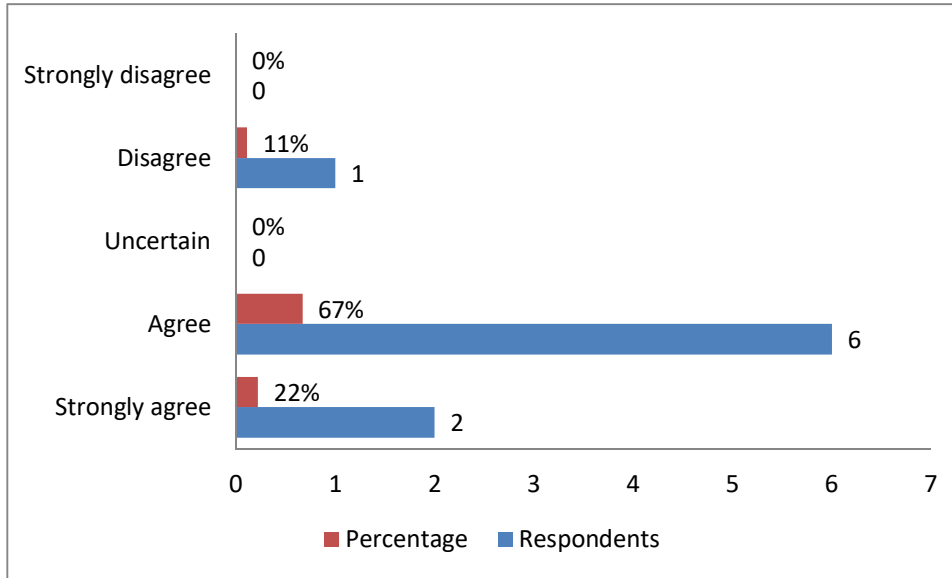
The table 4.10 above shows that 1/9 (11%) strongly agree, 2/9 (22%) agree, 0/9 were uncertain, 2/9 (22%) strongly disagree and 4/9 (45%) disagree.

An overall of 33% of the respondents agreed that the bargaining power of customers was a challenge in the implementation of cost and management accounting techniques at Jet. This view is further supported by Mazodze (2015) who is of the notion that the buying power of customers can pose serious challenges to the application of cost and management accounting techniques in organizations. 77% of the respondents disagreed and their view is seconded by Paul (2011) who argues that even if it is so the fact that different customers may demand different things and at the same time an individual customer has got less power and thus this neutralizes the situation

There is a mode of 6 respondents who disagree to the fact that the bargaining power of customers affects the implementation of management innovations hence from this evidence the researcher concluded that the bargaining power of customers is not a challenge in the implementation of management innovations.

c. Bargaining power of suppliers

Fig 4.7: Results for the bargaining power of suppliers



Source: Primary data

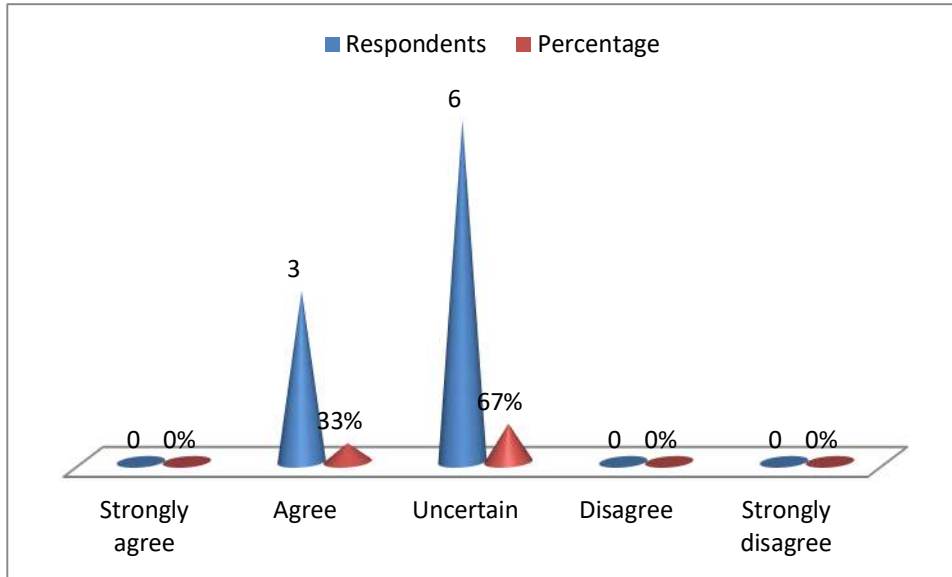
The question intended to find out if the bargaining power of suppliers has an impact on the implementation of cost and management techniques at Jet. The graph in Fig 4.7 above shows that 2/9 (22%) strongly agreed, 6/9 (67%) agree, 0/9 (0%) were uncertain, 1/9 (11%) disagree and 0/9 (0%) strongly agreed.

An overall of 89% agreed and this was supported by Martin (2014) who avers that the forces framework states that the bargaining power suppliers has an effect on competitive advantage and can impact on the competitive environment which in turn affects the financial performance of the organisation. 11% of the respondents took a side to disagree and this is in line with Greenspan (2015) who is of the view that the vast populace of suppliers can possibly affect firms.

Thus with the majority of the respondents agreeing the researcher was of the conclusion that the bargaining power of suppliers is a challenge in the implementation of cost and management innovations.

d. Leadership

Fig 4.8 :Results of leadership as a challenge to the implementation of management innovations .



Source: Primary data

From fig 4.8 above it can be clearly depicted that 0/9 (0%) strongly agreed, 3/9 (33%) agree, 6/9 (67%) were uncertain, 0/9 (0%) disagree and 0/9 (0%) strongly disagree.

A total of 33% of the respondents agree that the leadership was posing a challenge in the implementation of cost and management innovations. This is in line with what was posited by Romero (2013) who notes that the creation of competitive advantage is vested in the leadership of the organisation. 67% of the respondents, being the modal class was uncertain if whether leadership was a challenge or not and this is seconded by Sun (2012) who is of the view that leadership styles in most cases have effects on the competitive advantage of an organisation but this may vary with the leadership style as one may have a positive effect and the other a negative effect, it on depends with the variables employed by the researchers. From this mode of 67% who were uncertain it can be deduced that the leadership is not a challenge in the implementation of management innovations.

e. Employee engagements

Table 4.11 Results of employee engagements as a challenge

Attitude	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Frequency	3	4	0	2	0	9
Rate	33%	45%	0%	22%	0%	100%

Source: Primary data

The objective on this question was to find out if employee engagements at Jet were being a challenge in the implementation of cost and management innovations and from the above data in table 4.11, 3/9 (33%) strongly agree, 4/9 (45%) agree, 0/9 (0%) were uncertain, 0/9 (0%) strongly disagree and 2/9 (22%) disagree.

Out of all the respondents 2 of them did not agree that employee engagements were a challenge, this is supported by Schuler et al., (2014) who is of the view that many companies do not gain competitive advantage through employee engagements. 78% of the respondents agreed and this was seconded by Delery and Doty (2011) who claimed that a good human resource management policy goes hand in hand with high organizational performance. No one was neutral about the human resources as a challenge they all took sides. Thus this evidence of a mode of 78% agreeing drew the conclusion that employee engagements has affected the implementation of cost and management innovations at Jet in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage.

4.7 The best cost and management innovation practices that can be implemented at Jet to create and sustain competitive advantage

a. Activity based costing

Table 4.12 Results for Activity based costing

Attitude	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Frequency	6	2	1	0	0	9
Rate	67%	22%	11%	0%	0%	100%

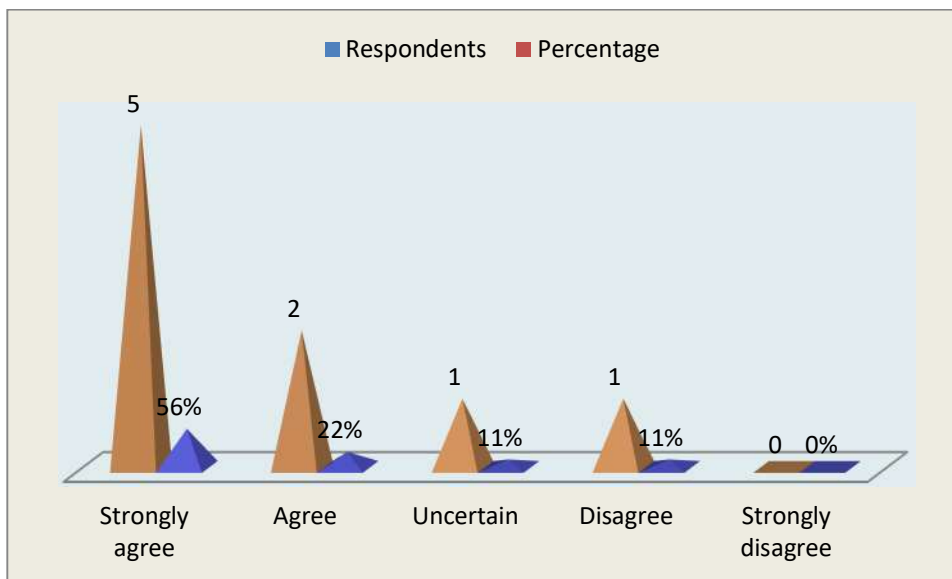
Source: Primary data

The thrust to this question was to figure out if Activity based costing could be successfully implemented at Jet in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage. This is illustrated in table 4.12 above which shows that, 2/9 (22%) agree, 6/9 (67%) strongly agree, 1/9 (11%) was uncertain, 0/9 (0%) strongly disagree and 0/9 (0%) disagree.

89% of the respondents agreed that ABC could be used as a practice so as to enhance competitive advantage, this is seconded by Manoj Kumar (2014) who is of the view that the output and input nature of ABC in the competitive world of today helps in enhancing the relevance and reliability of performance measures. Only one of the respondents was uncertain and this is in line with Chea (2011) who postulated that ABC was unreliable with the philosophies of continuous assessment and total quality management. Therefore the researcher concluded from the mode of 89% who agreed that ABC could be implemented at Jet and used as a best practice in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage.

b. Standard costing system

Fig 4.9 :Results for the standard costing system



Source: Primary data

From the data above in fig 4.9 , 2/9 (22%) agree, 5/9 (56%) strongly agree, 1/9 (11%) was uncertain,1/9 (11%) disagree and 0/9 (0%) strongly disagree.

A total of 78% agree that standard costing can be implemented at Jet to enhance competitive advantage, this is in line with Horngren et al (2012) who avers that the method of setting standards help especially in motivating employees that aid in the attainment of competitive advantage. One of the respondents was neutral and did not take a side whilst 11% disagree, this is supported by Beata et al., (2010) who indicated that critics against the standard costing systems raises questions on whether the method is really useful in the service industry of nowadays.

This evidence was thus used by the researcher to draw the conclusion from the mode of 78% who agree that the standard costing system can be implemented by Jet to sustain competitive advantage.

c. The balanced scorecard

Table 4.13 Results for the balanced scorecard

Attitude	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Frequency	4	2	1	1	1	9
Rate	45%	22%	11%	11%	11%	100%

Source: Primary data

The question sought to find out if the balanced scorecard could be used at Jet to enhance competitive advantage and the results in table 4.13 above show that 4/9 (45%) strongly agree, 2/9 (22%) agree, 1/9 (11%) was uncertain, 1/9 (11%) disagree and 1/9 (11%) strongly disagree.

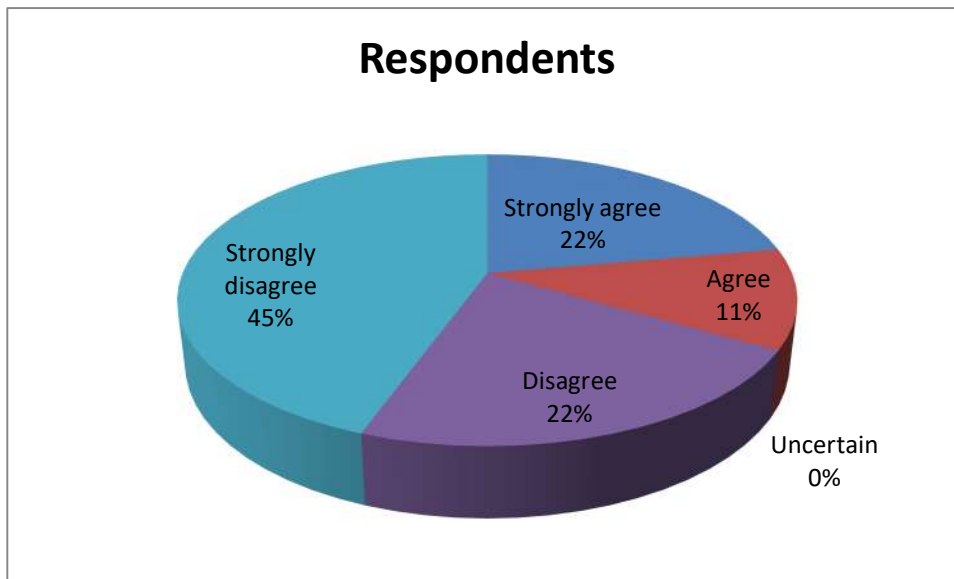
An overall of 67% agree and this is supported by CIMA (2011) which is of the fact that BSC is one of the common methods of management accounting used by organisations and is predicted to remain popular. 11% of the respondents were uncertain and this is in line with Rababah (2014) who avers that BSC has gained recognition as a way of performance evaluation rather than as organizing tool. On the other side a total of 22% disagreed and this is seconded by Norreklit

(2012) who is of the argument that the effect and cause connection among methods that are from the four views of the balanced score card which Kaplan and Norton elaborated is challenging.

As the mode is 67% , it shows that the balanced scorecard can be used or adopted at Jet so as to create and sustain competitive advantage.

d. Target and Kaizen Costing

Fig 4.10: Results for target and Kaizen costing



Source: Primary data

The question intended to find out if target and kaizen costing could be implemented at Jet so as to sustain competitive advantage. The pie chart above in fig 4.10 above shows that 2/9 (22%) strongly agreed, 1/9 (11%) agree, 0/9 (0%) were uncertain, 2/9 (22%) disagree and 4/9 (45%) strongly disagree.

An overall of 33% agree and this is supported by Ndwiga (2011) who is of the view that target costing and kaizen costing provides strategies that allow an organisation to offer cost effective services and products that may contribute to competitiveness in its industry. A total of 67% disagree and this is in line with Askarany (2012) who argues that the target costing and Kaizen costing are not widely implemented in recent management accounting innovations. The mode of

67% who does not agree shows that target and kaizen costing cannot be used or implemented at Jet to create competitive advantage.

4.8 Interviews

4.8.1 Interview response rate

A structured interview was set up for the branch manager and the interview was successfully carried out.

4.8.2 Interview responses

Question 1: What are the reasons for losing competitive advantage at Jet stores?

The branch manager posited that the lost competitive advantage was as a result of the organization charging prices too high than its other competing rivals. He also mentioned that the quality of the clothes vis-à-vis the prices that it was offering did not match for the prices were too high. The branch manager also said since it rebranded to Jet it has been importing some of its merchandise from South Africa, which was costly and at the end increasing the input costs thereby increasing the product costs as well, this led to customers complaining about being over charged and going for other retailers thereby losing its competitive advantage. Salimian et al. (2012) implied that it is vital for an organization to protect itself against the danger connected with cost delicate customers and marginalized production costs so that the organization will stay competitive.

Question 2: What strategies have management put in place so as to improve and create sustainable competitive advantages?

The branch manager mentioned that Jet has been using the product differentiation strategy so as to sustain competitive advantage. He further mentioned on embarking on products promotional strategies and these have especially prompted the achievement of competitive advantage as well as the establishment of its brand. The product differentiation strategy is supported by Ellis and Calanton (2012) who avers that for an organisation to enhance competitive advantage it must be able to offer products or services that are distinct to its customers.

Question 3: What are the factors affecting the significance of cost and management accounting innovations to organizational competitiveness?

To answer this question the branch manager said the lack of adequate resources and experienced staff members were the major factors affecting the significance of cost and management accounting innovations. He further elaborated that since the economy has been unstable this has led to retrenchment of key staff members from 2012 up to 2015 and this has left the company with few experienced staff members. He mentioned also of cost cutting measures that have been embarked on by the organization leaving the company with more of casual workers than permanent staff which have led to inefficiencies in the work place hence affecting organizational competitiveness. He also identified the product cost structure as one of the factors affecting the implementation of cost and management innovations in creating sustainable competitive advantage. These factors are in line with by Clarke et al (2010) who found that the major barriers to the adoption and implementation of management accounting innovations were lack of adequate resources and lack of experience.

4. What challenges are the management facing in the implementation of cost and management accounting innovations in sustaining a competitive advantage?

On this question the branch manager mentioned that the organization was having some liquidity problems hence leading to acquisition of inadequate stock which at times failed to meet the demand and also the bargaining power of suppliers was being a major problem since they were importing some of the merchandise which led them to charging high prices. The branch manager further stresses the lack of adequate working capital which was affecting the implementation of cost and management innovations in sustaining competitive advantage. This view is supported by Kimani et al (2014) who argues that working capital is vital in a firm's financial management decision. Russu (2011) is also in support of the fact that suppliers put pressure to their customers by demanding prices that are high thus posing threats to the management of organizations in accounting innovations.

5. What are the best cost and management accounting innovations that can be implemented in order to create and sustain competitive advantage?

The branch manager was of the view that standard costing was the best in enhancing competitive advantage since it provided standards that the company would want to meet and provide for variance analysis. He also asserts that the organization needed to embark on the ABC system

since it could help the company in making more effective production decisions that will help in the provision of accurate cost information so as to enhance competitive advantage. This view is seconded by Ebimobowei and Binaebi (2013) who avers that ABC can result in the realization of relevant and accurate cost measures as well as the vast processing of costs data and thereby taking the most appropriate actions.

4.9 Secondary data analysis

4.9.1 Jet document analysis results

The customers list extract of Jet from 2012 shows that the customers have been decreasing at a very fast rate from one year to the other. This fact was confirmed by the branch manager in the interviews that were held with him , that the company was losing its competitive advantage. As the customers were decreasing so did the cash sales. The information pertaining to the decrease in the customers and cash sales is given in the tables below.

Table 4.24 (Jet stores 2014) Customers list extract

Year	2012	2013	2014
Total number of customers	58 693	47 138	36 914
% decrease		(19. 7%)	(21.6%)

Source: Jet stores management accounts 2014

Table 4.25 (Jet stores 2014) Cash sales extract

Year	2012	2013	2014
Total cash sales	1 100 000	924 000	756 000
% decrease		(16%)	(18.2%)

Source: Jet stores management accounts 2014

4.10 Summary

This chapter looked at the interpretation , presentation and analysis of data which was gathered by the researcher. The researcher used findings were tables, bar graphs and pie charts to present

the data. The chapter that comes next comprises of the research summary, major findings, conclusion and recommendations based on the research findings.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMAR, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter the summaries of all chapters, findings from the research and the conclusions drawn will be focused on. Attention is also going to be on recommending the best cost and management innovations in accounting that Jet can use to enhance its competitive advantage basing on the research findings.

5.1 Research study summary

5.1.1 Chapter 1

In the background of study the researcher gave a brief explanation of the problem that Jet stores was facing of reduced performance in terms of sales figures. The evidence that was provided for the deteriorating performance was that of the customers' list extract and the sales figures extract that showed that since 2012 the figures have been decreasing. This was as a result that Jet was losing its competitive advantage to its rivals hence leading to the decrease in company performance including the sales.

5.1.2 Chapter 2

In this chapter the researcher looked through the literature on what other authors had to say on the role of cost and management accounting in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage. Shamsuzzohah (2013) and Kotler and Armstrong (2015) mentioned some of the causes for losing competitive advantage whilst Pearce and Robinson (2011) gave the strategies that management can put in place to improve its competitive advantage. The significance of the management accounting innovations were looked upon by Wanderly et al., (2013) and Rababah (2014) . Russo (2011) and Ndwiga (2011) noted the challenges that were being faced in implementing cost and management accounting innovations whilst Edwards (2013) and Kostakis et al.,(2011) gave some of the best practices that can be applied in cost and management accounting so as to create and sustain competitive advantage.

5.1.3 Chapter 3

The researcher in this chapter made use of the descriptive research study specifically using the mixed approach. A census of 10 Jet staff members were used as the research population. The census was carried out due to the population that was small and also to obtain a full picture of the research that was under study. Primary and secondary data was collected from Jet staff, of which primary data made use of questionnaires and interviews where the branch manager only was interviewed. The Jet documents provided the secondary data.

5.1.4 Chapter 4

The presentation of data and its analysis was the objective for this chapter. The data was presented and analyzed using charts, tables and graphs and from these, the results from the questionnaires and interviews were analyzed and conclusions drawn. The research objectives were used in line with the responses to analyze the data.

5.2 Major research findings

Through all the aforementioned the researcher managed to come out with the findings that follow on the assessment of the role of cost and management accounting in creating and sustaining competitive advantage.

5.2.1 Causes for losing competitive advantage

The findings from the research reveal that the charging of high prices than other retailers in the industry proved by the total population that is 100% strongly agreeing is a cause as well as the prices being too high than the products offered shown by 89% of the population that agreed to the fact and customer relationship management that had 88% respondents agreeing are the causes for losing competitive advantage.

5.2.2 Strategies applied so as to create competitive advantage

78% of the respondents agreed that Jet was using the product differentiation strategy so as to create and sustain its competitive advantage and thus it can be concluded that this is the strategy being used by Jet.

5.2.3 Factors affecting the significance of cost and management accounting in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage.

The discoveries show that the market competitiveness with 88% of the respondents agreeing , product cost structure which has 77% agreeing and poor financial performance with 89% agreeing are the factors affecting the significance of its cost and management innovations in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage at Jet.

5.2.4 Challenges being faced by Jet in implementing cost and management innovations.

The findings show that the bargaining power of suppliers had 89% agreeing , threats of new entrants had 78% agreeing and employee engagements had 78% agreeing and thus these are the main challenges being faced by Jet in implementing cost and management innovations.

5.2.5 Best practices that can be applied in cost and management accounting to improve competitive advantage.

From the research findings the researcher noted that activity based costing which had 89% respondents agreeing and standard costing that had 78% agreeing as well could be utilized in order to enhance competitive advantage.

5.3 Recommendations

As the study was carried out successfully, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

- Jet should supplement its basic competitive strategies for better performance and carry out customer surveys regularly so as to find out on their needs on certain products and see the best ways that it can present its products to the customers so as to maximize on what the customers want most. In other words it must draw ideas on constantly creating new competitive strategies that will help it create and sustain competitive advantage.
- The researcher also is of the recommendation that Jet managers should embrace the cost and management accounting techniques as an important part in their management systems. They should also embrace techniques such as the activity based costing as well as the balanced score card, so as to make the appropriate allocation of costs to products which will in turn help it to charge reasonable competitive prices for its products and also to evaluate its system performance effectively.

5.4 Conclusions of the research

The research assessed the role of cost and management innovations in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage. The study was carried out successfully as all the respondents responded 100%, making the research evaluations even more valuable and reliable. The findings reviews that Jet stores was losing its competitive advantage slowly and the best way that this competitive advantage could be gained is through making use of the various accounting techniques such as the activity based costing and the balanced scorecard.

5.6 Suggestions of areas of further study

As this study has looked through the role of cost and management accounting accounting in the service industry the researcher recommends that further study be done on the significance of management innovations in manufacturing companies in developing countries.

Future studies should also look on the role of the business in the service industry of having physical contact with its customers in creating competitive advantage.

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