RESEARCH METHODOLOGY - RESM 8419P

Organisational culture as a contributor to competitive advantage within the context of family owned businesses.

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I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the* Bachelor of Commerce Honours in Management *degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

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1. ABSTRACT

Family owned businesses are the oldest form of business in history, with a vast, majority of businesses today being family owned and managed. The popularity of this form of business continues to grow more especially in emerging and developing markets, making the field of family business research important to contemporary business research.

Perhaps one of the reasons that explains the overall popularity and success of family businesses is the concept of organisational culture and its link to competitive advantage. Through this research study the researcher aims to explore the relationship between these two elements within the context of family owned businesses.

The methodological design of this study was of a qualitative nature, from an interpretivist approach. The target population of this study was owners or managers of their own family owned businesses, with the sample being selected from 3 family businesses. Data was then gathered through semi-structured interviews with participants which was studied using narrative analysis.

The findings of this study support the belief that organisational culture is indeed linked to competitive advantage. The information gained from the interviews have highlighted a few of the advantages that each organisation has experienced through its individual culture. Further to this, the participants also expressed that some of these advantages are enhanced by the fact that each business is family owned.

2. INTRODUCTION

<u>1.1 Context</u>

Family businesses, regardless of the scale of their operations, legal practises, industrial activities and level of socio-political and market development, have been portrayed as the backbone of the corporate environment, across the world (Poutziouris, Smyrnios & Kleins, 2006). Family businesses have become a major player in capital markets, illustrated by the fact that most listed companies identify as being family owned (Charbel, Elie & Georges, 2013).

This type of business has been specifically identified as having a critical role in both emerging markets as well as developed economies (Ibid). Part of the value of family businesses was that from a historic perspective family businesses are viewed as resilient and enduring organisations (Sharma, 2006).

A fundamental element of family businesses was organisational culture. Wiener & Vardi (as cited by Cui & Hu, 2012) define organisational culture as being a system of shared values that "produce normative pressures on members of organisation." These values are typical elements of the organisational culture found in family businesses, seeing as the structure of a lasting organisation promotes and maintains its own culture.

When studying family businesses and theories that relate to them, Theory of Stewardship was one of the most commonly looked at theories. Theory of Stewardship essentially explores the relationship that exists between different stakeholders with regards to the organisation's wealth-generating efforts (Cossin, Ong & Coughlan, 2015). The theory also looks at improving the organisation's ability to balance these efforts with the purpose of maximising the creation of long-term economic and social value (Ibid). Creating economic and social value can also be considered to be success factors that are linked to competitive advantage.

The purpose of the following research was to explore the relationship between organisational culture and competitive advantage within the field of family business. As such, this study will reflect on the field by investigating the existence of a relationship between the two concepts and the ways in which organisational culture builds and leads to sustaining competitive advantage.

1.2 Relevance & Rationale

Research on family business differs from mainstream research on non-family organisations in that it looks at understanding family, and the influence it exerts on the business (Nordqvist, Hall & Melin, 2009).

In many ways, family businesses are perceived to be stronger and more important now than they have ever been. Statistics show that family businesses account for an estimated 90 percent of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (McKinsey & Company, 2014). Family businesses also make up almost a third of the Fortune Global 500 companies, while 40 percent of the major listed companies in Europe are family owned (Ibid). In emerging markets family businesses were especially important, accounting for almost 60 percent of private-sector companies with revenues of over $1 billion. Given the growth of emerging regions, the influence of family businesses was likely to increase in the next 10 to 15 years (McKinsey & Company, 2014).

Family ownership can be seen to present a strong competitive advantage through the creation of value-driven organisational cultures that inspire identity, trust, and a sense of belonging among employees (Ibid). These firms are also able to lessen certain agency dilemmas. An owner-manager can move more swiftly when they have the ability to bypass a long chain of command or an uncooperative board of directors (McKinsey & Company, 2014).

Furthermore, due to family business' ability to inspire loyalty through their strong cultures, the alignment between owners and managers was greatly enhanced (Ibid).

An additional benefit was that, in emerging markets in particular, founder- and family owned businesses often have a home-field advantage. They have a deep understanding of their countries and their industries, as well as considerable regulatory influence, derived from their long-term relationships with elements across the value chain. Many have proved especially resilient in times of economic crisis (McKinsey & Company, 2014).

1.3 Problem Statement

In the past, businesses that are family owned and controlled have been frequently perceived as being less efficient and profitable than their non-family counterparts (Royer, 2005). Financial economists have presented various explanations as to why family ownership might result in poorer firm performance. However, more recently, economists have begun to provide reasons for why family ownership may be associated with superior performance, changing their earlier stance (Ibid).

In recent years, the field of family business research has developed extraordinarily. While defining a family business can be challenging (Astrachan, Klein, & Smyrnios, 2002; Lank, 1997 as cited by Sieger, 2011), scholars have come to agree on family owned businesses' social and economic importance in today's business context (Astrachan & Shanker, 2003; Sharma, 2004 as cited by Sieger, 2011). As a result, the determinants of their long-term success have attracted considerable scholarly attention (Sieger, 2011).

Long-term success in family owned business can be linked to creating competitive advantages that may differ from non-family owned businesses. The concept of organisational culture has been identified as a key contributor to competitive advantage by researchers and will further be reviewed in the context of family owned businesses.

1.4 Purpose Statement

The aim of the study was to gain a deeper understanding of competitive advantage in family owned businesses and how this was influenced by the concept of organisational culture.

1.5 Research Questions

- How has *organisational culture* evolved within family owned businesses in recent years?
- How does being a family owned business enable *competitive advantage*?
- In what ways does *organisational culture* contribute to building and sustaining *competitive advantage* in family owned businesses?

1.6 Research Objectives

- To understand the evolution of family owned businesses in recent years.
- To illustrate how being a family owned business can create *competitive advantage*.
- To explore the ways in which organisation*al culture* contributes to building a sustainable *competitive advantage* in family owned businesses.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptualisation

Family owned business

A distinguishing characteristic of family business is their governance structure which is essentially the integration of family relationships within business structures (Nordqvist, et al., 2009). In order to understand the dynamics of family business one must first acknowledge the fact that the actions of key company individuals are also the actions of members of the same family (Ibid). This then introduces the following definition of the term *'family'*; "close relations with particularly well known others" (Sjöstrand, 1997:25 as cited by Nordqvist, et al., 2009), i.e. a social group of individuals that are bound together by familial relations (Ibid).

Chua et al. (1999:25, as cited by Venter & Kruger, 2004) have developed a similar definition of family businesses that also includes a dimension of behaviour; they define the family business as "a business governed and managed with the intention to shape and pursue the vision of the business held by a dominant coalition controlled by members of the same family in a manner that is potentially sustainable across generations".

Leadership

Within the context of family business, *leadership* relates to factors such as governance structures, the level of family involvement, and the extent to which the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is accepted as the centre of leadership (Thomas, 2009).

The concept of leadership is complex and multi-dimensional (Miller, 2015). In family businesses the degree of family involvement either through direct leadership or a board of directors has a great influence on how leadership is exercised within the organisation (Thomas, 2009).

An operational definition of leadership portrays leadership as a process of influencing others (Hughes et al, 1996: 6 as cited by Thomas, 2009,), while another view is that leadership is the expression of specific qualities of an individual in an elected position

(Ibid). *'Family'* as a characteristic of family business also introduces an additional element of complexity for the leadership process in several organisational areas such as allocation of responsibilities, managing performance, incentives, interactions between family and non-family members and cross-generational relationships (Thomas, 2009).

Organisational Culture

Organisational culture as defined by Geertz (as cited by Adiguna, 2015) is constructed from conceptual elements such as shared values, beliefs and norms; as well as real-world elements such as patterns in behaviour. The concept of organisational culture can also be described as unbiased reality and, contrastingly a prejudiced reality as well (Dyer, 1988 as cited by Adiguna, 2015).

The concept of organisational culture can also be interpreted as something that the organisation *has* or something that the organisation *is* (Smircich, 1983, as cited by Adiguna, 2015). Researchers Linstead and Mullarkey (2003, p. 4 as cited by Adiguna, 2015), have observed that organisational culture "arises as much from the *shared interaction* and practice of bodies as from the shared symbols of minds". This observation supports the idea that everything that happens during interactions between individuals is considered to be elements of culture, i.e. the language spoken, the manner in which the language is spoken, individuals' behaviours and organisational practices (Ibid).

Competitive advantage

Despite the critical importance of competitive advantage in organisations and their planning, it has been seemingly consistently neglected in contemporary business research (Sigalas & Economou, 2013). As a result of this multiple definitions and explanations have been used by researchers, many of which differ in meaning and application (Sigalas & Economou, 2013). Foss and Knudsen (2003, as cited by Sigalas & Economou, 2013) suggest that the reason for varying definitions of the same concept is that competitive advantage translates differently among different organisations therefore there isn't any single, agreed upon definition. Upon studying contemporary management literature, there also isn't one complete definition that stands out (Ibid).

However after reviewing the many definitions of competitive advantage most scholars have come to define competitive advantage in relation to performance, more specifically in terms of *superior* performance (Sigalas & Economou, 2013). Scholars have linked the concept of competitive advantage with superior performance and have focused on elements of profit and value. These elements are often used to signify the notion of performance in strategic management (Bosse et al., 2009 as cited by Sigalas & Economou, 2013).

Theory of Stewardship

Theory of Stewardship is founded upon models of humankind based on psychology and sociology (Charbel, et al., 2013). This theory implies that agents within the organisation transform into role holders. A role holder will ultimately work towards self-satisfaction through being successful in their job roles and in terms of abiding by organisational rules and regulations (McClelland, 1961 as cited by Charbel, et al., 2013).

Stewards are defined as organisational-oriented individuals who are committed to the vision of the organisation, always working in the organisation's best interest and not their own (Davis, Schoorman, & Donaldson, 1997 as cited by Charbel, et al., 2013). One of the reasons for this is that these individuals perceive organisational success to be directly linked to their own satisfaction.

Therefore the interests of both the *stewards* and the organisation will ultimately be aligned, reducing the need for organisational processes that aim to exert redundant control (Ibid).. Herein lies the underlying core of Theory of stewardship. In the context of family business, business owners and stewards are considered to be one and the same; therefore the interests of the organisation become the interests of the family *stewards* (Tosi, Brownlee, Silva, & Katz, 2003 as cited by Charbel, et al., 2013).

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

Theory of Stewardship

The *Theory of Stewardship* provides a social model of leadership and managerial behaviours that explore the family business dynamic (Davis et al., 1997 as cited by Molina & Rutterford, 2011).

This theory brings attention to self-actualising managers with altruistic impulses and non-economic desires, such as self-efficacy, worker empowerment and participation-oriented management (Ibid). Scholars promoting this theory have maintained that family businesses exhibit higher-order needs and objectives as opposed to purely economic ones, such as intra-familial altruism, firm longevity, and cross-generational succession (Carney, 2005; Lubatkin et al., 2005 as cited by Molina & Rutterford, 2011).

Family members can also identify more closely with their own businesses, increasing responsibility for, and commitment to, the organisation, its vision and stakeholders, as they are not as focused in short-term profit (Chrisman et al., 2004, as cited by Molina & Rutterford, 2011).

Theory of stewardship seemingly provides a viable alternative to agency theory and has increased in popularity in family business research (Miller and Le Breton-Miller, 2006; Miller, Le Breton-Miller and Miller, 2009 as cited by Molina & Rutterford, 2011). As the theory has been developed in recent years, it has increasingly been applied to dynamics within the ownership and family realms (Le Breton-Miller & Miller, 2009 as cited by Molina & Rutterford, 2011).
The concept of *stewardship* has progressively been associated with family businesses. The idea of being a "steward" undoubtedly resonates with individuals who perceive themselves to be "baton-holders," a term that has long been used by leaders of multi-generational business families (Craig & Moores, 2017).

Theory of stewardship is generally used to describe the relationship between goal alignment and principal interactions in organisations; illustrating the relevance of the theory in family business (Charbel, et al., 2013). Leaders who possess a central role in their organisation will then do their best to ensure the organisation's success possibly even at the risk of self-sacrifice (Ibid).

Achieving this requires the owner of the family business to transmit a deep values-oriented attitude towards organisational culture through the implementation of stewardship-oriented governance programmes (Charbel, et al., 2013). This will allow leaders to form a group of reliable family, or, sometimes non-family individuals who are dedicated to the family business and its vision (Miller & Le Breton-Miller, 2006; Zahra, Hayton, Neubaum, Dibrell, & Craig, 2008 as cited by Charbel, et al., 2013).

The results of shared steward behaviours will be reflected in the design of core organisational values and an innate sense of responsibility toward the organisation (Ibid). This will aid the organisation in reducing agency costs that usually arise from control based methods.

Corbetta and Salvato (as cited by Sciascia, Mazzola, Astrachan, Pieper, 2012), note that family businesses specifically embody unique stewardship characteristics. The stewardship behaviours of family owners and managers are rooted in these individuals' socio-emotional ties to the business, which may be substantial considering some of the motivations for commitment to the business stem from social contribution, a sense of belonging, and family standing (Ashforth and Mael 1989; Gomez- Mejia et al. 2007; Lansberg 1999 as cited by Sciascia, et al., 2012).

One of the main proponents of theory of stewardship is of the psychological and societal dimensions of the business rather than just the economic dimension. However measuring stewardship in the organisational environment is challenging as difficulties experienced by each leader will differ psychologically and socially from the next (Charbel, et al., 2013).

The use of empowered representatives will ensure that each individual will sense great responsibility and will be accountable for their own actions (Ibid).. Therefore the motivations and goals of stewards will eventually be aligned, leading to a structured form of governance based on stewardship behaviours that will enhance the business (Charbel, et al., 2013).

Contrastingly, at the risk of a takeover, the advantageous effects of stewardship will automatically end as stewards may begin pursuing their own interests once their future within the organisation is threatened (Ibid).

At the organisational level, family businesses that exhibit stewardship culture have usually adopted a collectivist culture within the business with a low power distance and high engagement orientation (Craig & Moores, 2017).

Miller et al. (2008, as cited by Sciascia, et al., 2012) presents three forms of stewardship which are associated with different facets of the business's organisational cultures; *Stewardship over continuity* explains that individuals in family businesses have vested interests in the business's success, more specifically, longevity, and will therefore do their best to create working conditions that will benefit both family members and the organisation (Gomez-Mejia et al. 2007; Habbershon and Williams 1999 as cited by Sciascia, et al., 2012).

Stewardship over employees refers to nurturing attitudes and behaviours among employees through training, motivation and sharing of organisational values employees (Arregle et al. 2007; Beehr et al. 1997; Davis et al. 1997; Guzzo and Abbott 1990; Ward 2004 as cited by Sciascia, et al., 2012).

Lastly, *Stewardship over customers* relates to strengthening relationships and ties between the business and its customers and clients in order to sustain prosperity and market position (Das and Teng 1998; Gomez- Mejia et al. 2001; Tsui-Auch 2004 as cited by Sciascia, et al., 2012).

2.3 Contextual Literature

Family Business

Family owned business is often recognised as the oldest form of business in human history (Lea, 1991 as cited by Avendano-Alcaraz, Kelly, Trevinyo-Rodríguez, Gómez, Madero, 2009), still remaining significant even in today's contemporary business environment.

However despite this, family business research has only seemed to gain popularity since the 1980's; prior to which they were largely neglected in business research (Benavides- Velasco *et al.*, 2013: 41; Bird *et al*., 2002: 337 as cited by Farrington & Jappie, 2016).

Various family business scholars have combined their efforts to explore the opportunity of creating a branch of business research that would effectively stimulate interest in family business (Lansberg, 2001 cited in Sharma, Chrisman and Gersick, 2012: 6 as cited by Farrington & Jappie, 2016). Their efforts lead to the development of the *Family Firm Institute* (FFI) in 1986 and subsequently the *Family Business Review* (FBR) in 1988 (Astrachan, 2008 cited in Sharma *et al*., 2012: 6 as cited by Farrington & Jappie, 2016).

The FBR was the first journal specifically devoted to family business research (Melin *et al*., 2014: 2; Bird *et al*., 2002: 340 as cited by Farrington & Jappie, 2016). Before the FFI and the FBR, there was a distinct absence of family business in management research (Sharma *et al*., 2012: 7 as cited by Farrington & Jappie, 2016).

A significant challenge that exists in family business research is a lack of clarity and the absence of an exact definition of the concept of family business (Venter & Kruger, 2004). Chua, Chrisman & Sharma (1999:25 as cited by Venter & Kruger, 2004) have reviewed some of the most widely used definitions of family business and have found that the common link between the different definitions is the focus on ownership and management dimensions.

Some authors share the view that family businesses can be defined as organisations that have a *single* family with controlling ownership, most often with a minimum of fifty percent of voting shares; as well as majority management control (Ibid).

An important purpose of family business research is to explore the relationships and interactions between the family as a whole and, individual family members and the organisation, while also observing how each influences the other (Habbershon, Williams & MacMillan 2003 as cited by Nordqvist, et al., 2009). By virtue of the fact that family businesses literally consists of individuals from the same family or families, a shared family history is implied. (Ibid). This history is based on family values and relationships among family members that have been found to expand on existing experience and commonly acknowledged family traditions (Copeland & White 1991: 5 as cited by Nordqvist, et al., 2009). Familial relationships generally comply with an accepted hierarchy of power which also translates into the family business, thus distinguishing them from other social groups (Ibid).

Case studies on family businesses have revealed that relations within the context of family businesses tend to be significantly more complex than that of their non-family counterparts (Whiteside and Brown, 1991 as cited by Nordqvist, et al., 2009). Long-term relationships combined with the existing shared history deepens emotional ties and the multiple-role-relationships family members share with each other (Ibid).

Organisational Culture

Organisational culture in family businesses refers to the lasting values that shape the personality of the business and its ability to adapt to the external business environment (Zahra et al., 2004 as cited by Cruz, Hamilton, Jack, 2012). Compared to non-family businesses, family businesses differ in their goals and objectives because of the controlling family’s influence, interests and values, which, in turn provides businesses with a resilient culture (Duh et al., 2010 as cited by Cruz, et al., 2012).

Thomas Peters & Robert Waterman (1982, as cited by Cui & Hu, 2012) have observed that the concept of shared values has dominated research on organisational culture. In their published work, the authors presented a *7-S* model which is focused on shared values as a critical element for sustaining organisational culture. Peters and Waterman also suggest that the shared values identified within businesses must be stated simply while still being meaningful as these values are viewed as a guide around which organisational culture is built (Ibid).

Over the last twenty five years there has been an increase in studies that have studied the relationship between organisational culture and organisational performance (Cui & Hu, 2012). While many researchers have identified a positive relationship between the two, there are a few contradictory outcomes due to the presence of cultural rigidity (Vries and Miller, 1986; Meyerson and Martin, 1987; Tushman, 1998 as cited by Cui & Hu, 2012).

Researchers Ulrike de Brentani and Elko J. Kleinschmidt (2004, as cited by Cui & Hu, 2012) have studied the interactions between organisational culture and commitment to establish a link to performance. However while a clear relationship between organisational culture and commitment has not yet been identified, the two are often grouped together in research (Ibid).

Another key element to examine when looking at organisational culture is the importance of organisational commitment (Li Yueh Chen, 2004 as cited by Cui & Hu, 2012). A rigid working environment can often result in poor employee commitment whereas a more supportive approach will promote employee engagement and enable a smooth cultural fit between the organisation and its members (Brewer, 1993 as cited by Cui & Hu, 2012).

A unique dimension of organisational culture exists within family businesses; known as the *family orientation* (Leenders, Waarts 2003, p. 687 as cited by Bartosik-Purgat & Hadryś-Nowak, 2014). The family orientation examines the needs of the family that must be considered in relation to strategic and financial decision making. Values are also an important aspect of the family orientation as this influences family dynamics and as a result, affects confidence and loyalty among family members, ultimately creating a shared value feature that may not necessarily be found in non-family businesses (Brice, Richardson 2009, p. 248 as cited by Bartosik-Purgat & Hadryś-Nowak, 2014).

Researchers have presented evidence that prove a direct relationship between organisational leadership and organisational culture (Mats, 2014). As such, business leaders are the main contributors to both values and goals within the organisation (Bartosik-Purgat & Hadryś-Nowak, 2014). The influence of leadership in family businesses often has a wider reach due to the existence of a shared history that often spans one generation or more (Tomei & Ferrari, 2010). In view of this, leadership may even be defined as agents working through culture as the medium and target of action (Mats, 2014).

Smircich and Morgan (as cited by Mats, 2014) have conveyed leadership as being a culture-influencing activity, 'the management of meaning'. While leadership does not necessarily change culture drastically, it is seen as a 'cultural manifestation' that in turn influences other cultural manifestations' (Ibid).

Founders of organisations are also viewed as founders of culture or at least a significant source of a set of values which the organisational members adapt and reproduce (Schein, 1985 as cited by Mats, 2014).

In situations like these, strong family values from the previous generation of family owners are carried over to the next generation who continue to protect these same values (Bartosik-Purgat & Hadryś-Nowak, 2014) and in so doing, preserve the organisational culture for future generations.

Bartosik-Purgat & Hadryś-Nowak (2014) view the concept of organisational culture to be a carrier of shared values and norms within family organisations, with these values and norms often taught and passed on in the family home and later on applied within the family business (Ibid).

Family business research has highlighted the ways in which relationships, values, history and traditions have influenced how family business leaders think. This ultimately affects long-term organisational perspective, commitment and more specifically organisational culture (Nordqvist, et al., 2009). However, along with these characteristics comes the challenge of multiple-role relationships, often in the form of succession, continuity and choice of strategic direction (Gersick et al., 1997; Dyer, 1986; Harvey and Evans, 1994; Schein, 1995; Holland and Boulton, 1984; Hall, 2003 as cited by Nordqvist, et al., 2009).

Competitive Advantage

Researchers have identified certain advantages that come from being a family owned business. James and Kaye (1999, as cited by Avendano-Alcaraz, et al., 2009) have specified three advantages linked to family businesses. The first being inherent relationships among family members that precede business involvement and usually result in minimal agency costs when compared to obvious and open relationships within the organisation (James and Kaye 1999 as cited by Avendano-Alcaraz, et al., 2009)

The second advantage identified is when the prospects of decision makers are enhanced due to the availability of family resources more so in situations of strained capital access. Lastly, the value of the firm becomes enriched due to access to additional family resources (James and Kaye 1999 as cited by Avendano-Alcaraz, et al., 2009). Other characteristics that often translate to competitive advantage within family businesses are comprehension, common goals, commitment, acceptance of authority structures and flexibility (Goldwasser, 1986 as cited by Avendano-Alcaraz, et al., 2009). Grant Walsh, the director and founder of the KPMG Enterprise Centre for Family Business based in Ottawa, claims that external stakeholders often view family businesses as being friendlier, better employers, more nurturing, therefore enabling to them produce and provide better products and services (Walsh, 2018).

He goes on to further state that this perception should be recognised as a distinct competitive advantage of family businesses which must be taken advantage of. Walsh supports his claim by stating that this perspective is not a mere myth or illusion but is based on the premise that family businesses have access to unique resources that can better provide competitive advantage when compared to non-family businesses (Ibid).

These unique resources will differ among family businesses depending on size, makeup and its stage of generational leadership (Walsh, 2018).

Barney (1991, as cited by Klein, 2011) proposes that an effective approach to understanding competitive advantage is to examine efficacies as either a weakness or strength, and to then label them according to business opportunities. This is known as a *''resource-based view''* which aims to extend the traditional external focus on opportunities and threats, also known as the *''environmental view''* (Ibid). Barney also suggests that when resources have the ability to aid mitigation of environmental threats, this is considered to be another form of competitive advantage as this does not occur often in the workplace and therefore cannot be imitated or applied by competitors (Klein, 2011).

The foundation for most business's competitive strategies is the assessment of competitive strengths and access to resources that enable them to compete (Klein, 2011). Michael Porter's (1985) model has suggested that businesses adopt one of two strategies i.e. being a *low-cost competitor* or *differentiation;* while Miles and Snow's (1978) framework state that businesses use *prospectors* or *defenders* as their competitive strategies (Ibid). Both of these models propose balanced alternatives that businesses usually examine when formulating their competitive strategies, though there is a small portion of businesses that choose not to select a clear strategy at all (Klein, 2011).

The key to surviving a volatile and rapidly changing business environment is the establishment and implementation of effective strategies (Douglas, Douglas, Davies, 2010).

The use of these strategies imply that there are optimum ways in which businesses can compete in business environments, just by looking at their internal features (Klein, 2011). These strategies are essentially a basic business strategy that relates to competitive position which businesses then implement (Ibid). Combining internal and external perspectives allows businesses to view how external forces shape and develop strategic choices (Klein, 2011).

Culture within an organisation can also be considered as a competitive advantage when clear benefits can be measured. This requires the organisation to link their internal resources and capabilities with external environmental opportunities and threats (Ibid).

Literature on competitive advantage often concludes by stating that competitive advantage itself is not born from any one resource but through a combination of resources (Douglas, et al., 2010). Organisational capability is another element of competitive advantage. Capability can be explained as the capacity for resources to perform a function (Ibid).

Continued use enables organisational capabilities to improve while also making it challenging for competitors to replicate or adapt. According to Barney (1991, as cited by Douglas, et al., 2010), it is this inimitability that becomes a competitive advantage for the business.

4. METHODOLOGY:

4.1 Research Design

The research design of this study was of a *qualitative* nature. Qualitative research involves the active participation of the researcher in understanding and explaining a phenomenon (Carcary, 2009). Qualitative research was dependent on logical interpretation (Hinton et al, 2003 as cited by Kvale, 2006), and was reflective of personal circumstances as it involves dialogues with participants.

This creates the need to collect large quantities of highly detailed accounts (Carcary, 2009). Within the context of social contexts, qualitative approaches have been found to be most appropriate while still maintaining an absolute focus (Mason, 2002 as cited by Carcary, 2009). This was crucial to research on organisational culture which was largely a social aspect of any organisation.

It was important for researchers to maintain their perspective when being introduced to conflicting opinions and views, which becomes reality when organisational cultures differ among organisations (Kvale, 2006). Substantial reflection was a requirement for qualitative research to be successfully conducted and this includes the ability of the researcher to critically assess participants' responses (Carcary, 2009).

4.1.1 Research Paradigm

The interpretivist research paradigm supports the idea that knowledge development relating to the social world was founded on human interpretation (Leppäaho, Plakoyiannaki, Dimitratos, 2016). As such, the theoretical purpose of the situation was to develop an understanding of the phenomenon being investigated.

One of the key strengths of qualitative research was that researchers have the opportunity to build a holistic perspective of a phenomenon, while, over time, observing the phenomenon's progress (De Massis, Nordqvist & Fletcher, 2015).

The general aim of interpretivist research is to understand social, economic and political phenomena, by developing a view of reality that challenges what was typically accepted by researchers (Nordqvist, et al., 2009). This outlook presents the intricate realities of family businesses as concepts that must first be interpreted In order to create understanding (Ibid).

While expounding on individual accounts, behaviours, interactions, relationship patterns and structures that are often conveyed during field research; the researcher was required to gather terminology and texts that can be integrated to reconstruct accounts that offer a profound explanation of a particular phenomenon (De Massis, et al., 2015).

Interpretivist research methods therefore allow for a more detailed and in-depth investigation which was vital for creating a richer and deeper understanding of family businesses due to the inherent complexities and dynamics in these types of organisations (Nordqvist, et al., 2009). More detailed and in depth interpretivist approaches enable researchers to generate insights regarding specific challenges and characteristics that differ according to various family businesses, rather than a default list that all will subscribe to (Ibid).

The manner in which verbal texts and evidence are presented in specific research studies can vary. This can be seen within the field of family business research as authors regularly emphasise narratives and storytelling (Dawson & Hjorth, 2012; Hamilton, 2013; McCollom, 1992 as cited by De Massis, et al., 2015). This practice was seemingly influenced by including sections of early research on family businesses which contain anecdotes or personal experiences (Donnelley, 1964 as cited by De Massis, et al., 2015).

Mainstream interpretivist researchers find common ground around their efforts to clarify the ways in which individuals in specific social environments understand, account for, and manage their daily lives, where the goal in this context was to build a 'shareable understanding' (Denzin, 2001 as cited by Nordqvist, et al., 2009). Here the focus was on three key concepts; interpretation, meaning and understanding, which are also qualities found among interpretivist researchers (Ibid). .

Within family business literature, interpretivists such as Michael-Tsabari et al. and Parada et al. (as cited by Leppäaho, et al., 2016); choose not to engage with the idea of generalisability; but rather pursue the view that the development of research propositions was not obligatory, since "qualitative research can and should be able to stand on its own" (Gioia et al., 2013: p. 25 as cited Leppäaho, et al., 2016).

The selection of instrumental and unique cases, or of critical cases, can be viewed as presenting the potential for family business theorising. Thus, family business scholars adopting the interpretivist approach – such as Hall and Nordqvist (2008, as cited by Leppäaho, et al., 2016) tend to use terms such as *explore* or *exploration* to indicate a method of gaining in-depth understanding of local meanings, while also remaining open to alternative perspectives and tensions in the research norms of family business management (Ibid).

4.1.2 Conceptual Approach

Inductive Reasoning:

Inductive reasoning refers to research approaches that mainly make use of raw data inputs in order to form themes, patterns and concepts through which interpretations can be derived by the researcher (Thomas, 2006). Inductive reasoning was widely used in qualitative data analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998 as cited by Thomas, 2006), and was consistent with common trends in qualitative data analysis as observed by authors such as Miles & Huberman (1994, p. 9; Pope et al., 2000, Punch, 1998 as cited by Thomas, 2006). One definition of inductive reasoning has been introduced by Strauss and Corbin (1998 as cited by Thomas, 2006), wherein the researcher, "begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data". During the analysis of the participants' responses, the transcripts were coded and thereafter themes were extracted which were then discussed in relation to the theoretical foundation of this study.

Exploratory Research:

This research study will be *exploratory* in nature. As the name suggests, exploratory research is generally conducted to explore a particular research question in the event of alternative choices being unclear or not specified (Singh, 2007). This type of research allows researchers the opportunity to explore a topic in detail while familiarising themselves with the concept being studied. In some cases, exploratory research can serve as the basis for formative research so that concepts can be tested before implemented (Ibid). In this research study the concepts of organisational culture, competitive advantage within the context of family owned business have been explored in order to ascertain if they are linked.

4.1.3 Cross-Sectional design

The use of a cross-sectional timeframe in this research study indicates that the study has been conducted at a single point in time over a short period of time. Research conducted using this time dimension usually helps to estimate the occurrence of an outcome related to a selected population (Levin, 2006). Data relating to specific characteristics, level of risk exposure and information about the outcome can also be collected (Ibid). Therefore cross-sectional research will present an overview of the outcome and the characteristics related to it at a specific point in time. An added advantage of using a cross-sectional timeframe was that it allows the investigation of relationships between potential risk factors and relevant outcomes (Levin, 2006).

In this research study, interviews of the sample population were first conducted and later on analysed. The interviews were only conducted once, meaning that no repetition of the interviews occurred due to the fact that the interviews only took place at one specific point in time.

4.2 Research Plan

4.2.1 Population

Banerjee and Chaudhury (as cited by Asiamah, Mensah, Oteng-Abayie & Fosu., 2017) have defined *population* as “an entire group about which some information was required to be ascertained”. This refers to the largest group of possible participants in a qualitative research. These Participants represent the general population must therefore share at least one or more traits of interest (Bartlett et al., 2001; Creswell, 2003 as cited by Asiamah, et al., 2017), as this shared trait becomes a criteria that illustrates why the group of participants are eligible population members. For the purpose of this research proposal the target population all family owned businesses in the Kwa Zulu Natal region.

4.2.2 Units of Analysis

When conducting qualitative data analysis, a major challenge for researchers was the process of selecting which parts of the data was most significant and meaningful to analyse (Chenail, 2012). By definition, a *unit* was “a single undivided entity or whole” (Collins English Dictionary, 2011 as cited by Chenail, 2012). Therefore for the purposes of qualitative data analysis, a unit will be understood to be the single individual upon whom the research study will base its analysis and present its outcomes (Ibid).

In this research study, the units of analysis have been identified as the managers and owners of the family owned businesses who will be interviewed. These managers and owners have presented important information relating to organisational culture and competitive advantage through their personal experiences and opinions, which have then be analysed and the findings thereof presented.

4.2.3 Sample

Across research studies it has become imperative to refine the general population by eliminating members of the population in order to work with a more manageable group of participants (Asiamah, et al., 2017). Some of the criteria involved in this elimination process will include removing individuals whose participation may hinder the research or who are not relevant to the major themes of the study (Ibid). For the purpose of this research study the sample population who were interviewed after the general population had been refined consisted of two managers and a director, all of whom work within their own family owned business. These participants all share common traits that make them relevant to this study such as being in a position of leadership and influence; and play key roles in enforcing and implementing cultural processes within their family owned businesses.

4.2.4 Sampling Method

The sampling method that was selected for this research study was be *non-probability sampling*. Non-probability sampling does not make use of a random sample from the population of interest as done so in probability sampling (Lavrakas, 2008). Instead, subjective methods are used to select which elements will be included in the sample (Ibid).

Non-probability sampling has been found to be especially helpful when randomisation of the sample was impossible, for example in the instance of a very large population (Etikan, Musa, Abubakar & Rukayya, 2016). It was also useful when there are resource, time and workforce limitations. Non-probability sampling is also used when the primary research aim was not to produce results that will be used to create generalisations relating to the entire population (Ibid).

Purposive sampling was a popular sampling technique in qualitative research and was used to identify and select specific research cases to maximise the use of limited resources (Patton, 2002 as cited by Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan & Hoagwood., 2015). Purposive sampling makes use of selected individuals or groups that display in depth knowledge or experience of a specific phenomenon, making these individuals or groups extremely useful to the research (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011 as cited by Palinkas, et al., 2015). The three individuals who were selected for the interview process met certain research criteria which justified their participation in this study and simplified the data collection method by excluding irrelevant participants and while working with time constraints.

4.2.5 Data Collection Method

When the purpose of a research study is to inquire and collect data based on participants' experiences and personal interpretations, a qualitative research approach is most commonly used (Fletcher, De Massis, Nordqvist, 2015). Instead of coding and analysing numerical data as done in quantitative research, qualitative researchers identify and collect words or text that can be integrated to form personal accounts that enhance the understanding of a specific phenomenon (Fletcher, et al., 2015).

The presentation of verbal accounts and statements may vary in research studies (Ibid). Researchers within the field of family business research have often emphasized the importance of narration and story-telling (Dawson & Hjorth, 2012; Hamilton, 2013; McCollom, 1992 as cited by Fletcher, et al., 2015). This includes the authors of some of the earliest works on family businesses containing personal anecdotes and stories (Donnelley, 1964 as cited by Fletcher, et al., 2015).

This also, explains why most qualitative researchers, therefore record their interviews with participants before transcribing (Ibid). These researchers also take detailed notes to ensure that the first-hand accounts they are working with are true representations of what participants expressed during the interview process (Fletcher, et al., 2015). In addition to this, participants are also often invited to review the transcripts of their interviews in order to validate what was discussed and to eliminate any contradictions and misunderstandings (Ibid).

During this research study, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted as the means of data collection. The purpose of the interviews was to use discussion and conversation as a medium to explore the main themes of a research study based on the insight provided by the participant (Newton, 2010).

This method was chosen for the following reasons; firstly, it provided an opportunity to gather detailed and rich data, secondly, analysis of the language and wording used provided greater insight into participants' perceptions and experiences. A third reason for using this data collection method was that the use of interviews provided a context or background that further enhanced the participants' answers.

During the data collection process, one-on-one interviews were scheduled with each participant at a predetermined time and location, convenient to both the participant and the researcher. Prior to the interview, the required consent forms were voluntarily signed by the participants. An estimated interview time of one hour was set aside for each interview. The participants were given the list of interview questions at an earlier date to ensure that they were prepared for the interview so that the interviews were conducted timeously.

The interviews were then audio recorded, and upon completion of the interview, transcribed so that the data analysis process could commence. Should the participants have wanted to review the recordings, they were free to request a copy from the researcher.

4.2.6 Data Analysis Method

The data analysis method that has been used by the researcher was *narrative analysis.* Akinsanya & Bach (2014) define a narrative as “a story that contains a sequence of events that take place over a time period. It mostly follows a chronological order and usually contains a link to the present on the form of a lesson learnt by the narrator”. As such, narrative analysis was used to identify relationships by analysing and assessing parts of a given narrative (Ibid).

A narrative can be either verbal or written, with verbal narratives using oral language in order to establish and maintain personal relationships in everyday life (Akinsanya & Bach, 2014). A written narrative makes use of a written language to decipher and share information (Ibid). Narrative analysis was a method of data analysis that was applied to a given narrative by breaking it down into smaller concepts, all of which play an integral role in the narration (Akinsanya & Bach, 2014).

Personal experience narrative, which was a story that has been experienced first-hand by the participant (Ibid), was relevant to this study due to the nature of the research topic. This study was dependent on the narratives of the participants and their experiences within their own family owned business, thus illustrating why narrative analysis was applicable.

Once the interviews were recorded and transcribed, the data analysis process began. The transcriptions were first be grouped according to related concepts such as *leadership*, *organisational culture* and *family influence* and then studied further to identify similarities amongst the three participants' responses.

A narrative approach has the ability to stimulate different emotions amongst participants, allowing them to integrate their experiences and to become more open to alternative interpretations (Kramer, 2007 as cited by Muylaert, Sarubbi Jr, Gallo, Neto & Reis, 2014). From this perspective, by narrating an individual's experience and in doing so, passing this experience on to another, this creates an experience that was fixed and central to the construction of research notion (Kramer, 2007 as cited by Muylaert, et al., 2014).

Qualitative research methods are often characterised by addressing questions that relate to concepts unique to the topic of the study and the participants (Muylaert, et al., 2014). Narrative analysis enables the researcher to move beyond just transferring information and content. This reveals the experiences of participants, which involves key aspects of understanding relating to both the participant and the context of the research study (Ibid). By contrasting more traditional methods of question and response based interviews, narrative analysis can be considered to be a significant analysis tool when conducting qualitative research (Muylaert, et al., 2014).

5. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The Participants:

The three participants in this study were chosen because of their management positions in their own family businesses, each having authoritative and decision making power through their position of influence. Julie is a second-generational manager in a manufacturing business founded by her father 24 years ago. Since her father is preparing for retirement, Julie alongside her sister will soon be leading the business in an official capacity as company directors. The second participant, Jackie is also a second-generational-manager in a manufacturing and supply business founded by her father 25 years ago. However her father is still actively involved in the business and leads the business together with Jackie and her brother. The final participant, Sam runs the family business with his brothers, as a director. His father started the business, in the transport and logistics industry, over 70 years ago and is currently retired.

5.1 Findings and Discussion

Leadership influence

Because leaders are able to mould the way people think and act, they are regarded as role models. This is one of the main reasons leaders largely have significant influence on the organisational culture in their businesses as employees become more aware of their own behaviours and values, constantly measuring the extent to which they are aligned with the organization's values and policies.

Through their position of influence, leaders are able to influence organisational culture by developing norms that create a context for culture to exist. While leadership influences culture, in turn, culture also influences leadership. Leaders who have distinct ethical values must be able to articulate this to members of their organisation through their own actions and responses as an example.

When discussing leaders and their position of influence, Jackie named her father as the founder of the business and his values that have influenced the business's organisational culture on a deeper level.

> **Jackie:** *my dad has the value of hard work […] has been passed on from generation to generation and I think it'll still be passed on even after us. It's something that has been embedded in the culture, […] in the everyday running of the business, in the management of the business, […] the way we interact with our customers, our service delivery, clients, everything has to do with hard work and how we are able to sell our product to the next person.*

One thing that is clear when discussing leadership effectiveness is that employees are more willing to adopt characteristics and behaviours from an individual they respect or consider to be authoritative. Therefore leaders who are respected by their subordinates will be more successful in creating a positive organisational culture as their subordinates will be more receptive to their leader's actions and values.

Both Julie and Jackie have expounded on this by emphasising their fathers' actions as role models to employees.

> **Julie**: *In regards to work ethic my dad has done every duty our staff members today have done. With sweeping the factory floor and fitting the product into our clients home or accounting and organising financials. This itself has made him a role model not only to my sister and I but also to all staff and it isn't uncommon to find him in the workshop inspecting helping and advising our staff members*.

> **Jackie:** *From the first generation we had a role model so from the second generation we all strive to be role models for our staff so when they look at us they'll see what they need to be like. So they have integrity, they have good morals [that] we as the members or the directors of the board have to reflect in ourselves first before we expect our staff members to act in accordance.*

Leadership and culture are closely linked as the founders of an organisation are responsible for creating a set of values that embody everything the organisation strives for. Their values have the ability to last decades once the organisational culture has been fully integrated into every part of the organisation. This is more especially evident in family owned businesses where values are shared and passed on to the next generation of leadership. This is a key characteristic of family owned businesses, the shared history between inter-generational family members becomes the foundation of the business's organisational culture.

The third participant in this study, Sam emphasises his family's spiritual values as being central to his family culture which has then been introduced to the organisation and its own culture.

> **Sam:** O*ur spirituality and our culture is of the utmost importance. It is a known fact amongst our employees some of whom belong to some religious and cultural institutions as we do. Others that have come into our employ over the years also evolved in their own religious practices. We encourage spirituality simply because we have found that it forms the cornerstone of the principles along which we conduct business. Our practices of honesty, integrity, hard work Etc. all stem from our discipline in our day-to-day lives, of which our religion is, should I say pivotal.*

When a leader's methods are successful and continue to succeed as time goes on, what started as only the leader's beliefs will quickly be adopted by organisational members as a shared set of beliefs and values (Tomei & Ferrari, 2010). The responses from Julie, Jackie and Sam support the idea that a leader's values have a significant influence on organisational culture, more especially if the leader is perceived to be a role model to employees, and is actively seen to consistently reflect these values.

Values

Every family, regardless of owning or managing an organisation, reflects its own sense of culture. Culture is often considered to be what brings together a family because it has the ability to illustrate the family's perception and image. At the core of family culture lies deeply embedded values and beliefs which drive family members' actions and reactions.

Jackie mentioned a 'sense of family' as one of the most prominent values of her family owned business, explaining that every function of the business involves a family member and that this family environment also extends to their employees as well.

Jackie: *Ok the first thing that you will definitely see is a sense of family because as soon as you walk in you are greeted by my dad, you go a bit further you see my brother, if you come into the office you will meet my mother, so everything is very family orientated. We are very close knit from the customer to the manufacturing to the actual delivery, you meet every person in my family. That's why we think that everything works so well together because we understand each other, we know what ticks, what buttons not to push.*

Within a family owned business, a different environment of culture exists. This environment is the result of merging a family with an organisation, creating an aligned culture that reflects both the founding family and the organisation itself (Tharawat Magazine, 2012). This alignment then leads to a strong connection between shared family values and organisational values, which will still be present even as the organisation moves from generation to generation. In addition to this, a distinct values-lead organisational culture that is managed by a family with similar values and principles has the capacity to improve employee motivation and performance.

While discussing distinct values and characteristics of her family owned business, Julie mentioned specific values that an outsider will instantly identify, more specifically close-knit work relationships and work processes.

Julie: *An outsider will quickly identify our customer values as well as our work relationships and work processes. Apart from the first and second generation being related, there is a work family because most of our staff have been with us over such a long number of years and have worked together for so long. They have over time learnt about learnt about each other's personalities and their differences we're able to ensure higher productivity that way and therefore even in terms our turnaround time to clients it cuts that time shorter so it makes clients feel that they are more important, that they are our priority.*

Sam spoke about the importance of honesty and work ethic as being crucial aspects of his organisation’s culture, both of which were instilled into his family and the organisation as a whole by his father, the founder of the business.

> **Sam:** *[…] I think that the two most important lessons embedded in us by our dad has been firstly honesty and secondly a strong work ethic. We will always taught that if you function and conduct yourself and your business dealings in an honest manner, then that honesty will not allow you to have anything but an honest work ethic that then translates into hard work, efficiency, and customer satisfaction, all driven by your conscience.*

Challenges to culture

Often, leaders' failure to fully understand their organisation's culture despite detailed plans and policies, becomes a primary challenge to organisational culture. In order for organisational culture to be effectively implemented and maximised, leaders must first become aware of how culture works (Groysberg, Lee, Price, Cheng & Yo-Jud, 2018).

Changes to the existing organisational culture often present a challenge particularly when there is a misalignment between the first generation and second generation, sometimes referred to as a *'generation gap'.* While the first generation seemingly succeeded in creating a culture that was well accepted by organisational members, the next generation of leaders may decide to make adjustments to the existing culture perhaps to appeal to a different group of stakeholders. These adjustments may not sit well with the founding generation who often adhere to the age old adage of 'if it's not broke, don't fix it'. This could lead to conflict within the family that may also translate into business as well.

Both Jackie and Sam highlighted the 'generation gap' between themselves as second generational leaders, and the first generation founders, as one of the main challenges to their businesses' organisational culture.

> **Jackie:** C*urrently the biggest challenge that we are facing is the generational gap between my father's generation and our generation. Also when it comes to staff members, we have staff that have been here for over 15 years and we need to get new skilled labourers to enter the new workforce to make the manufacturing process more effective and efficient for us.*

> **Sam:** *We have also seen the need to diversify our business portfolio and managed to successfully do that. The older generation strongly believes in the primary focus being the core business and it's far more conservative in their decisions and such. The younger generation have evolved to the extent where we are willing to accept that the core business may be used as a stepping stone onto a bigger or better opportunity as such. Considering the fact they he, [Sam's father], controlled the business in his way and that we delegate our business in another manner. We still have people out there that are the younger generation that we need to allow them to bridge the gap so therefore there is a challenge out there.*

As businesses are now employing more Millennials, workforce demographics are now beginning to change. Another challenge that builds on the concept of 'generation gap' is the contrasting schools of thought between first generation leaders and older employees and, the younger generation of employees. Defining 'right' and 'wrong' in terms of each generation's thinking is ultimately based on each individual's personal values. Leaders must now be able to manage these differences in a manner that will still add value to the organisation. This will include incorporating their personal preferences, behaviours and beliefs so that each is included, while also setting clear boundaries that will work to reduce inter-generational tension.

> **Julie:** [speaking about the younger generation of employees] *They are less likely to respect and adapt to our existing organisational culture. Most times they try to make their own organisational culture, they are very reluctant to build on what we have and our existing organisational culture. Even though I'm part of the second generation I would say that I have more respect or understanding for the organisation's culture because for me I've been exposed to it from such a young age there isn't a need for me to want to change or adapt because I've grown up with it.*

> **Jackie:** *the second generation which is the younger generation of employees don't buy into our vision and our mission of the company because they are lazy and don't have the same work ethic as the first generation, who bought into the*

culture which was there when the company started. So they understand the hard work and the drive that needs to go into making company successful.

Maintaining their organisational culture is another challenge many family owned businesses face. Due to the shared family values that then merge with organisational values, a leader's actions then become synonymous with the organisational culture, which can pressure the leader's behaviours and responses as the underlying alignment of values is at stake. Consistency in the leader's values and behaviour is vital to maintaining organisational culture, as any action that is seen as being contrary to the culture may cause members to doubt the leader's values. This highlights the importance of maintaining alignment with family and organisational values as the organisation moves onto the next generation of ownership (Tharawat Magazine, 2012).

Julie reiterated this by emphasising the link between her father's values, her family's values and the organisation's values. She further explains that consistency in these values is what their customers expect when they see how she and her sister have taken charge of the business.

Julie: *Ultimately my dad's integrity is the family's integrity, the family's integrity ultimately leads to the organisation itself and this is how our business is lead. When clients are dealing with our company they want to know that they are also dealing with my dad and that they have that authority figure […], clients are happy to know that they can still get that personal attention, a personal touch now my sister and I are there. The fact that we are directly linked to our father even though we are the second generation, they feel that nothing has changed in terms of how we would go about seeing to their needs.*

Competitive advantages

A distinct organisational culture has the ability to instil trust in employees once they have accepted the organisation's values as their own. This then creates an environment that will enable employees to develop themselves personally as they aim to fit in with the organisation's culture, helping them to achieve their own goals in life. This personal development often leads to recognition and support from leaders which helps to keep the employees motivated while building a well-rounded workforce (Tsai, 2011). In addition to this, overall job satisfaction is enhanced, which can be considered to be a competitive advantage.

When asked about the link between organisational culture and competitive advantage, Julie, Jackie and Sam all strongly believe that a link indeed exists.

> **Julie:** *I honestly agree that there is a very defined direct link between organisational culture and competitive advantage. In our organisation there is a sense of family. Our staff are always willing to go that extra mile you know, and it proved to be extremely beneficial to us in the fact that we gain higher productivity. There's a lot more efficiency and we achieve a higher standard of customer service*.

> **Jackie:** *Ok [I] definitely agree that organisational culture is related to competitive advantage. The organisational culture makes up what the company is and when a customer recognises that your company is honest and has integrity and has good morals and values it's definitely gonna come back [Sic].*

> **Sam:** *A good organisational culture lends itself to productivity and gaining a competitive edge. We also have a culture of working alongside our staff, nobody is too big for a job as such. Insofar as productivity and gaining a competitive edge [is] concerned it is all of this that has made us a leader in our field and most often we are the transporter of choice.*

By being consistent in their values and behaviours, leaders then send out clear indications of what they prioritise as important in terms of organisational culture, which then leads to the successful integration of the culture. Once the organisational culture is fully established within the organisation, it can be used as a useful tool to introduce new organisational members to both the leader and the organisation through the alignment of shared values. These shared values often translate into loyalty and commitment from both family and non-family organisational members.

When asked about the alignment of values and how these values were driven throughout his business, Sam emphasised that honesty and integrity were the main values passed on from his father, the founder of the business. He further states that these values from his family were then integrated into the business and how the business operates and thereafter became recognised by their customers.

> **Sam:** *Ok for me I think that the two most important lessons embedded in us by our dad has been firstly honesty and secondly a strong work ethic. We were always taught that if you function and conduct yourself and your business dealings in an honest manner, then that honesty will not allow you to have anything but an honest work ethic that then translates into hard work, efficiency, and customer satisfaction, all driven by your conscience.*

Interpersonal relationships between organisational members are considered to be a direct reflection of the working environment in an organisation. This includes how individuals interact with leadership and each other, engagement with company policies, and overall fit with the organisational culture. Therefore this implies that positive working relationships will enhance employee satisfaction and engagement, thereby enhancing their attitude towards the organisation and their work (Miklavčič Šumanski et al., 2007, as cited by Štok, Markič, Bertoncelj, and Meško, 2010).

> **Jackie:** *When you have a good working environment and an open line of communication the staff are open to taking your criticism, if you have something to say to them they're open to taking instruction. They take their instruction, they don't moan about something that you're telling them to do [Sic]. When your staff is happy, your customer is happy so the director [of the business] will be happy at the end of the day [Sic].*

The owners and family-member employees in family owned businesses their organisation's reputation, which is essentially an extension of the family's reputation. An organisation's reputation can be defined as 'a perceptual representation of a company's past actions and future prospects that describes the firm's overall appeal to all of its key constituents when compared with other leading rivals' (Fombrun 1996:72 as cited by Huybrechts, Voordeckers, Lybaert & Vandemaele, 2011).

Protecting the family business's reputation is considered to be a long-term obligation as one of the main aims of family businesses is to last over as many generations of family leadership as possible. A distinct and well established family culture that is aligned with an equally distinct business culture can contribute to a competitive organisational identity. This provides a competitive advantage in the form of an inimitable organisational culture that businesses, family owned or non-family owned cannot compete with.

All the participants mentioned their business's reputation as a competitive advantage. They all agreed that the number of years their businesses have been active in their industry, together with their family name and reputation has all contributed to their businesses recognition by customers and other stakeholders.

> **Julie***: The fact that we've been around for 25 years and we are well recognised through exhibitions shows and trade fairs, [shows that] our reputation speaks for itself, apart from our reputation speaking for itself, it's also directly linked to the image of my dad.*

> **Jackie:** *A benefit of being a family owned business for over 30 years is that we retain our old customers. It's not just having our reputation speak for itself, we offer good advice because my dad has been in the fast food industry prior to him setting up the shops.*

> **Sam:** *[…] our belief that service first and customer is king is not merely just words, it is the way in which we conduct our business and words we live by. This has in fact, basically for me ensured that we maintain our strong portfolio of blue chip clients only.*

Employee engagement & empowerment

In today's modern business environment, member engagement has been distinguished as being separate to employee motivation and satisfaction (Azoury, Daou & Sleiaty, 2013).Employee wellbeing is now considered to be a leadership priority in order assist in achieving organisational goals of customer satisfaction and improved performance. Employee engagement is a crucial part of organisational culture in any organisation as the employee's attitude towards the organisation has a direct impact on customer satisfaction, loyalty and productivity.

Sam indicated a keen interest in developing and engaging with his employees, mentioning

> **Sam:** *we have a keen interest in the development of our staff on both a work and personal level. You know it has been my experience that as we grow our staff into developing a good work ethic, with strong morals underlining that strong work ethic, these members of our staff actually develop on a personal level as well. For productivity, you have to invest something if you expect to get a good outcome, you know that's basic*.

Empowerment as a leadership focus enables employees to make their own decisions both personally and also, to an extent professionally. This allows employees to bear the responsibility and consequences of their decisions while developing their own leadership and management skills. In family owned businesses, empowerment is integrated into the organisation as an extension of how the founder empowers his or her own family members seeing as employees are considered to be an extension of the founder's family.

Julie and Jackie stated that their businesses actively pursue developing and mentoring their staff, through direct engagement in training and mentoring from the businesses founders, who are role models to their employees, as well as with interaction with outside professionals.

Julie: O*ften my dad will go into the workshop to see how our staff are coping with the workload, see if they're understanding the processes, offering advice [and] showing them the right from their wrongs, encouraging them to do better.*

Formal training takes place frequently as our technology and machinery changes often. We have people coming from overseas, such as Germany, China and India in order to train our guys and educate our guys on how the machinery should be operated [Sic].

Jackie: *Our staff are trained on a regular basis. So all our staff are multifaceted, they're not just deemed to do one job at a time. We also have provided them with adult education because most of them are coming from places where they don't even know how to write their names so we have taken pride in making sure that they have at least a basic education.*

Businesses can emphasise employee engagement and empowerment through their vision and mission, supported by organisational values and culture (Ghoshal and Bartlett, 1994, as cited by Azoury, et al., 2013). A well-established organisational culture with supportive values will instil confidence in each employee. This is more evident in family owned businesses which are considered to have organisational values that are deeply rooted in family values. Employee empowerment in family owned businesses often differs from engagement on non-family owned businesses. In family owned businesses employee empowerment and engagement is more directed at emotional and more foundational development, whereas engagement in non-family owned business is of a more transactional nature (Ibid).

Julie: *During our quiet periods we choose not to send our staff home so we won't put them on short time. What we would do is make use of that time and would encourage mentorship so between unskilled and skilled workers [Sic].*

Jackie: *We have weekly or every third day meetings with our staff. The top management will sit down with them to hear their concerns [regarding] what is going on, what are they unhappy about, what needs to be done to improve their working environment. The top management are not separated from our staff,* *they are constantly in contact with each other, there is no such thing as being in an office and then in the factory, there is an open line of communication both between our staff and our top level of management.*

Sam: *In terms of mentorship with regards to company policy, it's been a policy in a company for many, many years that we have drivers that are trained by professional driver training personnel employed by us on a full-time basis. we have our own or personal driving trainers sitting in trucks that monitor your driving behaviour. So in terms of mentorship, in the roots of training our drivers and such we have these drivers that are trained by us and personal drivers that are trained by experienced professional drivers so that the brand name is not tarnished.*

Engaged employees also contribute to a competitive environment that can drive their colleagues to focus on their performance and to apply themselves in all they do. When leadership focuses on how they treat their employees and are open to providing opportunities for growth and promotion, employee engagement will increase as each employee's skill, needs and motivations are recognised by the organisation.

5.2 Validity

Validity, as expressed by Lewis and Ritchie and Mason (as cited by Carcary, 2009) refers to the extent to which the research study was able to explore or investigate what it initially intended to and also includes the ability of the researcher to access to participants' knowledge and experiences (Remenyi et al, 1998 as cited by Carcary, 2009). Often, in qualitative research researchers define validity in relation to authenticity of their work (Lincoln, 2001 as cited by Carcary, 2009). Therefore it can be said that the concept of validity was entrenched within the theoretical context of a study's research design and its fundamental expectations.

Trustworthiness:

Trustworthiness in qualitative research was often questioned by positivist researchers (Shenton, 2004). Perhaps this was because their own idea of validity or reliability cannot be applied the same way in representational studies (Ibid). In spite of this, various writers of research method studies have explored how these concepts have been incorporated into qualitative research (Shenton, 2004). Research investigators have also attempted to directly address the validity and reliability issues in their own qualitative research (Ibid).

Lincoln and Guba (as cited by Pandey & Patnaik, 2014) have suggested that the trustworthiness of a study was an essential aspect when measuring its worth. Golafshani (as cited by Pandey & Patnaik, 2014) further states that maximising trustworthiness will lead to more credible and defensible results that then enhances the generalisability of the study. This concept was initially introduced by Stenbacka (as cited by Pandey & Patnaik, 2014) who explained that this was the foundation for conducting and recording a high quality of research. Therefore, the quality of a research study was directly related to the generalisability of the results and also to its evaluation, which in turn will improve the study's trustworthiness (Ibid).

Credibility:

Researchers Holloway & Wheeler, Macnee & McCabe (as cited by Anney, 2014) define credibility as "the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings". The main aim of credibility was to establish if the research findings are credible when based on the participant's answers and the interpretation of these answers (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1985 as cited by Anney, 2014). In order to maintain the credibility of this study the researcher has not in any manner influenced participants' responses or lead them to answer in accordance with the researcher's views

Transferability:

Transferability was considered to be an equivalent of generalisibility, more specifically the degree to which findings presented in qualitative research can be applied to other contexts with other participants Bitsch, 2005; Tobin & Begley, 2004 as cited by Anney, 2014). Bitsch (as cited by Anney, 2014) states that researchers "facilitate the transferability judgment by a potential user through ‘thick description’ and purposeful sampling”. In other words, this implies that when researchers provide detailed explanations of analysis conducted on selective participants, this enables the transfer of the enquiry. This research study was conducted with participants who belong to South African family owned businesses, and as such, should this study be conducted by another researcher with different participants in the context of South African family businesses, the findings of this study should yield similar results.

Dependability:

Dependability of a research study was based on “the stability of findings over time” (Bitsch, 2005 as cited by Anney, 2014). Ensuring dependability of a research study should involve the participants when evaluating and interpreting findings. This will ensure that information presented in the study was fully supported by data gathered from participants (Cohen et al., 2011; Tobin & Begley, 2004 as cited by Anney, 2014). The participants in this research study were interviewed one-on-one to ensure that they were comfortable and gave honest responses. The audio recordings and transcriptions of the interviews have not been accessed by anyone other than the researcher to ensure that the findings of this study were based on original feedback from participants.

Confirmability:

Confirmability in a research context relates to the level at which the research findings can be verified and supported by other researchers (Baxter & Eyles, 1997 as cited by Anney, 2014). Tobin & Begley (as cited by Anney, 2014) have expressed confirmability as being concerned with establishing the fact that data and interpretations of the findings are not merely fabrications of the researcher’s mind, but are solely derived from participants’ data. It was with this in mind that the researcher confirms that none of the information gathered from the participants have been manipulated or changed in any way, and that the information is solely based on the original answers from the participants.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Addressing research questions

Research Question 1: How has *organisational culture* evolved within family owned businesses in recent years?

Family owned businesses are defined by the inter-generational relationships between parents or other family members as founders of an organisation and their descendants. This implies a continuous process of culture sharing and replicating of the founder's cultural model as the organisation progresses to the next generation (Adiguna, 2015).
Oganisational culture can also be understood to be created and maintained by individuals. Literature on family businesses have recognised the position of influence leaders possess. Organisational leaders play a key role in this as they are major drivers of organisational ideology which essentially create boundaries for communication structures and interaction guidelines within the organisation (Madu, 2011). Because founders invest a large amount of time in their businesses, this has allowed them the opportunity to exert influence on both the organisational culture and overall performance long after the next generation of leaders have taken over (Andersen et al., 2003; García-Álvarez et al., 2002;Kelly et al., 2000; McConaughy, 2000, as cited by Sharma, 2006).

One fact that remains unchanged as of organisations have developed over the years, is the need for stability and direction by organisational members, which, once achieved, will help them accept their leader's vision for the organisation. This is also true for family owned businesses where organisational members are also members of the founder's family. The founder's values and traits may never truly leave the organisation even after his or her tenure has come to an end once these values and traits have been fully embedded into the organisation's culture and accepted by organisational members.

Research Question 2: How does being a family owned business enable *competitive advantage*?

Recognising that family life and business life intersect in family owned businesses has lead to the general acceptance that these businesses aim to achieve both financial and non-financial objectives, in contrast to their non-family counterparts who mainly pursue financial goals.

Family business researchers have highlighted ‘shared family vision, climate of trust, and open honest communication’ as requirements for meaningful interaction between family members and organisational members (Carlock and Ward, 2001; Habbershon et al., 2003; Ward, 1987 as cited by Uhlaner, 2006). As mentioned earlier in the study, positive working relationships and interactions between organisational members creates an open and efficient work environment which boosts morale among employees and builds trust between the founder, family members and employees. This is able to enhance conflict resolution procedures, which ultimately affects employee performance outside of profitability dimensions (Poutziouris, et al., 2006).

Another competitive advantage of being a family owned business is the transfer of knowledge from the founder as a leader to the next generation of family leaders. There is often specific information of teachings that can only be truly understood by family members, (Sharma, 2006), perhaps it is because of the shared values and family history.

Authors, Habbershon and Williams have suggested that the sense of ‘familiness’ is one such trait that is specific to family owned businesses (Ibid). . Further to this, they argue that ‘familiness can be considered to be a source of *‘strategic competence’* (Sharma, 2006).

Authors on organisational commitment literature, Sharma and Irving (as cited by (Ibid), have developed a theoretical model that explores the behaviour and performance of the next generation of family leaders in relation to their motives for joining the family business. They have found two main motives for this, namely because they desire to be part of their family business or out of a sense of obligation (Sharma, 2006). Both of these motives supports *Theory of Stewardship*, which is focused on managerial behaviours within the context of family business dynamics (Davis et al., 1997 as cited by Molina & Rutterford, 2011). This theory also promotes the idea that family members pursue the organisation's interest as a priority because they are more committed and are less focused on short-term profitability (Chrisman et al., 2004, as cited by Molina & Rutterford, 2011). It has been noted that future-focused founders choose to prioritise actions that enhance long-term value creation for the organisation as opposed to focusing on the family's immediate needs (Sharma, 2006).

Research Question 3: In what ways does *organisational culture* contribute to building and sustaining *competitive advantage* in family owned businesses?

Because culture is considered to be a social phenomenon, it cannot only be linked to one individual or that individual's values. Organisational culture exists in an environment of collective values and behaviours which, may have been initially introduced by the founder but does not end with that leader, instead combining group values and interactions which may also be informally experienced (Groysberg, et al., 2018).

Organisational culture is not the only determinant of organisational success or failure. However a positive organisational culture can contribute significantly to competitive advantage over other competing organisations.

An organisational culture that promotes effective teamwork and working relationships will allow for efficiency and productive functions. When organisational members work well together, this enhances problem solving and aids achievement of organisational objectives (Curteanu & Constantin, 2010). In this case, organisational boundaries are not as restrictive because while there is still a deep respect for authority, namely the founder and family members, employees feel valued and supported, which is an extension of the founder's family values.

Family business literature has suggested that extent of the next generation's preparation and their relationship with the founder's generation has a significant impact on the next generation's performance as leaders (Sharma, 2006). A supportive relationship between the founder and the next generation of family leaders will allow for an easy transition of knowledge, networks and social capital as the next generation prepares to take over the family business (Steier, 2001, as cited by Sharma, 2006).

6.2 Anticipated Contribution

One of the primary aims of this research study, other than answering the research questions, was to contribute to the existing body of knowledge of organisational culture with a focus on competitive advantage within the context of family owned businesses. The information presented through this research study was relevant to modern family owned businesses all over the world as organisational culture is an important focus for most organisations. This, when studied together with competitive advantage presents a different view of the two concepts and their relationship with each other.

The research study has built on previously discussed concepts of organisational culture and competitive advantage within family owned businesses and has presented a more comprehensive understanding of Theory of Stewardship in relation to these concepts. The participants in this study have presented their experiences and opinions from the perspective of South African family owned business which will then contribute to the field of family business research specific to South Africa.

Family business research has been criticised unfairly owing to myths and assumptions (Clark, 2014). By analysing the existence of a relationship between organisational culture and competitive advantage the findings presented will address these myths and assumptions and take a step towards changing the general perceptions of family businesses.

The findings of this study has added to and supported other research studies that have presented a positive relationship between organisational culture and competitive advantage which has been widely debated by researchers, while also exploring how the context of family owned business affects this relationship.

6.3 Ethical Considerations

An essential aspect of research is compliance with strict ethical guidelines. Failure to do so must therefore be thoughtfully reconsidered or in certain cases, justified as this will in turn affect the credibility of not only the research but the researcher as well.

Informed consent

Informed consent was one of the main ethical concerns when conducting research. Armiger (as cited by Fouka & Mantzorou, 2011), explains informed consent as “a person knowingly, voluntarily and intelligently, and in a clear and manifest way, gives his consent". The way in which participants’ rights to autonomy was protected through informed consent (Ibid). . Participants made a voluntary decision to be part of the study once they were provided with sufficient information regarding possible risks or benefits of the study to both themselves and the field of research (Ibid).

Voluntary participation

In all research studies, the subject’s participation should be voluntary without coercion or deception. As a researcher, one must ensure that one’s position of influence was not misused and that research participants are not harmed in any way (Polonsky & Waller, 2011). The research participants in this study have voluntarily agreed to be included in the research process and have been assured that they were under no obligation to do so and also that there will be no negative consequences to them withdrawing from the study at any point in time.

Participant anonymity/ confidentiality

Confidentiality and anonymity have been closely tied to participants’ rights of dignity and trust (Fouka & Mantzorou, 2011). It was the responsibility of the researcher to "maintain confidentiality that goes beyond ordinary loyalty" (Ibid). While there may not be a conflict of duty on the researcher’s part, maintaining confidentiality can often be challenging within qualitative research due to its social nature and the fact that smaller units of analysis are studied. Ford and Reutter as cited by (Fouka & Mantzorou, 2011), have suggested using pseudonyms and disguising identifying information when transcribing the interviews to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. Their suggestion was followed in this research study where participants have been given pseudonyms during the transcribing process and any identifying details have been changed with their permission to protect their identities.

The results of this study will solely be used to add to existing research on the topic of the study and not for the benefit of the researcher or the participants nor have the results been manipulated to support the researcher's views.

6.5 Limitations of this study

Limitations of a research study can be defined as any constraint or limitation within the study that was beyond the control of the researcher (Enslin, 2014). Some examples of these limitations are time and access to resources and participants (Ibid). A possible result of these kind of limitations was that the researcher may need to redefine and adapt their research plan to accommodate the limitations (Enslin, 2014).

One of the main limitations of this study is the fact that a limited number of participants have been interviewed. Due to time constraints and geographical limitations, only three participants have been studied, all of whom reside in the same city as the researcher. This has affected the findings of this research study, possibly making them less generalisable to all family owned businesses in operation today. Time constraints have also limited the amount of information gathered during the interview process as participants have had to strictly follow the questions specified in the questionnaire, without freedom to explore other discussion topics which may be useful to this study. This may therefore, affect the quality of the participants answers as they might feel pressured by the time constraints and may have excluded certain information or avoided lengthy, in-depth responses.

6.4 Closing Remarks

The research discussed throughout this paper has explored the concepts of family business, organisational culture and competitive advantage while trying to establish a direct link between these concepts. Within the context of family business research these concepts have been applied differently due to the fact that families share different familial ties which translate differently within each individual family business.

Family business leaders must be able to manage their business strategies while at the same time fostering shared corporate cultures within their organisations while examining their effect on competitive advantage and organisational performance. This requires alignment of strategy and organisational culture in order for value to be created that can be reflected throughout the business

Theory of Stewardship has been identified as a key family business theory and its relevance and implementation in family business research has also been reviewed. By virtue of the fact that family members consider themselves as stewards of the family business and its resources, this theory seems very fitting when attempting to understand the motivations and relational dynamics of family members in the business environment.

Long-term success in family owned business can be linked to creating competitive advantages that may differ from non-family owned businesses. The concept of organisational culture has been identified as a key contributor to competitive advantage by researchers and has been reviewed further within the context of family owned businesses.

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8. ANNEXURES

8.1 Informed Consent Form

8.2 Gatekeeper letter

8.3 Interview Questions

8.4 Ethical Clearance Letter

8.5 Originality Report

8.6 Updated Concept Document Table

8.1

EXPLANATORY INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

To whom it may concern,

My name is Clarise Bhagalu and I am a student at Varsity College Durban North I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Ajith Ramgoon about organisational culture and competitive advantage in family owned businesses. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of the relationship between organisational culture and competitive advantage.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.

What will I be doing if I participate in your study?

I would like to invite you to participate in this research because you are a manager/director of a business owned by your family. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to discuss the policies implemented within your business as well as your experiences in relation to organisational culture.

You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.

Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?

Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about the culture specific to your family business. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.

Do I have to participate in the study?

- Your inclusion in this study is purely voluntary;
- If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so;
- Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.

Will my identity be protected?

I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my supervisor and I will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at __________________ will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my **Bachelor of Commerce Honours in Management.** You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

Clarise Bhagalu
0836277558
clarisecb@yahoo.com

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

Ajith Ramgoon
0837756211
ajith.ramgoon@hotmail.com

Consent form for participants

I, ____, agree to participate in the research conducted by Clarise Bhagalu about organisational culture and competitive advantage in family owned businesses.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. I agree to be interviewed for this research.
2. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
3. My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
4. I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
5. I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

________________________ ________________________

Signature Date

Consent form for audio-recording/ video recording

I, ____, agree to allow (your name) to audio record my interviews as part of the research about (insert aim of research/ brief summary of exactly what you are researching)
.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
2. The recordings will be stored in a password protected file on the researcher's computer.
3. Only the researcher, the researcher's supervisor and possibly a transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings.

________________________ ____________________
Signature Date

8.2 Gatekeeper Letters

8.3 Interview Questions

1. What industry does your business operate in? *[manufacturing or services sector]*
2. How old is your family business? *[First, Second or Third generational]*
3. Do you think that the progress from one generation to the next has influenced your business's culture in any way?
4. What are some of the dominant values embedded in your business? *[work ethic/honesty/spiritual/diversity]*
5. How does leadership within your business reinforce or promote these values?
6. What values or characteristics do you think an outsider will quickly identify?
7. What factors do you perceive to be a hindrance or challenge to your business's organisational culture?
8. Do you agree or disagree that organisational culture is related to competitive advantage? Please elaborate.
9. What are some of the benefits that your business has gained through its organisational culture?
10. To what extent does leadership mentor and facilitate employees' personal development in relation to the existing culture in your business?