

Analyzing the Impact of Strategic Thinking and Models on Organizational Performance: An Examination of Porter's Strategy and Mills and Snow's Frameworks

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Strategic thinking is a key contributor to the future viability and prosperity of organisations, and the research examines the correlation that exists between adopting these strategic models and performance results in organisations such as profitability, market share and growth. **Method:** Based on mixed-methods research, information was gathered in various industries through surveys, interviews, and evaluation of the strategic documents, where regression and correlation were used to analyse quantitative data delivered, whereas the qualitative data was determined with the help of thematic content analysis and comparative case creates. **Result:** They show that the organisation with the explicitly stated orientation to a particular strategic model is linked to its better performance as compared to organisations with unclear or inconsistent strategies, and the work shows the mediating role that industry dynamics, managerial perceptions, and internal capabilities play in the effective implementation of the selected strategies. **Novelty:** The study will contribute to the determination of strategic fit patterns, the definition of the relationship between various strategies and important performance variables, as well as contextual conditions determining strategic effectiveness, with the practical implication that it is better to have a consistent strategic orientation, which is communicated effectively and efficiently to reach the goals of an organisation.

INTRODUCTION

Organisations are ever faced with the challenge of defining and/or keeping a clear strategic direction in an ever-dynamic and competitive global business environment. The capability to comprehend the competitive environment, predict changes, and align the organisational resources to long-term objectives, known as strategic thinking, has become a key determinant of the success of an organisation. The firms which are capable of explaining and implementing sensible strategies are more prone to maintaining a competitive advantage, and they are apt to respond and adjust to changing market situations well [1].

Michael Porter and the Generic Strategies are among the greatest ones, and so is the Miles and Snow Typology. Such frameworks offer systematic means of comprehending the manner in which companies should position themselves in the various markets and emerge with better performance. The model presented by Porter focuses on cost leadership, differentiation and focus as core strategic options, each of which necessitates a different design of the operations and value propositions. The Miles and Snow Typology, on the other hand, identifies firms as Prospectors, Defenders, Analysers, or Reactors depending on their strategy orientations and how they have responded to the uncertainty in the environment [2].

Both models are popularly known and realised, but there is doubt as to whether they are effective and useful in real-life practical settings and adaptable to various organisational situations. Are companies that follow one of these models of strategy strictly outperformed by the companies that do not follow? Looking at these strategies, how do they tie in as quantifiable, i.e., profitability, growth and market share? The research aims to fill the knowledge gap between theory and practice to understand how these strategic frameworks affect the performance of organisations [3].

The analysis is empirical and based on the data that has been gathered in a number of organisations on various industries, giving a comparative outlook of the practical applicability of the Porter and the Miles and Snow models. The research will combine quantitative and qualitative approaches to develop a more sophisticated knowledge about the concept of strategic impact and avoid comparison on a very superficial level that might lead to oversimplification [4].

Literature Review

The assumption on which the theory of strategic management is founded is the fact that organisations have to exercise deliberate options concerning their ways of competing to enable them to record high performance standards. The Generic Strategies and the Typology of Miles and Snow are two of the most popular models in this discipline, and one may find that they provide different but complementary views on strategic actions. Generic Strategies introduced by Porter in the early 80s suggest that the competitive advantage could be attained by use of one of the three generic strategies, namely cost leadership, differentiation, or focus. Each of these strategies has a certain method of providing value to the customers. Cost leadership focuses on efficient operations and economies of scale to provide low-cost services [5].

Although there have been a lot of studies giving validity to both models, their relative effect in relation to organisational performance is a matter of controversy. Certain research indicates that companies that maintain a clear strategic model also do better because of increased internal synergy and a better definition of the positioning within the market. Other reasons take the position that the success of a particular strategy is dependent on situational issues like industry exigencies, market wrath and company culture [6].

Different results have been confirmed in empirical research. As an instance, a cost leadership-based firm tends to register high profit margins in commoditised sectors, and one based on differentiation can thrive best in businesses where the customers are loyal and their brands are recognised. Prospectors are more likely to excel in a dynamic system, and therefore, they can be weighed down by inefficiencies. By attempting to achieve a balance between stability and innovation, analysts usually end up in something in the middle, yet still successful. The reactors lead to an underperformance because of the lack of strategic coherence [7]; [8].

This review paves the way towards a comparative empirical investigation of the way in which the frameworks of Porter and those of Miles and Snow affect the performance of different organisations in diverse environments. Discussing the

theoretical concepts and the real-life practices, this research would identify the circumstances when these strategic templates are most likely to bring the best results [9].

Rationale and Theoretical Framework

The reason that has contributed to the existence of this study is the continuously successful strategic models in offering judgment to an organisation and the importance of using quantification to empirically assess the success of identical models in a number of situations. Even specifically, although the theories of Porter, Generic Strategies and Miles and Snow Typology have had a substantial mention in the educational literature, there is a scarcity of research that comparatively demonstrates their direct effect on organisational performance in a well-organised, empirical form. This gap offers the possibility to evaluate not only the performance of these models themselves but also the level of their correspondence with organisational conditions and planning plans[10].

On the other hand, the Miles and Snow Typology is based on organisational behaviour and adaptability, emphasising the way the firms react to the uncertainty in the environment due to particular patterns of action. This model presupposes that strategic orientation is also related to internal processes and organisational learning as well as to the external positioning. It focuses on the fit among strategy, structure and process, an idea commonly called strategic fit [11].

The theoretical basis of this research, thus, comprises the contingency theory of strategy according to which there is no universal strategy that is superior to others; the efficiency of a strategy is dictated by the extent to which it allows for accommodating the external conditions and the inner abilities. This paper expounds on this school of thought to examine beyond the question of whether a given strategy causes an increase in performance, but also when a certain strategy would be the most effective [12].

Through assessing competitive positioning, with the use of the Porter model and strategic orientation and adaptability with the aid of Miles and Snow typology, this study takes a complete picture of how organisations think and act strategically. The research hypothesis is that companies that have well well-defined strategic identity of either cost leadership, differentiation, prospector, defender or analyser will perform better than firms that have ambiguous or mixed strategic behaviour. In addition, it speculates that some models of strategy that prioritise internal-external fit (i.e. Miles and Snow) can be better able to withstand the topsy-turvy climate.

Overall, this theoretical approach can be considered as a prism that helps to interpret issues related to strategic decision-making and its consequences, combining the ideas of positioning, adaptability, and fit in order to describe the differences in performance. There will be a comparative analysis of these two strategic models, and this will provide new insights on how strategic thinking becomes reality in the success of an organization [13].

Research Questions and Objectives

In this paper, we have tried to articulate the role of strategic models on organisational performance based on the practice of Porter's original Three Generic Strategies and the Miles and Snow Typology. The objective is to know how these strategic

frameworks affect the key performance indicators that can occur in different industries and contexts of organisations.

Research Questions

1. What are the consequences of Porter implementing his Generic Strategies (cost leadership, differentiation and focus) on organisational performance outcomes like profitability, growth and market share?
2. What is the relationship between the use of Miles and Snow's strategic typology (Defender, Prospector, Analyser, Reactor) in any industry and its organisational performance?
3. What is its degree of influence on the effectiveness of either of the two strategic models?
4. Are some strategic models more or less effective within an independent industry or an independent organisational setting (i.e. high-tech, manufacturing, services)?
5. What are the problems of organisations about the execution and sustainability of strategic consistency over time?

Objectives

To compare and assess the effect of strategies on the performance of Porter's and Miles and Snow's strategic models.

1. To detect patterns of strategic fit and the lack of fit in practice.
2. To investigate the contextual forces (type of industry, organisation structure, dynamics of the market) that influence strategic competency.
3. To help managers get practical information on how they can improve the performance of their organisations by planning and carrying out strategies.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research takes a mixed-methods design by employing the quantitative and qualitative research methods simultaneously in the study to come up with a full picture of how strategic models affect the performance of the organisation. Statistical analysis coupled with the contextual interpretation helps in carrying out a strong assessment not only of what relationships exist among the variables of strategy and performance, but additionally, why and how relationships hold in various organisational contexts.

Research Design

In the research, explanatory sequential mixed methods will be used. To begin with, quantitative research is compiled and reviewed in order to define tendencies and links between the adoption of the strategic model and metrics of performance. This is coupled with the qualitative case studies to have a deeper understanding of the results and get the underlying causes, hurdles, and trade dynamics not given by numeric data per se.

Sample Selection

A purposive sample, which will be used in the research, is an organisation of various spheres of business such as manufacturing, services, technology, retail, and healthcare. To be included, the organisations need to have formally or informally accepted strategic models that conform to the Generic Strategies of Porter or the Miles

and Snow Typology. Its last sample is comprised of roughly 30 organisations and is chosen so that it is diverse in industry, size, and market maturity.

Data Collection

Data collection is outlined in a two-stage sequence:

a. Quantitative Phase:

Surveys were administered among the managerial employees of the sample organisations in order to measure the strategic orientation (e.g., cost leadership, differentiation, prospector, defender, etc.).The data on performance, like revenue growth, profit margin, rate of return, and share of the market, are gathered based on financial information made publicly accessible, internal key performance indicators, and a company database.

b. Qualitative Phase:

The details of developing, communicating and operationalising strategies in the organisation are sought through semi-structured interviews with the selected managers to provide in-depth information. Strategic plans like mission statements, business plans, annual reports, and strategy presentations among the internals are determined and analysed in order to determine the strategic positioning and alignment.

Analytical Methods

The relationship between the strategic model adoption and performance indicators is tested thereby employing statistical correlations and regression analysis. The type of strategy (e.g., Porter, Miles and Snow) is an independent variable, and the financial and operational performance-based metrics are dependent variables.

A comparative case analysis is done to compare organisations with various approaches to their strategy and define what is necessary to achieve success and what the problems are in implementing this approach. The case study method allows one to examine effects and interpretations in the strategy of an industry, as well as of the management.

Thematic content analysis was used to extract similar themes that can be identified in the interview transcripts and strategic documents in areas of strategic alignment, organisational culture, leadership support and environmental fit.

Data Analysis and Collection

The present section describes the process of data collection and analysis in more detail, through which the impact of strategic models on organisational performance was assessed with more specific attention to these three aspects: performance indicators, strategy orientation testing tools, and strategic fit determinants.

a. Procedure of data gathering

The process of collecting data was planned so as to obtain not only quantitative performance and qualitative strategic behaviours data in the dissatisfied colleges in the sample. The collection of data was done in three major categories:

- Performance Indicators

To gauge organisational performance, the paper considered the following standardised metrics:

1. Profitability: Net profit margin and ratio of returns on investment (ROI) will be used.
2. Market Share: Evaluated using industry reports, self-reporting of participants and selectable sales statistics as compared to the competition.
3. Growth: (Measured as year-on-year revenue growth, employee head count and market penetration).

These indicators were chosen because they allow comparison both in the case of different industries and organisations of different scales.

b. Assessment Tools of the Strategic Orientation

To clarify the strategic direction of each organisation two assessment tools were utilised:

1. In case of Porter Framework: A survey tool was designed to categorise strategic orientation according to those that match cost leadership, differentiation and focus criteria. Some of them were pricing strategy, investment in innovation, market targeting behaviour and efficiency of operation.
2. In the Miles and Snow Typology example: A typology questionnaire based on questionnaires developed by other typologies, provided a typology answer of Defender, Prospector, Analyser and Reactor, depending on innovation patterns, risk-taking patterns, stability patterns and environment scanning.

These instruments made it possible to assign each organisation to a certain strategic category, creating the groundwork for correlation as well as comparative analysis.

c. SDA Strategic Document Analysis

Business plans, annual reports and corporate strategy decks were surveyed internally and externally in an effort to verify survey answers and develop further understanding of how the strategies are framed and described in each company.

d. Analysis Techniques

- Regression Analysis

The analysis of quantitative data was conducted by means of applying multiple regression analysis. The profitability, growth, and market share have been regarded as dependent variables, whereas each strategic type was compared as an independent variable.

- Comparison of Case Studies

To complement the outcome of the statistical analysis, a deeper comparative case study was conducted. Organisations were categorised in behalf on their strategic model, and within observance, comparisons were made in order to evaluate common factors of success, internal practices, and challenges within the environment.

- Thematic Content Analysis

Thematic analysis of coding transcripts of interviews and strategic documents was performed to find reparative strategic behaviours, leadership styles and cultural considerations. This account gave us an idea of how the strategy intent was put into practice and how it affected the performance in the long run.

- Analysis of Strategic Fit

The concept of strategic fit was evaluated through examining the correspondence of selected strategy and organisational features such as structure, resource distribution, corporate culture, and market realities. This assessment has been a mixture of responses to the surveys concerning the inside fit and perceived consistency and readings of documents to evaluate stated versus enacted strategies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

In this part, the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses are described. Substantial findings indicate that there are significant relations between strategic orientation, strategic fit and organisational performance. Outputs are represented visually to aid the interpretation of trends and comparative content.

Quantitative findings

Correlation analysis of strategic characteristics and organisational performance indicators depicted a number of essential connections. Highly strategic fit organisations produced better results in terms of performance. In particular, both strategic fit and the return on investment (ROI), as well as profit margin, revealed a positive relationship. This implies that companies whose internal operations and organisations are well aligned with the strategic models they adopt or are adopted are building better chances of attaining financial success.

Table 1. ROI by Strategy Type and Fit Level.

| Porter Strategy | Miles & Snow Type | Strategic Fit Level | Average ROI (%) | Porter Strategy | Miles & Snow Type |
|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Cost Leadership | Analyzer | High | 11.52 | Cost Leadership | Analyzer |
| Cost Leadership | Defender | High | 8.54 | Cost Leadership | Defender |
| Cost Leadership | Defender | Moderate | 13.26 | Cost Leadership | Defender |
| Cost Leadership | Reactor | High | 14.74 | Cost Leadership | Reactor |
| Cost Leadership | Reactor | Low | 13.21 | Cost Leadership | Reactor |
| Differentiation | Analyzer | Moderate | 8.65 | Differentiation | Analyzer |
| Differentiation | Analyzer | Low | 13.25 | Differentiation | Analyzer |
| Differentiation | Defender | Moderate | 12.75 | Differentiation | Defender |
| Differentiation | Prospector | Low | 12.54 | Differentiation | Prospector |
| Focus | Defender | Moderate | 13.13 | Focus | Defender |
| Focus | Prospector | Low | 10.96 | Focus | Prospector |
| Focus | Reactor | Moderate | 7.91 | Focus | Reactor |

a. Analysis of correlation

To support the resultant descriptive finding and have better insight into the strength of relationships between strategic variables and performance, a correlation analysis was performed. This statistical tool gives information on the extent to which certain strategic dimensions e.g., the operational efficiency, the focus of innovation, the environmental scan, and the strategic alignment are associated with key performance indicators such as profit margin, market share, the rate of growth and the rate of investment returns (ROI).

Table 2. Correlation of Strategic Drivers with Performance Metrics.

| Strategic Variable | Profit Margin | Market Share | Growth Rate | ROI |
|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Operational Efficiency | 0.01 | 0.02 | 0.11 | 0.02 |
| Product Uniqueness | 0.25 | 0.10 | -0.17 | 0.21 |
| Market Narrowing | -0.07 | -0.11 | -0.19 | -0.14 |
| Innovation Emphasis | -0.26 | 0.13 | -0.30 | -0.02 |
| Environmental Scanning | 0.08 | 0.30 | -0.15 | 0.39 |
| Strategic Clarity | -0.09 | 0.01 | 0.05 | -0.07 |
| Strategic Commitment | -0.20 | -0.07 | 0.06 | -0.22 |
| Document Clarity | -0.35 | -0.20 | -0.01 | -0.07 |
| KPI Alignment | -0.08 | -0.01 | -0.02 | -0.08 |
| Strategy-Structure Alignment | -0.16 | -0.13 | 0.03 | -0.08 |
| Resource Allocation | -0.02 | -0.04 | -0.08 | -0.02 |
| Market Alignment | -0.02 | -0.09 | -0.13 | -0.04 |
| Environment Fit | -0.02 | -0.09 | -0.13 | -0.04 |
| Overall Strategic Fit Score | -0.12 | -0.05 | 0.11 | -0.20 |

Qualitative Insights of Case Studies

The qualitative results provide supplementary details to the observed numbers. The majority of the organisations indicated good organisational leadership and proper internal communications on their strategic course. These determinants were more common in firms that used a clearly articulated differentiation or prospector strategy,

which perhaps illustrates an indication that such strategies may require and develop a leadership and alignment that is more considered.

Table 3. Summary of Most Frequent Qualitative Responses.

| Theme | Most Frequent Response | Count |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|-------|
| Leadership Support | Weak | 14 |
| Strategic Communication | Unclear | 12 |
| Change Adaptability | High | 13 |
| Cultural Alignment | Aligned | 11 |
| Strategy Implementation Challenges | Low | 14 |

Such qualitative themes allow explaining why some types of strategies do better in certain conditions. Successful implementation and competitive performance were repeatedly linked to strategic clarity, leadership coherence and organisational flexibility.

Findings of the Study

In general, the findings show that the most effective way of finding an optimal strategic approach is to be uniform and in balance. The models provided by Porter as well as Miles and Snow apply equally good routes to a high level of performance, yet success depends heavily on inner coherence, environmental adjustability and cultural integrity. The quantitative and qualitative results should be integrated, and hence the importance of a strategic model that is not only selected prudently but also incorporated at every organisational level.

Discussion

The findings of the present research point to the ambivalent yet crucial connection between strategic thinking, model adoption, and organisational performance. Both the Porter Generic Strategies and the Miles-and-Snow Typology provide viable strategic directions, albeit on condition of a significant proportion of internal fit and external acclimatisation within the models [14]. This strengthens the postulation of the contingency theory, which proposes that there is no single-fit formula of approach in strategic management. Rather, a strategy that best fits the internal capacity of an organisation and the external environment of an industry has the best performance [15]. Higher strategic fit organisations have better financial performance as demonstrated by higher average ROI.

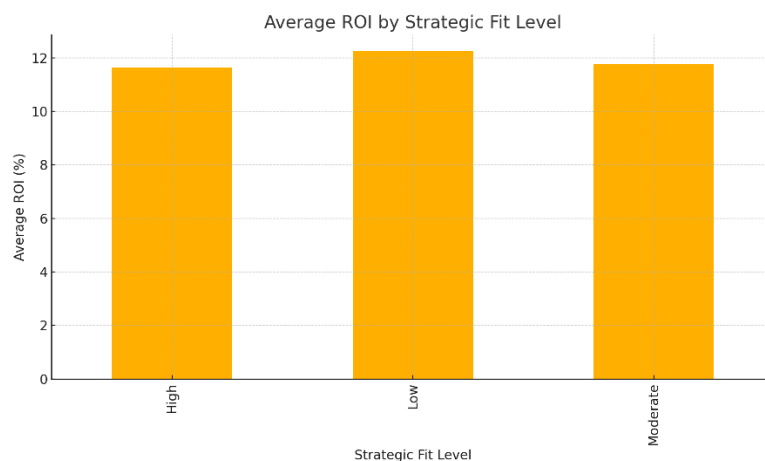


Figure 1. Average ROI by Strategic Fit Level.

The positive performance of such cost leadership, such as the case of high operational efficiency scores and well-organised cost management operations, could only become effective when complemented by the correct systems and leadership control. Conversely, companies that adopted a differentiation or a prospector strategy achieved the highest success where high-power leadership support, cultural flexibility, and acceptance of innovation were evident. These results indicate that choosing the strategy is the first part of the equation; the internal environment and its implementation capacity will really dictate whether the strategy will become a competitive advantage or not [16].

The classification of organisations into defenders or reactors was also more difficult, interestingly enough. Defenders became ineffective when challenged with change and innovation needs, although at times they were successful in stable settings. Without a clear, consistent strategic orientation, reactors were characterised by poor performance results and a lack of internal dimension harmonisation. This highlights the dangers of acting without a prescribed strategy or failing to respond to external pressures [17]. Although both the frameworks by Porter and Miles and Snow have their value, the latter seems to be giving greater adaptability power to the turbulent industries, whereas the former framework by Porter still holds a superior value in stable, efficiency-oriented industries [18]. The prospector-type firms usually get more market share than Defenders, Reactors, and Analysers.

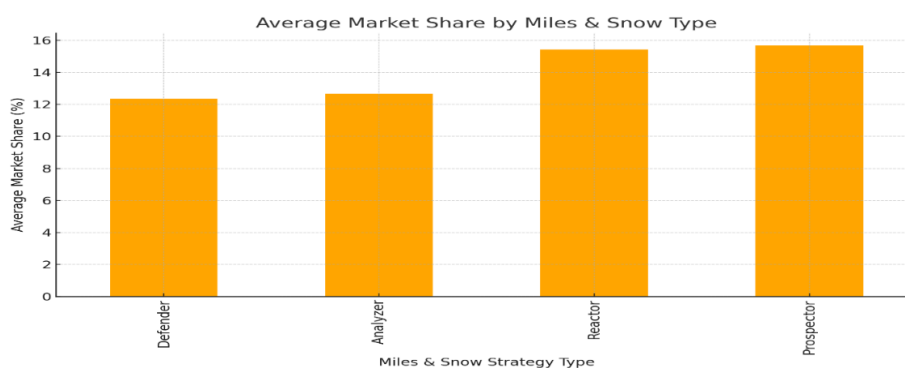


Figure 2. Average Market Share by Miles and Snow Type.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : This research has found that the most important aspect of the maintenance of high performance at the organisational level is not merely the selection of the strategy that should be followed, but the capability to effectively implement and set out that strategy in the organisation. The successful companies are the ones whose internal structures, leadership behaviour and cultural values are consistent with the strategic orientation that they have chosen. It is the capacity of fulfilling the strategy pursued by a company (cost leader, differentiation or prospector/defender) that it pursues consistently across the functions that makes the actual difference. **Implication :** The main finding of the study is that strategic fit (as opposed to the type of strategy) is the best indicator of performance. Companies that had high strategic fit were observed to display favourable performance in ROI, profit margin and growth. **Limitation :** The common features of these firms were that they had a clear proclamation of the strategic objectives, high adaptability, supportive leadership and that the daily operations were in line with the long-term strategy, but the study does not cover the possible constraints or external shocks that could affect strategic coherence. **Future Research :** They did not just adopt more aggressive or risky strategies: their adopted strategy was just more consistent and coherent, and further studies could explore how external environmental uncertainty or digital transformation influences the sustainability of strategic fit.

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