

**A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage.**

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**OPEN ACCESS**



**P - ISSN 2518 - 5764**  
**E - ISSN 2227 - 703X**

**Received: 27/11/2019**  
**Accepted: 19/12/2019**

**SUMMARY:**

The objective of this research paper is two-fold. The first is a precise reading of the theoretical underpinnings of each of the strategic approaches: "Market approach" for (M. Porter), and the alternative resource-based approach (R B V), advocates for the idea that the two approaches are complementary. Secondly, we will discuss the possibility of combining the two competitive strategies: cost leadership and differentiation. Finally, we propose a consensual approach that we call "dual domination".

**Keywords:** cost leadership, differentiation, competitive advantage, dual domination.

**JEL Classification:** M210





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### **INTRODUCTION:**

Even though "market approach" or "entrance to the industrial economy" or "industry structure" to achieve a competitive advantage which is popular and prevalent during the 1980s and 1990s, the entrance to the resources found many studies and research since the 1990s until today, it was other great attention also particularly theoretical framework is based on the number of scripts older than half a century.

But all the studies, including those that tried to find indicators to measure this entrance or that categorically did not confirm any more practical entrances, or in other words, these studies did not answer a number of questions concerning the degree of integration between both approaches as well as the need for adoption together in order to achieve a competitive advantage its permanent.

From the above, we raise the following problematic: In a volatile environment characterized by globalization of markets and increasing intensity of competition between enterprises: How can the economic enterprise take advantage of the most important advantages of the market entrance which assumes the position of the enterprise in its market or sector, as well as taking advantage of the most important advantages of the resource entrance which often assumes interest in internal enterprise resources, in order to achieve a permanent (lasting) competitive advantage for the enterprise?

Noting that the idea of situational and permanence for competitive advantage she held many researchers in the field, and there's near unanimity that permanent competitive advantage is only the sum of a set of situational features.

In order to achieve this, too, Should the enterprise adopt a single competitive strategy or use more than one?

### **THE HYPOTHESES:**

In trying to answer the two previous questions, we adopt the following two hypotheses:

- 1- The enterprise can achieve a permanent (lasting) competitive advantage by taking advantage of opportunities in the external environment and by valuing its internal resources.
- 2- The enterprise can achieve a permanent (lasting) competitive advantage by combining the cost leadership strategy and the differentiation strategy simultaneously.

In order to discuss the previous hypotheses we divided our subject to the following elements:

First: Theoretical and conceptual framework for competitive advantage;

Second: Review of main approaches assumptions (market approach and resources approach);

Third: Gathering the most important treatises in terms of preference: pursuing one competitive strategy or pursuing more than one (dual domination);



## **A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage**

Fourth: Try to suggest a consensual approach that cares about the competitive position of the enterprise, on the other hand it cares about its internal resources, and should be based (the approach) on a combination of more than one competitive strategy.

### **I-THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE**

Over the past three decades, studies and research in the field of strategic management have not been abandoned by the concept of competitive advantage. The prominence of this concept and its dominance over the various strategic orientations has led some to define strategic management as: "the management of competitive advantage, which is the process of identifying, developing and using the feature in a clear and tangible way so that it can be applied and maintained" (Lynch, 2000: 153).

The controversial definition of (Porter) remains in our view because it does not know the competitive advantage but describes the way to achieve it: "Competitive advantage arises precisely from the value that an enterprise can create for its customers in excess of the costs incurred in creating it. The value is what customers are willing to pay, and a higher value is obtained by applying lower prices than their competitors to similar benefits (offers)..."(Porter, 1999: 13).

The competitive advantage is characterized by a set of characteristics: it is relative, i.e. it is achieved by comparison and not absolute, it leads to the achievement of superiority and preference on competitors, as it originates from within the enterprise and achieves value, and is reflected in the efficiency of the enterprise's performance of its activities or in the value of what is offered to customers or both, Buyers should influence and be aware of the preference of the enterprise and motivate them to buy from it, which is achieved over a long period of time and does not disappear quickly when it is developed and renovated.

### **II- REVIEW OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ASSUMPTIONS OF MARKET APPROACH AND RESOURCES APPROACH**

#### **II-1 THE BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF THE MARKET APPROACH (ENTRANCE):**

Porter's theory is one of the most important theories that sparked a revolution in strategic thinking and specifically with regard to competitiveness. Through two (02) books, Porter was able to establish the theory still means (and criticized) until today

Porter wrote three books: (Porter, 1980), (Porter, 1985) and (Porter, 1986). But what triggered a big bang in the academic milieu, especially the first and second writers. The first provides a full analysis of its focus on industry and the market; the views presented in the second book focus on the Enterprise and its activities (refers the foundation and its environment (with a view to achieving a competitive advantage strategy, in the sense that it is being analysed from all to



## **A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage**

the section; The third book is concerned with the competitive advantage At the macro level or at the level of nations (States).

Porter's interest in the issue of competitive enterprise, in our view, has led to the establishment of a theory that allows for the identification and maintenance of competitive advantage sources. His analysis focused on the concepts of activity and the value chain.

Many studies have addressed the issue of competitive advantage, and have gone into linking the competitive enterprise -automatically- with the size of the enterprise or its market share, and then Back off this subtraction, because in many sectors, small and medium enterprises have proved to be more effective than large enterprises (Porter, 1999).

From there, Porter went on to deny (negate) the previous proposition, by saying, "Even if the organization combines the large volume with the large market share and satisfactory results, this is only the fruit of a competitive advantage rather than its source" (Porter, 1999).

Porter asserts his deep conviction that the failure of many enterprises (in his environment) is due to their inability to pass from the great directions of the strategy to the level of conducts and precise actions necessary to obtain a competitive advantage (Porter, 1999), in other words, the failure was the result of the implementation of the strategies themselves and not because of a flawed formulation. From there, Porter designed his famous model based on three (03) competitive strategies to achieve competitive advantage.

We know that the writings of Porter or to move the topical school into strategic thought-style schools, entrances and other writings such as the cultural entrance in the operation of the enterprise was both an expression and a contribution to the reaction of academics in the United States of America at the end of the 1970s and the beginning The 1980s, the failure of the American enterprises to take place in front of Japanese enterprises, even in their own backyard, and in activities that were known to be of purely American jurisdiction such as the automobile industry.

### **II-1-1: THE THREE MAIN BASIC STRATEGIES (PORTER'S GENERIC STRATEGIES)**

The relative position of the enterprise determines whether the profitability of the enterprise is higher or lower than the average profitability of the sector (Porter, 1999:22). According to Porter, competitive advantage results from the ability of the enterprise to control the five powers of competition more or better than its opponents or competitors (Porter, 1999:23).

#### **A) COST LEADERSHIP STRATEGY:**

According to this strategy, the enterprise offers a supply; its perceived value is similar to the value of the competitors' offers, but at a low price.

There are many researchers who prefer to use the term "price strategy" instead of "cost strategy". They see that only under the influence of Porter this label appeared, because in their view, "cost reduction per se is not a strategy.



## **A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage**

When we seek to build a competitive advantage through a cost leadership strategy (Johnson, Scholes, Whittington and Fréry, 2008: 274), many approaches can be used, and there is no room for them to mention them all. Generally, the objective is to improve efficiency from year-to-year, without compromising the quality of the goods/service. When we seek to build a competitive advantage through cost leadership strategy, many approaches can be used, and there is no room to mention them all.

The enterprise can achieve economies of scale by trying to capture a larger market share of competitors' quotas, and those savings are used to achieve cost advantages. They can also achieve those savings through negotiating capacity (for suppliers and the impact of the experience curve. We are talking here, about the scale (size) strategy, because success inevitably passes through the growth and acquisition of market shares.

Dominant enterprises are not always necessarily the most profitable and can lose their market share in favour of smaller, more dynamic competitors. If the concept of "control through volume" is accepted, this concept is only positive for the enterprise that enjoys the lowest costs (Johnson, Scholes, Whittington and Fréry, 2008: 274). Domination through volume -through sequential repetition- leads to monopolistic positions, lowering costs, allowing for a reduction in prices and hence a higher growth in market shares, which -through the impact of size (scale) and experience- allows for a reduction in costs: Where, when market share rises, costs are reduced.

### **B) DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGY**

We used the term "Differentiation" rather than the concept of "excellence", because (Porter) used the first concept and not the second.

The second strategy to achieve the competitive advantage is to look for (differential) for the customer's perceived value. There are two broad types of differentiation:

Type I: reduction of perceived value compared to competitors' offers;

Type 2: Raising the perceived value compared to competitors' offers.

In the first case, the reduction in value allows the result to be reduced costs (product/service is very simple, lower cost of production), which imposes a price reduction so that the offer remains attractive to the customer.

In the second case, the increase in value would generally result in additional costs (because the offer would be good, the cost of its production is higher); these costs must be absorbed by the increase in price or by the production of larger sizes (volumes)

In order for these strategies to be profitable for the enterprise, it is necessary to:

- Whether a more cost reduction than price reduction (In the case of a strategy of differentiation downward)
- Whether the price increase is more than the cost (In the case of a strategy differentiation towards the top)



## **A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage**

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The strategy of differentiation toward the down (Purification strategy), seems to be very unattractive, but many enterprises have been very successful with their application. This strategy depends (as we said) on offering a low price offer, but the perceived value is lower than the perceived value of competitors "offerings", which is primarily directed to customers for whom the price is the first and primary criterion in the purchase decision. This strategy is effective only if there are enough customers, and if they know that the quality of the product/service is limited or even poor, they do not decide to go towards a more valuable offer.

The clean-up strategy and the lower cost strategy should not be confused: the latter is to maintain the level of customer-aware value but to lower the price. The clearance strategy relies on simultaneous-but asymmetric-reduction of price and value.

On the contrary, the differentiation towards the top (sophistication strategy) depends on the display of a product/service with characteristics and specifications higher and better than the characteristics and specifications of competitors. By resorting to increased value, you can:

- Whether to raise the market share (thus reducing costs by playing on the impact of experience)
- Whether raising margins (by applying higher prices)

In both cases, the profit is higher than the profit realized by competitors. The success of the strategy of sophistication is subject to two basic points:

\* It is necessary to clarify well who are the customers. Before any decision is taken on the strategy, a number of questions must be asked about the nature of the customers, i.e. who are the strategic customers of the enterprise?

\* It is also important to clarify who are the competitors?

For some writers, there are two types of customers for your organization: end consumers, and distributors (Johnson, Scholes, Whittington and Fréry, 2008: 95).

With the knowledge of customers and competitors, the target market can be clarified.

### **C) FOCUS STRATEGY:**

The focus strategy (niche strategy) relies on the rejection of direct confrontation and the sufficiency of a part of the market (segment) that is very distinctive or special, with the aim of protecting the enterprise itself from competition attacks. This is a highly distinctive proposal that attracts only a fraction of the customers.

The focus could be the maximum extension of the strategies:

- Sophistication's strategy
- purification strategy

The word "sophistication" refers to the various improvements that are added to the process and which have a change in appearance and in the method of use. We have merely named it "improvements".



## **A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage**

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An enterprise can focus on a an affordable segment of customers, by proposing a significant difference in value and in price compared to the underlying offer (the basic supply);

Or on the contrary, an enterprise can go to a less affluent segment of customers, who do not have sufficient means to obtain the products offered by competitors.

In the first case, the enterprise offers luxury products/services, whose world market is limited to a small number (a few thousand) of customers.

In the second (maximum) case, the enterprise offers minimal, limited access to the more bad customers.

This strategy (focus) can focus on qualitative differentiation, i.e. specialization in satisfying the needs of customers with special needs (pregnant women's clothing, small cars without driver's license) (Johnson, Scholes, Whittington and Fréry, 2008: 280-281).

It is for the success of the focus strategy that certain conditions must be respected: (Johnson, Scholes, Whittington and Fréry, 2008: 280-281).

- The market must be small enough: so as to avoid attracting powerful competitors. The volume of sales does not allow a major enterprise to cover its fixed burdens, hence the enterprise that chooses the focus strategy is forced to maintain a small size, but that does not protect it from its strong competitors.

- The enterprise that adopts this strategy must have its assets (origins), which are used to respond to the needs of the selected or targeted group, are assets of a special nature: proprietary technology, private machines, an unique distribution channel... etc. If competitors who are active in the public market decide to use their own resources to intervene in the narrow market (niche), this market becomes threatened and unprotected.

- Most of the new enterprises start with a concentration strategy which allows them, by limited means, not to be exposed to the attacks of existing competitors. In the event of success and growth, their narrow market (niche) becomes attractive to large competitors. It becomes necessary to abandon focus, but the shift towards another competitive strategy must be carefully studied. In any case, the increase in customers generally requires a restructuring of the enterprise's funding structure (raising capital, entering new partners or shareholders, changing the legal form of the enterprise: for example, a company from a solidarity company or a company with limited liability is transformed into a shareholding company with the aim of attracting the largest number of shareholders and capital in order to expand.).

- The chosen small market is protected from the large competitors who are active at the public market level, but this market small can be the place of greed of many small enterprises or specialized sections or branches of larger enterprises.



## **A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage**

### **II-1-2 RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH MAIN BASIC STRATEGIES:**

Porter sees that no competitive strategy can lead to higher than average results if that strategy is not viable continuous compared to competitors' strategy (Porter, 1999:34). Viability or continuity is a prerequisite for the success of any competitive or uncompetitive strategy because the strategy is originally intended to remain successful.

To become a main basic strategy viable continuous, the enterprise must have barriers that make it difficult to imitate (Porter, 1999:34). However, because barriers are not always non-boarding, the enterprises must always strive to be a mobile target for its competitors by working to continually improve its status (position) (Porter, 1999:34-35).

As a summary of this portal, we say that a lot of criticisms were directed at him for being neglecting the internal characteristics and dimensions of the enterprise, and it did take into account neither the concept of the entrepreneur nor the concept of creativity. The intensification of the competition has made the implementation of Porter's teachings difficult, especially with regard to "entry barriers". Some studies have confirmed that some entry barriers, such as "marketing spending", rather than discouraging the entry of new enterprises into the market, make it easier for them, especially when those enterprises are more in control of this function. Perhaps the most important criticism of the approach is the lack of field studies that demonstrate the impact of market structures on the behaviour of enterprises and therefore determine their performance. While some of the completed studies have confirmed that market structures can explain the changing in the performance of enterprises, they are only explained in the range of 6 to 30% (McGahan, 1999: 373-398). The greater part of that change is therefore not explained through market structures. In order to explain this difference in performance, researchers have tended towards the internal factors of the enterprise that play an important role in changing performance. In this context, a "resource-based approach or view" has been included.

### **II-2 BASIC PREMISE OF THE ENTRANCE (APPROACH) OF RESOURCE-BASED VIEW**

According to (Grant), "Research and studies on strategy in general and competitive advantage in particular have focused during the 1980s on the external environmental dimension particularly the analysis of the structure of the industry, especially the writings of (Porter), which focused on the elements of the external environment, which affect the enterprise and its competitive position, as well as strategies that achieve competitive advantages, while the linkage between the strategy and the enterprise's internal resources and skills towards achieving competitive advantages was neglected" (Grant, 1992: 114).





## **A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage**

As a result of the focus on industry as the appropriate analysis unit, another school emerged as the "Resource-Based View", which considered the enterprise to be the appropriate unit for analysis, and this view is based on the diversity and differentiation of the enterprise's constituents (components) in achieving competitive advantage. An enterprise that is able to integrate its scarce resources, rare, valuable, non-refundable and difficult to imitate, it will be able to achieve competitive advantage during its competition to other enterprises.

This approach looks at enterprise as a different combination (mix) of physical and non-physical capabilities and assets, and this combination cannot be similar in two enterprises, because there are no two enterprises with the same experience, assets, organizational skills or culture, and it is this combination that determines the efficiency and The effectiveness of the enterprise in the performance of its functional activities (Collis, Montgomery, 1995: 119).

Within the resource portal, researchers differed in the classification and division of resources, considering (Macmillan & tampoe) believe that resources within the enterprise include: material resources (fixed assets and equipment), human resources, financial resources (MaCmillan, Tampoe, 2000: 348). (Grant) considers that resources can be categorized into financial, material, human, technological and organizational resources in addition to the reputation of the enterprise (Grant, 1992: 119).

According to the resource approach, strategies should be formulated based on the strengths of the enterprise's resources. An effective competitive advantage is realized when the enterprise uses its available resources in a way that distinguishes it from others in the marketplace and in the minds of its customers.

Talking about the resource approach is not complete without addressing the concept of (core competences), which is the result of the reasons of excellence and uniqueness and singularity of the resources and skills of the enterprise, and the achievement and sustainability of competitive advantage. They can be defined as "enterprise-specific skills and cognitive traits geared towards achieving the highest possible levels of customer satisfaction compared to competitors" (Hamel, Heene, 1994:113). They can also be defined as "the resources that the enterprise uses to perform its activities better than its competitors, or to perform those activities in a way that competitors cannot perform them" (MaCmillan, Tampoe, 2000: 101).

### **II-2-1 CRITICISMS DIRECTED AT THE RESOURCE APPROACH:**

The applications of the resources approach within strategic management are still not clear-cut for two main reasons: The first reason is that the multiplicity and diversity of intellectual contributions in various and different directions has pushed towards the weakening of the integrated framework for such a view or approach, The second reason is the lack of efforts to develop practical applications for this approach. Also, this approach does not explain how resources evolve and change over time, as the dynamic nature of resource



## **A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage**

development is a key element within the strategy, and this entry has not added much to illustrate this dimension. Enterprises that seek to maintain their competitive advantages require them to possess dynamic resources and core competences, not static, a distinctive resource and a creative core competence may become available and routine skills over time. This approach also provides a significant disregard for the adoption of the human element as a key factor in the development of resources.

### **III- ONE COMPETITIVE STRATEGY OR MULTIPLICITY OF STRATEGIES?**

#### **III-1 STUCK IN THE MIDDLE:**

Porter used this concept (Stuck in the Middle) for the first time in his second **book to** refer to the qualities of an organization that uses more than one of the generic strategies but fails to succeed in any of them.

In his view, such an enterprise had no competitive advantage because it did not want to choose a specific method of competition in the market. This position leads the enterprise to achieve results less than the average sector.

According to Porter, there are three (03) cases in which an enterprise can access, at the same time, domination through the cost leadership strategy and through the strategy of differentiation (Porter, 1999:32).

A- The presence of competitors in the middle position: when competitors are in the middle position, there is not one of them in a position of force that allows him to push its enterprise to the point at which domination through the cost leadership and differentiation becomes non-identical. And this situation, which allows the enterprise to achieve both strategies, is usually a temporary position, according to Porter (Porter, 1999:33).

B- A situation where costs are very sensitive to market share or interconnections: It is possible to achieve the position of domination through the cost leadership and differentiation, when the market share has a greater and more powerful role in determining costs than product design, technology, service or other factors (Porter, 1999:33). Porter considers that the benefits (advantages) that the enterprise achieves at the cost level by deducting a large share of the market, allow it (these benefits) to incur additional costs in other regions and at the same time continue to remain in domination through the cost leadership (Porter, 1999:33).

C- The case of an enterprise that is introducing huge innovations: the introduction of major technological innovations can allow the enterprise to reduce its costs and strengthen, at the same time, its distinctiveness and perhaps, at the same time, the success of both strategies (Porter, 1999:33-34).

#### **III-2 DUAL DOMINATION:**

Dual domination (through cost leadership and through differentiation) is an approach that has been justified and reviewed, and is specifically inspired by many researches. This strategy can be defined as the simultaneous implementation of strategies based on: domination through the cost leadership



## **A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage**

and through the differentiation. According to Miller, the most effective strategies, which offer the least imitation attempts, are those that are based on synchronous control of a range of competencies in marketing, production, product design, distribution and price... etc. The introduction of new automation-related technologies can play this role. As well as some innovative practices that have nothing to do with technology and that can produce the same effect (Porter, 1999:34).

There are many models that blend the two main basic strategies: domination through cost leadership (lower costs) and through differentiation. These models focus on the methods and techniques of the basic strategies: Size (volume), limitation, efficiency and purification for the cost leadership strategy; and Quality, image, design and service for the strategy of differentiation (Mezghani, 1996).

The choice of a particular competitive strategy depends on two basic concepts or variables related to competitiveness: The costs and the perceived value (Cueille, Yami and Benavent, 2003). We prefer to use the concept of perceived value rather than the concept of value, because the value that the organization seeks to achieve for the customer is perceived (recognized) by the latter and translated through its fulfillment of the enterprise product.

These two variables (according to Porter) are the source of competitive advantage, which determine the location and the status of the enterprise within the competition, and not to choose one of the two strategies that can put the enterprise in the middle position (Stuck in the Middle).

We emphasize that even the credibility of notions (concepts) of domination through cost leadership and through differentiation has been criticized. In the context of the globalization of competition and the increasing speed of technological changes, the components of the Porter's "model" do not allow for consideration the complexity of the enterprises environment (Mintzberg, 1988: 1-67).

In his first book (Porter, 1980), "Porter" asserts the idea that one type of competitive advantage can be qualified for the enterprise's success (Asset) in order to obtain a strong and distinctive position compared to competition. But the combination of the two features or the two weapons: the costs and the value can give a description and a different picture of the ones made or provided by (Porter). This new approach takes into account the dynamic dimension of the strategy and the competitive advantage that is more compatible with the changing environment (Billard, 1999:18). To better understand the importance of this idea, it suffices to emphasize that a single competitive advantage can usually be a source of imitation, necessitating a reconsideration of the initial strategy.



## **A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage**

"Cueille and al." asserts the poor performance of the organizations that follow the Middle way (Stuck in the Middle), that is, those enterprises that are in an intermediate position between cost leadership domination and differentiation (Cueille, Yami and Benavent, 2003).

The blending of main basic strategies was the subject of disagreement between researchers in the strategy; some of them (Dess, Davis, 1984:467-488) reject the idea of combining main basic strategies and believe that this necessarily leads to the middle road (Stuck in the Middle). These researchers assert that a unique or single strategy model can give the enterprise a permanent and conclusive (decisive) competitive advantage.

In fact, many researchers (if not the majority) they defend the thesis of blending the two competitive strategies and have made it clear that the "compact or mix strategy" gives the enterprise a very good (favourable) position compared to its competitors. They believe that the modern enterprise has become very flexible and is harnessing multiple organizational competencies in order to face and surpass competition. Hence, the enterprise cannot achieve its objectives through the implementation of a single strategy. In this context, "Murray" explains to us that the cost leadership strategy that competes and rivals a strategy of differentiation must also be a strategy of differentiation and vice versa.

From the foregoing, it is clear to us that it is possible to blend the two competitive strategies -according to this logic or this new approach- and that they seem (appear) to be more flexible and represent a wide range of choices and options through the blending of main basic strategies. These strategies can be said to be able to steer the enterprise clearly, making it difficult for the competitor to imitate the sources of its competitive advantage.

In fact, the contributions indicated remain limited because they have been confined to the level of problem formulation without giving solutions. In contrast, (Billard) illustrates the possibility of blending the two strategies by proposing a model that facilitates understanding of the trajectory of merged strategies according to the hierarchy of time (time-gradation).

Despite the "theoretical" support for the approach by: (Blanc, Dussauge et Quélin; Cooper; Billard), they recognize that this strategy is characterized by a short position at the level of the two types of competitive advantage. Hence the criticism directed at the hat of the models of blending is the lack (non-permanence) of durability of the acquired advantage.

### **III-2-1 EVOLUTIONARY APPROACH:**

"Billard" came to say that the enterprise needed a series of temporary advantages rather than one feature. These series of advantages (benefits) can be guaranteed or achieved only through the possibility of merging main basic strategies. "Billard" emphasizes: "Integrated strategies are not synchronized, and once the first strategy is effective, the enterprise can choose to follow it with a second strategy at the same time, which is only for the continuation of



## A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage

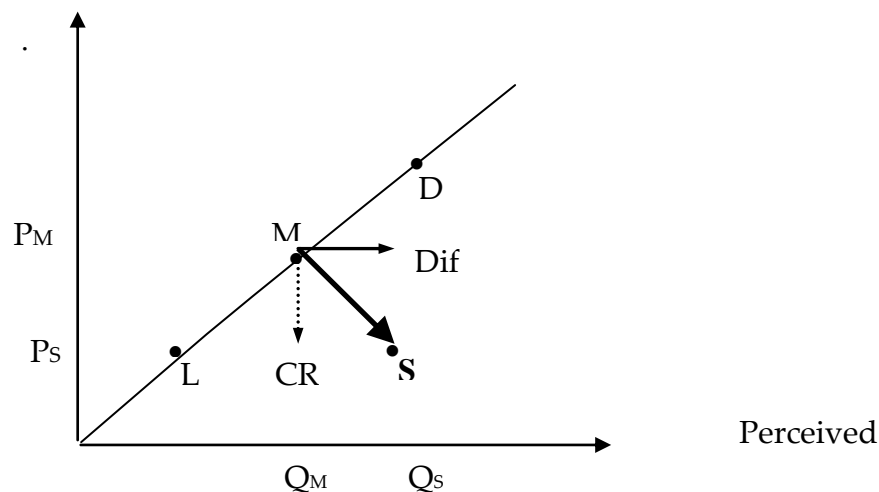
acquisition of a temporary or circumstantial monopolistic position". It is clear that (Billard) does not propose a mixed (integrated) but dynamic, time-based approach, so that the enterprise applies two sequential strategic options in time rather than simultaneously (not synchronized).

In other words, the dynamic approach proposed by (Billard) does not answer the question of integrating main basic strategies, because blending or merging is actually only possible if two different strategies are adopted simultaneously rather than sequentially.

### III-2-2 SYNCHRONOUS APPROACH:

This approach prefers to develop and implement a specific strategy that takes two (both) dimensions: cost leadership and differentiation in order to enable the Organization to achieve the competitive advantage in its two types. The synchronous approach can be explained with the help of a graph (Figure 01), which is two axes: perceived quality (differentiation strategy) and price (cost leadership strategy). Where: M, is any point that belongs to the curve (LD) that represents the supply of the organization that has properties: the PM price and the QM quality. In Confronting to its competitors who offer offers: L and D, who adopt individual strategies for the cost leadership (L) and for differentiation (D), the enterprise settles at point M, thus an attack that allows it to get a higher position, that is, point S.

Figure 01 : Synchronous approach



Source : D'AVENI. R., Hypercompétition, Vuibert, Paris, 1995, p 52.

Merging or blending can correspond to the M point that blends the two dimensions: cost leadership and differentiation in order to achieve the transformation factor of M to S.

In other words, the enterprise adopts the two strategies by improving the relationship at the same time: a perceived quality/price compared to its customers. The supply S is a preferred selection because the organization in



## **A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage**

question gets in view of its customers an improvement in quality and a reduction in price.

We note that this approach is inspired and derived from the works of: (Blanc, Dussauge et Quélin; Cooper; Billard)

### **IV- DISCUSSION: (ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH A CONSENSUAL APPROACH: BLENDING MORE THAN A COMPETITIVE STRATEGY)**

Thus, based on the theoretical and conceptual foundation of competitive advantage: The entrance of the industry structure (market entrance) and the concepts associated with this approach (five-or 5 + 1 power model) for "Porter", the concept of value chain, concept of perceived value, and the entrance of resource-based view (RBV) and its tributaries (Core competencies, knowledge-based insight «KBV»), can be concluded as follows:

1- In support of the first premise adopted, we can say that, in our view, a resource-based approach complements the industrial structure approach at least theoretically: the resource entrance stems from the idea that enterprises in the same industry are different from each other in terms of resources, in the sense that they vary and differentiate their constituents in achieving competitive advantage, an enterprise that is able to integrate its scarce, valuable, non-replacement and hard-to-imitate resources will be able to achieve competitive advantage over its competitors. The enterprise is a mixture of (capacity, competencies, knowledge... etc.) material and intangible. Hence, the success of the enterprise lies in its ability to blend those resources better than its competitors, which is reflected in the better functioning of its functional activities and the achievement of competitive advantages.

Once again, we are going to talk about the concept of "activity". This concept, which, while concerned with the market approach, is, in our view, the sum of the resource value for the resource portal is maximizing the "performance of activities".

The entrance to the market is based on the idea that the enterprise achieves a competitive advantage only when the five competition forces control more or better than their opponents or competitors (industry-level). But at the enterprise level (itself), the concept of a value chain that can be defined: "as the receptacle in which all the activities of the enterprise flow in close sequence and coherence." The value chain concept is associated with the value, which is the amount that customers are willing to pay for what the organization offers or offers them, the two concepts are bilateral to maximize performance through cost control at the level of achieving the best value chain down to or below the intersection point (value) that Specified by the last customer.

From the foregoing, the vision of an enterprise's environment, both internal and external, is, in our view, complemented by the strengthening of the adopted competitive strategies.

2- In support of the second premise adopted, arguably, it can bypass the thesis of "The need to adopt one competitive strategy: cost leadership or differentiation",



## **A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage**

because the concept of "stuck in the middle", presented by Porter, must be understood as reflecting the failure of the enterprise to overcome competition due to the simultaneous adoption of competitive strategies without accurate knowledge of the appropriate competition method in the market concerned, from there, the enterprise fails to implement the two strategies. Conversely, in the light of the great diversity of products, the diversity of markets and the diversity of customers, the enterprise can adopt more than one competitive strategy: by product or product chain as well as by the target markets and nature of competitors... etc.

The successful enterprise, in our view, transcends all the criticisms of the proponents of this or that approach; and the use of the theoretical framework provided by the two approaches: a strategy from outward inward, and strategy from inward towards outward together, in the sense of working to control many external competition forces, work to achieve the best mix of available resources. There is, therefore, more control over the costs of the various activities that make up the value chain and access to competitive advantage, which is only the best value realized by the client.

### **V- CONCLUDING REMARKS:**

We close this research paper with a curious indication of the problem of quantifying all approaches to competitive strategies and approaches to competitive entrances.

Through our survey of the most important contributions in this area, we conclude with the preliminary conclusion that these studies, including Porter's contributions, has not come out of its theoretical framework, even if it is backed by the field observation of the successes and failures of this or the enterprise in adopting/abandoning a particular strategy.

Any attempt to quantify such contributions to our environment is very possible, but in our view, the researcher may encounter another problem, namely, the different environments: the environment in which the theory of competitive advantage has been formulated varies in place, time and context from our environment, where competition rules and disciplines are still sometimes absent.

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## **A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage**

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## A Try to combine more than approaches and competitive strategies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage

محاولة الجمع بين أكثر من الأساليب والاستراتيجيات التنافسية لتحقيق  
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### المستخلص:

الهدف من ورقة البحث هذه ذو شقين. الأول هو قراءة دقيقة للأسس النظرية لكل من النهج الإستراتيجية: "نهج السوق" لـ (M. Porter) ، والنهج البديل القائم على الموارد (R B V) ، ويدعو لفكرة أن النهجين متكاملان. ثانياً ، سنناقش إمكانية الجمع بين الاستراتيجيتين التنافسيتين: قيادة التكاليف والتمايز. أخيراً ، نقترح طريقة توافقية نسميها "الهيمنة المزدوجة".

الكلمات المفتاحية: قيادة التكلفة ، التمايز ، الميزة التنافسية ، الهيمنة المزدوجة.