
Why do we consider Miles and Snow's model's one of the most important strategic ones?

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the literature on the typologies of business strategies to find out the business strategies that a company can follow, to assess whether Miles and Snow's typology does share characteristics with previous studies, and to know whether this model comprehends all strategic typologies.

For this purpose, we analyze Miles and Snow's typology. This analysis allows us to identify four strategic choices that are commonly accepted in the literature. These strategies are Defenders, Analyzers, Prospectors, and Reactor. In the second part of this paper, we compared Miles and Snow's typology with other strategic models. This comparison shows that Miles and Snow's typology is considered as one of the most important strategic models to explain the other business strategies, and it contains them all. Therefore, it is regarded to be the best choice for the organization.

Keywords: Business strategy typology, A model of Miles and Snow.

1- Introduction

Some typologies and taxonomies have been developed in the strategic management literature to categorize the strategies that an organization can pursue at the business level. This situation raised the need to manifest the relations between these typologies and taxonomies. Referring to the literature, no studies have been carried to show that the model of Miles and Snow is comprehensive for all classifications contained in previous studies, although there are many classifications. This study aims to show the universality of Miles and Snow's classification for all strategic classifications contained in the previous studies, and, therefore, to explain the relative importance of this classification which was propounded in 1978 when Miles and Snow developed a general model of the adaptive process with the environment. This model will be known as "adaptive cycle", along coherent with the strategic-choice approach to the study of organizations.

2- Literature Review

The interest in discussing business strategy in many studies has increased since the 1970s. The overwhelming majority of these studies agree that the competition is the basis of success or failure of the business. Thus, there is a need for a competitive strategy of the organization to survive and grow in a competitive market. Porter (1980) points out that it is better to choose one of the generic strategies consisting of differentiation strategies, cost strategies, and focus strategies, in order to avoid the result of poor performance due to the use of many of the activities at the same time (Tiorini & Jiang, 2009). In contrast, Miles and Snow suggest a different kind of strategies, but, what is important for the organization is how to choose and to take Specified form in the environment that it competes in it, in order to achieve the basic goal which is the survival, the growth, and the sustainability.

In this context, some writers and researchers including:

(Jauch & Glueck, 1988),(Boseman & Phatak, 1989), (Pitts & Lei, 2006),(Johnson & Scholes,1997),(Wheelen & Hunger 1997), (Grant, 2002), (Macmillan & Tampoe, 2001), (David & 戴维, 2001), (Daft, 2001), (Miles, Snow, Meyer, & Coleman, 1978), (Mintzberg, 1973), (Miller, 1988) ,agree That there are common models of the strategic choice, Table (01) shows these models and the level of strategy, which it is located, with sub-strategies.

Table (01): Models of strategic choice

Model	Level of Strategy, in which the model is located	sub-strategies	Study
Ansoff, (1965)	Business Strategy	Market Penetration, Market Development Product Development, Diversification	Macmillan & Tampoe, 2000:136-137
Mintzberge, (1973)	Business Strategy	Entrepreneurial Style, Adaptive, Planning	Mintzberg, 1974:44
Anderson & Paine, (1975)	corporate strategy	Administrative perception of stability and environmental uncertainty. The need (high and low) for internal change.	Anderson & Paine, 1975: 811-22
Utterback & Abernathy (1975)	Business Strategy	Performance maximizing Sales maximizing Cost Minimizing	(Kerem Summer, 2012: 105) based on the Utterback, J.M., & Abernathy, W.J. 1975).))
Miles & Snow,(1978)	Business Strategy	Prospector Defender Analyzer Reactor	(R. Miles&C. Snow,1978), (Hodge&Anthony,1991), (J. Parnell & M. Menefee, 1995),(F.Gimenez,2000),(Daft, 2001),(Antonio .S &Gregorio ,M 2005), (N. Da Silva,& all,2010), (V.Gnjidić,2014)
Hofer & Schendel -1978	Business Strategy	Share increasing Growth Profit Turnaround Market concentration Asset reduction and liquidation	(Kerem Summer, 2012: 105) based on the Hofer, C. W., & Schendel, D. E, (1978)
Glueck, (1980)	corporate strategy	Growth Stability Retrenchment Combination	Glueck,1980:222; Weelen & Hunger, 1989: 205; Rue & Holland,1989:3
Porter,(1980)	Business Strategy	Low-Cost Leadershipe Differentiation Focus	Porter,1980:34-40; Macmillan & Tampoe, 2000:143; Daft, 2001: 59; David, 2001: 179-82
Wissema & al.(1980)	Business Strategy	Explosion ,Expansion	(Kerem Summer, 2012: 106) based

		Continuous growth ,Slip Consolidation ,Contraction	on the Wissema, J.G., Van Der Pol, H.W., & Messer, H.M, 1980)).
Miles & Cameron -1982	Business Strategy	Domain defense , Domain offense Domain creation	(Kerem Summer, 2012: 106) based on the (Miles and Cameron, 1982)
Burgelman,(1984)	Integration between the organization's strategy and business strategy	Induced behavior Autonomous behavior	Burgelman,1984:155
Chaffee, (1985)	Business Strategy	Linea Adaptive Interpretive	Chaffee,1985: 89-98
Schuler & Jackson -1987	Business Strategy	Innovation Quality enhancement Cost reduction	(Kerem Summer, 2012: 106) based on the Schuler, R.S., & Jackson, S.E, (1987).
Miller (1988)	Business Strategy	Differentiation Cost leadership Focus Asset parsimony	(Kerem Summer, 2012: 106) based on the (Miller, D. 1988)
Mintzberg (1988)	Business Strategy	Differentiation by image Differentiation by design Differentiation by quality Support strategy Differentiation by price Undifferentiation	(Kerem Summer, 2012: 107) based on the Mintzberg, H 1988)).
Venkatraman (1989)	Business Strategy	Aggressiveness Analysis Defensiveness Futurity Proactiveness Riskiness	(Kerem Summer, 2012: 107) based on the Venkatraman, N, 1989)).
Thompson & Strickland (1999)	Business Strategy	Cost leadership Differentiation Focus Best-cost provider	Kerem Summer, 2012: 103) based on the (Thompson and Strickland, 1999
Kim and Mauborgne (1999)	Business Strategy	Value innovation	Kerem Summer, 2012: 103) based on the (Kim & Mauborgne, 1999)
Hitt & al. (2007)	Business Strategy	Cost leadership Differentiation Focus Integrated low-cost differentiation	Kerem Summer, 2012: 103) based on the (Hitt et al., 2007)

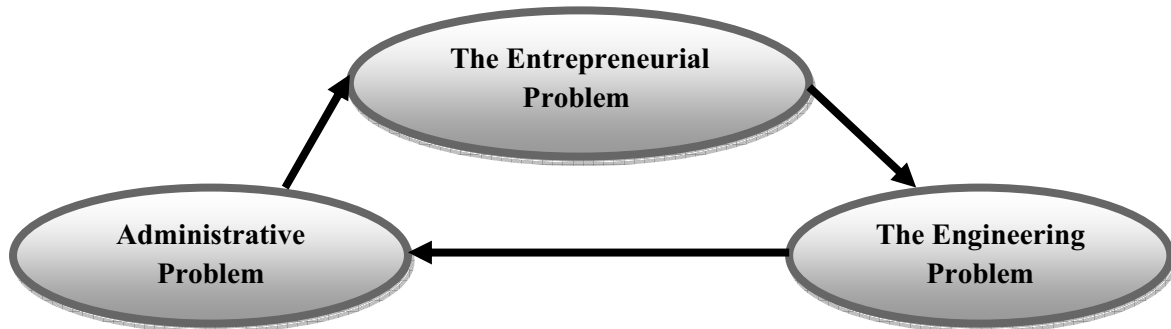
Source: prepared by researchers

According to the above table (01), we note that business strategies classifications are various and multiple. This explains that there is major progress regarding business strategy within the strategic orientation literature. However, there are still some deficiencies. We find, for example, the most of the researchers have studied the special classifications of their own perspective without taking into account the classification of Miles and Snow. For this, this study was done to show the existing overlap between these strategic models and Miles and Snow's model.

Miles and Snow (1978) affirmed that proponents of the strategic-choice perspective argue that organizational behavior is only partially preordained by environmental conditions and that the choices which top managers make are the critical determinants of organizational structure and process. Although these choices are numerous and complex, they can be viewed as three broad "problems" of organizational adaptation: the entrepreneurial problem, the engineering problem, and the administrative problem (Miles et al., 1978).

We have the figure (01) below which shows that there are three key strategic issues of adaptive cycles, which Miles and Snow (1978) refer to as problems of a complex and dynamic process of strategic choice.

Figure (01). Adaptive cycle by R.E. Miles and C.C. Snow



Source: Vladimir Gnjidić, **Researching the Dynamics of Miles and Snow's Strategic Typology**, Management, Vol. 19, 2014, 1, p 95. based on the Miles, R. E. & Snow, C. C. , **Organizational Strategy, Structure ,and Process**, Stanford University Press, California, (1978/2003), p 24.

According to Miles and Snow (1978), adapting the organization to the environment oblige the administration to put to the fore the appropriate strategic choices in order to solve these three major organizational problems-entrepreneurial, engineering and administrative, and so that a certain "fit" between these three elements can be reached. Thus, organizations are effective¹.

Through the "Adaptive cycle", the orientation is to find out how do organizations move through this cycle, what strategies do organizations employ in solving their entrepreneurial (Determining the scope of products and markets Organization), engineering (Selection of technology used in the production and distribution), and administrative problems (Selection and development of organizational structure and operations politics). The researches had been made starting with Miles and Snow (1978)'s one (Miles et al., 1978) , then studies of (Hambrick, 1980), (Parnell & Menefee, 1995), (Gimenez, 2000), (Ferreira, 2001), (Aragón-Sánchez & Sánchez-Marín, 2005) , (DeSarbo, Anthony Di Benedetto, Song, & Sinha, 2005) , (Silva, Hutcheson, & Wahl, 2010) , (Gnjidić, 2014) , (Kerbouche, Belmimoun, Bouhelal, & Imen, 2015) , pointed out that there are essentially four strategic types of

¹ Margaret A. Abernethy & Cameron H. Guthrie, **An Empirical Assessment of the "Fit" between Strategy and Management Information System Design**, Journal of Accounting and Finance , Vol 34,2, November 1994, p 52.

organizations: Defenders, Analyzers, Prospectors, and Reactor. Where Miles and Snow (1978) found out that each type has its own unique strategy for relating to its chosen market(s), and each has a particular configuration of technology, structure, and process that is consistent with its market strategy, and the Reactor is a form of strategic "failure" in that inconsistencies exist among its strategy, technology, structure, and process. Each organization often fits one of the four categories, and its behavior is predictable concerning its typological classification (Miles et al., 1978).

3- Discussion

➤ *Why do we consider Miles and Snow's model's one of the most important strategic models?*

Although there are several business strategy classifications which may help managers to find the way of being successful in intense competition, we consider the model of Miles and Snow (1978) as one of the most important strategic models for the following reasons:

-According to Zahra & Pearce, (1990) The typology has been used in predicting organizational performance, and according to Hambrick,(2003) the typology was introduced over 25 years ago and is the framework that has been most enduring and most often used. Kabanoff & Brown, (2008) reckons that this typology is rich in the detailed descriptions of each strategic type. According to Hambrick,(1983) The key dimension underlying Miles and Snow's (1978) typology is the rate at which an organization alters its products or markets (Silva et al., 2010).

- Each strategic choice of the model (Defenders, Analyzers, Prospectors, and Reactor) is characterized by a set of characteristics that we find express other strategic choices as shown in the table (02).

- Analyzing Miles and Snow's model, we found that it is based on the idea that managers are trying to formulate strategies which adapt to the external environment and that organizations seek to achieve fit among internal characteristics, strategy, and the external environment.

Table (02) shows the existing overlap between business strategy Classifications for previous studies and Miles and Snow's classification.

Table (02): Strategic characteristics of the model Miles and Snow (1978)

Strategy	Concept	The overlap between business strategy Classifications for previous studies and Miles and Snow's classification
Prospector strategy ¹	The organization in Prospector strategy is characterized by a set of features as it looks for markets in order to exploit the opportunities available through the use of techniques characterized by modernity and flexibility as well as creativity and innovation, this allows the organization to set a variety of goods and services that help it to grow and expand. The organization also follows this strategy to avoid entering into long-term commitments, and it calls for the educational trend that is associated with the flexibility to face the changes taking place in its surroundings; for this, the organizations depend on decentralized management style in planning and control. Thus, this strategy fits with the dynamic environment, which depends on the organic structure, and it is also compatible with the start phase within stages of the life cycle of the organization.	<p><u>Find the markets:</u></p> <p>*one of the Competitive strategies for Buzzell, Gale & Sultan (1975) (Building Strategy) (Kerem Sumer ,2012 ,p104) based on the Buzzell, R.D., Gale, B.T & ,Sultan, R.G.M .((1975 ,</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Hofer and Schendel) (1978)Share Increasing Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p105) based on Hofer ,C. W & ,Schendel, D. E, 1978.((</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies Vesper for (1979 ()Multiplication Strategy) (Kerem Summer, 2012, p105) based on the Vesper., K.(1979) .</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Galbraith & Schendel (1983) (Builder strategy, Growth) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p108) based on Galbraith C & ,Schendel, D, 1983.((</p> <p><u>Exploit the opportunities available:</u></p> <p>*One of the strategies for Venkatraman (1989) (Proactiveness Strategy) (Kerem Summer, 2012, p107) based on Venkatraman, N, 1989.((</p> <p><u>Creativity and Innovation:</u></p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Porter (1980 ()Differentiation Strategy) (Porter, 1980: 34-40.((</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Miller (1988) (Differentiation Strategy) (Kerem Summer, 2012, p106) based on Miller, D. 1988.((</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Schuler & Jackson (1987) (Innovation Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p106) by Schuler , R.S & ,Jackson, S.E, 1987.((</p> <p><u>Growth and expansion</u></p> <p>Growth strategies for Ansoff (1965) (Kerem Summer, 2012, p104) based on Ansoff, H.A, 1965).).</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Hofer and Schendel) (1978)Growth Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p105) based on Hofer, C. W & ,Schendel, D. E, 1978.((</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Wissema, Van Der Pol & Messer (1980), based on the life cycle theory (Continuous Growth strategy, Expansion) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p106) based on Wissema, JG, Van Der Pol, HW & ,Messer, HM , 1980.((</p>

¹ Raymond E. Miles & Charles C. Snow & Alan D. Meyer & Henry J. Coleman, Jr, **Organizational Strategy, Structure, and Process**, op cit, p 557.

- Miles, R.H., & Cameron, K.S., **Coffin nails and corporate strategies**. New Jersey:Prentice-Hall, 1982. In Kerem Sumer, **Business Strategies and Gaps in Porter'S Typology: A Literature Review**, Journal of Management Research, Vol. 4, No. 3, 2012, p106.

		<p>*One of the competitive strategies for Herbert & Deresky (1987) (Develop Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p105) based on Herbert ,T.T & ,Deresky, H. (1987.((</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Galbraith & Schendel (1983) (Growth Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p108) based on Galbraith C & ,Schendel, D, 198.(3</p> <p><u>Beginning stage</u></p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Wissema, Van Der Pol & Messer (1980), based on the life cycle theory (Explosion Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p106) based on Wissema, JG, Van Der Pol, HW&,Messer ,HM, 1980.(</p>
Defender strategy ¹	<p>Defender strategy is the opposite of the prospector one. It is characterized by a set of features as it calls for stability and interests in the current markets. It tries to maintain its current customers without expanding into new markets. It also focuses on providing products and services which are relatively fixed; therefore, it does not tend to innovation or expansion, and it avoids high-risk business. It also relies on the central administration style in planning and control. It competes basing on low-cost, efficient service as well as delivery times. Thus, it can be said that this strategy is appropriate relatively with the stable environment. Its use fits with automated structure; thus, it is compatible with the maturity stage of the life cycle of the organization.</p>	<p><u>Aimed to stability and is interested in the current markets</u></p> <p>*One of the strategies for Venkatraman (1989) (Defensiveness Strategy) (Kerem Summer, 2012, p107) based on Venkatraman, N.(1989 ,</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Buzzell, Gale & Sultan (1975) (Holding Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p104) based on Buzzell ,R.D., Gale, B.T & ,Sultan, R.G.M, 1975.((</p> <p><u>Low-cost</u></p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Porter (1980) (Cost Leadership Strategy) (Porter, 1980.(40-34 :</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Miller (1988) (cost leadership Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p106) based on Miller, D, 1988.(.</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Schuler & Jackson (1987) (Cost Reduction Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p106) by Schuler, R.S & ,Jackson, S.E, 1987.((</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Herbert & Deresky (1987) (Stabilize Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p105) based on Herbert, T.T & ,Deresky, H. (1987.((</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Mintzberg (1988) (Price Differentiation Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p107), based on Mintzberg, H1988.((</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Robinson & Pearce (1988) (Efficiency and Service Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p109 (based on Robinson, R.B & ,Pearce, J.A, 1988.((</p>

¹ Raymond E. Miles & Charles C. Snow & Alan D. Meyer & Henry J. Coleman, Jr, **Organizational Strategy, Structure, and Process**, op cit, p 557.

- Miles, R.H., & Cameron, K.S., **Coffin nails and corporate strategies**. New Jersey:Prentice-Hall. In Kerem Sumer, **Business Strategies and Gaps in Porter'S Typology: A Literature Review**, op cit, p106.

		<p>*One of the competitive strategies for Kim & Lim (1988))Overall Cost Leaders Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p109) based on Kim, L & ,Lim, Y, 1988.((</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Ward, Bickford & Leong (1996) (Cost Leadership Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p107) Based on Ward, P.T, Bickford, D.J & ,Leong, G.K, 1996((</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Utterback & Abernathy (1975) (Cost Minimizing Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p105) based on Utterback, J.M & ,Abernathy, W.J. 1975((.(</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Huang (2001) (Cost Leadership Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p109) based on Huang, T.C, 2001.((</p> <p>*One of the competitive strategies for Powers & Hahn (2004))Cost Leadership Strategy) (Kerem Sumer, 2012, p109) based on the Powers, T.L & ,Hahn, W, 2004.((</p>
Analyzer strategy ¹	<p>Analyzer strategy is found between the defender and Prospector strategies. It works in two types of business: production relatively stable and variable production. The organization is characterized by a set of features as it works routinely and efficiently through formal processes and structures to retain current customers in a stable field that fits with the stable environment. It also monitors the competitors and adopts creativity and new ideas in production to achieve growth in the variable field which fits with the dynamic environment. It depends on the style of the central administration and decentralization to satisfy its stable and changing requirements to achieve a balance between the efficiency of the defender organizations and the learning of the prospector organizations, so it achieves the balance between stable or fixed technologies requirements and flexible technologies. The organization, using such kind of strategic choice, remains very keen, and before entering into new businesses, it must ensure the profitability as well as its ability to maintain its current market share. This strategy fits with both the stable and the dynamic environments. Its use fits with the structure which is found between the organic and the automated structures: the mixed structure. It fits with the growth phase within the stages of the life cycle of the organization.</p>	
Reactor strategy ²	<p>Reactor strategy can be determined to be not a real strategy, but it is a reaction to the opportunities and threats that exist in the environment and occur suddenly. The organization is characterized by the following features: It is aware of the change and instability in the environment, but it does not respond to them effectively. It does not specify a long-term plan or a message or a clear goal, but it takes any action or behavior to satisfy the immediate needs. Although the reactor strategy is successful in some cases, it can sometimes lead to the failure of the organization. Its use fits with the automated structure, and it is compatible with the decline phase within the stages of the life cycle of the organization.</p>	

Source: prepared by researchers

¹ Analyzer is a combination of types prospector and defender (combines the strengths of each of the prospector and defender in one system) and represents for these other strategies viable alternative. Based on the: (R.E. Miles & C.C. Snow, 1978), (J. A. Parnell & M. Menefee, 1995), (F. A. P. Gimenez, 2000), (Antonio A.S & Gregorio S, M 2005), (N. Da Silva, & all, 2010), (V. Gnjidić, 2014).

² Reactor is the strategy the "residual", created when alone than the other three strategies. Or is it a kind of strategic failure. Based on the: (R.E. Miles & C.C. Snow, 1978), (J. A. Parnell & M. Menefee, 1995), (F. A. P. Gimenez, 2000), (Antonio A.S & Gregorio S, M 2005), (N. Da Silva, & all, 2010), (V. Gnjidić, 2014)

The above Table (02) illustrates that the current study came to show that the model Miles & Snow (1978) is a comprehensive model for most of the strategic choices which had been brought by many thinkers, noting that this model is in itself a set of strategic choices, which the organization can be relied upon to achieve its mission and objectives.

After business strategy analysis for Miles & Snow, we found that many authors give different names to what can be considered to be the same strategy. Thus we can say that the classification of Miles & Snow is comprehensive for most business strategies for the previous studies, and thus it is one of the most important strategic models in achieving the organization's goals, however, this latter does not have an accurate strategy if it does not emphasize on a strategic element that would bring a competitive advantage. We find most of these strategies denominating in different categories, and it may be in the same category, but under different names. After this comprehensive analysis of the most strategic classifications, we observe that the classification of Miles & Snow is the most widely used in business strategy, and comprehensive for most strategy classifications for previous studies.

In the above table (2), we have presented the overlap that exists between previous studies in the literature and the classification of Miles & Snow, for example, we note: First, the prospector strategy for Miles & Snow includes different strategies, it is always seeking for markets, it is one of the competitive strategies for Buzzell, Gale & Sultan (1975) and represented in the construction strategy, as well, one of the competitive strategies for Hofer and Schendel (1978) and represented in the increasing share strategy, also one of the competitive strategies for Vesper (1979) and represented in proliferation strategy. And so on with the rest of the other strategies.

Second, the strategies propounded by the Miles & Snow are those that enterprises could prefer to realize their goals. Because they take into account the environmental conditions that turned from a stable environment to a turbulent environment.

5- Conclusion

The purpose of this work is to examine the research on strategic classifications to assess if the classification of Miles & Snow is one of the most important strategic models. For this purpose, the classifications found in the literature were reviewed briefly, and the one of Miles & Snow in details. We found that the classification of Miles & Snow was comprehensive for most strategy classifications under different names to what can be considered to be the same strategy.

We sum up these findings into the following series of business Strategies for Miles & Snow that are commonly accepted in the literature:

- Prospector strategy: real prospector is capable of finding and exploiting opportunities for new products and market.
- Defender strategy: real defender is capable of selecting and maintaining a small field in the industry that are difficult for competitors to penetrate.
- Analyzer strategy: real analyzer is the organization that is trying to minimize the risks and maximize opportunities to make profits.
- Reactor strategy: Reactor is the "residual" strategy; it can be resulted of one of the other three strategies.

Thus, we find that business strategies propounded by Miles & Snow are sufficient for explaining the business strategies put forward by previous studies. While Miles & Snow pointed out that all the strategic choice of the four strategic choices is a comprehensive set of strategic models with different names. And therefore, can accept the offer of Miles & Snow that it is true until now, taking into account that business environments became turbulent.

This literature review has aimed to help readers and researchers to update their understanding of the present status of the knowledge on business strategy. Moreover, business strategies may help managers to find out the way of being successful in intense competition. As demonstrated in this paper, major progress has been made regarding business strategy within the strategic orientation literature. However, there are still some deficiencies. For instance, many thinkers provided strategic classifications of their own perspective and did not take into account the classification of Miles & Snow, which is nothing but a literary combination of most business strategies for previous studies under different labels. So it was a must when researchers studied this issue should focus their work on the classification of Miles & Snow, considering that the environment was transformed from the stable environment to the turbulent environment, and classification Miles & Snow takes into account the environmental conditions.

Thus, this category falls short of explaining business strategies in the current competitive environment (stable / turbulent). And therefore, future empirical studies should investigate whether the business strategies for Miles & Snow, which presented in this study will be applied in various sectors.

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