



Framework for strategy formulation

Testing Mintzberg's positioning school and its strategic management tools to the modern approach of strategy formulation within different companies in The Netherlands

Master Thesis Business Administration

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Date: 3 August 2016

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Abstract

The goal of this study is to test whether the positioning school and/or its strategic management tools are still useful in practice and identify differences/similarities between literature and practice. The positioning school is one of the ten schools of thought, which were formulated by Henry Mintzberg.

Results of this study indicate that the awareness of the existence of the positioning school are relatively low in both theoretical and practical field. Moreover, the strategic management tools within the positioning school do also have a low support level. The only tool which was applied within organisations is the BCG-matrix. It can be concluded that the positioning school adds no value to the process of strategy making within organisations nowadays. However the BCG-matrix is still useful for organisations. Besides, it can be concluded that the strategic management tools are most of the time not related to the positioning school. The results are derived from data which is gathered through literature study and semi-structured interviews. The goal of the literature study and semi-structured interviews was to test the positioning school and its strategic management tools. Six articles were analysed based on key points which are related to the positioning school. After the literature study, semi-structure interviews were conducted in order to gather data for the same key points as the literature study. The respondents within the interviews were six Dutch organisations. All the organisations operate on a different market, in order to test the positioning school in a broader field. After the interviews, the research within the theoretical and practical field are compared to each other and some differences/similarities became clear. The measurements within the theoretical and practical field were based on the strategic management tools (five forces model, generic strategies, value chain analysis and BCG-matrix).

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1. Introduction

Strategic management is a relatively youthful definition in the field of strategy. The fundamental elements date back to the 1960s where strategic management became a diverse concept for every company. It is also an important concept for companies because strategic management can affect the adaptability, the performance and the legitimacy of the organisation. Especially for managers it is an highly important task because there is a lot of competition (Shojaei, Taheri, & Mighani, 2010). However strategic management is not a definition which stands alone; it is narrowly related to strategic thinking. Strategic thinking is the way a company, specifically the top management of a company, thinks about strategy. Because companies have their own unique top management, there are differences in strategic thinking and therefore also in the definition of strategy (Johnsen, 2014).

Strategic management is about the correct alignment of the environment/external demands with the internal capabilities (Marcus & van Dam, 2009; Mintzberg, Ahsstrand, & Lampel, 2009). Within strategic management there are several frameworks for categorising and analysing strategic management thinking. The framework which is relevant for this research, is the framework of Henry Mintzberg named the 'schools of thought' (Johnsen, 2014). Mintzberg is specialized in strategic planning and organizational structures (Marcus & van Dam, 2009). In his book 'Strategy safari: A guided tour through the wilds of strategic management' (1998) he describes the schools of thought.

A school of thought can be defined as the thoughts in the field of strategic management within a specific group (Elfring & Volberda, 2001). There are ten schools of thought. These ten schools can be divided into three groups, namely: prescriptive group, descriptive group and the configuration group. The three schools in the prescriptive group are mainly focused on how strategies are formulated. In comparison to the schools with a prescriptive character, the schools in the descriptive group are more concerned with how strategies do or get made. Finally, there is the configuration group which contains only one school, it clusters parts of the strategy making process, content of strategies, organizational structures and their contexts (Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, & Lampel, 1998).

As mentioned before, Mintzberg's schools of thought were set up in 1998 and explained in his book. However these schools of thought were never updated and it is not clear how these schools are used nowadays. In this thesis, the positioning school will be investigated in depth to find out what the differences or/and similarities are between literature and practice.

The aim of this research is to test whether the classical positioning school/strategic management tools, described in the book 'Strategy safari: A guided tour through the wilds of strategic management' (1998) of Henry Mintzberg, are still useful in practice and identify differences/similarities between literature and practice.

This thesis first discusses the main research question, the key constructs and the sub-questions related to the research question. After this, there is the theoretical framework of this study. This section first describes the ten schools of thought, followed by a detailed explanation of the positioning school. After the explanation of the positioning school, the strategic management tools within this school are explained in detail. The next section describes the methods which are used in this research. Also the way the data is gathered is explained in this part of the thesis. Chapter 4 is about the results and findings of this study. This chapter is followed by the conclusion and discussion section.

1.1 Research Question

RQ: Which classical strategic management tools from the positioning school are still useful in practice?

1.2 Explanation of constructs in research question

In the research question there are some key constructs which need further explanation.

The RQ will be measured through strategic management tools. Strategic management tools are derived from strategic management, so before explaining these tools, it is necessary to know the background of strategic management.

There are two approaches of strategic management. The first one is the classic approach which relates strategic management to strategic planning. The second approach is the modern approach. In the modern approach, or new direction, strategic management equals strategic thinking (Marcus & van Dam, 2009). The classic approach of strategic management is a synonym for strategic planning. The main founder of this approach is H. Igor Ansoff. According Mintzberg, Ansoff was the leader of the planning school (Martinet, 2010). Strategic planning can be defined as a way to create a balance between the instruments of a company, the strengths and weaknesses of a company and the opportunities and threats (Marcus & van Dam, 2009). As mentioned before, the modern approach of strategic management refers to strategic thinking. In the field of strategic thinking, an organisation is not influenced by quantitative analytical models. In this area the organisation uses a vision which will be implemented through the whole business. This approach equals the vision of Mintzberg (Marcus & van Dam, 2009).

Now the background information of strategic management is known, strategic management tools is the next step. Strategic management tools are used to analyse the environment in which a company operates and plans a strategy to handle the competition in a market (Şentürk, 2012). In this study the measurement is based on the tools which are used in literature or in practice. The strategic management tools can also be linked to Mintzberg's ten schools of thought. Within this framework the tools can be divided into categories. The ten schools of thought are: design school, planning school, positioning school, entrepreneurial school, cognitive school learning school, power school, cultural school, environmental school and lastly the configuration school (Mintzberg et al., 1998; Mintzberg et al., 2009).

The focus in this study will be the positioning school. The positioning school looks to strategy as a strong analytical process. The founder of this school is Michael Porter (Mintzberg et al., 1998; Mintzberg et al., 2009). Because Mintzberg and Porter are not in line with each other in their way of thinking, it is very interesting to investigate this school. Mintzberg is a person who equals strategic management to strategic thinking, whereby an organisation is not influenced by quantitative analytical models. However, in the positioning school there are a couple of quantitative analytical models which are used to manage a company's strategy.

1.2 Sub-questions

To be able to answer the central research question, the research question is divided into different sub-questions.

1. What are the ten schools of Mintzberg?
2. What are the strategic management tools in the positioning school?
3. What does the theoretical field say about the positioning school/strategic management tools?
4. Which strategic management tools from the positioning school are used in practice and why?
5. What are the differences/similarities in views between the theoretical and practical field regarding the positioning school and/or the strategic management tools?

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter contains a description of the theory/concepts which are central in this research. In this study the framework of Mintzberg regarding strategic management is the base. Also the strategic management tools related to each school are explained because this is the measurement instrument in the practical field.

As mentioned before, there are ten schools of thought which can be categorised into three different groups, see figure 1. These groups are schools with a prescriptive, descriptive and configuration character. The schools with a prescriptive character are the design school, planning school and positioning school. The entrepreneurial, cognitive, learning, power, cultural and environmental school are the schools within the descriptive group. Lastly there is the

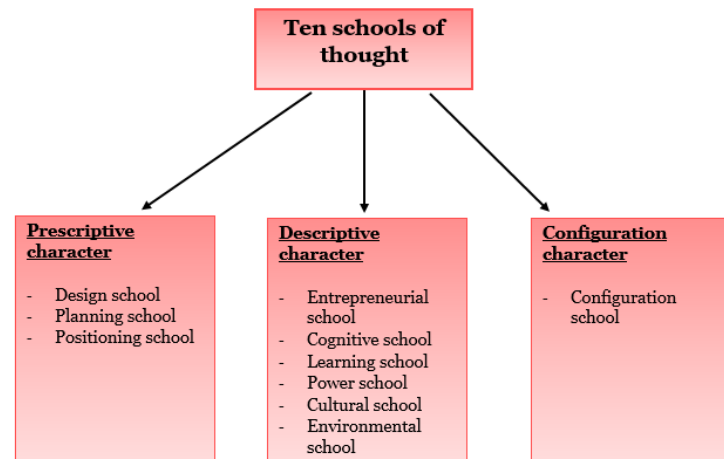


Figure 1: Ten schools of thought.

configuration group which contains only the configuration school (Mintzberg et al., 1998; Mintzberg et al., 2009). Mintzberg's framework is based on the contingency theory; every school of thought defines strategy in his own way and therefore differs from each other. Because of the differences, a typical school can be more useful for addressing issues in a typical environment than another school (Johnsen, 2014).

2.1 Ten schools of thought

As mentioned before, the ten schools of thought can be divided into three groups. These three groups are discussed separately in the next section.

2.1.1 Prescriptive group

The several schools of thought differ from each other in their origins and in their theoretical foundations. As stated before, the first difference can be made on base of the characters of the schools. Schools with a prescriptive character focus on how strategies are formulated. The first school in this group is the design school. This school views strategy formation as a process of conception. Mintzberg et al. (1998; 2009) describe the design school as a school which "proposes a model of strategy making that seeks to attain a match, or fit, between internal capabilities and external possibilities" (p. 24). Another



Figure 2. SWOT model. Reprinted from "SWOT analysis: Strategy skills (FME, 2013)

identifying mark of this school is that once a strategy has been agreed upon, it will be implemented soon (Mintzberg et al., 1998; Mintzberg et al., 2009). The strategic management tool which is typical for the design school is the model of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). The SWOT model (figure 2) maps the Strength and Weaknesses, i.e. the internal capabilities of an organization, together with the external possibilities, the Opportunities and Threats. With the use of this model, the strategic options of an organisation can be analysed (Johnsen, 2014).

Secondly, there is the planning school whereby strategy formation can be seen as a formal process. This school builds further on the elements of the design school. However as stated in the description, the central messages of this school are formal procedures, formal trainings, formal analysis and lots of numbers (Mintzberg et al., 1998; Mintzberg et al., 2009). To be more specific, the development, formalisation and the implementation of an explicit plan shape the process of strategy formation. The development of the strategy formation is attributable to planners in a staff division (Volberda & Elfring, 2001). Because the elements of this school builds further on the elements of the design school, the strategic management tool does it as well. This management tool is called the basic strategic planning model. The model builds further on the SWOT model and divides this model into specific steps. Within this model there is a focus on setting objectives on the front end and the application of budgets and operating plans (Mintzberg et al., 1998; Mintzberg et al., 2009).

The last school in this group is the positioning school. This school views strategy as an analytical process. In comparison to the design and planning school, this school has the point of view that there are limits on strategies in typical situations. Thereby external analysts play an important role in the process of strategic management (Mintzberg et al., 1998; Mintzberg et al., 2009). The focus of this school is the

industrial-economic point of view, which can be related to Michael Porter (Elfring & Volberda, 2001). In his view, there are three strategies from which a company must choose, namely; cost-leadership, differentiation or focus (figure 3). These strategies are in fact categories of strategies. For example companies who want to lower the cost and have a broad target, the strategy cost leadership fits the best.

		COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE	
		Lower Cost	Differentiation
COMPETITIVE SCOPE	Broad Target	1. Cost Leadership	2. Differentiation
	Narrow Target	3A. Cost Focus	3B. Differentiation Focus

Figure 3. Three generic strategies. Reprinted from *Competitive advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance* (p. 12), by M.E. Porter, 1985, New York: The Free Press. Copyright 1985 by Michael E. Porter

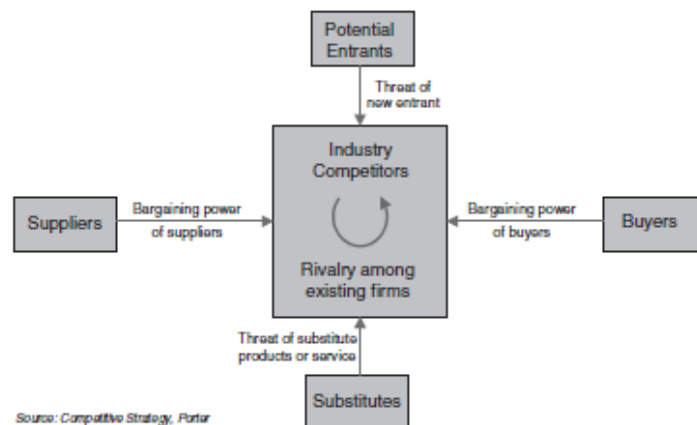


Figure 4. The five competitive forces that determine industry profitability. Reprinted from *Competitive advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance* (p. 5), by M.E. Porter, 1985, New York: The Free Press. Copyright 1985 by Michael E. Porter

Besides these three categories of strategy, Porter's five forces model (figure 4) is also a typical tool in this school. The five forces are threat of new entrants, bargaining power of firm's suppliers, bargaining power of firm's customers, threat of substitute products and intensity of rivalry among competing firms. When this model is analysed for a company, the strengths of this certain company can explain why a company chooses a particular strategy (Mintzberg et al., 2009; Porter, 1980). The last

tool from Porter is the value chain. Through the use of a value chain a company can examine the performance of all their activities and the interaction between those activities. This examination is necessary to be able to analyse the sources of competitive advantage (Porter, 1985).

Not only Porter came up with tools, but also Henderson introduced a tool which relates to the positioning school. This tool is called the BCG growth-share matrix. The BCG matrix is a part of portfolio analyses which focuses on sales, market and cash flow developments. Through this matrix a diversified company can analyse whether their portfolio has different growth rates and market shares. Such a portfolio is necessary to be successful (Mintzberg et al., 2009).

2.1.2 Descriptive group

Schools with a descriptive character are concerned with how strategies do or get made instead of how strategies are formulated.

The first school which will be discussed is the entrepreneurial school which views strategy formation as a visionary process. A vision can be explained as: "a mental representation of strategy, created or at least expressed in the head of the leader" (p. 130, Mintzberg et al., 2009). The vision of the individual strategist, which can also be mentioned as a personalised leadership style, is the key to success in the company. To be more specific, the entrepreneurs are able to bring new products or services to the market and they could influence and manipulate the environment (Volberda & Elfring, 2001). Within this school there is no particular model which represents the process of strategy formation.

At the cognitive school the strategy formation is viewed as a mental process. The strategist(s) in a company are self-taught. This means that they develop their own knowledge through experiences. These experiences shape what the strategist knows. The knowledge of the strategist shapes the actions he will undertake, which will result in subsequent experiences. It is therefore the strategist, the individual, who perform analysis. All these steps described before, results in strategies which are not planned and which could not be in line with other individuals. Because of this 'personal' influence there are a lot of biases within the decision making process of this school e.g. optimism or selective perception. It can be concluded that there are different styles between strategists. The strategic management tool which can be

related to this school is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Mintzberg et al., 1998; Mintzberg et al., 2009). Within this model there are four dimensions which are opposites of each other. The combination of these four dimensions results in sixteen styles for the strategists (Myers, 1962).

Sets of opposite dimensions	
Extroversion (E) (energized by the outside world)	Introversion (I) (energized by the world inside one's own head)
Sensing (S) (information comes from relying on the senses)	Intuition (N) (information comes from trying to grasp the essential patterns)
Thinking (T) (relying on analysis for decision)	Feeling (F) (relying on feelings for decision)
Judgment (J) (to live in a planned, orderly, controlled way)	Perception (P) (to live in a flexible, spontaneous way)

Figure 5. Myers-Briggs Instrument. Adapted from *Strategy Safari: Your complete guide through the wilds of strategic management* (p. 161) by H. Mintzberg, B. Ahlstrand, and J. Lampel, 2009, Essex: Pearson Education Limited. Copyright 1998, 2009 by Henry Mintzberg, Bruce Ahlstrand and Joseph Lampel.

The learning school looks to strategy formation as an emergent process. Cited from Mintzberg et al. (1998; 2009) “strategies emerge as people come to learn about a situation as well as their organization’s capability of dealing with it” (p. 186). In other words the option for selecting strategies are open as long as possible because of the learning part and the central actors in this school are the people who learn (Volberda & Elfring, 2001). The people who learn can be anybody inside the organisation, it is not specifically the top management. There is no model which represents the process of strategy formation.

The fourth school in this group is the power school whereby negotiation is the main focus. As Mintzberg et al. (1998; 2009) state in their book, “the power school characterizes strategy formation as an overt process of influence, emphasizing the use of power and politics to negotiate strategies favourable to particular interests” (p. 242). The power can be enforced in two manners namely through the inside of an organisation or the way the power is already used. Power through the inside of an organisation is mentioned as micro power and the way power is used is called macro power. With the micro power it can be clarified why the individual interests inside an organisation differs from the ultimate strategy. The macro power is about the interaction between the organisation and the environment. Because the interests of stakeholders can be diverse, there is an attempt to deal with this diversity. Companies can do a stakeholder analysis to obtain information about the interests of the stakeholders (Mintzberg et al., 1998; Mintzberg et al., 2009).

After the power school, there is the cultural school. In the cultural school the formation of strategy is a collective process. Culture connects individuals into an integrated organisation which refers to the collective process. There are no private cultures inside an organisation. The process of strategic formation is influenced by the way decisions are made, the resistance to changes regarding strategic, dominant values and lastly the huge differences in culture. Within this school there is no model which can be used for strategy formation (Mintzberg et al., 1998; Mintzberg et al., 2009).

The last school in this group is the environmental school where the process of strategy making can be seen as a reactive process. The difference between this school and the other schools is the way it treats the 'environment'. At the other schools the environment is treated as a factor, however in this school it is an actor. As Mintzberg et al. (1998;2009) stated in their book: "this school helps to bring the overall view of strategy formation into balance, by positioning environment as one of the three central forces in the process, alongside leadership and organization" (p.302). The environmental school arose from the contingency theory which focuses on the external dimensions and internal characters of the organisation. Besides the contingency theory which is also mentioned as the contingency view, there is the population ecology view. Within this view the environment plays a greater role than in the contingency view. Cited from Mintzberg et al. (1998;2009) the difference is that in the population ecology view "the basic structure and character of an organization is fixed shortly after birth" (p. 307).

2.1.3 Configuration group

The configuration group, which contains only the configuration school, clusters parts of the strategy making process, content of strategies, organisation structures and their contexts. To be more specific, it tries to integrate the other nine schools. Within this school there are two definitions which form the base, namely configuration and transformation. Configuration refers to a coherent set of characteristics which in turn refers to the way a school can be seen. When there is a transition from a stable configuration to another stable configuration, it is called transformation. It can be concluded that changes take place through transformation (Mintzberg et al., 1998; Mintzberg et al., 2009).

2.2 Positioning school

In section 2.1.1 a brief explanation of the positioning school was provided, including the strategic management tools which are representative for this school. In this section, there will first be a description of the premises of this school, followed by a detailed explanation of the strategic management tools. This detailed explanation is necessary for further investigation. In order to understand all the information gained through the interviews and to ask more in-depth, the tools should be known well.

The positioning school builds further on the process of strategy making from the planning school. However, it differs in some other ways. The first difference is that the positioning school focuses on the content of strategy. Another difference is, as mentioned before, that there are limits on strategy in the positioning school. The choice between generic strategic positions is limited (Mintzberg et al., 2009).

All these principles are related to Michael Porter. In 1980 Porter published his book 'Competitive strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors'. This book forms the base for the positioning school (Mintzberg et al., 2009).

As stated before, the positioning school views strategy as an analytical process. This school focuses only on facts which are obtained through analyses. The positioning school analyses the way a company can achieve a better strategic position in the market in which the company operates. Based on this analysis, it will then select a generic strategic position. Because of all the analysis, analysts play an important role in the process of strategy making (Mintzberg et al., 2009).

2.2.1 Strategic management tools of the positioning school

As mentioned in section 2.1, the strategic management tools of the positioning school are the generic strategies, five forces model and value chain of Porter and the growth-share matrix of the Boston Consulting Group. Where the previous section explained the models briefly, this section will elaborate the models further.

Generic competitive strategies

The first tool which will be further explained is the management tool regarding the generic competitive strategies of Porter. This tool will help organisations with making strategic decisions and strategies. Cited from Porter (1985), “there are two basic types of competitive advantage a firm can possess: low cost or differentiation” (p. 11). The competitive advantage related to the low cost, focuses on developing and producing a product in such a way that a company will become the low-cost producer in its industry, while the advantage regarding differentiation focuses on being unique in its industry.

Combining these competitive advantages with the range of the targeted market segments, or in other words the competitive scope, leads to three generic strategies. These strategies are cost leadership, differentiation and focus. The focus strategy contains two ways, namely a cost focus strategy and a differentiation strategy. All these generic strategies, with the competitive advantage and competitive scope are illustrated in figure 5 (Porter, 1985).

		COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE	
		Lower Cost	Differentiation
COMPETITIVE SCOPE	Broad Target	1. Cost Leadership	2. Differentiation
	Narrow Target	3A. Cost Focus	3B. Differentiation Focus

Figure 6. Three generic strategies. Reprinted from *Competitive advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance* (p. 12), by M.E. Porter, 1985, New York: The Free Press. Copyright 1985 by Michael E. Porter

To gain competitive advantage, organisations should make a choice between one of the strategies illustrated in figure 6. Each strategy has its own characteristics and field of focus. The strategies are described as follow:

- **Cost leadership:** As illustrated in figure 6, this strategy has a broad scope and lower cost as competitive advantage. It can be concluded that when a company chooses this strategy, it wants to become the low-cost producer in its industry. For companies which are low-cost producers, it is typical that they sell a standard product to gain competitive advantage (Porter, 1985).
- **Differentiation:** As stated before, differentiation focuses on being unique in the industry. When a company choose this strategy, it wants to be different than its competitors. Within this strategy, there is a selection regarding the attributes which are found important by buyers in a certain industry. After this selection, a company wants to become unique by meeting the important needs of the buyers.

The differentiation can be achieved through different ways. An organisation can choose to differ from its competitors in the product itself or in the system through which the product is sold. Besides these two factors, there is also the possibility to achieve differentiation through the marketing approach. These three factors are only examples,

there is a broad range of factors through which differentiation can be achieved (Porter, 1985).

- **Focus:** Companies with a focus strategy have a narrow competitive scope. Cited from Porter (1985) “The focuser selects a segment or group of segments in the industry and tailors its strategy to serving them to the exclusion of others” (p.15).

As can be seen in figure 5, the focus strategy can be divided into cost focus and differentiation focus. The cost focus strategy is about to lower the cost in its target segment and the differentiation focus is about differentiation in its target segment (Porter, 1985).

When an organisation focuses on each generic strategy, but fails to adapt one generic strategy it is called ‘stuck in the middle’. Most of the time it is the unwillingness of a company to make choices regarding the way it should compete. It can be stated that a company which is ‘stuck in the middle’ has a disadvantage in comparison to companies with a strategy like the cost leader, differentiator or focuser. This is because those companies have a better position to compete against rivals (Porter, 1985).

Five competitive forces

Just like the generic strategies, the five competitive forces also focuses on the competition. The five forces model can be used to analyse the competition inside an industry. After this analysis, the strategy of an organization can be adjusted to the results of this analysis.

Through a competitive analysis the five forces in the environment of the organization are identified. These five forces influence competition (Mintzberg et al., 2009). Each of the five forces have their own characteristics which estimate the power of the forces. The forces and characteristics are illustrated in figure 7 on the next page. The five forces are:

- **Threat of new entrants:** When organisations want to enter a certain industry, there are some barriers which could hinder a successful entry. Some examples of barriers are basic requirements regarding capital or the government policy. If there are a lot of barriers, or in other words the barriers are high, it can be stated that the competition is low. Not much newcomers overcome all the barriers. This is also applicable the other way around: low barriers implies high competition (Porter, 1980, 1985).
- **Bargaining power of suppliers:** In every industry, suppliers want a high price for their products to earn more money. However, firms which buy the products of these suppliers want high quality for a low price to be able to earn a higher return. These opposites result in a power struggle. When there is a high bargaining power of suppliers, suppliers have the power to determine the cost and quality of the products they supply and sell to the firms. On the other hand, the firms which are not dependent on one supplier for example, reduce the power of the suppliers (Porter, 1980, 1985).
- **Bargaining power of buyers:** In line with the interests of the firms to the suppliers, customers wants to lower prices and increase the quality. The extent to which customers have power in an industry depends on several characteristics of a market. Some of these characteristics are the way in which the customers are informed and the volume which a customer wants to buy. With this power, buyers can influence the price which companies can charge for their products. (Porter, 1980, 1985). All the other characteristics are illustrated in figure 7.
- **Threat of substitutes:** The competition in a certain industry depends on the substitutes of products. A substitute is a product which can replace another product. The extent to which these substitutes are present in an industry, states the threat of substitutes. It can be stated

that every company in an industry has to deal with the competition of other industries which produce substitutes. Substitutes place a limit on the prices which companies can charge in their industry. If the prices of the substitute are more attractive, buyers will purchase that substitute (Porter, 1980, 1985).

- The intensity of rivalry: Cited from Porter (1980), “Rivalry occurs because one or more competitors either feels the pressure or sees the opportunity to improve position” (p. 17). Bundling all of the previous discussed forces leads to the intensity of rivalry among competitors (Porter, 1980, 1985).

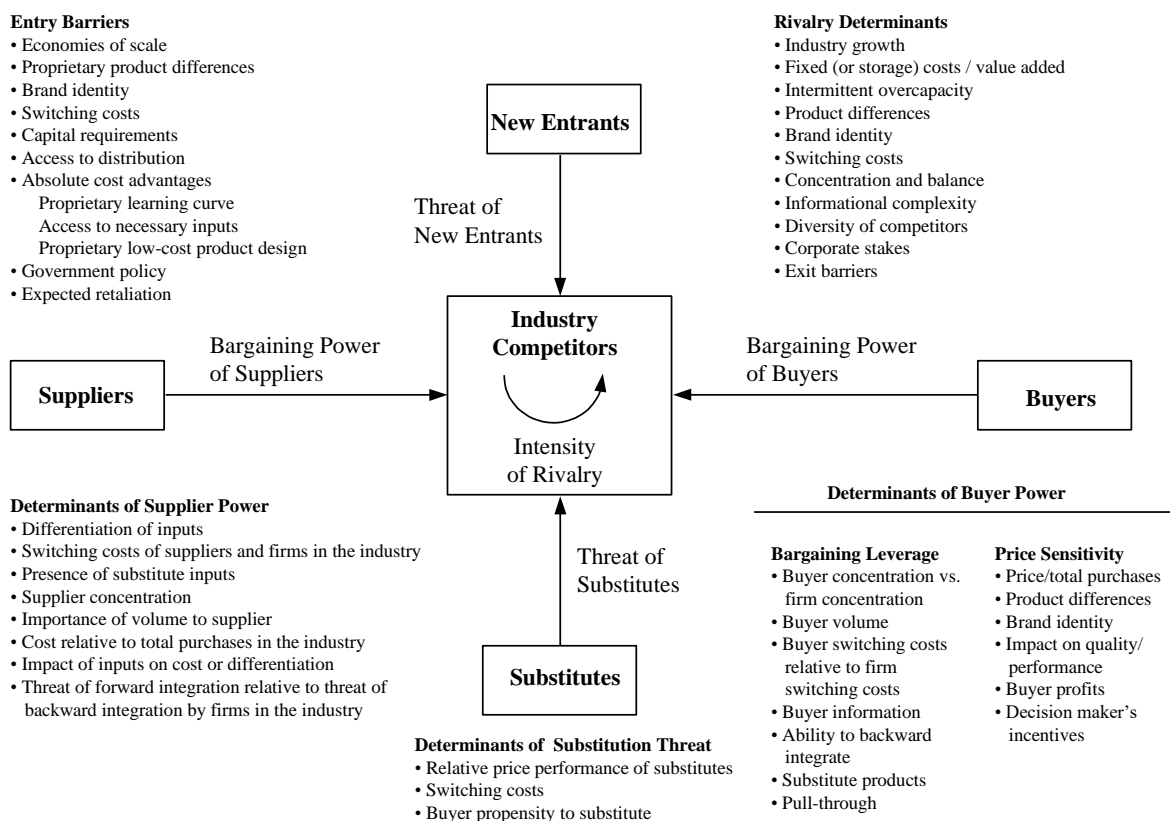


Figure 7. Elements of Industry Structure. Reprinted from *Competitive advantage: Creating and sustaining Superior Performance* (p. 12), by M.E. Porter, 1985, New York: The Free Press. Copyright 1985 by Michael Porter.

The value chain

The value chain is a strategic model which can be used to analyse the sources of competitive advantage. Within the value chain, there is a distinction between the primary activities of a company and the support activities. This distinction helps a company to understand the costs behaviour and sources of differentiation. If a company performs the primary and support activities better than other competitor companies the company gains competitive advantage (Porter, 1985).

As mentioned, the value chain is divided into primary and support activities. This is illustrated in figure 7. According to Porter (1985), primary activities can be defined as “the activities involved in the physical creation of the product and its sale and transfer to the buyer as well as after-sale assistance” (p. 38). As can be seen in figure 8, the primary activities consist of inbound logistics, operations, outbound logistics, marketing & sales and service. Besides the

primary activities, there are also support activities. These are defined as follows: “support activities support the primary activities and each other by providing purchased inputs, technology, human resources, and various firm wide functions” (Porter, 1985, p.37). Firm’s infrastructure, human resource management, technology development and procurement are the categories which are related to the support activities. The dotted lines, which are illustrated in figure 7, represent the fact that human resource management, technology development and procurement could be involved in primary activities as well as support activities. Margin reflects the difference between the total value and the total costs of performing the value activities (Porter, 1985).

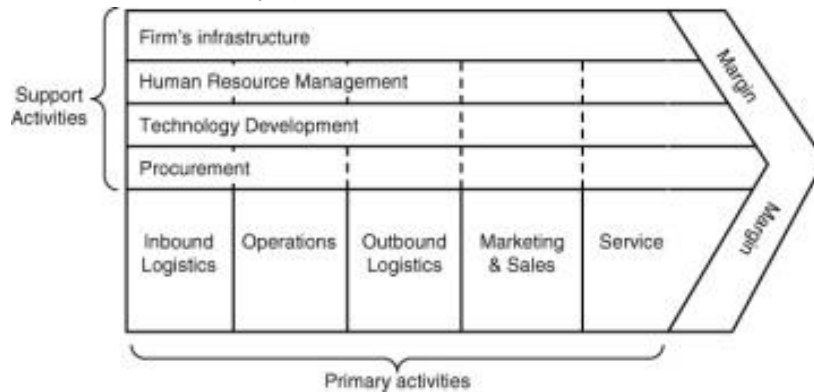


Figure 8. The generic value chain. Reprinted from *Competitive advantage: Creating and sustaining Superior Performance* (p.37), by M.E. Porter, 1985, New York: The Free Press. Copyright 1985 by Michael Porter.

The primary activities contain five generic categories. The categories are:

- Inbound logistics: Activities such as receiving, storing and distributing the inputs of the product belong to this category (Porter, 1985).
- Operations: This category represents the activities which turn the inputs (raw materials) into the final product (Porter, 1985).
- Outbound logistics: Cited from Porter (1985), this is “activities associated with collecting, storing, and physically distributing the product to buyers” (p. 40).
- Marketing & sales: this includes activities which are associated with providing means by buyers (Porter, 1985).
- Service: This category contains all the activities which are necessary to maintain the value of the final product (Porter, 1985).

The categories which are related to the support activities are:

- Firm’s infrastructure: the infrastructure supports the entire value chain and not only one certain category. Examples of activities in this category are general management, planning, finance and accounting (Porter, 1985).
- Human resource management: this category represents the supportive activities of all types of personnel. To be more specific, these activities are concerned with the recruitment, development, training and recruiting of personnel (Porter, 1985).
- Technology development: it can be stated that every activity that adds value embodies technology (Porter, 1985).
- Procurement: is about the function of purchasing inputs which are used in the value chain of a firm (Porter, 1985).

BCG Growth-Share matrix

The BCG growth-share matrix is derived from the Boston Consulting Group. The growth-share matrix is a management tool which is a part of portfolio planning. In other words, a company's portfolio can be analysed. Through the use of this matrix, the strategy for a product or a strategic business unit (SBU) can be determined. The level of analysis is therefore dependent on the structure of a company. When a company produces a lot of different products or work with different SBU's, the strategy will be defined on product- or SBU-level. However, it can also occur that a company is small and focuses only on selling one product, then the analysis will be on company-level (Henderson, 1973; Mintzberg et al., 2009).

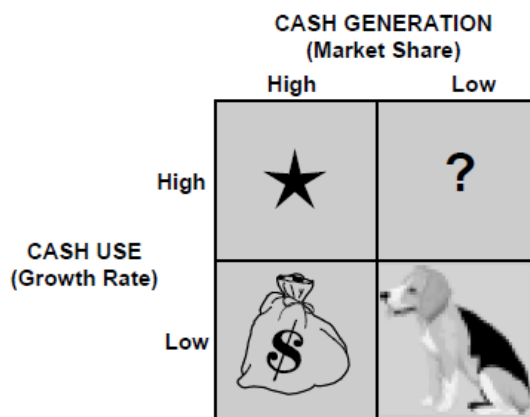


Figure 9. BCG Growth-Share Matrix. Reprinted from "The Experience Curve - Reviewed IV. The Growth Share Matrix or The Product Portfolio", by B.D. Henderson, *The Boston Consulting Group*, 135, p. 1. Copyright 1973 by The Boston Consulting Group.

Cited from Mintzberg et al. (2009), "The growth-share matrix addressed the question of how to allocate funds to the different businesses of a diversified company" (p. 98). It is the relationship between the use of cash and the generation of cash. This can be seen in the growth-share matrix, illustrated in figure 8.

Figure 9 shows four categories: star, question mark/problem child, cash cow, and dog. A successful organisation has a diversified portfolio, which means that there are different products with different growth rates (cash use) and market shares (cash generation). The relationship between the cash generation and cash use can be mentioned as the cash flow (Henderson, 1973). According to Mintzberg et al.

(2009), there are four rules which determine the cash flow of a product/SBU:

- The margins and cash which are generated are a function of the market share of the product/SBU.
- Cash input is required when there is growth. This is because of the added assets which have to be financed.
- A high market share for a product/SBU must be earned or bought.
- Every product market has a definite growth level.

Through the use of these four rules, the categories are determined. According to Henderson (1973), every category has its own characteristics. These characteristics will be explained now:

- **Star:** A star has a high growth-rate and a high market share. This means that products/SBU's grow fast. Because of this rapid growth, there is a large amount of cash input required to finance the added assets. Products/SBU's which are stars are mentioned as the leaders and therefore generate a lot of cash. It is recommended to invest in these products/SBU's.
- **Question mark/problem child:** Question marks, or in other words problem children, have a high cash use but a low cash generation. There is a high cash use because of the high growth. However, the market share is low which implies a low cash generation. The products/SBU's with these characteristics require more cash than they generate. Question marks can be mentioned as opportunities to invest in, to create more market share and become a star.
- **Cash cow:** Products/SBU's within this category, have a low cash use and a high cash generation. The growth rate in this category is low, it can be translated into a slow growth. However the market share is high, which results in a high cash generation. It can be

concluded that a cash cow is profitable, but attention is required because of the slow growth. Cash cows should keep the investments as low as possible to maintain the market share.

- Dog: Dogs have a low cash use and a low cash generation. There is a low market share in combination with a low growth rate. It can be concluded that investing in a dog is narrowly related to a worthless investment.

3. Methodology

This chapter describes the methods which are used in this study. First the research design is described. The next section describes the participants of this study. To be more specific, the participants of the semi-structured interviews are described. This section is followed by the description of the methods which are used to gather the data for this study. The last part of this chapter describes the way the data is analysed.

3.1 Research design

The aim of this study is to find out how the positioning school relates to the modern strategies and to identify any shortcomings or strong points in the classical approach. This study look at differences in visions of the positioning school between theoretical field and practical field which is divided into different markets. Through the use of a qualitative research design, the differences are identified.

In order of answering the main research question, the first step in this research was to investigate the basic principles of the positioning school and its strategic management tools. As mentioned before, the central base of this study is Mintzberg's book 'Strategy Safari: A guided tour through the wilds of strategic management' (1998;2009). Therefore, the basic principles and strategic management tools are derived from Mintzberg's book.

In 'Strategy Safari' Mintzberg gives his view about strategy and a clarification about all the ten schools of thought. Also the strategic management tools are explained, however this is a brief explanation. Michael Porter and the Boston Consulting Group are the founders of the strategic management tools which are representative for the positioning school. To get a more detailed explanation of the tools, Michael Porter and the Boston Consulting Group are investigated further. Their explanation of the tools were investigated and used in this study.

The previously described literature study can be mentioned as a deeper exploration regarding the positioning school and its strategic management tools. To be able to identify differences in visions between the theoretical field and practical field, the visions of authors (theoretical field) should be clarified. To clarify these visions, a literature study was used.

After this literature study, it was necessary to identify the visions regarding the positioning school and strategic management tools in the practical field. In order to get a clear and detailed explanation of the visions in the practical field, semi-structured interviews were used. These interviews also gave the opportunity to gain knowledge on the implicit assumptions used by the respondents. The respondents were several companies in different markets.

The last step in this study was the analysis of all the data collected. The data collected through the literature study and the interviews was first analysed separately. After these separate analyses, the data was compared to each other in order to identify possible differences in visions about the positioning school and strategic management tools.

3.2 Participants in semi-structured interviews

As mentioned before, the semi-structured interviews were held to identify the visions regarding the positioning school and strategic management tools in the practical field. The participants in this study were people in companies who define or decide a company's strategy. These participants were either directors or members of a management team. The participants were selected carefully and were persons which work in companies within different markets because of the generalisability. Every market has its own specific working and interaction with customers/competition. Because this study is a sort of test of the positioning school, it is therefore better to investigate more markets and increase the generalisability. Besides the

selection based on the market of the companies, selection is also made on the responsibility/supervision in the process of strategy making. In this study it is not meaningful to interview people who do not have any responsibility/supervision regarding the process of strategy making. Table 1 gives an overview of the participants in this study, the market in which the company operates, function of the respondent and the way the interview was held

Participant	Market	Function	Contact
1	Car branch	Manager	Face to face
2	Accountancy	Marketing & Communication advisor/Member of Management Team	Face to face
3	Childcare	Manager Marketing & Sales/Member of Management Team	Face to face
4	ICT	Owner	Face to face
5	Retail/franchise	Owner	Face to face
6	Consultancy	Co-owner	Face to face

Table 1: Participants study

3.3 Data collection

As mentioned before, data gathering methods which were applied in this study include literature study and semi-structured interviews.

3.3.1 Literature study

The first data gathering method that was used in this study, is a literature study. As described earlier, the data for the sub-question related to strategic management tools of the positioning school was gathered from Mintzberg's book. However, the tools were explained briefly and therefore the founders of the tools, Michael Porter and the Boston Consulting Group were studied. The founders were studied, to get the right, original information of the tools. Michael Porter wrote several books in which he describes his tools. Porter's 'Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Companies' (1980) and 'Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance' (1985) were used to gather the data about the generic strategies, five forces model and the generic value chain. To gather the data about the BCG-matrix, the Boston Consulting Group was investigated. To be more specific, the work of Bruce Henderson, founder of the Boston Consulting Group was investigated. One of his articles, 'The Experience Curve – Reviewed IV. The Growth Share Matrix or The Product Portfolio' contained all the information regarding the BCG-matrix.

A literature study was also used to gather information about the authors/articles which cite the positioning school, and what these authors/articles might say regarding the positioning school and/or the strategic management tools related to the positioning school. Searches were conducted in different scientific databases like Scopus, Science Direct and Google Scholar using different terms. The terms were 'ten schools of thought Mintzberg', 'positioning school' and 'strategic management thinking'. From all the search results, a selection was made based on whether the search term was literally mentioned in the title, subtitle or keywords of the article. After this, the abstract of the article was read to conclude whether the information in the article was useful for this study. When the information was useful, the whole article was read. To gather the right information, a checklist was made. This checklist can be found in

appendix 1. The key words on the checklist were based on the information which was necessary to answer the corresponding question. After searching on the three terms described above, it can be concluded that there are several articles which mention the positioning school only, but do not give in-depth information. For this reason, there is chosen to search on more specific terms like 'Michael Porter', 'generic strategies Porter', 'five forces model', 'generic value chain', 'Boston Consulting Group' and 'BCG-matrix'. The same selection method was applied. The checklist was also applied on these articles.

3.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

The second collection method which was used within this study is semi-structured interviews. The reason for choosing interviews in general, is because of the validity of this study. To improve the validity in a research, different data collection methods should be used (Baarda, Goede, & Meer-Middelburg, 1998). As described above, the first collection method was the literature study and the second one is interviewing. Another reason for choosing interviews is because of the possibility to keep on asking until useful information is gathered. The interviews were semi-structured, this means that a template was used for the interviews. This template can be found in appendix 2. The template was based on the information which has to be gathered in order to answer the sub-question regarding the strategic management tools in practical field. But the template was also based on the criteria mentioned in the checklist from the literature study. There has to be an overlap between the template for the interviews and the checklist for the literature study. This overlap is necessary to be able to compare the theoretical field with the practical field on the same points. Through the use of semi-structured interviews, the questions regarding which strategic management tools of the positioning schools are used in practice and the main reasons why companies change/do not change the tools should be answered.

The participants in these interviews were people in a company who define or decide a company's strategy. These participants included someone from the management board or management team. The respondents were not selected randomly. There were several criteria which have to be met to participate in this study. The first criterion was that it should contain a company which is aware of the use of a strategy. Small companies, like sole proprietorships, have a management board of one person. This person is also the executive staff in such a company. Because of the small size of a sole proprietorship, such kind of companies are left out of the study. Besides this criterion, it was also a requirement that the several companies in this study operate on different markets. Table 1 gives an overview of the industries in which the companies are operational. Companies which were found to be interesting to investigate, were approached through an e-mail.

All the interviews were held in a timetable of three weeks, to be more specific from 25 April 2016 until 20 May 2016. The interviews were conducted on the premises of the participating company. At the beginning of the interview, the interviewee was asked if he or she would approve recording of the interview. Only one interviewee did not allowed to record the interview. This interview is completely typed. The disadvantage of typing this interview could be that the questions asked are not deep enough. Because everything has to be written down. To ensure that all the information which is necessary for this study will be gathered, the interviewee is asked to remain available for more questions afterwards.

3.4 Data analysis

The articles with useful information found in the literature study are evaluated through the checklist. The terms on the checklist can be translated into questions. Answers on these questions were derived from information in the articles. All the answers were collected into a matrix. The matrix contains one side in which the titles of the articles and the authors are mentioned and one side with the terms regarding the positioning school. All the information from the articles were elaborated in the matrix. This matrix can be found in appendix 3.

All the semi-structured interviews were recorded with an audio-recorder. After the interviews, all the recorded information was digitalised into a document for each company. This was necessary to be able to translate all the information into a matrix with keywords. These keywords are derived from the questions on the template which was used for the interviews. The matrix is divided into two sides, one side contains the market of the company, and the other side contains the different topics/keywords in the interviews. The documents with the data gathered through the interview were for each company elaborated in the matrix.

Because of anonymity, the matrix is excluded from this report, appendix number 4.

After all the data from the literature study and semi-structured interviews were elaborated in the matrix, the data can be further analysed. Both matrices were compared with each other. As mentioned before, the matrices contains equal terms. This was a conscious decision, because it was easier to compare the results from the theoretical field with the practical field when the terms were equal. In the next section of this thesis, the results and findings of these analysis are described.

4. Results and findings

In this part of the thesis, the results and findings of the qualitative research are discussed. This sections starts with the results and findings of the literature study. Every term will be discussed separately. After the literature study, the results and findings of the semi-structured interviews are described. Finally the differences between the results and findings of the literature study and the semi-structured interviews are described.

4.1 Literature study

As described in the methodology section, a literature study was conducted to find out what the statements/findings from different authors are regarding the positioning school and the underlying constructs. The main question during the literature study was: *‘What does the theoretical field say about the positioning school/strategic management tools?’* With the help of a checklist, which can be found in appendix 1, the articles were criticised on usefulness. The results from the literature study can be found in the matrix provided in appendix 3. This matrix compares all the articles on the same points. All the results and findings on these points are described in the next part and based on the matrix. There were six articles found and analysed in detail. Table 2 shows the authors and titles of articles which are used in this study.

Authors	Article
Åge Johnsen	Strategic management thinking and practice in the public sector: A strategic planning for all seasons?
George Stonehouse & Brian Snowden	Competitive Advantage Revisited: Michael Porter on Strategy and Competitiveness
Denise Jarratt and David Stiles	How are Methodologies and Tools framing Managers’ Strategizing Practice in Competitive Strategy Development?
Eonsoo Kim, Dae-il Nam & J.L. Stimpert	The Applicability of Porter’s Generic Strategies in the Digital Age: Assumptions, Conjectures and Suggestions
Tony Grundy	Rethinking and reinventing Michael Porter’s five forces model
Georgios Giannakopoulos, Damianos P. Sakas, Dimitrios S. Vlachos, Daphne Kyriaki-Manessi, Palvĺna Haltofová & Petra Štěpánková	An application of the Boston Matrix within Financial Analysis of NGOs

Table 2: Authors and articles literature study

4.1.1 Ten schools of thought

In two articles (Johnsen, 2014; Stonehouse & Snowden, 2007) there was a direct reference to the ten schools of thought from Mintzberg. It is remarkable that Johnsen (2014) state that the ten schools of thought is one of the two possible frameworks for categorising and analysing strategic management thinking. The other article (Stonehouse & Snowden, 2007) just mentions the ten schools of thought but does not tell any underlying details. Still, the authors of this article give a conclusion that represents their view on the ten schools of thought: “No single school within the field of strategic management provides a complete or definitive explanation of strategy and strategizing by organizations” (p. 260). Based on this conclusion, doubts arise about the fact whether the authors support the ten schools of thought.

Only two of the six articles mention the ten schools of thought, which can lead to a conclusion that the ten schools of thought is not a commonly used definition in relation to strategy. This could be due to the fact that there is one more framework for categorising and analysing

strategic management thinking. And that this framework is more comprehensive. It is also possible that the support of the ten schools of thought in the theoretical field is relatively small. At the beginning of this study, it was not expected that the ten schools of thought was mentioned that sporadic. Because of the small number of reference to the ten schools of thought, doubts arise about the extent to which it is a necessary and useful framework for categorising and analysing strategic management thinking.

4.1.2 Positioning school

In 50% of the analysed articles (three out of six), there was a reference to the positioning school. The articles are from Stonehouse & Snowdon (2007), Jarratt & Stiles (2010) and Johnsen (2014). However the article from Jarratt & Stiles (2010) contains a reference to the positioning school, but do not refer to the ten schools of thought. They do not link the positioning school to the ten schools of thought.

All the three articles do mention underlying facts about the positioning school. It is stated that the main contribution of this school is focussing on strategy content (Johnsen, 2014). This contribution is also mentioned in the theoretical framework from this study. It can be therefore concluded that this is not new information. Moreover, this information is in line with the view of Henry Mintzberg which can be found in chapter 2.

In the article from Stonehouse & Snowdon (2007) a whole new definition regarding the positioning school is mentioned. The authors state that the positioning school represents an 'outside-in' strategy approach. It means that the way a strategy is decided, depends first on the environment. This view about the positioning school is in line with the information given in the section about the theoretical framework, however the definition of an 'outside-in' strategy approach is not mentioned in other articles and is new. In chapter 2 it is stated that the positioning school focuses on the external factors of an organisation.

The third article, the article of Jarrat & Stiles (2010), views the positioning school in the perspective of strategy development. They state that strategy development can be divided into two models, a formal and dominant model. The positioning school belongs to the formal model which is "formal and process-based, structured and imposed, and developed through consultation within the organization, with various stakeholders and through examining environmental data" (p.28). This description of the formal model does not really match with Mintzberg's view on the positioning school. It is possible that this difference arose because Jarrat & Stiles (2010) do not link this school to the ten schools of thought.

One article (Johnsen 2014) states for which organisations the positioning school can be used, namely by huge organisations which operate in mature and competitive markets. The other two articles do not mention this.

The positioning school is mentioned in half of the studied articles. This could be a consequence of the fact that the ten schools of thought were also mentioned a couple of times. It is outstanding that Jarrat & Stiles (2010) did refer to the positioning school, however they did not refer to the school with a linkage to the ten schools of thought. It is possible that the positioning school does not only relate to the ten schools of thought.

As can be concluded on the results described above, the article wrote by Jarrat & Stiles (2010) does not match with the way Mintzberg, Johnsen (2014) and Stonehouse & Snowdon (2007) approach the positioning school. This difference could be related to the differences in reference

to the ten schools of thought, because Jarrat & Stiles (2010) did not link the positioning school to the ten schools of thought.

The fact that only Johnson (2014) gives attention to what kind of organisations can apply the positioning school indicates that the other authors do not place the usefulness of the school in a box. Or these authors did not think about this or they are convinced that the positioning school can be useful for every organisation.

4.1.3 Definition strategy

The article of Johnsen (2014) is the only article which gives a definition of strategy. The other articles do tell something about strategy, but do not give a clear definition of their view on this concept. In the article of Johnsen (2014) the concept of strategy contains two detailed definitions. The first definition is that strategy is a “cohesive response to an important challenge” (R. Rumelt, 2011). The other definition views strategy as “a means by which organizations can improve their performance and provide better services” (Boyne & Walker, 2004). As can be concluded, the author does not give his own view of strategy but cites the definition from other authors.

It is remarkable to see that only one article gives a definition of strategy. While in the first place the fulfilment of the concept of strategy could be of importance for the further implementation of strategy. However on the other hand it could also be said that the fulfilment of the definition does not decide the implementation process of strategy.

Within the article of Johnsen (2014), two definitions of strategy are given. Because there is more than one definition, it implicates that the fulfilment of the concept of strategy is diversified. Comparing the two definitions with each other, both definitions indicate something else. The definition of Boyne and Walker (2004) see it as a manner in which the performance and services can be improved. However Rumelt (2011) talks about a challenge. Based on these different views, it can be said that the improvement in performance and service described in the Boyne and Walker (2004) definition could be the challenge from the Rumelt (2011) definition.

4.1.4 Michael Porter/Boston Consulting Group

All the six articles contains a reference to Michael Porter or the Boston Consulting Group, which was also a requirement from the checklist. Four from the six articles (approximately 66%) refer to Michael Porter. These four articles are the articles from Johnsen (2014), Stonehouse & Snowdon (2007), E. Kim, Nam & Stimpert (2004) and Grundy (2006). The two articles from Jarrat & Stiles (2010) and Giannakopoulos et al. (2014) refer to the Boston Consulting Group.

Michael Porter

Johnson (2014) and Stonehouse & Snowdon (2007) refer both to Michael Porter in relation to the positioning school. Johnsen (2014) state that Michael Porter is the ‘founding father’ of the positioning school and Stonehouse & Swowdon (2007) state that all the work of Michael Porter forms the base for the competitive positioning school. They also state that the tools of Porter were of such importance for the major analytical tools of the planning school. The article of Kim et al. (2004) does not refer with respect to content. Grundy (2006) states that Porter focusses on macro level in his models, to be more specific on the competition in a specific region.

Boston Consulting Group

As stated before, the articles of Jarrat & Stiles (2010) and Giannakopoulos et al. (2014) refer to the Boston Consulting Group. Jarrat & Stiles (2010) state that the Boston Consulting Group developed a traditional tool for guiding strategy, the BCG-matrix. The article of Giannakopoulos et al. (2014) refers to the start of the Boston Consulting Group in 1968. They refer to Henderson, one of the founders of the Boston Consulting Group. However more in-depth information about the Boston Consulting Group is not given in this article.

50% of the articles (2 of the 4) which refer to Michael Porter, refer also to the positioning school. Based on this result, it is difficult to conclude whether Michael Porter is always linked to the positioning school. However, combining these results with the results from the ten schools of thought described above, it can be stated that the linkage between Michael Porter and the positioning school is not always a common used linkage. Michael Porter is mostly seen as a 'stand-alone' person/concept. Both articles that refer to the positioning school, outline Porter and his work as the foundation of the positioning school. This description is completely in line with the description given in the theoretical framework. It can therefore be concluded that there are no differences in the fulfilment of Porter's relationship to the positioning school. The articles which refer to the Boston Consulting Group, refer to it as a 'stand-alone' concept. In the article, there is no relationship described with the positioning school. For this reason, it can be said that the Boston Consulting Group is not a commonly used reference to the positioning school. This can be due to the fact that three of the four strategic management tools within the school are tools founded by Porter.

4.1.5 Strategic management tools

In every article from the literature study, one of the strategic management tools of the positioning school was mentioned. Table 3 represents an overview of the strategic management tools discussed in every article. The results and conclusions of every tool will be discussed separately.

	Five forces model	Generic strategies	Value chain analysis	BCG-matrix
Äge Johnsen	X	X	X	
George Stonehouse & Brian Snowdon	X	X	X	
Denise Jarratt and David Stiles	X			X
Eonsoo Kim, Dae-il Nam & J.L. Stimpert		X		
Tony Grundy	X			
Georgios Giannakopoulos, Damianos P. Sakas, Dimitrios S. Vlachos, Daphne Kyriaki-Manessi, Palvína Haltofová & Petra Štěpánková				X

Table 3: Strategic management tools in articles from literature study

Based on the results of the literature study illustrated in table 3, it can be concluded that the five forces model is the most known model within this research. This can be related to the fact that four of the six articles refer to the five forces model. However it could also be possible that the five forces model is mentioned that much because there are some things which can be improved within the model. It is therefore difficult to base a conclusion on only these results.

Another remarkable point is that the first two articles contains a reference to the five forces model, generic strategies and the value chain analysis. These tools are all derived from Porter. This indicates that the three tools cannot be seen separately from each other. When comparing these results with the results described at the point of positioning school, it attracts attention that the BCG-matrix is not mentioned in the first two articles. These articles (Johnsen, 2014 and Stonehouse & Snowden, 2007) refer to the positioning school. The positioning school contains the four tools illustrated in the table. Based on this remarkable result, the indication arose that there is no linkage between BCG-matrix and the positioning school.

Five forces model

As can be seen from table 3, the five forces model was mentioned in most of the articles, namely four articles. The article from Åge Johnsen (2014) discusses the five forces model. It is worth to mention that this article focused on the study of 27 organisations in 35 strategy processes. Because of this study, it can be stated that the five forces model was kind of present in the studied strategy processes and organisation. There was no detailed design described of the five forces model.

Stonehouse & Snowden (2007) mark the five forces model as one of the main analytical frameworks for analysing competitive position. Jarrat & Stiles (2010) call the five forces model the base of the main strategy process. Both articles emphasise the importance of the five forces model. However Stonehouse & Snowden (2007) refer to the model as a framework for analysing competitive position, which is narrowly related to Porter's vision. This is logical because it is a tool founded by Porter. However Jarrat & Stiles (2010) view the model as the base for strategy process, this indicates that it is not only applicable for analysing competitive position. Because two different views are given, it is irresponsible to make a conclusion based on these two facts.

The article from Grundy (2006) focused on opportunities to use the five forces model in a more practical way. Because this article focused only on the five forces model, some remarkable numbers were given. From a sample based on participants at strategic management courses at a certain business school, it can be stated that approximately 15% to 20% of the participants do know the five forces model. However just 5% applied the concept and analysed it accurately. To put this in a context, the numbers were also given for the SWOT-analysis. The awareness level of the SWOT-analysis is 90% to 95% and an active analysis level of 50%. Based on these numbers, it can be concluded that the five forces model does not have such a broad support as the SWOT-analysis has. Besides the numbers, the article describes that there is a gap between PEST and SWOT-analysis and that this gap is met by the five forces model.

All the articles also mentioned some advantages and disadvantages of the five forces model. These are all illustrated in table 4.

Authors	Advantages	Disadvantages
Åge Johnsen	- There are no advantages described.	- There are no disadvantages described.
George Stonehouse & Brian Snowden	- The five forces model is the most powerful tool to analyse business environment.	- The five forces model focuses on industry, however the individual firm is also important. Industrywide factors are less important to the profitability of an organisation in comparison to the firm-specific factors (R. P. Rumelt, 1991). - Not all the five forces are applicable in the same way to every company in an

		industry. It differs among businesses which differ from each other in size, strength or brand name.
Denise Jarratt and David Stiles	- There are no advantages described.	- There are no disadvantages described.
Tony Grundy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The micro-economic theory is set out into five major influences in just one model. - It emphasises the function of competitive rivalry among other forces. - The model offers help in predicting the long-run rate of returns in a specific industry. - In relation to the SWOT-analysis, the five forces model ensures that managers look more at the external environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "It tends to overstress macro analysis" (p. 215) - The model fails in concrete management. - Disadvantage regarding the encouragement of the mind-set that an industry has ongoing boundaries. - The model can be seen as a 'stand-alone' model. It is not really related to other factors.

Table 4: Advantages and disadvantages five forces model

Some of the advantages are related to the five forces itself. This could indicate that the five forces are useful factors for analysing the business environment. However there are more disadvantages given. Looking at the results from table 4, it is notable that there are a lot of disadvantages regarding the level of analysis. The model analysis the environment on industry-level. However based on the disadvantages given, it can be concluded that the model should also focus on firm-level analysis. It is possible that the model needs some adjustments.

Generic strategies

As described above, the article of Johnsen (2014) did not give a detailed design explanation of the generic strategies. In this article, the author came up with a new framework for analysing strategy. This framework is called the Boyne and Walker (2004) framework and is based on several tools, including the generic strategies framework. This is the only fact which is given regarding the generic strategies.

Just like the five forces model, the generic strategies framework can be seen as the main analytical framework for analysing competitive position (Stonehouse & Snowden, 2007).

Kim et al. (2004) state that there are several studies which focus on the relationship between strategy type and the performance of a company. These strategy types can be mentioned as the generic strategies. Firms which only apply the generic strategies framework outperform companies which carry on more than one strategy (Dess & Davis, 1984; L. Kim & Lim, 1988). Within this article, the framework is used because of its relationship with firm performance and the fact that it overlaps with other typologies (Miles, Snow, Meyer, & Coleman, 1978).

Johnson (2014) came up with a new framework for analysing strategies. This occurrence gives the feeling that the generic strategies framework does not function that well. Otherwise, there would be no new framework for analysing strategies.

Table 5 illustrates the advantages and disadvantages of the generic strategies.

Authors	Advantages	Disadvantages
Åge Johnsen	- There are no advantages described.	- There are no disadvantages described.
George Stonehouse & Brian Snowdon	- There are no advantages described.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The article state that there is evidence of successful companies with a combination of cost leadership strategy and differentiation strategy (e.g. Toyota). - Generic strategies do not form the base for competitive advantage. A company should develop unique firm-specific core competences which in turn result in outperforming competitors because companies do things differently and better (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990).
Eonsoo Kim, Dae-il Nam & J.L. Stimpert	- There are no advantages described.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The article examined the use of generic strategies in the world of e-business. The focus strategy will not be as viable for e-business firms as it is for traditional business firms. - Because industry environments do not provide the need for cost leadership strategy or differentiation strategy, there is relatively no reason to say that one strategy should be applied (Murray, 1988).

Table 5: Advantages and disadvantages generic strategies

As can be seen in table 5, none of the articles mention advantages of the generic strategies. This could be due to the fact that the authors only focus on disadvantages to improve the model. Though this is a convincing result, it is difficult to write a conclusion. The model is mentioned because all the tools from Porter are mentioned in these articles. Moreover, it is easier to focus on negative facts/limitations of something, than on positive things.

Based on the disadvantages, it can be concluded that when an organisation applies a combination of cost leadership and differentiation it could also be successful. Porter stated that this is impossible; that a company must choose. Doubts may arise about the implementation and results of the framework.

Value chain analysis

The article of Johnsen (2014) only mentions the value chain analysis but does not give an explanation of the tool. It is mentioned because of the case study in the article.

In the two articles that discuss the value chain analysis, there were no advantages or disadvantages discussed. In the article of Stonehouse & Snowdon (2007) it is literally stated that there are no critics to the value chain analysis.

Because there are no advantages/disadvantages given, it is not possible to use these superficial results.

BCG-matrix

As can be seen in table 3, the BCG-matrix is mentioned in the articles from Jarratt & Stiles (2010) and Giannakopoulos et al. (2014). The BCG-matrix is mentioned as the traditional tool which can be used for guiding strategizing (Jarratt & Stiles, 2010). Giannakopoulos et al. (2014) described how the matrix can be used. The BCG-matrix can be used to explain that it

could be attractive to invest into a market share which grows. It is also sensible to disperse the risks. Cited from Giannakopoulos et al. (2014) “Keeping differentiated shares in companies with different potential risks and opportunities are the key characteristics and predispositions for a portfolio planning” (p. 58). The research of the article contained 36 randomly chosen nongovernmental non-profit organisations. These organisations received an e-mail to give their opinion about the BCG-matrix. From all the answers, most of the organisations are unfamiliar with the BCG-matrix. The organisations which are familiar with the matrix, do not implement/use it comprehensively. The respondents were not convinced that this matrix was useful for a non-profit organisation.

The essence described in the articles of Jarrat & Stiles (2010) and Giannakopoulos et al. (2014) are in line with the description from the theoretical framework. It is therefore possible to state that the essence of the BCG-matrix is well known within the theoretical field. However this is the opposite when looking at the practical field research from Giannakopoulos et al. (2014). Because this part of the thesis contains a study to the theoretical field, it is not appropriate to give conclusion regarding the practical field.

It is remarkable that some nongovernmental non-profit organisations adjusted the matrix to fit it more to their daily ‘business’. This adjusted matrix shows the current situation of actual, future and previous financial sources. However the adjusted matrix does not give new or more information than other analysis. It can be stated that the BCG-matrix in its original state is not applicable to non-profit organisations (Giannakopoulos et al., 2014).

Giannakopoulos et al. (2014) do not describe benefits and cons of the BCG-matrix. In the article from Jarratt & Stiles (2010), the BCG-matrix falls under the traditional tools. These traditional tools have several benefits. These benefits are:

- The tools focus on key issues and offer a structure for analysis.
- The tools offers a framework for strategizing and the decision-process of strategy.

Besides the benefits there are also some cons against the traditional tools and hence the BCG-matrix. These cons are:

- The simplification in application of the tools. The traditional tools are simple to apply, but this can be a danger.
- Because of the simplification, there is a lack of explanatory value. The tools are quite compact.
- There are differences in views regarding the factors which should be included. These factors are related with the personal value of people within an organisation.

Based on the advantages and disadvantages described above, it can be concluded that the simplicity of the BCG-matrix is as well an advantage as disadvantage. The BCG-matrix offers a structure for analysis, because of the four boxes within the matrix. However these four boxes lead to a lack of explanatory value because of the compactness. This describes the challenge which organisations face in the application of the matrix.

The personal influence regarding the factors of the matrix is an important point of interest. This contributes to doubts in the reliability of the matrix which in turn can result in less application of the matrix.

4.2 Semi-structured interviews

As described in the section about the methods, six interviews were conducted to identify the views/opinions regarding the positioning school and its tools. These views/opinions are analysed on the same points as the analysis of the literature study. The central question during the interviews was: *'Which strategic management tools from the positioning school are used in practice and why?'* A comparison was made between all the semi-structured interviews based on five points.

4.2.1 Ten schools of thought

During the interviews, it was asked whether the interviewee is familiar with the ten schools of thought. 50% of the cases studied, were familiar with the ten schools of thought. However none of the interviewed organisations use one of the ten schools of thought. The marketing & communication advisor of the accountant company mentioned that there is not chosen deliberately for a certain school of thought. It is possible that there is one school which fits the way the organisation is managed.

Three of the six interviewees/companies are familiar with the ten schools of thought. It can therefore be concluded that the concept is relatively known in the practical field. Within these three companies, there is no application of one of the ten schools of thought. Based on this result, it can be said that the ten schools of thought is not used within the practical field. And thus adds no value in the process of strategy making within companies. With the information given by the marketing & communication adviser of the accountant company, it is also possible that organisations are not aware of the existence of the ten schools of thought. And thereby also not aware of the possible application of one of the ten schools. It can be concluded that the general support of the framework within the practical field is relatively low.

4.2.2 Positioning school

All the cases analysed, did not apply the positioning school within the organisation. During the interviews, it was asked whether they are familiar with the positioning school. The interviewees which were familiar with the ten schools of thought, also knew the positioning school. However this knowledge was superficial.

The conclusions that can be made are kind of in line with the conclusions described at the ten schools of thought. It can be concluded that companies do not apply the positioning school or companies are not aware of the existence of the positioning school. Moreover, it can be stated that the positioning school is not of great importance in the strategy process. Because these results are narrowly related with the outcome of the ten schools of thought, it is not really useful to make a conclusion based on these results.

4.2.3 Definition strategy

All the interviewees were asked how they look at the concept of strategy. Their understanding of strategy could be of relevant importance in the way they approach strategy. Below, in table 6 all the definitions of strategy are summed up.

Market - Function	Definition
Car branch - manager	<i>'The course a company follows and its resources to support the course. The course is decided on the basis of the things a company is good at.'</i>
Accountancy – marketing & communication advisor/member MT	<i>'The manner in which the goals of the organisation will be achieved.'</i>
Childcare – manager marketing & sales/member MT	<i>'Strategy is a translation of the mission and the beliefs of an organisation.'</i>
ICT – co-owner	<i>'Strategy is a calibrated way to go from one point to another point, so to achieve your goals.'</i>
Retail - owner	<i>'Strategy is the way/direction a company chooses.'</i>
Consultancy/advisory – co-owner	<i>'Strategy is something on which a company focuses in the long term, 2/3 years. Most of the time it is known what a company wants to do next year, however the course of a company over a couple of years is strategy. It is the world over 2/3 years.'</i>

Table 6: Definitions of strategy.

Based on the results in table 6, the visions of the interviewees are generally in line with each other. This means that the definition of strategy is relatively clear and that there are no differences in the general point of view. Only the definition given by the co-owner of the consultancy/advisory company gives an indication of the time circle regarding the process of strategy. The interviewed people from the other companies, did also give an indication of the time circle, however this indication was not related to their definition of strategy. Based on these facts, it can be stated that the time circle of strategy is not a part of the definition of strategy. But it is important to consider.

4.2.4 Michael Porter/Boston Consulting Group

In five of the six interviewed organisations, there was a familiarity with Michael Porter. Moreover, there was not only familiarity with Michael Porter, but also with his tools. First, it was asked whether they were familiar with Michael Porter. This is because the positioning school is linked most of the time to Michael Porter.

After this, it was asked if the interviewees do know the Boston Consulting Group and its tool. Because the BCG-matrix is one of the strategic management tools from the positioning school, it is of importance to test the familiarity with the founders of this matrix. In approximately 66% of the interviews, there was familiarity with the Boston Consulting Group and the BCG-matrix.

Looking at the results described above, it can be concluded that Michael Porter is well known in the practical field. Comparing these results with the results described at the ten schools of thought/positioning school, it can be concluded that Michael Porter is not always related to the ten schools of thought. Three of the six interviewees did know the ten schools of thought in comparison to five out of six who were aware of Michael Porter.

The results regarding the familiarity with the Boston Consulting Group indicate that the group is relatively well known. Because the Boston Consulting Group is a free-standing 'concept', there is no awareness of the relationship between the BCG and Michael Porter.

4.2.5 Strategic management tools

During the interviews, it was asked whether one of the strategic management tools of the positioning school were used within the organisation. Table 7 represents the outcome of this question.

Market - Function	Five forces model	Generic strategies	Value chain analysis	BCG-matrix
Car branch - manager				
Accountancy – marketing & communication advisor/member MT				X
Childcare – manager marketing & sales/member MT				X
ICT – co-owner				
Retail - owner				
Consultancy/advisory – co-owner				

Table 7: Strategic management tools used within organisation.

As can be seen in table 7, only the BCG-matrix is used within two organisations. It is remarkable that it is just one tool, because the impression was given that the tools are useful for the process of strategy making. It is hard to conclude something based on only this fact. When deciding to conclude something on this fact, it can be stated that the other three tools are not useful in the practical field.

Five forces model

The car/graveyard company does not use one of the tools. However the company indicated during the interview that they could use the five forces model to become more aware of strategy and the environment. In the car branch there is a lot of competition. The company distinguishes itself by buying large batches of cars and thereby generate a competitive price. Through the five forces model, the organisation might think that they could perform better in this process.

The accountant company did not apply the five forces model. This is because the organisation thinks it does not fit a service organisation because of the force suppliers. There are no suppliers within this organisation.

Only two of the studied organisations gave attention to the five forces model during the interview. It can be concluded that the five forces model is not applicable within the organisations studied in this research. However it is hard to implicate that this is true for every organisation.

Further the doubts regarding the applicability mentioned by the accountant company gives an indication of the reason why companies do not apply the five forces model. It is possible that organisations could not identify their organisations with the fulfilment of the five forces.

Generic strategies

The trends in the market and the competition is well analysed at the accountant company. A few years ago, the generic competitive strategies were used cursory. It was used as information, but not applied within the organisation; it was used to become aware of certain things regarding strategy.

Just one company mentioned the generic strategies. But none of the interviewed organisations apply the generic strategies framework. This is a remarkable result. The generic strategies framework is not a useful tool for the studied organisations. The co-owner of the consultancy/advisory company mentioned that the environment is changing fast because of the internet. For this reason, it is hard to put something into four boxes. Based on this data, doubts arise about the extent to which the model can be used in a modern environment. It could be concluded that the model has shortcomings regarding the changing environment.

Value chain analysis

None of the interviewed organisations use the value chain analysis. In the interview with the consultancy/advisory organisation, it is stated that the value chain analysis is useful to analyse. However there is a lot of keywords in the chain, which, according to the interviewee, are too much. This organisation view the value chain a lot easier. They look whether the margin is well, if there is added value, if the costs are in relation to each other and if the staff is good. It is remarkable that the organisation do have an opinion regarding the value chain analysis, but do not apply this tool within the organisation.

Based on the data gathered through the semi-structured interviews, it can be concluded that the value chain does not add value to the process of strategy making within the studied organisations. The focus of organisations is mainly on the results at the end, and not when and where there is value added in the process. It can also be concluded that there are too much factors within the value chain, which in turn results in that the model is not applied within organisations. Because of the high number of factors within the value chain, it is not that simple to apply within the organisations. During the interviews it was made clear that organisations want to apply tools which are simple in the implementation.

BCG-matrix

As can be stated from table 7, only the accountant company and the childcare organisation apply a strategic management tool from the positioning school. The accountant company use the BCG-matrix for acquisition and relationship management. It is used to analyse the current customer portfolio. The organisation use the BCG-matrix because of the easiness in practice. Also the ease in application is very attractive to use this tool. The matrix gives a clear view and people remind the illustration which is related to the factors. It is worth to mention that the matrix is used as its original state.

The childcare organisation use the BCG-matrix. However, it was not a deliberately use of this tool. Through the interview and explanation of the tools, the interviewee was aware that the BCG-matrix is the tool which is used in this organisation. This tool is used to analyse the different locations. The axes of the matrix are modified. The growth rate depends on the surroundings of a certain location whether it stands in a district in which a lot of new houses are build or a lot of children are born. The other axis is about other providers in that district. It could be said that the market share is kind of analysed.

The companies in the ICT-, retail and consultancy/advisory branch do not apply any of the strategic management tools. They also do not indicate that one of the tools could be useful for the organisation. The ICT-company does not use a tool because the markets which the organisations enter, are most of the time new markets. Because no one discovered these markets before, it is in the opinion of the interviewee, worthless to use strategies. The strategic management tools do only work for markets which are broadly explored and which can be analysed well. The intuition of the co-owner is the main factor which determines the strategy. It is worth to mention that the competition is analysed well.

The company in the retail branch does not use one of the strategic management tools. It is of importance to know that the organisation is limited in the process of strategy making because it is a franchise company. The organisation is depended of the strategy decided by the overall company and tries to translate that strategy to a strategy which fits the organisation. For this reason, the company is also limited in the application of the tools from the positioning school. The only tool which is applied in this organisation, is the SWOT-analysis. The SWOT-analysis is the base for the process of strategy making.

The co-owner of the consultancy/advisory organisation gives a clear statement why there are no strategic management tools used. Within this organisation, the degree of coincidence has been greater than thinking about strategy. This is because there arose for example a special opportunity, or a major customer 'walks in'. When you go seize opportunities, it can affect your current strategy. The degree of coincidence is a large factor. The interviewee state that the way the coincidence is handled, is also a strategy. Besides the degree of coincidence, the interviewee is convince that the models of Porter/BCG are not applicable nowadays. Because of the important place of internet in the current society, the society is fast changing. For this reason, the tools are a bit outdated. Organisations cannot put something in four boxes for example.

As already mentioned at the part regarding the value chain, companies like tools which are easy to apply in practice. As stated by the accountant company, the BCG-matrix is a tool with a relatively easy level of application. Therefore it can be said that this is one of the motives on which a company decides to apply this tool. Looking at the data gathered through the interview with the childcare company, it should be kept in mind that there is not always the awareness of the name 'BCG-matrix'. Organisations can apply a matrix which is derived from the BCG-matrix and at the same time do not know the concept of the BCG-matrix.

The ICT-company enters most of the time new markets, and for these markets the model is not applicable. It can be therefore concluded that the matrix is only useful within well analysed markets. Another remarkable point, which also applies to the other tools described before, is the degree of coincidence. In some organisations/markets, the degree of coincidence is greater than thinking about strategy. For this reason, it not always make sense to analyse something through tools.

4.3 Comparison literature study and semi-structured interviews

As described in the methodology section, a comparison was made to find out any differences/similarities between the theoretical and practical field. The main question during this analysis/comparison was: *'What are the differences/similarities in views between the theoretical and practical field regarding the positioning school and/or the strategic management tools?'* The comparison was based on the same points used for the literature study and the semi-structured interviews.

4.3.1 Ten schools of thought

In the literature, approximately 33% of all examined articles mentioned the ten schools of thought. 50% of the studied organisations were familiar with the ten schools of thought. Based on this fact, it can be concluded that there is relatively little familiarity with the ten schools of thought in both the practical and theoretical field. This means that the support of Mintzberg's framework is also very limited. In the literature there is sporadic reference to the framework and in practice there is no reference/application to it. Thus the results of the research within the theoretical and practical field are in line with each other.

Besides, the results from the theoretical field indicate that there are doubts regarding the necessity of applying the principles from the ten schools. Comparing this with the results from the practical field, it can be stated that a company can be successful without applying one of the schools. Moreover, it should be kept in mind that it is possible that organisations are not aware of the existence of the ten schools of thought. Due to this, the support of the framework will be limited. When organisations are aware of the framework, they can say that they apply one of the schools and the support will probably increase.

4.3.2 Positioning school

50% Of the articles from the literature study contained a reference to the positioning school. Based on the results from the semi-structured interviews, 50% of the studied cases were familiar with the positioning school. These percentages indicate that there is a kind of awareness in the theoretical/practical field regarding the positioning school. It is remarkable that these percentages are equal. This fact indicates that the awareness/support of the positioning school is the same in the researched fields.

It is noteworthy to mention that the results regarding the positioning school are mainly related to the outcome of the ten schools of thought. This is because the positioning school is a part of the ten schools of thought. There is little chance that organisations do not know the ten schools of thought but do know the positioning school. This low probability is supported by one article in the literature study (Jarratt & Stiles, 2010) which refers to the positioning school without a reference to the ten schools of thought. It can therefore be concluded that the probability of a reference without linking the positioning school to the ten schools of thought is higher in the theoretical field compared to the practical field. Nevertheless it should be kept in mind that there is a chance that the positioning school is not only relatable to the ten schools of thought. There is a remarkable difference between the results of the two field studies. Within the literature, substantial information is provided about the positioning school. However this information is missing in the practical field. This is a logical result given the reasoning described before. Moreover, this result indicates that there is a little support/knowledge in the practical field regarding the application/usefulness of the positioning school.

4.3.3 Definition strategy

Just one of the six articles (Johnsen, 2014) studied gave a definition of strategy. Within the practical study, all the six interviewees gave a definition. This difference could be due to the fact that the interviewees were asked directly to their fulfilment of strategy. The information gathered in the interviews depended on the questions that were asked. However the information within articles is fixed. This means that it is not possible to ask questions in order to gather more data.

Within the article, two different definitions of strategy are given. These definitions both indicate something else. When comparing all the definitions from the practical field study, these

definitions differ from each other in detail. However in general they are in common with each other. Based on the two definitions given in one article, it can be concluded that the fulfilment of the concept of strategy is diversified. The results of the practical field study confirms this. But it is important to keep in mind that there are detailed differences between the definitions given in the interviews. The differences between the two definitions of the articles are differences from a higher level. For this reason, it is not responsible to state that the differences in all the definitions are on an equally level.

Just one of the six definitions given in the interviews mentioned a time circle regarding the process of strategy. This is a remarkable result. None of the definitions given in the literature study mentioned a time circle. Because just one interviewee mentioned a time circle, it can be concluded that the definition of strategy does not contains a time circle element. The time circle of strategy is important to consider, but is not a part of the definition.

4.3.4 Michael Porter/Boston Consulting Group

As mentioned before, all the six articles refer to Michael Porter (4 articles) or the Boston Consulting Group (2 articles). Within the interviews, five out of six mentioned Michael Porter and four out of six mentioned the Boston Consulting Group. It can therefore be concluded that there is relatively high familiarity with Michael Porter and the Boston Consulting Group. However this does not indicates that these references are always related to the positioning school.

Michael Porter

Michael Porter is not always linked to the positioning school. This can be concluded from the results gathered in as well the theoretical as the practical field study. It is remarkable to see that the theoretical field supports the practical field and vice versa.

The articles which refer to Michael Porter and the positioning school (two of the four articles), outline Porter's work as the base of the positioning school. None of the cases studied in the practical field link Porter and the positioning school to each other. This can be due to the fact that the familiarity with the positioning school is not that much within the practical field. Porter is well known in the practical field but the ten schools of thought and positioning school are not really known.

Boston Consulting Group

It can be concluded that the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) can be seen as a 'stand-alone' concept. Through the literature study, it was made clear that the BCG is not linked to the positioning school. This result was supported by the data gathered through the interviews. This can be due to the fact that there is a general knowledge regarding the ten schools of thought/positioning school. Because of this general knowledge, the interviewees do not know substantial information about the schools, and therefore do not know the precise content of the positioning school. Thus the linkage between the BCG and positioning school/Michael Porter is not familiar. The overall conclusion is that the BCG is not a commonly used reference to the positioning school.

4.3.5 Strategic management tools

In every article within the literature study, one of the tools of the positioning school was mentioned (table 3). There arises a remarkable difference when looking at the tools mentioned in the interviews (table 7). The BCG-matrix is the only tool which is used within the studied organisations. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the five forces model is the most

known model within the theoretical field study. For the practical field study, the BCG-matrix is the most used model. It can be concluded that the other three tools are not useful in the practical field. A remarkable outcome of the analysis from the literature study, is that there is no linkage between BCG-matrix and the positioning school. This outcome supports the thoughts described before regarding the Boston Consulting Group.

Five forces model

Four of the six analysed articles mentioned the five forces model. In one of the articles (Grundy, 2006) the five forces model was compared to the SWOT-analysis. These numbers indicate that the five forces model does not have such a broad support as the SWOT-analysis. This fact is supported by the outcome of the semi-structured interviews. Two organisations apply the SWOT-analysis, and none of the studied organisations apply the five forces model.

It can be concluded that the five forces model is not applicable within the studied organisations. One of these organisations could not identify its activities with the fulfilment of the five forces. This fact is in line with one of the disadvantages described in table 4; one of the main points of criticism given, is that the five forces model focuses on industry-level, where it should focus more on firm-level analysis. This issue could be the main reason why organisations do not apply the five forces model.

Comparing the results from both the theoretical and practical field study, it can be concluded that the model need some adjustments. This is based on the disadvantages given in table 4 and the data gathered through the interviews.

A remarkable difference is the fact that there are four references to the five forces model in the literature, in comparison to zero in the practical field. This implicates that there is more support for the five forces model in the theoretical field compared to the practical field. However it should be kept in mind that some articles did mention the five forces model, but also mentioned some adjustments. For this reason it is not quite correct to say that there is more support.

Generic strategies

Three of the six articles mentioned the framework regarding generic strategies. This in comparison to one organisation which mentioned the framework, but did not apply it. Based on these facts, it can be concluded that the generic strategies do have more support in the theoretical field compared to the practical field.

One major point of criticism to the framework is that when an organisation applies a combination of cost leadership and differentiation, it could be successful. As Porter stated: a company must choose between one of the two strategies and a combination of it is not successful. Through research it is confirmed, however, that a combination could indeed be successful.

The organisation which mentioned the framework, stated that the environment is currently changing fast because of the internet. It is therefore difficult to put something into four rigid boxes. Combining this fact with the point of criticism described above, doubts arise about the implementation and usefulness of the framework within a modern environment.

It can be concluded that the disadvantages given in the practical field are different compared to the disadvantages of the theoretical field. This means that there is a gap between the experiences regarding the model and this gap could be investigated further. For this reason it is irresponsible to state the precise gap.

Value chain analysis

50% Of the articles mentioned the value chain analysis in comparison to 16,67% of the interviewees. It is remarkable that none of the articles mentioned advantages/disadvantages of the model. This in comparison to one organisation which mentioned some disadvantages. However it sticks out that this organisation does not apply the tool.

Based on the data from the interviews, it can be concluded that the value chain analysis does not add value to the process of strategy making. Moreover, some disadvantages are mentioned regarding the high number of factors within the value chain. This high number of factors makes it harder for organisations to implement the tool.

The main difference between the results from the literature study and interviews is that the literature does not describe the advantages/disadvantages of the value chain. One article stated that there are no points of criticism to the value chain. Doubts arise regarding this statement, because the other articles do not give this statement. Moreover, one organisation came with a disadvantage. Because of this disadvantage, there should be some more advantages/disadvantages. For this reason it is irresponsible to use these results.

BCG-matrix

The BCG-matrix is mentioned in two articles (Jarrat & Stiles, 2010; Giannakopoulos et al. 2014). Within the study of the practical field, the BCG-matrix is also mentioned and used two times. This is a remarkable similarity. But it should be kept in mind that this is still a relatively low percentage, namely approximately 33% in both field studies.

When analysing and comparing the data in more detail, it can be concluded that the BCG-matrix in its original status is not applicable to all organisations. This is based on the fact that Giannakopoulos et al. (2014) state that it is not applicable for non-profit organisations. Besides, the interviewed childcare company mentioned that they adjust one of the axis. It is important to mention that the childcare company was not aware of the concept of the BCG-matrix. The company used the BCG-matrix, but did not know that the model they used is called the BCG-matrix in the literature. For this reason, it should be kept in mind that not every organisation is aware of the existence of the matrix.

It is remarkable that the literature gave some attention to the personal influence regarding the factors of the matrix. The fulfilment of the factors differs from person to person. This personal influence was also mentioned in the interviews. For this reason, doubts arise regarding the reliability of the matrix which in turn can result in a reduced application of the matrix. The literature and practical field agree with each other based on this point.

Another point which needs attention is the simplicity of the matrix. The BCG-matrix is easy to use and therefore attractive to apply. This is mentioned as a motive why the accountant company uses the tool. However in the literature, this is mentioned as a disadvantage. The simplicity can be of such danger, that there is a lack to explanatory value. It could be therefore concluded that it is important to find a good balance between the simplicity and the danger level.

5. Conclusion & Recommendations

This chapter of the thesis contains the conclusions based on the findings followed by the discussion. The conclusion part provides an answer on the central research question. After this some practical implications are described. This chapter ends with the limitations of this study.

5.1 Conclusion

This section provides an answer on the main research question. This question is as follows:

‘Which classical strategic management tools from the positioning school are still useful in practice?’

It can be concluded that the BCG-matrix is the only tool which is used nowadays within the studied organisations. Because all four studied strategic management tools are linked to the positioning school, this outcome indicates that the positioning school adds no value to the process of strategy making nowadays. Organisations are mainly focussed on their (financial) results and assess their strategy based on these results.

The analysis of the findings indicate some interesting points regarding the ten schools of thought, the positioning school and the strategic management tools which belong to the positioning school.

First of all, there is relatively little familiarity with the ten schools of thought. It can be concluded that the support of the ten schools of thought is low. Just 50% of the studied organisations were aware of the existence of the ten schools of thought. Organisations which do not apply one of the schools, are still successful in their operations and the process of strategy making. This is confirmed by the results gathered through the literature study and semi-structured interviews. As mentioned before, the positioning school is part of Mintzberg’s ten schools of thought. In the extension of the results regarding the familiarity of the ten schools of thought, the awareness of the positioning school is also relatively low. It is stated that when organisations do not know the ten schools of thought, they are also not familiar with the positioning school. The organisations which were familiar with the positioning school, have heard of it but are not familiar with the detailed content of this school.

Because the positioning school is narrowly related to the concept of strategy, it is important to mention that there is a diversified fulfilment of the concept of strategy. However in general the interpretations are in common with each other. Within the fulfilment of the concept of strategy it is not usual to mention a time circle. Nevertheless, for organisations it is important to consider the time pattern of the process of strategy making.

The positioning school can be related to two persons/groups. These are Michael Porter and the Boston Consulting Group. The literature study stated that Michael Porter is the ‘founding father’ of the positioning school. However, this was a small percentage which mentioned Porter in such a way. It can be concluded that Michael Porter is most of the time seen as a ‘stand-alone’ person/concept. This is confirmed by the results gathered through the literature study and interviews. There was a relatively high familiarity with Porter.

The Boston Consulting Group is in all the cases seen as a ‘stand-alone’ concept. In none of the cases it is linked to the positioning school. It can be concluded that the general knowledge regarding the ten schools of thought/positioning school is relatively low. Otherwise the organisations should know that the BCG is a part of the positioning school.

As mentioned before, the positioning school contains four strategic management tools: five forces model, generic strategies, value chain analysis and the BCG-matrix. This study was conducted to investigate whether the positioning school and its stools are still useful in the practical field.

Doubts arise regarding the applicability of the five forces model. Based on the results from the field studies, it can be concluded that the five forces model needs some adjustments. It is not all-embracing. It can be stated that the model is focussed mainly on companies which produce products. Companies that operate in the service sector, cannot apply this model because they do not have suppliers. The five forces model analyses the industry, however the firm-specific factors are also very important for organisations. This could be one of the motives why organisations do not apply the five forces model.

The generic strategies is a tool which is not applied in the practical field. Organisations must choose between two main strategies. When a company wants to combine these two strategies, they will be unsuccessful as Porter stated. Organisations are not convinced that such a model can comprise all the important focus points and activities. Moreover, the environment is currently changing fast because of the internet. It is therefore difficult to put something into four rigid boxes.

The value chain analysis is mentioned superficially. It is stated that there are no points of criticism to the value chain. Doubts arise regarding this statement, and it is therefore irresponsible to conclude something about the value chain analysis.

As already mentioned before, the BCG-matrix is the only tool which is used within the studied organisations nowadays. The matrix is used because it gives a clear overview. Moreover, the simplicity in the application/implementation is very attractive to apply the tool.

Besides, it is important to mention that the degree of coincidence is an important factor in the process of strategy making. Not every organisation performs a thorough strategy analysis. The degree of coincidence decides the direction chosen by a company.

5.2 Discussion

The main research question of the present study was: *‘Which classical strategic management tools from the positioning school are still useful in practice?’* As the question already implicates, this study focused on the positioning school and its tools. These tools are the five forces model, generic strategies, value chain analysis and the BCG-matrix. In order to answer the main research question qualitative research methods were applied. The methods were literature study and semi-structured interviews. As concluded in the previous section, the positioning school is still applicable in the practical field. However, this conclusion cannot be linked to the tools of the positioning school. From all the four tools, only the BCG-matrix is used within organisations nowadays.

In the theoretical framework it is stated that the positioning school is part of the ten schools of thought from Henry Mintzberg. Based on the theoretical framework, it was expected that the ten schools of thought framework was relatively known/commonly used within the theoretical field. This expectation arose because a whole book is written about the ten schools of thought framework. The book gave the impression that the framework was a well-known framework in the field of strategy. During the literature study, it became clear that the ten schools of thought framework was not that well known/commonly used as expected. Because this outcome was kind of unexpected, there was no expectation about the results derived from the semi-structured interviews. The results from the semi-structured interviews indicated that the ten

schools of thought is kind of known but not applied within the organisations. The study in the practical field contained six organisations. For this reason, it is hard to conclude that the framework regarding the ten schools of thought is not applied or useful within organisations because it is just a low number of studied organisations. The results of the interviews indicated that there is not always awareness of frameworks for the process of strategy making. This is another reason why it is not correct to conclude that the ten schools of thought is not useful for organisations. When organisations do know the framework regarding the ten schools of thought, they could probably implement one of the ten schools.

As mentioned before, the positioning school is part of the ten schools of thought. For that reason, it was expected that when the ten schools of thought is unknown, the positioning school is also unknown. This was expected for both the literature study and semi-structured interviews. During the literature study, it became clear that this statement is not always true. Therefore, it cannot be concluded that the positioning school is always related to the ten schools of thought. Moreover, it should be kept in mind that the positioning school can also be seen as a 'stand-alone' concept. The expectation regarding the outcome of the literature study was not met. However the results of the semi-structured interviews were in line with the expectations. The studied organisations which were familiar with the positioning school, were also familiar with the ten schools of thought framework. This outcome makes it therefore harder to conclude whether the positioning school is always related to the ten schools of thought.

Thereby, it was studied whether the positioning school is still applicable/useful nowadays. The outcome of the literature study indicates that the positioning school is still applicable. This outcome was expected. It is based on the fact that there are no points of criticism given regarding the positioning school within the studied articles. However, the outcome of the semi-structured interviews states that the studied organisations do not apply the positioning school because they think it adds no value to their current process of strategy making. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the positioning school is still applicable but not useful for organisations. Because the studied articles state that the positioning school is still applicable/useful and the studied organisations state the opposite, it is hard to conclude the reasons why there is a gap between these outcomes.

The theoretical framework states that the positioning school focuses on the external environment. Within this school there are four strategic management tools which can be used, namely the five forces model, generic strategies, value chain analysis and the BCG-matrix. As described earlier, the five forces model, generic strategies and value chain analysis are models founded by Michael Porter. The BCG-matrix, is founded by the Boston Consulting Group. It can be therefore concluded that the positioning school is related to the work of Porter and the Boston Consulting Group. This was also the main expectation during the literature study. However, the findings of the literature study are remarkable. Within the studied articles, Porter is more related to the positioning school in comparison to the Boston Consulting Group. Several authors describe Porter or his work, as the base for the positioning school (Johnsen, 2014; Stonehouse & Snowden, 2007). These authors do not refer to the Boston Consulting Group. Comparing this outcome with the theoretical framework, it seems a logical outcome, because three of the four tools within this school are invented by Porter. The results of the interviews indicate that the BCG-matrix is of such importance in the practical field. For this reason, it is not correct to refer only to Porter as the founder of the positioning school. Thereby, looking at the results of the interviews it is only the BCG-matrix of the Boston Consulting Group which is used in practice and not the tools of Porter.

As already described above, the BCG-matrix is the only tool which is applied within the practical field. This is a remarkable fact. The information presented in the theoretical framework states that a company first applies the five forces model to analyse the environment, followed by the generic strategies framework to choose a strategy. When one of the strategies is chosen, a company should analyse their value chain to be aware of the chain within the organisations. And through the BCG-matrix a portfolio can be analysed. Based on this information, the expectation arose that it would be the same in the theoretical and practical field. However, during the literature study it became clear that these strategic management tools can be used separately from each other. And that a five forces model is not necessary for the generic strategies framework. It is therefore unrealistic to conclude that all the strategic management tools are equally useful and applicable within organisations. This fact is supported by the data gathered through the semi-structured interviews. As some studied organisations indicate, not every tool is useful for every type of organisation or market in which an organisation operates. Based on only the results from this study, the BCG-matrix is the only tool applied by organisations nowadays.

During the literature study, it became clear that there are probably more tools which can be (in)directly related to the positioning school. For example the Boyne and Walker (2004) framework. This framework is based on several tools, including the generic strategies. It is therefore possible that there are more frameworks/tools that combine strategic management tools into one tool. This study only focused on the four tools within the positioning school.

The last discussion point regarding the findings/conclusions of this study contains the fast changing environment. Through the semi-structured interviews it became clear that three companies develop a strategy based on experiences or a degree of coincidence in potential customers. Moreover, it was mentioned that the market is quickly changing nowadays and that this cannot be put in a simple tool. This could be due to the fact of upcoming technology and the internet. On this point, there were no expectations. Upcoming technology and the internet can be regarded as reasons why organisations do not apply the positioning school. Nowadays technology and the internet is changing fast. Organisations need to have a clear and good working website in order to compete with other organisations through the world. It is no longer a competition between local organisations. This can be remarked as an important factor in the process of strategy making within organisations. During the literature study, it became clear that the Porter's generic strategies framework is not applicable in a digital environment. The article of Kim & Stimpert (2004) give adjustments to the generic strategies in order to be valuable for organisations within a digital environment. Based on this, it is hard to conclude whether all the strategic management tools of Porter are applicable in a digital environment. Besides, in recent years the economy has shown alarming signals. Most of the markets have shown a decrease in results due to the financial crisis. Because of this occurrence, the trust of organisations within markets has declined. This fact is supported by the results from the interviews. Organisations undertake actions regarding the strategy based on their feelings and experiences. These facts are not mentioned in the articles from the theoretical framework and literature study. It is therefore difficult to conclude that the strategies based on experiences/feelings are better/worse than strategies based on the strategic management tools. But it should be kept in mind that the degree of coincidence in potential customers and experiences/feelings are an important factor in the process of strategy making.

The framework regarding the ten schools of thought, and therefore also the positioning school, date back to approximately 20 years ago. Because this framework is relatively old, it was expected that the ten schools of thought, especially the positioning school, are not fully applicable within the world nowadays. This expectation is fully met. The positioning school and its strategic management tools do not enclose the important requirements for companies nowadays. Moreover, 20 years ago, the environment was not changing as quickly as it is nowadays.

5.3 Implications

This section describes some implications of this study. The first implication is the confirmation regarding an update of the positioning school and its tools. During the theoretical field study, it became clear that there is a relatively low number of articles which refer to the positioning school in combination with its strategic management tools. This is a logical consequence of the relatively low number of references within the articles to the ten schools of thought. During the practical field study it became clear that the strategic management tools of the positioning school are not really used within practice. One of the reasons why the studied organisations did not apply the strategic management tools is because they are convinced that the tools are not capable enough in the current environment. It can be concluded that the tools are a bit outdated. Because the tools within the positioning school are a bit outdated, it can be stated that the positioning school is also outdated. This is because all the statements and characteristics of the positioning school are presented in these tools. Mintzberg set up the ten schools of thought in 1998. In 2009, an update of Mintzberg's book regarding Strategy Safari was made, however this update did not change the content of the ten schools of thought and specifically the positioning school. Moreover, the positioning school and its tools does not fit the current environment/business world. Based on this study, it can be concluded that the positioning school and its tools need some adjustments in order to add value in the current environment/business world. This study delivers a theoretical contribution for authors and research studies which are specified in the strategical field and/or the ten schools of thought. This study showed that the positioning school and its strategic management tools should be updated to gain more references and create a larger supporting base.

Besides the theoretical implication, this study delivers also a practical implication for organisations that are in the process of strategy making. This could be organisations starting up, or organisations that already exist for a couple of years. Within the organisation, this implication can be useful for the management board or management team because they are mainly involved and responsible in the process of strategy making. Because of this study organisations or other stakeholders can create more advantages on the field of strategy and especially regarding the strategic management tools of the positioning school.

The results of this study showed that just one of the four strategic management tools of the positioning school is used in practice. This is based on testing the functioning of the tools in practice. Moreover, the outcome of this study showed that all the tools do not function that well in the practical field as in the theoretical field. The BCG-matrix is the only tool which is used in practice. In most cases, the BCG-matrix was used because of the simplification in application and the clarity of the matrix itself. But it is worth to mention that the BCG-matrix is used/applied superficially. There is no extensive application of this matrix because the studied organisations are convinced that they can define a good strategy without this matrix or the other three tools. Organisations can create an advantage by not applying the tools of the positioning school or make some adjustments to the tools. By adjusting the tools, it is possible

that the tools fit the environment/business world today. The outcome of this study can prevent that a company puts a lot of time or money in the classical positioning school/and or its strategic management tools to formulate their strategy, which does not work in the long run.

5.4 Limitations

The conducted study contains some limitations which are discussed in this section. The first limitations is about the generalisability of the results of this study.

This study focussed on testing the positioning school and its tools. The studied organisations are kind of chosen deliberately. For this study, it was important to study organisations which operate on different markets. This was in order to test the positioning school in a broad perspective. This criterion was fully met within this research. To be more specific, this was the only criterion for selecting organisations. The respondents could have been selected more carefully. This means that when a market was chosen, it was better to analyse several companies in that specific market and then make a choice. However, just one company per market was analysed. To be able to generalise the results to a large part of the organisations in the studied markets, it would have been better to focus on one market and choose several companies within that market. This is a limitation because it is not possible to conclude, based on the findings of this study, that every organisation does not use the positioning school and its strategic management tools. Every industry has different characteristics that are important for companies in analysing the trends and setting up a strategy. Because this differs between industries, the generalisability of the outcome of this study is relatively limited. This limitation is mentioned because in the beginning, it was the intention to create a large generalisability of the results, so the study would be supported more. At the end of the study it became clear that this intention was not met. For this reason, the generalisability of the results is a severe limitation.

The last limitation within this study is directly related to the research design and indirectly to the outcome of this study. This limitation is about the number of respondents in the practical field study. Six different organisations participated in this study. Because there was a limited time frame, it was not feasible to ask more organisations. Also due to the fact that a literature study which had to be completed within the same time frame. Because there are six studied organisations, it is hard to conclude something which is useful for every organisation in the studied markets. The results of this study would have been more useful when more organisations are interviewed which are operating on the same six markets as the studied organisations. In that case, it would be more correct to conclude something about the whole market in which the studied organisations operate.

5.5 Future research

In response to the conducted study, there are some recommendations for future research. The first and most important recommendation is to test the usefulness/application of the other nine schools of thought. The outcome of this study showed that the positioning school is still useful nowadays but adds no value to the process of strategy making. Because the positioning school is part of the ten schools of thought framework, it is recommended to test the other schools. It could be possible that the outcome of the positioning school is generalizable to all the other schools. When this is investigated, it would become clear how the ten schools of thought framework function nowadays. Besides, it would also become clear how the strategic management tools from all the other schools function. When these strategic management tools

are also that relatively limited used in practice, it can be concluded that organisations in the current fast changing environment/business world do not need strategic management tools in order to create a clear strategy.

The before described recommendation is the main recommendation for future research. When digging deeper into the research design of this study, a recommendation can be given based on the respondents. As already described in the limitations section, several organisations are studied which operate on different markets. To be able to get more insights regarding the positioning school in practice, one single market should be studied. By testing the positioning school within one single market, the generalisability of the results would increase. It would then be more correct to conclude how the positioning school is functioning.

However, there are also recommendations which are based on the content of the positioning school and its strategic management tools. First of all, it would be valuable to investigate each strategic management tool of the positioning school separately. The outcome of this study states that only the BCG-matrix is used within organisations, but this use can be mentioned as sporadic. When focussing on one tool in a research, more detailed information regarding its use could be made clear. Moreover, any shortcomings in practice could also be identified in more detail. However, it is very important to mention that when the focus is put on investigating one tool, there is no longer a link to the positioning school and therefore no longer a test of the school.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Checklist literature matrix

Auteur + Titel	
Datum + journal	
Wordt de positioning school genoemd?	
Wat wordt er gezegd over de positioning school?	
Wordt er een definitie van strategie gegeven? Zo ja, welke?	
Wordt er gerefereerd naar de tien scholen van Mintzberg? Zo ja, welke school?	
Wordt er gerefereerd naar Michael Porter? Zo ja, waarmee?	
Worden er definities van begrippen gegeven? Zo ja, welke begrippen en welke definities?	
Welke strategic management tools worden er besproken?	
Wat wordt er over deze tools gezegd?	
Waarom worden deze tools genoemd?	
Wat zijn de voor- en nadelen van deze tools?	
Wanneer zou je deze tools moeten gebruiken?	
Zijn er tekortkomingen aan de instrumenten volgens de auteurs?	

Appendix 2: Topic list interview

1. Inleiding (algemene informatie)
 - a. Wat is uw functie binnen het bedrijf?
 - b. Hoeveel werknemers telt het bedrijf?
 - c. Hoe vaak wordt de strategie binnen het bedrijf bijgesteld?
 - d. Wat voor relatie heeft uw functie met de strategiebepaling binnen de organisatie?
 - e. Ben je betrokken geweest bij het proces van de strategie bepaling?
2. Strategie
 - a. Hoe zou u het begrip strategie omschrijven?
 - b. Wat is de strategie binnen het bedrijf?
 - c. Hoe zorgt het bedrijf ervoor dat de strategie die is opgesteld door directie/management wordt doorgevoerd in de organisatie?
3. Ten schools of thought Mintzberg
 - a. Hebt u voor dit interview, eerder gehoord van de tien scholen van Henry Mintzberg?
 - b. Zo ja, wat weet u hierover?
 - c. Is één van de tien scholen van Mintzberg een basis voor het bepalen van de strategie binnen dit bedrijf?
4. Positioning school → Mijn onderzoek is voornamelijk gebaseerd op de positioning school. Een belangrijke grondlegger voor deze school is Michael Porter.
 - a. Kent u de standpunten van Michael Porter betreffende strategie?
 - b. Kent u het begrip strategic management tools/strategisch management instrumenten?
 - c. Zo ja, hoe zou u dit begrip definiëren?

In de positioning school zijn een viertal strategische management instrumenten die gebruikt worden om een strategie te bepalen/formuleren binnen een bedrijf. Deze instrumenten zijn: BCG growth-share matrix, vijf krachten model van Porter, generieke strategieën van Porter en de value chain van Porter.

- d. Maakt dit bedrijf gebruik van één van deze instrumenten om de strategie te bepalen?
- e. Zo ja, welke instrumenten worden er gebruikt en waarom? Zo nee, waarom worden er géén of andere instrumenten gebruikt om de strategie te bepalen?
- f. Hoe worden de instrumenten toegepast?
- g. Wanneer worden de instrumenten ingezet?
- h. Als u kijkt naar de oorspronkelijke basis van de instrumenten, wordt er in de toepassing afgeweken van de oorspronkelijke basis?
- i. Zo ja, welke aanpassingen worden er verricht? Zo nee, waarom worden er geen aanpassingen verricht?
- j. Met welke reden worden er aanpassingen verricht? Is dit bijvoorbeeld om het instrument beter te laten aansluiten bij het bedrijf?

Appendix 3: Literature matrix

Article information	<i>Strategic management thinking and practice in the public sector: A strategic planning for all seasons? (Johnsen, 2014)</i>	<i>Competitive Advantage Revisited: Michael Porter on Strategy and Competitiveness (Stonehouse & Snowden, 2007)</i>	<i>How are Methodologies and Tools framing Managers' Strategizing Practice in Competitive Strategy Development? (Jarratt & Stiles, 2010)</i>
Contribution of the article	"The contribution of this paper is the positioning of public management practices in relation to theories of strategy" (p.4).	"This article assess Porter's contribution to the development of the discipline in the context of the advances that have taken place since the publication of Competitive Strategy in 1980" (p. 256).	"The purpose of this study is to examine the practice of senior executives as they apply strategizing methodologies and tools" (p. 31).
Mention of the ten schools of thought	All the 10 schools are mentioned. It is stated that the ten schools of thought is one of the two possible frameworks for categorising and analysing strategic management thinking.	All the 10 schools are mentioned. The schools are only mentioned, because the focus of the article lays on Michael Porter. Cited from the article: "No single school within the field of strategic management provides a complete or definitive explanation of strategy and strategizing by organizations" (p. 260).	There is no direct reference to the ten schools of thought. The positioning and design school are mentioned, but not in relation to the ten schools of thought.
Mention of positioning school	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.
Information about positioning school	The positioning school can be used by huge organisation which operate in mature and competitive markets. Focussing on strategy content is the main contribution of this school.	The positioning school represents an 'outside-in' strategy approach. This means that the way a strategy is decided, depends first on the outside. Thus the environment (Mckiernan, 1997).	Strategy development can be divided into two models. The positioning school belongs to the model which is "formal and process-based, structured and imposed, and developed through consultation within the organization, with various stakeholders and through examining environmental data" (p.28). The formal model contains tools which structure analysis.

Definition strategy	<p>Within this article, there are two definitions of strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Cohesive response to an important challenge” (R. Rumelt, 2011) - “A means by which organizations can improve their performance and provide better services” (Boyne & Walker, 2004) 	There is no definition given.	There is no definition given.
Reference to Michael Porter or Boston Consulting Group	Michael Porter is the so called ‘founding father’ of the positioning school.	All the work of Michael Porter is the base of the competitive positioning school.	The Boston Consulting Group is mentioned as a group which developed a traditional tool for guiding strategy.
Strategic management tools of positioning school	Five forces model, generic strategies, value chain analysis.	Five forces model, generic strategies, value chain analysis.	Five forces model, BCG-matrix
Information of strategic management tools	<p>This article focused on the study of 27 organisations in the 35 strategy processes. It can be stated that the tools were kind of present in the studied strategy processes and organisation, however there was no detailed design of these tools.</p> <p>There is mentioned a different tool, which does not relate to the positioning school. This tool is the Boyne and Walker (2004) framework and is based on several tools, under which the generic strategies.</p>	<p>The five forces model, generic strategies and the value chain analysis can be seen as the main analytical frameworks for analysing competitive position.</p> <p>The tools from Porter were of such importance for the major analytical tools of the planning school.</p>	<p>The BCG-matrix is mentioned as the traditional tool which can be used for guiding formal strategizing.</p> <p>There are 30 studied cases, industries, in which the application of the strategizing methodologies and tools are examined. In one of the cases, the five forces model was used as a demonstration tool. Through the model, it was made clear how the selection of the alternative industries change the business environment. The five forces model formed the base in the main strategy process.</p>

Reason why strategic management tool is mentioned		The article focuses on Michael Porter's vision on strategy and competitiveness. For this reason, the tools of Porter are mentioned.	The tools are mentioned because of the study in the practical field. It can be stated that a couple of cases apply the BCG-matrix or the five forces model.
Benefits and cons positioning school/strategic management tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is stated that the positioning school emphasise rivalry. However this emphasis does not bring much new to politics (con). - The checklist style in utilising economic reasoning can be useful for policy makers and public managers. This could be especially useful in understanding the number of actors in the industry operates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The five forces model focuses on industry. This is seen as a con, because the individual firm is not close enough analysed. Industrywide factors are less important to the profitability of an organisation in comparison to the firm-specific factors (R. P. Rumelt, 1991). - The implication that all the five forces apply the same to every company in industry is seen as a con. This actually differs among businesses which differ from each other in size, strength or brand name. - The five forces model is mentioned as the most powerful tool to analyse business environment (benefit). - Regarding the generic strategies, the article state that there is evidence of successful companies with a combination of cost leadership strategy and differentiation strategy (e.g. Toyota). - Generic strategies do not form the base for competitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The BCG-matrix falls under the traditional tools which have several benefits. These tools focus on key issues and offer a structure for analysis (which is also mentioned at the description of the formal group). Besides the structure for analysis, it also offers a framework for strategizing and the decision process of strategy. - There also some cons regarding the traditional tools (BCG-matrix). The first con is about the simplification in application of the tools. The traditional tools can be applied simple, but this can be a danger. Because of the simplification, there is a lack of explanatory value. The tools are quite compact. Besides the simplification, there are differences in views regarding the factors which should be included. - There are no benefits and cons described regarding the five forces model.

		<p>advantage. A company should develop unique firm-specific core competences which in turn result in outperforming competitors because companies do things different and better (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No critics to the value chain analysis. 	
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Article information	<i>The applicability of Porter's Generic Strategies in the Digital Age: Assumptions, Conjectures, and Suggestions (E. Kim, Nam, & Stimpert, 2004)</i>	<i>Rethinking and reinventing Michael Porter's five forces model (Grundy, 2006)</i>	<i>An Application of the Boston Matrix within Financial Analysis of NGOs (Giannakopoulos et al., 2014)</i>
Contribution of the article	"This paper examines how existing strategy frameworks, models and tools are, and are not, applicable in the new Internet age" (p. 570).	"The paper looks at a number of important opportunities for using Porter's model in an even more practical way" (p. 213).	"The aim of the paper is to determine the applicability of the Boston matrix in a financial analysis of NGOs" (p. 56).
Mention of the ten schools of thought	No.	No.	No.
Mention of positioning school	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Information about positioning school	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Definition strategy	There is no definition given.	There is no definition given.	There is no definition given.
Reference to Michael Porter or Boston Consulting Group	Michael Porter is mentioned in the article, because of his generic strategies framework.	Michael Porter focuses in his models on macro level, to be more specific, on the competition in a specific country.	The Boston Consulting Group invented the BCG-matrix in 1968. Henderson, one of the inventors of the matrix, used the model to explain that it could be attractive to invest into a market share which grows. Cited from the article:

			“Keeping differentiated shares in companies with different potential risks and opportunities are the key characteristics and predispositions for a portfolio planning” (p. 58).
Strategic management tools of positioning school	Generic strategies.	Five forces model.	BCG-matrix.
Information of strategic management tools	<p>Firms which only apply the generic strategies framework outperform companies which carry on more than one strategy (Dess & Davis, 1984; L. Kim & Lim, 1988).</p> <p>There are several studies which focus on the relationship between strategy type and the performance of a company. The strategy types can also be mentioned as the generic strategies. The generic strategies framework turns several possible strategies into four strategy types.</p>	<p>From a sample based on participants at strategic management courses at a certain business school, it can be stated that approximately 15% till 20% of the participants do know the concept of Porter. From this percentage, just 5% applied the concept and analysed it accurately. Some other numbers indicate that the awareness level of the SWOT analysis is 90% till 95%, and an active analyse level of 50%. Cited from the article, “Porter’s starting point was that he wanted to account for long-term variances in the economic returns in one industry versus another” (p. 214).</p> <p>There is a gap between the PEST and SWOT model. This gap is met by the five forces model.</p>	<p>The speed of growth and market share depends the amount of cash flow which is generated by a company.</p> <p>The study contained 36 randomly chosen nongovernmental non-profit organisations. These organisations received an e-mail to give their opinion about the BCG-matrix. From all the answers, most of the organisation are unknown with the BCG-matrix. The organisations which are familiar with the matrix, do not implement/use it comprehensive. The respondents were not convinced that this matrix was useful for a non-profit organisation.</p>
Reason why strategic management tool is mentioned	Framework of generic strategies is sued because of the relationship with firm performance and the framework overlaps with other typologies (Miles et al., 1978).).	The five forces model is widely used within business schools. However in the work field, to be more specific, the practising managers outside of an MBA, did not use it as much as it is used within business schools.	The article focuses on the BCG-matrix within the field of nongovernmental non-profit organisations. Because these organisations do need an analysis of the financial situation, the SWOT and BCG-matrix were used to analyse the strategic plans.

<p>Benefits and cons positioning school/strategic management tool</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This article examined the use of the generic strategies framework in the world of e-business. The generic strategies differentiation and cost leadership are applicable in the overall e-business firms. However, the focus strategy will not be as viable as it is for traditional business firms. - Because industry environments do not provide the need for cost leadership strategy differentiation strategy, there is relatively no reason to say that one strategy should be applied (Murray, 1988). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The five forces model has several benefits. First of all the micro-economic theory is set out into five major influences in just one model. It also emphasise the function of competitive rivalry among the other forces. Thirdly, the model offers help in predicting the long-run rate of returns in a specific industry. In relation to the SWOT-analysis, the five forces model ensures that managers look more at the external environment. - There are also several limitations to the five forces model. Cited from the article “It tends to over-stress macro analysis” (p. 215). Besides this limitation, the model fails in concrete management actions. The third limitation is about the encouragement of the mind-set that an industry has ongoing boundaries. Also the model can be seen as a ‘stand-alone’ model. It is not really related to other factors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nongovernmental non-profit organisations adjusted the matrix to fit it more to their daily ‘business’. This adjusted matrix shows the current situation of actual, future and previous financial sources. - The adjusted matrix does not give any new or more information than other analyses. It can be stated that the BCG-matrix in its origin is not applicable to non-profit organisations.
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Appendix 4: Matrix results semi-structured interviews

According the anonymity of the conducted interviews, the results are disclosed from this thesis. This appendix can be viewed on request.