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Porter's Forces For Native Fruit Plants Grown In Pots And Sold In Curitiba, Paraná State

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Abstract
The article analyzes some of the native fruit plants that can be cultivated in pots, with special attention to the way that companies market these plants for cultivation in urban homes. After Porter's generic strategies are read and analyzed, strategists are confused about which strategy to pursue or which strategy to implement in their organization to provide better performance for their companies. Although Porter has carefully analyzed the industry environment, competitive forces and competitive strategies that must be built by companies to obtain competitive advantages, he lacks to present strategies by quantitative results, identifying how "separately" each of the three generic strategies impacts the company performance. The objective of the research is to analyze the possible influence of the implementation of Porter's generic strategies in the commercialization of native potted plants: (a) low-cost strategy; (b) differentiation strategy; and (c) focus strategy on the company's performance in the manufacturing sector.

Keyboards: NTFP. Fruit. Porter

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I. INTRODUCTION

In recent research on specialized sites, printed literature and publications in general form are rare exceptions to research on this subject. Some experiences only in the production of these seedlings and in the marketing only ads on sites of trading companies. Therefore, there is no data, information and research that deals specifically with this market of native fruits in pots.

Specifically, the growth of the pot-grown plants market was driven by some factors. The recent urbanization that occurred in Brazil mainly during the 1970s and 1990s, a period in which the Brazilian population left the countryside to occupy the urban centers and, especially, the peripheries of large cities (IBGE[1]).

The rural exodus, caused by the modernization and expansion of the agricultural frontier, combined with industrial development, drove this urbanization and brought as a consequence profound changes in the population's consumption habits.

Nowadays, the recent pandemic, caused by the Coronavirus (Sars Cov 2), which has ravaged the world, has also brought many changes in the market and also many uncertainties about the way populations consume and this fact has been impacting the markets of goods and services, causing changes in consumer habits.

As a way of preventing infection by this virus many consumers have avoided physical stores and are increasingly turning to online forms of commerce known as e-commerce which shows that consumer needs have obviously not disappeared.

In Brazil, especially regarding the plant trade, this activity represents an important source of income and work for the population. As it has great biodiversity in its flora, the country has comparative advantages capable of providing excellent opportunities in this area. The national biodiversity, globally recognized, allows obtaining several natural products and among them we highlight the domestication and trade of native potted fruit plants.

These fruit plants represent an important income-generating activity and work for traders in Brazil and reduction of environmental impact since they are already domesticated species thus reducing the impact of exploitation in Brazilian biomes, although extensive literature search that preceded the preparation of this article, evidenced the almost complete absence of studies that address this issue.

It is within this context that the present article analyses aspects of the commercialisation of native pot-grown fruit plants in Curitiba, capital of Paraná. To this end, Porter's forces were employed to better position companies in this activity.

The objective of the research is to analyze the possible influence of the implementation of Porter's generic strategies: (a) low-cost strategy; (b) differentiation strategy; and (c) focus strategy on the company's performance in the manufacturing sector.

II. MATERIAL AND METHOD

This qualitative research focused on understanding the dimensions of the forms of commercialization of native fruit trees planted in pots and, to this end, Porter's 5 forces were used to validate the data using a bibliographic and practical approach, seeking information that would allow for the validation of the data.

As already mentioned, no academic production on native pot-grown fruit species was found in the country, so it was decided to visit the marketing sites and conduct interviews with traders.

The field research was conducted during the months from August to November of the year 2020 as retailers were interviewed traders located in Curitiba due to the delimitation of the researched area.

In practice there is no way to ensure research reliability without having information from the entire population to compare with the sample, so there would be no need for sampling as in this case the researcher is not interested in all aspects of the population (BIERNACKI, WALDORF[2]).

From the forwarded surveys returned, with similar characteristics and accepted responses 10 (ten) companies that market these species in retail located in Curitiba. This criterion was used by the author's delimitation to study companies with similarities of marketing. The companies that responded differently from the others may be objects of further researches.

The questions formulated in the questionnaires were prepared based on already established methodologies (REZENDE[3]; PEREIRA[4] ;CHIAVENATO and SAPIRO[5] ; CALAES, BÔAS, GONZALES[6]).

Among the various native fruit trees produced in pots, eight (8) were selected as a sample to understand the total universe of these commercialized species. The species selected were araça, ariticum do mato, caju, cherry bush, guabiroba, jabuticaba, pitanga and uvaia, which were among the most cited by respondents. Some species were selected in order to standardize the research to compare sales of the same product; however, the interviewed companies sell many varieties of seedlings.

Research of this magnitude has shown that companies, during their life cycle, can face strong competition that leads them to failure. This was the reason that aroused our curiosity to research the relationship between Porter's generic strategies and company performance, as a means of diminishing the scale of corporate failure. The findings of this article enrich the strategic literature with empirical evidence and offer an opportunity for business strategists to choose the path that will provide their organizations with survival, increased profit, and increased market share.

Thus, the present study focused on understanding the dimensions of the forms of commercialization of native fruit trees planted in pots and, to this end, Porter's five (5) forces were used to validate the data through a bibliographical and practical approach, seeking information that would allow for the validation of the data, characterized as a qualitative research.

To obtain the data required for this research, primary sources of information were primarily used, and questionnaires were used as a data collection instrument, targeting the managers or responsible officers of the responding companies.

The article was prepared as of the analysis of secondary data for literature review (scientific publications and articles from specialized databases and other databases), considering primary data in the form of quantitative research conducted at respondent companies that operate their business activities in the city of Curitiba, state of Paraná.

For the empirical analysis of the study, data werecollected by means of self-administered questionnaires.

The questionnaire prepared based on the analysis that showed the factors under which each of Porter's generic strategies will be effective:

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Islami*"et al"*[7] in their article Relationship between generic strategies, competitive advantage and organizational performance: an empirical analysis discourse:

Michael Porter, born in Michigan, USA, in the year 1,947, is considered one of the most influential specialists in strategic planning and strategic competitiveness. For him, competition is not relegated to merely competing with competitors. More than that, it is in relation to a large chain that involves the company, at various levels, and it is from this understanding that the concept of the five competitive forces arises.

In this first major conceptual approach, Porter proposes that a company's performance should be attributed to the average performance of all other competitors in the industry, focusing on its profitability.

Through the analysis and understanding of the five competitive forces, it would be possible to obtain some kind of advantage in the market, thus establishing a strategy to achieve this. Still, it is through these five forces that it will be possible to glimpse how is the competition in a given sector, with which force is materialized. Based on this, the goal of competitive strategy for an organization is to find a position in the sector where it can best defend itself or even influence them for its own benefit.

Threat of new competitors. This strength refers to the degree of ease or difficulty that a competitor faces to enter a sector. The more complex the entry, the less competition will be and therefore the greater the chances of profits in less time.

Porter visualizes some barriers that can hinder the entry of new competitors, such as economies of scale, product differentiation, capital requirements, switching costs, access to distribution channels, and government policy.

Substitute products. This other competitive force refers to the degree of ease with which a consumer can replace a product or service for another, there is an exchange for something similar or alternative. For example, electronic security systems replaced the use of people who performed such a service, i.e., in this case we see a product that replaced a service.

Bargaining power of buyers**.** As for this other force, it is relative to the power that consumers may possess, to the extent that not all are equal, often using means to force price reductions, eating in large quantities or in batches. Thus, for example, a large network can buy (and sell), on a large scale, eating at a lower price and selling at a more competitive price, working its profit margin, as opposed to a small company, which will not be able to compete on an equal footing.

Bargaining power of suppliers. In this strength, Porter notes that the characteristics resemble buyers' bargaining power, but outlines some peculiarities, determining that suppliers' strength will be greater in cases where they do not have to face substitute products in the industry, their products are essential to the buyer (dependency relation), implying the threat of the supplier becoming a potential competitor.

Rivalry among competitors. This last force, the clearest in terms of competition in an industry, Porter states that the degree of competitiveness of an industry is determined by the rivalry between competitors.

Porter describes competitive strategy as being synonymous with decisions, where offensive or defensive actions must occur with the purpose of creating a position that allows to defend itself in a sector, to be able to deal with the five competitive forces and thereby achieve and expand the return on investment.

He also notes that there are several ways to position oneself strategically, varying according to the sector of operation, capacity, and characteristics of the organization. However, the author outlines that there are three major strategic pillars, i.e., three major strategies that will act directly within the scope of the creation of competitive advantage.

According to Porter:

Its cost position provides the firm with a defence against rivalry from Competitors, as its lower costs mean that the firm can still generate returns after its competitors have invested their profits to combat rivalry.

A low-cost position defends the firm against powerful buyers, as buyers can exercise their power only to reduce prices to the level of the next most efficient competitor. Low cost provides a defense against suppliers by offering more flexibility to deal with cost increases. The factors leading to a low-cost position typically provide substantial barriers to entry in terms of economies of scale or cost advantages.

Finally, a low-cost position typically places the firm in a favorable position with respect to substitutes relative to its competitors in the industry.

Thus, a low cost position protects the company from all five competitive forces, since bargaining can only continue to erode profits until those of the next most efficient competitor are eliminated and because less efficient competitors will suffer first when faced with competitive pressures" (PORTER[8]).

To choose the cost leadership strategy, as well as the others, one must first verify which of them is the most ideal for the organization, since one or the other might not fit the company's characteristics.

Organizations that opt for the differentiation strategy necessarily need to invest more in research than cost leaders, in addition to having better product designs.

Furthermore, most of the time it is necessary to use more expensive and better quality raw materials in its products, as well as to invest more in customer service. There is also the Marketshare factor, because necessarily in this strategy, there is a greater segmentation of customers/markets in which it will operate.

In addition, they have to be willing to give up part of their market share.

However, it is seen that differentiation is a proven viable strategy, insofar as it can provide situations of loyalty to the brand/product, which ends up generating a defense against rivals.

The needs, desires of customers vary constantly, which requires constant investment in research on the part of supporters of differentiation, in order to avoid obsolescence of their products / services.

Furthermore, an organization that does not have any of these well defined strategies cannot maximize its profitability, its organizational culture is not well defined, and there are conflicts in decisions and in the efficiency of its processes, among other negative aspects.

It is from a careful analysis of the entire value chain that it will be possible to obtain important and necessary subsidies for the correct choice of strategy to be adopted.

According to Aerts[9] increasing global market, internationalizing companies, today, the uncertainty of companies increases much more, consequently the ambiguity of companies in answering the questions, what do we have to do? and how to do this? It is improved. As well as many other questions that increase the need to have a strategy, the importance of strategy is greater today than ever before. Moreover, it is worth answering the question: how important is it to have a good strategy?

The first challenge faced by companies entering the market is to find a way to survive in that market. Statistics and studies show that about one third of European start-ups do not make it to their second year of existence, while 50% -60% of them can only survive into their seventh year.

Eurostat Statistic[10] Explained states that currently, companies are losing energy in finding methods that offer them to maintain their existing market position, as well as to increase market share and profit. About 55% of new entrants fail within the first 5 years. According to Eurostat, about 83% of the companies newly born in 2011 survived in 2012, while over the years a gradual decrease is marked only by 45% of the companies created in 2007 that were active in 2012.

Baum JAC[11]; Carroll GR[12]define that the mortality rate of organizations tends to decrease as they age. Hannan MT, Freeman J [13]defines that newborn organizations suffer a "novelty liability". Hannan[12]in which they must learn how to survive and must create successful patterns of operations despite having limited resources.

Fichman M, Levinthal DA[14] Slightly older organizations may suffer an "adolescent liability" in which they may survive for a time in their initial storage of resources, but then their failure rate tends to follow an inverted U-shaped pattern as they age while companies in the decline phase try to find ways to have a longer life cycle in the market.

Barron DN, West E, Hannan MT[15] Older organizations can suffer an "obsolescence liability" if their operations are highly inertial and unchanging and become increasingly misaligned with their environment.

Therefore, to survive, be more profitable and increase market share, companies must create strategies.

Regarding organizational strategies, organizations are called "specialists" if they can survive only within a limited range of resources. However, companies are called "generalists" if they can survive using a wide range of resources (HANNAN MT, FREEMAN J[16]).

Empirical research has shown that organizations that are more generalist in nature tend to last longer than specialized organizations (MILES JA[17]).

Generalist organizations tend to have more resources than they need for routine operations and only operate at full capacity when responding to unforeseen environmental demands. Generalist organizations also tend to introduce more new products and go beyond their typical market segments than specialized organizations (SORENSON O, MCEVILY S, REN CR, ROY R[18]).

IV. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Based on the literature cited by testing the hypotheses of this study, the gap in the existing strategic literature dealing with the relationship between Porter's generic strategies and firm performance will be filled.
In order to provide the empirical evidence for the most important of Porter's generic strategy, which enables the firm to enhance the competitive environment, the following hypotheses should be tested.
Hypothesis 1. Low cost strategy has a positive relationship with firm's performance operating in a competitive environment.
Hypothesis 2. The differentiation strategy has a positive relationship with the performance of the company operating in a competitive environment.
Hypothesis 3. Focus strategy has a positive relationship with the performance of the firm operating in a competitive environment.
By testing the hypotheses, the data provides whether Porter's generic strategies have a positive or negative relationship with firm performance.

V. RESULTS

Table 1. Price of fruit plants in the retail trade.

Young plants height between 0.50 cm and 1.0 m	Price Minimum	Price Medium	Price Maximum
Araçá	R$ 30,00	R$ 32,75	R$ 35,50
Ariticum	R$ 35,00	R$ 39,50	R$ 44,00
Cashew	R$ 42,00	R$ 61,00	R$ 80,00
Wild Cherry Tree	R$ 35,00	R$ 39,00	R$ 43,00
Guabiroba	R$ 41,00	R$ 58,25	R$ 75,00

Jabuticaba	R$ 54,00	R$ 72,00	R$ 90,00
Pitanga	R$ 30,00	R$ 32,75	R$ 35,50
Uvaia	R$ 35,00	R$ 39,50	R$ 44,00

Source: Author 2020.

In the interviews with retailers it was found that the prices of seedlings are determined by quality, plant conditions and even by supply and demand.

Even young seedlings that have already flowered, seedlings with fruit, even if similar to other plants, suffer price differentiation in relation to others with the same cultivation time that have not yet flowered or fructified, despite having been acquired from the producer or nurseryman for the same price.

We observe that in the tables, of the results, presented below, for each determining question, there are three other columns, "evaluation", "inverts" and "grade". In the "evaluation" column, the corresponding question is evaluated based on knowledge about the company and the market it operates, responding according to the established criteria. For each criterion, scores ranging from 0 to 5 are assigned, which can be seen in the table below. Table 2 has the names of N and S, which correspond to NO and YES, respectively. This approach is used to fill in the column "inverts" in the first table

Table 2. Score given in the evaluation - Porter.

	N	S
Very high	5	0
High	4	1
Average	3	2
Low	2	3
Very low	1	4
Zero	0	5

Source: Nardi[19] . Adapted by the author (2021).

Table 3. RivalrybetweenCompetitors.

Decisiveissues	Evaluation	Inverts	Note
Evaluate market share X annual growth rates X industry growth.	Very high	N	5
Comparison of fixed X variable costs and simulation of possible changes of growth and adaptation to demand variation.	Low	S	3
Differentiation of the product / service in relation to competitors.	Average	N	3
Evaluate the quantity X diversity X degree of influence of competitors.	Average	N	3
Arithmetic mean			3,5

Source: Nardi[19] . Adapted by the author (2021).

At the companies researched, it was noted that companies are able to evaluate their market share, observe growth rates and even the sector's growth, however have little ability to reverse or act to modify these indexes, which are self-regulated by the market. Few of these companies with efficient management on the control of the fixed and variable costs however with training and adaptation to the technology exists all the possibility of inversion in this situation. There is little product differentiation, when all the seedlings are young and none of the interviewees has its own production, thus being subjected to what the market presents. The traders can empirically evaluate the quantity, diversity and degree of influence of the competitors, but they do little to reverse this condition.

Table 4. Customers' bargaining power.

Decisiveissues	Evaluation	Inverts	Note
Perception of product quality in relation to possible substitutes or competitors.	Average	S	3
Requirements in relation to flexible payment and delivery terms.	Verylow	S	4
Relative costs for company to switch customers x costs for customers to switch products.	Very high	N	5

Degree of product differentiation and brand perceived by the customer in relation to competitors.	Verylow	S	4
Arithmetic mean			4,5

Source: Nardi[19] . Adapted by the author (2021).

Bargaining Power of Customers, and its power to attract new customers factor that is perceived by the interviewees with medium possibilities of reversing this position. With little demand in relation to flexibility of payment terms and delivery and possibility of reversal, as well as the relative costs for the company to change the clientele and the degree of differentiation and product brand perceived by the customer in relation to competitors is very high and without possibility of reversal by the company. In a situation of urgency, the companies of the sector need to search new clients and to have in a clear way which is the effectiveness of its attraction and conversion strategies. The case is not necessarily to choose good clients, but to act strategically in case of cancellation of key accounts, developing action plans and controlling expenses efficiently, in a constant and pragmatic way.

Table 5. Bargaining power of suppliers.

Decisive issues	Evaluation	Inverts	Note
Degree of dependence on the supplier or in relation to exclusivity in supply.	Average	S	2
Costs inherent to the change of supplier.	Verylow	S	4
Degree of flexibility in negotiating payment terms.	Average	S	2
Regularity of delivery times.	Average	S	2
Arithmetic mean			2,5

Source: Nardi[19] . Adapted by the author (2021).

The bargaining power of its suppliers is quite relative, since there is a good number of these, The suppliers are not very influential in the business and with little bargaining power, So in a medium way can ponder and reflect, as well as the possibility of choosing great suppliers.

Table 6. Threat of entry from new competitors.

Decisive issues	Evaluation	Inverts	Note
Access to distribution channels and raw materials.	High	S	1
Technological use and adaptations.	High	S	1
Brand image and product / service differentiation.	Average	S	2
Investment needs and adaptation costs.	Average	S	2
Regulatory requirements for new entrants.	Low	N	2
Arithmetic mean			1,6

Source: Nardi[19] . Adapted by the author (2021).

There is little to influence or how to hinder the entry of new players. New entrants in a competitive landscape arrive with ambition to win market share and desire to change the status quo, putting pressure on costs, prices and profit margins. It is observed that marketers take the frequent concern that they must protect their business and create barriers to new entrants as important. Strong brands, patents and exclusivity agreements are some ways to do this.

Table 7. Threat of substitute products.

Decisiveissues	Evaluation	Inverts	Note
Assess the risk of replacement of the product or service and the estimated timeframe for this.	High	N	4
Measure the costs of changing inputs, development and technologies to achieve substitution.	High	S	1
Projection of the product or service life cycle and adaptations according to the real demand and market dynamics.	Average	S	2
Arithmetic mean			1,6

Source: Nardi[19] . Adapted by the author (2021).

The current technological scenario is increasingly agile and merciless with obsolete or rudimentary tools and processes, so substitutes emerge with extreme speed and unparalleled strength. The companies' greatest enemies in this case are: assuming that their competitive position is assured and blindly trusting in their clients' loyalty. Create mechanisms for monitoring competitors and implement a culture of feedback with customers, added to research and development and technologies to satisfy them. In a high degree the marketers are open to use new tools for monitoring new technologies and were open to innovation.

VI. DISCUSSION

Are the companies that answered the questionnaires operating in a competitive market? This question emphasizes the environment in which the companies competed, since it is known that Porter's generic strategies are suitable only for companies that operate in the competitive sector. If these companies did not operate in a competitive market, the results of this study would not be significant for the strategic literature.

Which of Porter's three generic strategies has the most impact on company performance?

The low-cost strategy can be especially effective under the following conditions (when price competition among rival sellers is especially vigorous;

When the rival sellers' products are essentially identical and supplies are readily available from any of several eager sellers; when there are few ways to achieve product differentiation that has value to buyers;
When most buyers use the product in the same way; when buyers incur low costs in switching their purchases from one seller to another; when buyers are large and have significant power to bargain for prices;
When newcomer traders use low introductory prices to attract buyers and build a customer base).

Low cost strategy
Low cost strategy $_1$ = Raw material insurance, negotiation of price reductions with suppliers.
Low cost strategy $_2$ = Standardization of products / services
Low cost strategy $_3$ = Product / service efficiency
Low cost strategy $_4$ = Maximum utilization of company capacity
Low cost strategy $_5$ = Offering the products / services with a lower price than competitors
Low cost strategy $_6$ = Control of company overheads

The differentiation strategy can be especially effective under the following conditions (when there are many ways to differentiate the product or service and many buyers perceive these differences as having value; when buyer needs and uses are diverse; when few rival firms are pursuing a similar differentiation approach; when technological change is accelerating and competition revolves around rapidly evolving product features).

Differentiation strategy
Differentiation strategy 1 = Development of new products / services
Differentiation strategy 2 = The degree to which new products / services are launched on the market
Differentiation strategy 3 = Increasing the intensity of advertising and marketing
Differentiation strategy 4 = Differentiation through reduction of project time
Differentiation strategy 5 = Sales power development and training
Differentiation strategy 6 = Creating a good name and image
Differentiation strategy 7 = Offering unique products

The focus strategy can be especially attractive under the following conditions (when the target market niche is large, profitable and growing; when industry leaders do not consider the niche crucial to their own success; when industry leaders consider it too expensive or difficult to meet the specialised needs of the target market niche while taking care of their core customers; when the trade has many different niches and segments, thus allowing a focuser to choose a competitive and attractive niche suited to its own resources; when few or no other rivals are trying to specialise in the same target segment).

Focus strategy
Focus strategy $_1$ = Targeting a specific part of the market
Focus strategy $_2$ = Offering products to that market segment that pays high prices
Focus strategy $_3$ = Offer specific products to fit a certain number of customers

VII. CONCLUSION

- The objective of this study was to discover the impact of Porter's generic strategies on increasing company performance, by analyzing each of the generic strategies: low-cost strategy, differentiation strategy, and focus strategy.
- The results of this research showed that three of Porter's generic strategies are important in increasing firm performance.
- Furthermore, the empirical results indicated that pursuing the differentiation strategy has a greater impact on increasing firm performance compared to two of Porter's other generic strategies.

- The application of Porter's generic strategies allows companies to successfully achieve the essential objectives of every company which is to survive, be profitable and increase market share.
- The data used in this manuscript are primary data, and questionnaires were used as a tool to collect these data.
- The distributed questionnaires contain the anonymity statement, assuring respondents that their personal data will not be published anywhere: "Anonymity: Only the researcher will have access to the physical responses.

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