CHAPTER 5

CRITIQUE ON METHOD EMPLOYED

CHAPTER 5 CRITIQUE ON METHOD EMPLOYED

It is envisaged that, the problems of designing strategy at the top of the organisation and then hoping 'they' will implement it. The strategy so created, however abstractly clever or artful, may not fit the culture of the corporation, may not be acceptable to customers, may be seen as representing an imposition from the above, attack the scope from people who previously enjoyed, and may create an invidious distinction between those who think and those who do, which is unflattering to the latter group. "What is sauce for the goose may not be for the gender".

The methodology employed in this project, to design a strategy for ACSB using strategic management framework, may be quite useful. It is not a panacea and therefore it is worth to go through a debate from bottom up. It is through debate that helps to bring out different views and perspectives, identify issues or assumptions that need to be addressed, promotes communication and provides a basis for discussion on views.

Thus, the strategic management framework together with system thinking also help to polarise the question on what assumptions had each viewpoint make about the reality for it to come to a conclusion. The idea of critical assumption underlying each of the different information source will give rise to a very critical review of each viewpoint. In sum, this significant project has enlightened the author's the process of continuous learning.

Another critique was brought up during this research was the question of "Should a corporate go flat out to enhance its competitive position?" as suggested by Michael Porter(1980). This includes enhancing its power over retailers or suppliers, gaining a large market share and attacking those trying to enter, achieving a superior technology advantage and/or privileged access to scarce resources. According to this view, the corporation has an adversarial stance vis-à-vis most other economic actors. To co-operate extensively with other economic units will lead inexorably to collusion, that is, to companies ganging up on some third party, typically the consumer. The only route to ever higher quality and ever lowered costs is competitiveness and more competitiveness. This is the emphatic position of western–type capitalism in which serving the consumer is essentially the by-product of the competitive rivalry in which self-interest is the key.

The other side of the dilemma argues that it is the co-operative aspect of the European Union, of the Japanese, or consortium of companies formed in Malaysia, that is the real key to economic strength. Moreover, it is the cluster of companies in an industry, not single competitors, which are the genuine of the companies playing as a team, feeding resources to the better of solo players. The problem with too many competitive and adversarial relationships is high transaction costs involve in opportunistic behaviours, exploitative manipulations and hidden or distorted information. Consumers are supposed to be your allies but too often they are treated as adversaries, too, to be bombarded with blandishments.

Is it possible to reconcile these conflicts and create a synergy of "co-operative competing" or "co-optation"?

A local businessman said it is possible but one need to be absolutely clear as to what you are aiming for and how these values can be fined-tuned and what the learning process which combines these values are like. When we compete, we differentiate products, people and performances. We see them in contrast with each other, the better and worse, sometimes on several dimensions. When we co-operate, we communicate and transfer these contrasts, so that others learn what is best as "winners", teach "losers" how they how they won but, of course, the fortunes of the "losers" are thereby transformed. All life and learning requires differentiation and integration. When we compete, we differentiate ourselves. When we co-operate, we re-integrate ourselves.

Having identified current competencies, the company needs to carefully assess the viability in the future. In this world of rapid change, competencies which provide superior performance today may well be eclipsed in the future by newer competencies that are highly valued by the customers.