**ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** This paper aims to summarize and discuss key findings in the literature around the main responses used by incumbents in order to anticipate or counter-attack disruptive up-starters and hence to partially or totally tackle the innovator’s dilemma.

**Methodology:** The research method is based on critical and comparative literature review. Hence, by narrowing down the scope of studies papers using a multi-stage selection process, this paper discusses other scholars’ research and findings on the topic of disruption innovation and the directions well-established firms choose to avoid being disrupted.

**Findings:** This paper enumerated some main strategies invoked in a finely selected literature advised for incumbents wiling to escape disruptive threats. It suggests that these strategies share a common exploitation/exploration basis but are implemented in distinct ways and have different impacts across the organization. It also discovered many missing parts in the literature that stand for interesting research opportunities.

**Value Added:** This literature review contributes to the current body of knowledge by providing an overview of the main incumbents’ responses to disruptive threats. It also identifies some current gaps in research and provides recommendations on how to close them.

**Recommendations:** This paper builds on hitherto literature in order to present state-of-the art approaches to disrupt or resist disruption. It categorizes these responses into internal and external, and proactive vs. reactive. While these strategies are studied in different contexts and are labeled distinctly, this study proposes a common frame displaying a similar underlying purpose to all of them. It also provides some updated research avenues for scholars to inspect.