

Artificial Intelligence in Strategic Management Research: Current Status and Future Prospects

Zhi Yang Ruichen Zhang

(School of Management, Huazhong University of Science and Technology)

Abstract:

Purpose: Artificial Intelligence (AI), characterized by autonomous learning and complex analysis, has challenged the traditional view in strategic management research that technology is merely an auxiliary tool. The role of AI in this field has evolved into a multi-dimensional morphology. This paper aims to construct a four-dimensional analytical framework to elucidate the application forms of AI in strategic management research, systematically reshaping the understanding of AI's impact on the entire knowledge production chain.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Based on a systematic review of existing literature in top journal, this paper constructs a comprehensive framework that categorizes AI's roles in strategic management research into four dimensions: as an analytical tool, an overall phenomenon, a specific variable, and a research paradigm. The study further analyzes the logical interconnections and progressive relationships among these four forms.

Findings: Through the proposed framework, this paper identifies four key application forms: (1) As a set of analytical tools, AI supports new variable development by converting multimodal data into quantifiable empirical constructs; (2) As an overall phenomenon, AI provides new research contexts, generating novel strategic topics and testing or challenging existing theoretical assumptions; (3) As a specific variable, AI drives the exploration of new mechanisms, acting as an antecedent or consequence in corporate strategic settings; (4) As a research paradigm, AI establishes new pathways for theory generation, fostering a shift toward data-driven and multi-method integration. Furthermore, these roles of AI form a spiral ascent relationship, propelling research from technical applications to paradigm transformation.

Originality/Value: Unlike previous fragmented discussions, this paper provides an integrated "Tool-Phenomenon-Variable-Paradigm" framework. It clarifies the "spiral ascent" logic of AI's influence, offering a clear "analytical coordinate" for the field and revealing how AI affects strategic management research from methodology to theoretical foundation.

Implications/Research Limitations/Suggestions For Future Research: This paper suggests that future research should move beyond simple application to deeper exploration. We propose several directions for future research: ①From the tool perspective, focus on the integration of Generative AI (e.g., Agentic AI) and address the validity and interpretability of AI-based measurements; ②From the phenomenon perspective, deepen the inquiry into specific issues like algorithmic collusion and human-machine collaboration, while emphasizing contextual heterogeneity and dynamic evolution; ③From the variable perspective, open the "black box" of micro-mechanisms and explore cross-level interactions between individual AI adoption and organizational strategy; ④From the paradigm perspective, promote the fusion of computational and theoretical approaches and engage in philosophical reflection on the nature of strategy in the AI era.

Key Words: artificial intelligence; strategic management; multiple application roles of AI

Management Research on Artificial Intelligence: A Comparative Analysis

Jiguo Qi¹ Linghang Li² Lun Li³ Yong Li⁴

(1. School of Economics and Management, China University of Petroleum Beijing;

2. School of Economics and Management, Tsinghua University;

3. Business School, Beijing Normal University;

4. Lee Business School, University of Nevada, Las Vegas)

Abstract: Existing studies have explored AI – related topics across multiple subfields of management, including organizational behavior and human resource management (OBHR), innovation, entrepreneurship, strategy, and international business. However, prior management research lacks comparative analyses that cut across subfields as well as across Chinese and English studies. Addressing this gap, the present paper analyzes 406 articles published between 1995 and 2025 in 87 leading Chinese – and English – language journals. Our findings identify similarities and differences in management research on AI across subfields and across Chinese – and English – language literatures, and, on this basis, we propose five directions for future research.

In OBHR, Chinese and English literatures exhibit strong thematic overlap. Both focus on structural transformations in organizational and HR systems following AI adoption, the dynamics of human – AI collaboration, employees’ attitudes toward AI, and ethical and governance challenges associated with AI applications. Within this shared agenda, however, Chinese research often situates these issues within the specific context of China’s national “digital transformation” policies and addresses distinctive local challenges, such as managing a large flexible workforce and navigating high – context communication cultures. In contrast, English literature in OBHR tends to explore these themes across more diverse organizational contexts and demonstrates an earlier, stronger focus on developing micro – level causal mechanisms and theoretical frameworks for understanding human – AI interaction.

In innovation research, both literatures converge on core issues such as the drivers of AI – enabled innovation, AI – driven innovation outcomes, and AI’s role in building innovation ecosystems, while also differing in topical emphases and contextual grounding. Chinese innovation studies often align with national strategic priorities, such as fostering “new quality productive forces” and supporting specialized and innovative SMEs, reflecting a policy – driven orientation. In comparison, English innovation research focuses more on the micro – foundations and specific application scenarios of AI – driven innovation within firms, increasingly extending to structural analyses of the global innovation landscape.

In entrepreneurship, both bodies of work highlight AI’s critical role in entrepreneurial opportunity recognition, yet they diverge in analytical perspectives and focal areas. Chinese entrepreneurship research is characterized mainly by qualitative, case – based studies that theorize the growth mechanisms and developmental trajectories of AI start – ups within China’s entrepreneurial ecosystem. English literature in entrepreneurship is more quantitative and theory – driven, examining how AI shapes uncertainty, influences start – up valuation and financing, and functions as a “super – tool” that enhances the efficiency and quality of entrepreneurial action.

In strategy, both literatures attend to how AI reshapes competitive advantage and enables human – AI synergy. Nonetheless,

Chinese studies emphasize macro – level transformation frameworks and localized practices, often linked to narratives of industrial upgrading and national industrial policy. English studies engage more in theory testing and micro – level mechanisms, exploring how AI challenges or extends strategy theories (e. g., Resource – Based View, dynamic capabilities) and scrutinizing the effectiveness and legitimacy of algorithmic decision – making within organizations.

In international business, the two literatures differ markedly. English research prioritizes conceptual and theoretical development, focusing on how AI reshapes the logic of firm internationalization, how institutional differences affect global innovation in the AI era, and how AI can serve as a novel methodological tool for data analysis and construct measurement. Chinese studies are more policy – and practice – oriented, emphasizing AI – enabled supply chain resilience and value chain upgrading, and responding to strategic concerns about industrial security and technological autonomy in a complex global environment.

Overall, management research across the five subfields display a similar pattern: Chinese research tends to integrate local managerial contexts and practices, responding to distinctive institutional environments and policy imperatives, whereas English research spans more diverse settings and places greater emphasis on introducing new constructs and building theory, often aiming for generalizable insights.

Given the review of existing literature, we argue that although AI research across management subfields has made significant progress and developed relatively clear thematic themes, substantial opportunities remain. These include the potential benefit from dialogue and complementarity between Chinese – and English – language scholarship; overcoming disciplinary boundaries that constrain theory development despite the strong coupling of these domains in practice—particularly given the relatively limited research in innovation and entrepreneurship where AI applications are highly active; addressing the concentration of empirical samples in large firms and the limited attention to SMEs and emerging markets; strengthening research on how institutional and cultural factors shape mechanisms under a shifting global order; and accelerating methodological innovation enabled by AI technologies.

To capitalize on these opportunities, we propose five priorities for future research: (1) fostering dialogue and exploring complementarity between Western and Chinese research paradigms; (2) breaking down subfield boundaries in management to promote theoretical and methodological integration, while strengthening AI research in innovation and entrepreneurship where practice is vibrant but scholarship remains comparatively limited; (3) broadening the empirical lens to examine distinctive mechanisms and theoretical contributions of AI adoption in SMEs and emerging markets; (4) systematically investigating how institutional and cultural differences moderate AI's pathways and effects across contexts; and (5) leveraging AI technologies—such as machine learning and large language models—to advance methodological innovation and enhance data analysis and theory building. Progress along these directions will help scholars generate new insights for comparative research and for distinctive contexts.

Key Words: artificial intelligence; management; comparative analysis; literature review

Digital Platform Ecosystems: Reconceptualizing the Logic of Gaining Firm's Competitive Advantage in the Context of Digital Economy

Jiao Hao

(Business School, Beijing Normal University)

Abstract: With the rise of digital technologies, the creation, allocation, and recombination of productive resources are undergoing profound changes. Industry boundaries and standards are becoming blurred, labor markets are being reshaped, and power asymmetries in the digital era are increasingly evident. In this context, digital platform ecosystems, enabled by digital technologies and driven by data, play an ever more critical role in socio economic development. Digital platform ecosystems not only integrate platform technologies but more importantly embody networks of interdependence formed through technology enabled multi party participation, emphasizing value co creation and rational value distribution among stakeholders. These ecosystems constitute a key organizational form in the digital economy that interfaces with human technological advancement.

This study argues that resolving network externalities constitutes a precondition for digital platform ecosystems to generate competitive advantage. The emergence of ecological value spillovers is rooted in the mechanisms through which digital platform ecosystems realize such competitive advantage. From the perspectives of customer multi cscenario demand, ecosystem products, and the creation of end cuser competitive advantage supported by platform ecosystems, this paper further examines the internal logic through which digital platform ecosystems contribute to competitive advantage.

Keywords: digital economy; digital technology; data driven development; digital platform ecosystems

How can digital technical standards affect enterprise digital innovation?

— Interpretation from the perspective of legitimacy theory

Linqing Liu Chengye Li Liwen Tan

(School of Economics and Management, Wuhan University)

Abstract: Existing literature presents a paradox regarding the impact of technology standards on innovation, with a notable gap concerning government – led digital standards in emerging economies. Prior research often overlooks the dynamic legitimacy process and the distinct role of political connections. From the perspective of legitimacy theory, this study posited that government – promulgated digital technology standards shape the legitimacy of the technological field. We hypothesized that the relationship between digital technology standards and corporate digital innovation follows an inverted U – shape, driven by the dual mechanisms of “legitimacy empowerment” and “legitimacy liability.” Furthermore, we argued that firm’s state – owned identity significantly moderates this relationship by strengthen both mechanisms therefore making the inverted U – shape relationship steeper.

This study employed a longitudinal design using data from Chinese A – share listed companies (2011 – 2023) including 22, 432 firm – year observations. The dependent variable, corporate digital innovation, was measured as the log – transformed count of a firm’s annual digital patent applications. The key independent variable, digital technology standard, was measured as the log – transformed count of active government – led digital standards in a firm’s industry each year. The state – owned identity was measured as a dummy variable. The analysis controlled for firm – level characteristics and incorporated industry and year fixed effects.

The results strongly supported our hypotheses. A significant inverted U – shaped relationship was found between digital technology standards and corporate digital innovation. The moderating effect of firm’s state – owned identity was also confirmed. These findings remained robust after addressing endogeneity with an instrumental variable and through a series of robustness checks.

This study offers significant theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it advances the literature by introducing a dynamic legitimacy perspective to explain the non – linear impact of government standards on innovation in the digital realm. It further refines the understanding of complex institutional logics by revealing the nuanced moderating role of firms’ state – owned identity. Practically, the findings underscore the importance for policymakers to adopt a dynamic standard – setting strategy to avoid overload and for firms to tailor their innovation strategies according to the stage of standard development and their specific political resources.

Keywords: digital technology standards; digital innovation; legitimacy theory; state – owned enterprise; institutional logic

The Current Research Status of Internationalized Firms’ Return to Home Countries

Ziliang Deng^{1,2} Yiyang Wang¹

(1. China Center for Economic Research, National School of Development, Peking University;

2. Institute of South – South Cooperation and Development, Peking University)

Abstract: In an era of de – globalization, internationalized firms reconfigure their global operations more frequently. In particular, a growing number of internationalized firms are returning to their home countries. The return of internationalized firms refers to the adjustments that aim to reduce the dependency on overseas markets and move a larger percentage of operations back to the home countries. Prior studies on returning to the home country explored various routes to reposition the supply chain, including reshoring, nearshoring, and friendshoring. Studies in the field of de – internationalization also discussed how internationalized firms return to home countries in response to operational failure or external shock in overseas markets.

However, the research attention on the de – internationalization is still limited compared to the rich literature on the internationalization process. Moreover, scholars consider returning to home countries mainly as a temporary adjustment to internationalized firms’ overseas failures, which has underestimated its strategic importance in the sequence of internationalization and de – internationalization. Therefore, a more refined framework is required to depict the motivations, process, and effects of internationalized firms’ return to home countries.

This paper is based on the progress of our project, funded by the National Natural Science Foundation of China. We first systematically review the existing literature on reshoring and de – internationalization to clarify the concept of internationalized firms’ return to home countries. We applied the broad definition that includes both the direct and the indirect returns. Internationalized firms’ return to home countries is thus defined as the strategic actions that aim at reducing the dependency on the overseas markets and enhancing the competitive advantages in the home market.

We then apply multiple theoretical perspectives to analyze the strategic motivations of internationalized firms to return to home countries, including the behavior theory of the firm, institutional theory, resource dependence theory, and real options. We also categorize the various internal and external factors that are related to the return to home countries. In addition, we compare the short – term and long – term effects of returning on internationalized firms’ overseas and domestic operations. Therefore, we provided an overall view of the literature and theoretical development in this field.

Finally, we outline the main findings of the research project. In particular, we present a “pendulum – like process of internationalization” model that depicts the sequence of expanding into overseas markets and returning to home countries under high overseas volatility. The model uses the concept of momentum and potential energy from physics to explain how internationalized firms adjust the scale of overseas operations and return to their home countries in response to external disturbances. Our model reveals that with the momentum brought by the disturbances, the internationalized firms temporarily switch between home return and overseas expansion, which resembles a pendulum – like process of internationalization.

Our research has several theoretical and managerial contributions: First, we integrated different perspectives to provide an o-

verall view of the literature on the motivations, process, and effects of internationalized firms' return to home countries. Thus, we inspire future research on the de-internationalization process and home market strategy. Second, we develop a "pendulum-like process of internationalization" model, which explains how internationalized firms return to home countries in response to external changes. We also conceptualize the shifts between returns to home countries and expansion to overseas as a potential value creation process. Third, our study has a managerial contribution to managers who are navigating geopolitical tension and decoupling risk. We suggest that internationalized firms should adjust the scale of domestic and overseas operations depending on the level of external volatility, thus reserving the resources and maintaining strategic flexibility.

Based on the research findings, we propose three directions of future research: Firstly, future research can further explore the specific adjustments that internationalized firms apply during the sequence of internationalization and de-internationalization, especially the shifts and conjunctions between adjustments. Secondly, our findings encourage more research on the patterns and effects of internationalized firms' return to home countries. Based on the framework of the "pendulum-like process of internationalization" model, it is also promising to analyze the transfer and reconfiguration of knowledge in overseas and domestic markets. Researchers can also explore how internationalized firms adjust their global strategy and organizational structure in coherence with the home market strategy. Thirdly, under heightened geopolitical tension, risk resistance of internationalized firms has become a critical topic. Thus, researchers can further investigate how the internationalized firms return to their home countries to avoid external risk, while maintaining potential for future overseas expansion.

Key Words: internationalization; home country; return; reshoring

The Screening Effects of “Off – the – Job” Indiscretions by the “Key Persons” of China’s Listed Companies

Jiaqian Xu¹ Liping Xu² Wenchang Liu³ Yu Xin²

(1. School of Accounting, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies;

2. School of Business, Sun Yat – sen University;

3. Strategy Department, Mobvista Technology Co. , Ltd.)

Abstract: The public image of key persons of listed companies constitutes a significant component of the company’s reputation. The existing literature has extensively discussed the effects of on – the – job behaviors of listed companies’ key persons, but largely ignores the off – the – job behaviors. Such kinds of behaviors can lead to key person risk, which refers to the disproportionate negative impacts on the company’s operations and market value due to the presence, absence, or actions of key persons, such as controlling shareholders, actual controllers, or senior management. The exposure of key – person indiscretion constitutes key – person risk. Prevention and governance of key person risks of listed companies are crucial to the sound development of the capital market.

According to the screening theory, due to information asymmetry, investors can judge the inner characters of key persons through observable actions, qualifications, and other explicit screening indicators, thereby adjusting their investment decisions. Therefore, this paper examines the screening effects of key – person risks arising from the exposure of key persons’ indiscretions, specifically how the listed company and investors are negatively impacted by the off – the – job indiscretions of key persons and explores whether high – quality corporate governance can mitigate these negative impacts.

This paper manually collects 83 off – the – job indiscretions of key persons of listed companies in Shanghai and Shenzhen Stock Exchanges from 2008 to 2021. Based on the screening theory, it examines how the behavior of investors (including external investors, all shareholders, and core major shareholders) and corporate performance are impacted by the exposure of these incidents. The findings indicate that: (1) The investors conduct screening reactions upon receiving the signal of off – the – job behaviors of key persons. The market reaction is negative to the news on the key persons’ indiscretions both in the short – term and medium – term; shareholders promote the management turnover and the adjustment of ownership structure. (2) The exposure of key persons’ indiscretion leads to a decline in the company’s operating performance. (3) The negative impact of key persons’ indiscretion on company performance was significantly alleviated in companies with higher internal control quality and lower agency costs. Therefore, off – the – job indiscretion poses a key – person risk that should not be overlooked, and affects the performance of listed companies, but high – quality corporate governance helps mitigate these negative impacts.

The contributions of this paper are as follows. Firstly, this paper explores the screening effects of the exposure of key persons’ off – the – job behaviors from the perspectives of investors and in terms of operational performance based on the Chinese context. This enriches the literature on executive behavior and extends the application scenarios of screening theory. Secondly, whereas previous studies have focused on how specific traits or behaviors of key persons affect their on – the – job behaviors and thereby influence corporate operations, they have largely ignored the importance of key persons’ personal integrity as a productivity force. Unlike

prior research based on on – the – job behaviors, this paper provides empirical evidence related to the economic consequences of key person’s off – the – job indiscretions. Thirdly, this study expands the corporate misconduct literature from the perspective of key persons’ off – the – job behaviors. Lastly, the findings of this paper hold significant practical implications for both corporations and regulatory authorities. Listed companies should pay close attention to reputation management for their key persons, while regulatory bodies should supervise the behaviors of these key persons outside the workplace.

Keywords: off – the – job indiscretions, key – person risk, screening theory, corporate governance

JEL Classification: M14; G38

Carbon Risk, M&As Announcement Textual Features, and M&A Value

— Empirical Evidence from Green Mergers and Acquisitions by Heavily Polluting Companies

Listed on China’s A – share Market

Xue Chen¹ Qihui Zhu¹ Jianbing Hu² Dazhi Chu¹ Xin Chen³

(1. College of Management, Shenzhen University;

2. China Construction Bank, Xiamen City Branch;

3. Shenzhen Audencia Financial Technology Institute, Shenzhen University)

Abstract: Green mergers and acquisitions (M&A) represent a pivotal strategic initiative for corporate environmental governance, with their execution and valuation being significantly influenced by a firm’s exposure to carbon risk. While extant literature has predominantly examined carbon risk through a risk – management lens, focusing on its impact on M&A activity and premiums, the informational value embedded within carbon risk—as a signal interpreted by the capital market—remains substantially underexplored. To address this gap, this study employs signaling theory to develop a novel analytical framework that links “carbon risk – M&A motivation – M&A value creation”. This framework posits that the market deciphers carbon risk signals heterogeneously, contingent on whether a green M&A is perceived as stemming from reciprocal motivations (e. g. , genuine strategic transformation towards sustainability) or instrumental motivations (e. g. , primarily seeking regulatory compliance or legitimacy) .

Empirically, we analyze a sample of green M&A transactions announced by heavily polluting A – share listed firms in China from 2012 to 2022. Our finding reveals a inverted U – shaped relationship between a firm’s pre – acquisition carbon risk and the value creation (as measured by cumulative abnormal returns) of its green M&A. This inverted U – shape is not a mere statistical artifact but the equilibrium outcome of two countervailing signaling effects. We theorize and find supporting evidence that carbon risk can send a positive signal when the market attributes the acquisition to reciprocal motivations, suggesting that higher risk necessitates and validates a serious strategic green transformation. Conversely, carbon risk emits a negative signal associated with value erosion when the market suspects instrumental motivations, as high risk then signals heightened regulatory pressure and potential “greenwashing.” The confluence of these opposing forces peaks market valuation at moderate levels of carbon risk, creating the identified inverted U – shaped pattern. This discovery provides a novel, motivation – contingent explanation for how carbon risk transmits to capital market valuation within a transition economy.

Furthermore, we investigate the boundary condition of this signaling process by examining the moderating role of information disclosure quality in M&A announcements. The signaling power of carbon risk is particularly pronounced—and the inverted U – shape steeper—when announcements are of inferior linguistic quality, characterized by low textual neutrality, scant forward – looking statements, and high similarity to boilerplate templates. Crucially, we demonstrate that high – quality disclosure, which clear-

ly and specifically articulates strategic rationales and future environmental plans, can attenuate the market's marginal reliance on the carbon risk signal. By enhancing transparency around true motivations, superior disclosure helps mitigate investor skepticism, especially for firms with very high or very low carbon risk, thereby flattening the extremes of the value relationship.

Our findings yield significant practical implications for corporate managers. First, regarding timing, managers must recognize the signaling function of their firm's carbon risk profile. The value – creating potential of green M&A is maximized when a firm's carbon risk is at a moderate industry level, serving as a credible signal of transition without being indicative of severe regulatory distress. Firms should therefore integrate carbon risk positioning into their strategic decision – making to identify the optimal window for green M&A. Second, regarding communication, firms must proactively manage investor expectations by enhancing the quality of M&A disclosures. Employing objective, neutral language; bolstering forward – looking content on environmental strategy and transition pathways; and providing firm – specific context can effectively supplement the raw carbon risk signal. This reduces information asymmetry and guides investors toward a more accurate, favorable interpretation of the firm's motivations, ultimately safeguarding and enhancing transaction value.

This study acknowledges certain limitations that chart a course for future research. Our primary reliance on firm – level carbon risk metrics could be augmented by incorporating external textual data (e. g. , news, social media) to construct a composite signal index, differentiating heuristic from analytical signals. While we theoretically and empirically infer motivations, directly measuring the distinct constructs of reciprocal and instrumental intent remains challenging. Future studies could leverage exogenous policy shocks or advanced textual analysis via NLP to create motivation – specific keyword lexicons, enabling more precise testing of the proposed mechanisms. Despite these limitations, this paper fundamentally re – conceptualizes carbon risk from a mere hazard to a multifaceted information signal, offering a more nuanced understanding of its role in shaping the financial outcomes of corporate environmental strategies like green M&A.

Keywords: Carbon Risk; Green Mergers and Acquisitions; M&A Announcement; Textual Features

Research on the Impact Mechanism of Heterogeneous Environmental Strategy on Enterprise Green Transformation

Ling Ma Yiran Liu Minna Zheng Yanxiao Niu Xiaoyu Gao
(School of Economics and Management, Hebei University of Technology)

Abstract:

Purpose: Green development is the foundation of high – quality development, the new quality of productivity itself is green productivity, must accelerate the green transformation of the development mode. As the mainstay of economic development, enterprises urgently need to implement high – quality development. However, due to the different resources and capabilities of enterprises, their attitudes and approaches to environmental management also differ, which reflects the heterogeneity of enterprise environmental strategies. Existing research lacks the logic of the role of different types of environmental strategies on enterprise green transformation and its comparative research. Based on legitimacy theory and strategic choice theory, the research adopted a double fixed – effects model to analyze the relationship between heterogeneous environmental strategy and enterprise green transformation. Furthermore, the research also examined the moderating effect of environmental regulation.

Design: The research takes the listed industrial enterprises in Shanghai and Shenzhen A – shares from 2011 to 2021 as the research object. Firstly, we obtained the data from CSMAR, CNRDS, WinGo database and China Environmental Statistics Yearbook. Then we used Stata17.0 analysis software to process the data, and understood the basic characteristics of the variables through descriptive statistical analysis, and analyzed the correlation coefficients of the main variables, so as to judge the correlation between each main variable and the appropriateness of the selection of the variables. Finally, a double fixed effects model was used to test the research hypotheses proposed in this paper, and heterogeneity analysis, endogeneity and robustness tests were carried out.

Findings: First, both reactive and proactive environmental strategies positively affect the green transformation of enterprises, with the latter having a more significant effect on the green transformation of enterprises; this facilitating effect is more pronounced among large – scale, heavily polluting and eastern region enterprises, and this conclusion still holds after endogeneity and robustness tests. Second, Command – and – control environmental regulation positively moderated the positive impacts of reactive environmental strategies on corporate green transformation; market – incentive environmental regulation positively moderated the positive impacts of both reactive and proactive environmental strategies on corporate green transformation. Finally, this paper finds that reactive environmental strategies promote enterprise green transformation by improving adaptation, while proactive environmental strategies promote enterprise green transformation not only by improving adaptation and absorption, but also by increasing investment in environmental protection.

Value: In terms of theoretical contributions, this research bridges the existing research gap on the relationship between heterogeneous environmental strategy and enterprise green transformation, provides a new theoretical perspective on heterogeneous envi-



ronmental strategies and green transformation of enterprises, and identifies the boundary conditions of heterogeneous environmental strategies and green transformation of enterprises from the perspective of environmental regulation. In addition, this research reveals the mediating role of dynamic capabilities and environmental investments in the impact of heterogeneous environmental strategies on enterprise green transformation. In terms of practical significance, this research offers management insights and suggestions to enterprises and governments, guiding environmental strategies and green transformation.

Implications: First, based on Institutional Theory, this study explores the contingent effects of different types of environmental regulations within the relationship between heterogeneous environmental strategies and enterprise green transformation from the perspective of external supervision. Future research could adopt an integrated perspective combining internal governance and external supervision to investigate their interaction mechanisms. Second, this study employs empirical research methods, confined to a single model. Future studies could utilize case study methodology to uncover the stage – specific pathways of enterprise green transformation under heterogeneous environmental strategies, thereby enabling richer exploration. What’s more, focusing on industrial enterprises as the research subjects, this study did not concentrate on specific sectors or types of firms. Future research could conduct a more in – depth exploration targeting specific types of industries or enterprises, such as manufacturing or heavily polluting enterprises.

Key words: heterogeneous environmental strategy; enterprise green transformation; dynamic capacity; environmental regulation