

AI-ENABLED STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION: ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITIES AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN A CHANGING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

Artificial intelligence is increasingly reshaping business strategies, organizational capabilities, and sources of competitive advantage across industries. This paper provides a structured thematic literature review of recent studies on the role of AI in strategic transformation within a changing business environment. The review synthesizes findings related to digital capabilities, data-driven differentiation, organizational learning, responsible AI governance, and business model transformation. The Resource-Based View, Technology Acceptance Model, and Dynamic Capabilities Framework are used to interpret the main mechanisms through which AI affects organizational performance and strategic adaptation. The reviewed literature indicates that AI alone does not create sustainable competitive advantage; rather, its value depends on complementary organizational resources, process redesign, employee acceptance, governance, and the ability to adapt continuously. The paper concludes with theoretical and practical implications for organizations seeking to integrate AI into their strategic transformation processes.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, Strategic Transformation, Competitive Advantage, Dynamic Capabilities, Technology Acceptance, Organizational Change*

1. INTRODUCTION

The growing use of artificial intelligence in organizational decision-making is changing the way firms formulate and implement strategy. Rather than functioning only as an operational technology, AI increasingly supports strategic planning, business model development, and organizational adaptation. Previous research emphasizes that the strategic value of AI depends on an organization's ability to connect technological capabilities with managerial expertise and clearly defined business objectives (Kitsios & Kamariotou, 2021). From a strategic management perspective, AI can also enhance the quality and speed of managerial decision-making, although its contribution to business performance depends on how effectively it is incorporated into broader planning processes (Stipic, 2021). Digitalization has also encouraged organizations to reconsider traditional approaches to corporate strategy and business model design. Akmaeva et al. (2020) argue that contemporary political, economic, and technological developments require firms to adopt more flexible forms of management and to integrate advanced digital technologies into a broader range of business activities. In this context, AI may support faster infor-

mation processing, more adaptive organizational structures, and the development of new approaches to value creation. Its strategic relevance therefore extends beyond automation, as it can influence how organizations respond to environmental change, allocate resources, and pursue long-term growth.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH QUESTION SPECIFICATION

Digital transformation refers to organizational changes based on digital technologies. Digital transformation can be understood as a constant process in which digital technologies have a disruptive effect on the organization, imposing the need to develop an appropriate response, as well as changing the way the company will create value (Vial, 2019). AI contributes to the aforementioned phenomenon by accelerating the processes of prediction and learning, but also by improving the autonomous capabilities of digital systems. While digital transformation traditionally includes concepts such as business information systems, cloud technologies, mobile platforms or e-commerce, AI-driven digital transformation includes real-time analytics, intelligent automation, computer vision, generative AI, decision-making supported by machine learning and natural language processing. In contrast, Bharadwaj et al. (2013) argue that digital business strategy is a combination of business strategy and information technology. With the development of AI, business strategies and IT integration become easier, as AI is integrated into important products, customer engagement processes, management decision-making procedures and logistics. For example, it is possible to replace manual credit application assessment procedures with risk assessment with the help of AI algorithms; to replace traditional machine maintenance with proactive predictive maintenance; to replace generic marketing campaigns with personalized marketing recommendations; improving the treatment process by applying AI-based diagnostics and optimizing patient flow. The above examples clearly show that AI is changing both the process architecture and the logic of value creation in the company. Based on the resource-based theory of competitive advantage, advantage is gained by possessing rare, valuable, non-substitutable and difficult-to-imitate resources (Barney, 1991). In terms of AI deployment, competitive advantage cannot come from just having AI software, as nowadays, a large number of tools are readily available. Instead, the source of competitive advantage can be found in the combination of AI with the company's data, expertise in a certain area, the ability and agility of the organization to learn, the scalability of the infrastructure. AI capability is defined as an organization's ability to use AI-specific resources to improve business performance and foster creativity (Mikalef & Gupta, 2021). Table 1 presents the evolution of research priorities in the field of AI.

Table 1. Evolution of AI Research Focus

Research Focus	2018-2020	2021-2023	2024-2025	Growth Rate
AI Implementation Challenges	15%	4%	2%	-87%
Predictive Analytics	18%	6%	2%	-89%
Digital Transformation	22%	19%	8%	-64%
AI Ethics & Governance	8%	15%	18%	+125%
ML Applications	32%	38%	28%	-12%
Generative AI	5%	18%	42%	+740%

Source: Author's adaptation based on Shakil et al. (2025, Table 1)

Recent research suggests that the organizational benefits of AI emerge gradually rather than automatically following technological adoption. Holmström et al. (2025) conceptualize AI transformation as an organizational journey in which firms progressively build capabilities, establish a strategic direction, and communicate the purpose of transforma-

tion across the organization. Evidence also suggests that weak business outcomes from AI projects are frequently associated with insufficient organizational adjustment rather than with limitations of the technology itself (Gao, 2024). Accordingly, the implementation of AI should be viewed as part of a broader organizational transformation process. The introduction of new technology alone is unlikely to generate substantial strategic benefits unless it is accompanied by changes in organizational routines, structures, leadership practices, and culture. Research on digital transformation therefore stresses the importance of aligning technological initiatives with the organization's overall strategic orientation (Kemp, 2024). From the Resource-Based View perspective, the strategic importance of AI does not primarily arise from access to the technology itself. Because many AI applications are commercially available, firms are more likely to differentiate themselves through the complementary assets surrounding their use of AI. These may include proprietary datasets, specialized knowledge, skilled employees, technological infrastructure, and organizational routines that competitors cannot easily reproduce. AI can therefore contribute to sustained differentiation when it becomes embedded in a distinctive combination of organizational resources and capabilities (Azagury & Moore, 2024; Barney & Reeves, 2024). The Dynamic Capabilities Framework adds a temporal dimension to this argument by emphasizing the capacity of organizations to renew their resource base as conditions change. In an AI-intensive environment, firms need to recognize emerging technological opportunities, mobilize appropriate resources, and revise existing processes when technologies or markets evolve. Such capabilities allow organizations to move beyond static possession of AI-related assets and continuously adapt the way those assets are used (Doshi et al., 2025; Shakil et al., 2025). Based on previous studies, the following research questions are formulated:

1. What new sources of competitive advantage emerge from AI adoption?
2. Through which mechanisms does AI influence strategic decision-making and business performance?
3. Which organizational capabilities and transformation requirements enable successful AI integration?

3. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a structured thematic literature review based exclusively on secondary sources. The methodological approach follows the general principles of literature review research proposed by Snyder (2019), with the aim of synthesizing existing knowledge rather than conducting a systematic meta-analysis or primary empirical investigation. The review draws on peer-reviewed journal articles, review papers, and selected industry reports addressing artificial intelligence, strategic transformation, competitive advantage, organizational capabilities, technology acceptance, responsible AI governance, and business performance. Priority was given to recent studies published between 2019 and 2026 in order to reflect the rapid development of AI technologies, while several earlier seminal studies were retained where necessary to establish the theoretical foundations of the Resource-Based View, Technology Acceptance Model, and Dynamic Capabilities Framework. To enhance the transparency of the literature selection process, the literature search was conducted using Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The search strategy employed different combinations of keywords, including "artificial intelligence," "AI strategy," "strategic transformation," "competitive advantage," "organizational capabilities," "dynamic capabilities," "technology acceptance," "digital transformation," "AI governance," "strategic decision-making," and "business performance." These terms were combined in different ways to identify publications addressing the strategic and organizational implications of artificial intelligence. The literature selection process was con-

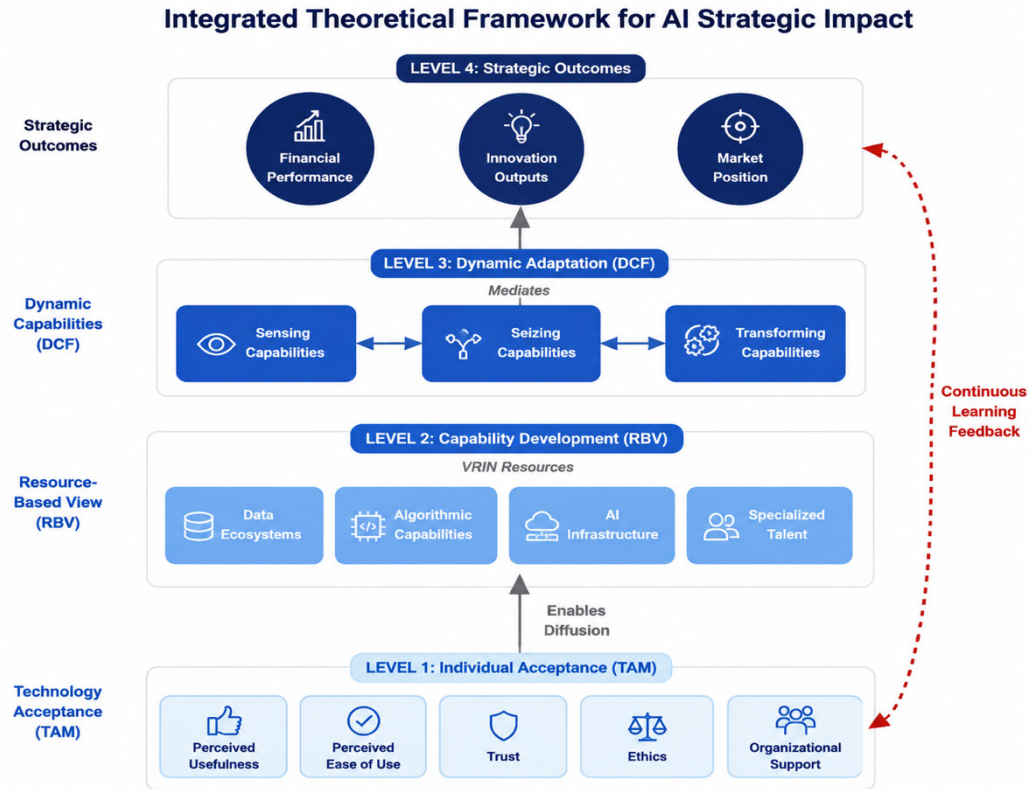
ducted in several stages. First, potentially relevant publications were identified on the basis of their titles, abstracts, and keywords. Second, studies considered relevant to the research questions were examined in greater detail. Sources were included when they met at least one of the following criteria: (1) direct relevance to the strategic application of AI in organizations; (2) contribution to the explanation of AI-enabled competitive advantage or organizational transformation; (3) empirical or conceptual evidence concerning digital capabilities, organizational adaptation, employee acceptance, governance, strategic decision-making, or business performance; or (4) relevance to the theoretical perspectives applied in this study. Studies focusing primarily on technical AI development without a clear organizational or strategic dimension were excluded. Priority was given to peer-reviewed academic publications indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, while selected industry reports were included when they provided recent empirical evidence, organizational statistics, or practical insights that complemented the academic literature. The selected literature was analyzed thematically. The analysis involved identifying recurring concepts and findings across studies and grouping them into several analytical themes: AI-related resources and capabilities, organizational transformation, process redesign, organizational learning, strategic decision-making, responsible AI governance, and business performance. Similar findings were compared across sources, while differences and emerging research directions were considered in order to develop a broader interpretation of the strategic role of AI. The interpretation of the reviewed literature was guided by three complementary theoretical perspectives: the Resource-Based View (RBV) ([Barney, 1991](#)), the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) ([Davis, 1989](#)), and the Dynamic Capabilities Framework (DCF) ([Teece et al., 1997](#)). These perspectives were used to explain different but interconnected dimensions of AI-enabled strategic transformation, including individual acceptance, organizational capability development, continuous adaptation, and strategic outcomes.

Based on these theoretical perspectives, the study adopts and adapts the integrated conceptual framework proposed by [Shakil et al. \(2025\)](#). The adapted framework organizes the strategic impact of AI into four interconnected levels:

- Level 1 - Individual Acceptance: The first level concerns employees' willingness to interact with and use AI-supported systems. Adoption is shaped by perceptions of usefulness and usability, organizational support, confidence in AI-generated outcomes, and ethical considerations.
- Level 2 - Capability Development: At the organizational level, firms develop the resources required for effective AI deployment, including data assets, technological infrastructure, AI-related expertise, and specialized human competencies.
- Level 3 - Dynamic Adaptation: Organizations continuously adjust and recombine their resources as technological opportunities and competitive conditions evolve. Such adaptation enables AI capabilities to remain strategically relevant over time.
- Level 4 - Strategic Outcomes: The interaction between acceptance, capability development, and organizational adaptation may contribute to innovation, stronger market positioning, improved financial performance, and more sustainable forms of competitive advantage.

Since the study is based entirely on previously published evidence and secondary data sources, it does not claim to provide new primary empirical evidence or independent econometric testing. Its contribution lies in the thematic synthesis of recent literature and the integration of complementary theoretical perspectives into an adapted conceptual interpretation of AI-enabled strategic transformation.

Figure 1. Integrated AI Strategic Impact Model



Source: Adapted from Shakil et al. (2025, Figure 3)

4. LITERATURE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. STRATEGIC PATTERNS IDENTIFIED IN PREVIOUS STUDIES

Evidence reported by [Azagury and Moore \(2024\)](#) indicates that organizations follow substantially different approaches to AI adoption. A relatively small group classified as “Makers” develops highly customized AI solutions and records the strongest sales performance. “Shapers” combine AI with proprietary organizational data and modify their business models, while “Takers” rely predominantly on standardized solutions with limited customization. The reported sales growth rates are 12.4% for Makers, 8.7% for Shapers, and 4.2% for Takers. These differences suggest that greater organizational commitment to developing distinctive AI capabilities is associated with stronger performance outcomes. [Shakil et al. \(2025\)](#) report statistically significant differences among the three strategic archetypes. The reviewed literature supports the Resource-Based View, according to which competitive advantage arises from the combination of AI capabilities and heterogeneous complementary resources rather than from AI technology alone (Table 2).

Table 2. Performance Comparison

Archetype	Sample %	Sales Growth	EBIT Impact	TRS Premium	Example Companies
Takers	51%	4.2%	1.8%	2.1 pts	Traditional retailers
Shapers	42%	8.7%	5.3%	10.7 pts	Walmart, JP Morgan
Makers	7%	12.4%	8.9%	15.2 pts	Microsoft, Bloomberg

Source: Author’s adaptation based on Shakil et al. (2025, Table 4)

The reviewed evidence also indicates that the performance effects associated with AI are influenced by an organization’s capacity to adapt. Dynamic capabilities can strengthen the link between technological adoption and organizational outcomes by enabling firms

to modify resources, routines, and processes as new opportunities emerge. At the same time, the relationship does not appear to operate exclusively through these adaptive mechanisms, since certain AI applications may generate direct operational benefits through automation. An important theme emerging from the reviewed studies is the redesign of work processes. Evidence reported by [Holmström et al. \(2025\)](#) suggests that organizations achieve considerably greater business impact when AI implementation is accompanied by substantial changes in the way work is organized. The reported average EBIT contribution reaches 7.3% in organizations undertaking comprehensive redesign, compared with 0.4% when implementation is largely limited to technological upgrading. Despite this difference, only around 21% of organizations have substantially redesigned their work processes ([Shakil et al., 2025](#)). Among the organizational practices considered in previous research, process redesign appears particularly important because it links technological adoption with changes in talent, data management, organizational support, and change management. This reinforces the broader argument that AI implementation should be approached as a sociotechnical transformation rather than as an isolated technology project.

4.2. SOURCES OF AI ADVANTAGE

The following discussion builds on and further interprets the six sources of AI-driven competitive advantage identified by [Shakil et al. \(2025\)](#). Proprietary organizational data can become an important source of differentiation when combined with AI capabilities. Firms that possess extensive, specialized datasets may be able to develop applications that are difficult for competitors to reproduce. BloombergGPT illustrates this principle by drawing on decades of financial information. However, effective exploitation of such resources remains limited: approximately 30% of organizations have developed comprehensive data-management arrangements for AI ([McKinsey & Company, 2024b](#)), while a substantial proportion of corporate information remains unstructured. Technological infrastructure represents another important foundation for AI-based advantage. Organizations with well-developed digital platforms can introduce and scale AI applications more rapidly than firms whose systems remain fragmented. Relevant infrastructure may include cloud-based environments, integrated data platforms, APIs, and modular digital architectures. [Deloitte \(2024\)](#) reports substantial differences in implementation speed between organizations with strong and weak digital foundations, while managerial confidence in existing digital cores remains relatively low. Organizational learning also affects the extent to which AI investments generate value. Firms that identify changes early, test possible applications, learn from pilot projects, and scale successful solutions are better positioned to convert technological experimentation into strategic outcomes. Previous evidence indicates that organizations characterized by faster learning processes obtain substantially greater benefits from their AI investments. This reflects the broader role of sensing, experimentation, and organizational renewal in dynamic capability development. Limited automation of individual activities may create short-term efficiency improvements, but deeper transformation occurs when AI is integrated across interconnected organizational functions. Such integration is more difficult for competitors to reproduce because it combines technology with organizational routines, knowledge, and complementary resources. The AI-supported drug-development platform used by Insilico Medicine provides an example of this approach, with reported reductions of 95% in development time and 99% in costs ([McKinsey & Company, 2024a](#)). External relationships can further support the development of AI capabilities. Collaboration with technology providers, research organizations, and specialized service partners may provide access to expertise and infrastructure that would otherwise require substantial internal investment. At the same time, the strategic use of AI increasingly depends on organizational

trust and responsible governance. Although only a relatively small proportion of organizations have fully institutionalized responsible AI practices, transparency, explainability, ethical data use, and accountability are becoming increasingly important elements of stakeholder confidence (Camilleri, 2024).

Figure 2. Sources of AI Advantages



Source: Author's adaptation based on Shakil et al. (2025, Figure 4)

4.3. STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING TRANSFORMATION

AI is changing strategic decision-making by expanding the amount of information that organizations can process and by shortening the time required to evaluate alternative courses of action. Scenario analysis. AI-supported systems can assist managers in exploring numerous possible future conditions and evaluating how alternative decisions may perform under different assumptions. This is particularly relevant to decisions involving markets, supply chains, resource allocation, and pricing. Forecasting and predictive analysis. Machine-learning techniques allow organizations to identify patterns in historical and real-time information and use them to anticipate changes in demand, market conditions, and risk. Such applications are increasingly used in financial services for fraud and risk assessment and in retail for demand planning, where inventory-related savings of approximately 20–30% have been reported (Forrester Research, 2024). Reduction of repetitive managerial workload. AI can take over selected routine decisions and analytical tasks, enabling managers to devote more attention to problems that require judgement and strategic interpretation. Previous evidence indicates that the time devoted to repetitive decision processes can be reduced by approximately 30–50% (Shakil et al., 2025). Support for more evidence-based judgement. AI may also help managers identify patterns that would otherwise be overlooked and can provide an additional analytical perspective when human judgement is affected by cognitive biases. Nevertheless, AI does not automatically eliminate bias. When historical data contain systematic distortions, algorithmic outputs can reproduce or even reinforce them, which highlights the importance of responsible AI governance (Camilleri, 2024).

4.4. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The reviewed literature supports the relevance of an integrated framework combining the Resource-Based View, the Technology Acceptance Model, and the Dynamic Capabilities

Framework. The RBV explains how valuable and difficult-to-imitate AI-related resources contribute to competitive advantage, while TAM highlights the importance of employee acceptance and organizational readiness. Recent empirical evidence further confirms that digital capabilities strengthen organizational innovation and competitive advantage by extending the Resource-Based View in the context of digital transformation (Ha, 2026). The Dynamic Capabilities Framework explains how organizations reconfigure their resources and capabilities in response to technological and market change. Recent research has further extended this framework by demonstrating that AI-enabled organizational capabilities support innovation and long-term sustainable development (Alsharaideh et al., 2026). Taken together, the reviewed evidence suggests that organizations derive greater value from AI when technological investment is accompanied by deliberate changes in business processes and organizational capabilities. From a practical perspective, managers should prioritize organizational transformation over the simple acquisition of AI tools and integrate AI with proprietary data, specialized capabilities, responsible governance, and continuous learning (Azagury & Moore, 2024).

Although the reviewed studies broadly agree that AI can strengthen organizational performance and strategic decision-making, they differ in how they explain the mechanisms through which such benefits emerge. Some studies emphasize more direct operational effects of AI, particularly through automation, predictive analytics, and improved information processing (Gao, 2024; Doshi et al., 2025). In contrast, research grounded in the Resource-Based View and Dynamic Capabilities perspective suggests that technological adoption alone is insufficient and that sustainable benefits depend on complementary organizational resources, process redesign, learning capabilities, and continuous adaptation (Mikalef & Gupta, 2021; Azagury & Moore, 2024; Holmström et al., 2025). This distinction is important because short-term efficiency improvements resulting from AI adoption should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of sustainable competitive advantage. Rather, sustained strategic value appears to depend on the extent to which AI becomes embedded in organizational routines, proprietary resources, and adaptive capabilities (Kemp, 2024; Shakil et al., 2025).

The reviewed literature also reveals different levels of emphasis regarding the human and organizational dimensions of AI adoption. While capability-oriented research focuses primarily on organizational resources such as data, technological infrastructure, specialized knowledge, and AI-related competencies (Mikalef & Gupta, 2021; Azagury & Moore, 2024), the Technology Acceptance Model emphasizes individual perceptions of usefulness and ease of use as important determinants of technology acceptance (Davis, 1989). In addition, recent research on responsible AI highlights the importance of trust, transparency, explainability, and accountability in organizational adoption processes (Camilleri, 2024). These perspectives are not necessarily contradictory; rather, they address different levels of AI-enabled transformation. Their integration suggests that successful strategic transformation requires alignment between individual acceptance, organizational capabilities, responsible governance, and the firm's ability to continuously reconfigure resources in response to technological and market change (Teece et al., 1997; Holmström et al., 2025).

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in integrating three complementary perspectives—the Resource-Based View, the Technology Acceptance Model, and the Dynamic Capabilities Framework—into a unified interpretation of AI-enabled strategic transformation. While these theoretical perspectives are frequently applied separately to explain organizational resources, technology acceptance, or adaptive capabilities, their combined application provides a more comprehensive explanation of how AI generates strategic

value. The proposed interpretation connects individual acceptance of AI-supported systems with the development of organizational capabilities, the continuous reconfiguration of resources, and the achievement of strategic outcomes. In this way, the study extends the existing discussion beyond technology adoption alone and conceptualizes AI-enabled transformation as a multilevel process in which human acceptance, organizational resources, responsible governance, and dynamic adaptation jointly shape the potential for sustainable competitive advantage.

5. CONCLUSION

This review shows that the strategic significance of artificial intelligence cannot be explained by technological adoption alone. Across the examined literature, organizational outcomes depend on how firms combine AI with data, human expertise, digital infrastructure, governance arrangements, and the capacity to modify existing business processes. The evidence therefore positions AI as part of a broader system of organizational capabilities rather than as an independent source of lasting competitive advantage. The review highlights the importance of combining the Resource-Based View, the Technology Acceptance Model, and the Dynamic Capabilities Framework to better understand how organizations create value through AI adoption. While the Resource-Based View explains the strategic importance of valuable and difficult-to-imitate resources, the Technology Acceptance Model emphasizes the role of user acceptance and organizational readiness, and the Dynamic Capabilities Framework explains how organizations continuously adapt their resources and capabilities in response to technological change. Together, these theoretical perspectives provide a comprehensive explanation of AI-enabled strategic transformation. The reviewed literature further indicates that successful AI implementation requires more than technological investment. Organizations that redesign business processes, develop digital competencies, establish responsible AI governance, and continuously strengthen organizational learning achieve more sustainable strategic outcomes than organizations that focus solely on technology adoption. Furthermore, trust, ethical AI practices, high-quality data, and collaboration with external partners emerge as important determinants of long-term organizational performance. Despite the growing body of research, several important research gaps remain. Future studies should further investigate the long-term organizational effects of AI adoption, compare implementation strategies across industries, and examine the interaction between technological capabilities, organizational culture, and human decision-making across different business contexts. Additional empirical studies are also needed to validate the proposed conceptual relationships and identify industry-specific factors influencing AI-enabled strategic transformation. This study is subject to several limitations inherent in the literature review approach. First, the analysis relies exclusively on previously published research and secondary evidence and therefore does not provide independent empirical validation of the relationships identified in the conceptual framework. Second, although the review follows a structured thematic approach, the selection and interpretation of relevant studies may involve a degree of researcher judgment. In addition, the inclusion of selected industry reports, while useful for capturing recent developments and practical evidence in a rapidly evolving field, may limit direct comparability with peer-reviewed academic studies. Finally, given the rapid development of artificial intelligence technologies, some of the strategic and organizational implications identified in the current literature may evolve as new applications, governance practices, and empirical evidence emerge. Overall, this literature review contributes to a better understanding of the strategic role of artificial intelligence by synthesizing recent scientific evidence and integrating key theoretical perspectives into a unified conceptual framework. The findings provide useful guidance for

researchers, managers, and policymakers seeking to implement AI successfully as a strategic resource for organizational transformation and sustainable competitive advantage.

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