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# DEVELOPING AI-ENABLED DYNAMIC CAPABILITIES FOR B2B INTERNATIONAL MARKETING: A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY OF PETROCHEMICAL FIRMS IN NORWAY AND CHINA

**Khalifah Almuzayyen[1*]**

*[1]Johns Hopkins University, United States.*

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*Corresponding Author: Khalifah Almuzayyen*

## ABSTRACT

***Artificial intelligence (AI) transformed marketing practices. However, its application in international B2B remains unexplored, especially in culturally diverse industries. Therefore, the study aimed to explore how petrochemical companies in Norway and China build AI-enabled dynamic marketing capabilities for B2B international marketing, focusing on strategic integration and cultural, behavioral, and organizational outcomes. Based on an interpretive qualitative design, 16 marketing personnel representing Norwegian and Chinese petrochemical companies were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis showed that Norwegian companies incorporated AI into strategic decision-making, market sensing, and customer targeting. In contrast, Chinese companies applied AI to operational efficiency and process scalability. The adoption behaviors were influenced by cultural factors, where Norwegian professionals emphasized transparency and user autonomy. Meanwhile, Chinese employees depended on managerial approval and hierarchical fusion. In both cases, implementing AI results in role changes where workers could shift to strategic participation. However, culturally specific resistance and adaptation strategies emerged in both countries' adoption of AI. The results indicate that AI policies should be culturally customized to boost implementation and strategic performance. The study contributes to the theory of dynamic capabilities by adapting cultural mediation and providing insights that managers can use to deploy AI in international B2B marketing with high levels of cultural uniformity.***

**KEYWORDS:** Artificial Intelligence, B2B Marketing, Dynamic Capabilities, Cross-cultural Management, Petrochemical Industry.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has grown as a back-end automation solution in the last few years, becoming a strategic transformer in global business-to-business (B2B) marketing. According to the McKinsey Global Survey on AI, more than three-quarters of companies in the industrial sector around the globe have implemented AI in one or more of their fundamental business processes [1]. As Ngugi [2] states, AI investment in marketing by global corporations has reached USD $47.32 47.32`billion in 2025, and it is expected to go beyond USD $ billion in 2028, which quantifies the core place of AI in commercial transformation. The place of AI in marketing and sales is among the three leading areas. AI has evolved beyond data analysis to more complicated tasks like predictive lead scoring, real-time customer profiling, automated negotiation, and dynamic pricing operated by AI in a B2B setting, especially in capital-intensive sectors of the economy like petrochemicals [1].

The petrochemical sector alone is expected to yield an incremental USD-140 billion to USD-80 billion of AI-driven business value by 2030. It will help shape the supply-chain efficiencies, customer targeting, and product innovation [3]. These instruments allow organisations to identify and respond to the markets faster and more accurately, increasing organisational dexterity in risky international markets. Regardless of these developments, Keegan et al. [4] opine that AI has not explored its potential in international B2B marketing, mainly because of the behavioural resistance, cultural mismatch, and contextual differences between AI systems and local business activities. The challenges faced in cross-cultural marketing include the existence of divergent norms in communication, relationship-building, and trust formation, all of which affect technological acceptance. Even though AI can be helpful in pattern recognition, it is not sensitive to cultural nuances, which influence decision-making and trust between people [5]. For example, Liimatainen [6] says that low power-difference cultures like Norway promote egalitarian discourse and free analysis of AI suggestions. However, unlike that, Liu [7] has documented that high power-distance and collectivist cultures like China are more likely to have a top-down decision-making, whereby subordinates hardly ever challenge managerial pronouncements on using AI. The identified cultural asymmetries affect the stakeholders regarding their perceptions of AI credibility, customer relationship management (CRM) systems, and algorithmic outputs in marketing.

Much like behavioural norms vary widely [4], an AI strategy that works in one cultural setting will not perform as well or even run counter to expectations in a different setting. This strain is especially relevant to petrochemical B2B companies, in which continuation of relationships, technical bargaining, and long-term contracts are decided based on trust [5]. Specifically, AI-assisted personalisation, which is focused on speed and efficiency, fits the Norwegian data-driven decision-making. It might, however, go against the Chinese culture where guanxi (personal relationships) and emotional familiarity take precedence [8]. Though Dwivedi et al. [9] and Mikalef et al. [5] admit that AI plays a strategic role in marketing, they do not research cross-cultural determinants of behavioural attitude to AI. This vacuum restricts the comprehension of the translation of the AI capabilities into the subsidiary-level performance. Similarly, Mukhopadhyay et al. [10] are concerned with the specialist view in India, and the question of how cultural cognition and organisational learning determine AI assimilation in other B2B settings remains unanswered. In its turn, this study fills an acute gap because, currently, firms are adopting AI at an unprecedented pace and, in most cases, they lack the understanding of the organisational potential and cultural changes that can create business value in a wide range of settings. Cozma and Cosma [11] are among the few researchers who focused on AI marketing in the business-to-consumer (B2C) framework due to the ease of buyer journeys and the individual-level data. Conversely, multi-stakeholder decision-making, long sales cycles, and negotiating with expertise, which are aspects that are not given much attention in the current research, are present in B2B marketing. In the petrochemical industry, AI implementation involves sophisticated data analytics, personalised products and advisory services that need advanced knowledge [12]. Current models, including the Technology Acceptance Model and the Diffusion of Innovation Theory, do not reflect such socio-technical messiness since they do not consider cultural cognition and relational trust in AI adoption [13]. Thus, the research also fills this theoretical gap by exploring how AI-based dynamic marketing capabilities will develop in the environments of different cultural and organisational frameworks in Norway and the petrochemical industry in China. The research aims are triple: to examine the strategic application of AI in B2B marketing, to find out how cultural factors affect the use of AI, and to

understand behavioural and organisational consequences -such as staff resistance, adaptation to learning and role redefinition in multicultural organisations.

This work bridges the gap between the perceived strategic benefits of artificial intelligence (AI) and their actual implementation by the international B2B marketing. Even though global enterprises spend lots of money on AI to automate decision-making processes and provide better customer engagement, few companies (around 2530 per cent) claim the anticipated ROI (return on investment) [14]. Gregoire [15] also found that only 26 per cent of the corporations are aware of a definite strategic purpose of AI, which is often explained by an absence of correspondence between technological design and cultural anticipations. This leads to poor AI performance due to poor integration, scepticism about ethics, and user adaptation. In line with this, the study explores the conditioning of successful implementation of AI-based marketing capabilities due to cultural behaviour, organisational learning and ethical leadership. Norway and China make an interesting contrast because they are both at the centre of the global petrochemical market but have divergent digital, regulatory, and cultural characteristics. According to the European Commission, Norway is a digitally developed, open and innovation-driven economy [16]. China is described as state-led digitalisation, hierarchic corporate systems, and relational network-based trust systems [17]. Although Chinese companies are the leading companies in the globalisation of AI, there are still ethical data surveillance and privacy issues. The comparative form of this study thus allows a deep evaluation of the interaction between local behavioural logics and global technological paradigms.

Theoretically, the paper is an extension of the dynamic capabilities framework based on the evidence of how cultural cognition and ethical leadership affect the integration of AI into B2B marketing systems. Graham and Moore [18] describe dynamic capabilities as the ability of a firm to sense, seize and reconfigure resources to respond to the market change; however, previous literature has rarely had cultural and relational reasoning as the sources of internal forces behind these activities. The paper advances a culturally responsive conception of AI-enabled strategy, incorporating organisational learning and cultural adaptability in the dynamic capabilities framework [19]. In addition, the work questions the current assumption of technological neutrality within the AI marketing theory. AI systems cannot be implemented elsewhere; design, communication style, and interaction logic are culturally determined. Keegan et al. [4] have discovered that AI tools that encouraged directness and task orientation were practical in Western Europe but were not cross-culturally validated in Asian markets. Therefore, the current research theoretically models the process of AI adaptation within culturally diverse B2B settings, highlighting the need for ethically adaptive and human-centred AI systems.

In practice, the study can be applied by managers, policy-makers, and technology designers working in the global petrochemical industry. The digital transformation market in oil and gas is set to grow to USD 56.4 billion by 2025-2029, making the need to align AI systems with the cultural realities apparent to result in performance and trust [20]. Companies that will not localise AI will likely experience reduced ROI, loss of reputation, and loss of trust among clients. To this end, the research suggests culturally sensitive customer relationship management (CRM) architecture, sales automation, and AI implementation based on ethics. Finally, the paper highlights the human-centred paradigm of industrial marketing where AI effectiveness relies on algorithms and values of the adopting organisation, its learning and ethical climates [21]. The study, by looking at how the Norwegian and Chinese companies find equilibrium in automation versus cultural sensitivity, adds to the collective, context-driven and sustainable methods of AI implementation that will be crucial in the future of global B2B marketing.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

### *2.1 Research Design*

This research paper follows the qualitative primary research design based on the interpretivist paradigm that is specifically appropriate in explaining how meaning, perception, and behaviour are formed concerning adopting artificial intelligence (AI) as a part of culturally diverse business-to-business (B2B) marketing practices. Unlike the quantitative method, qualitative methods can be used to achieve a profound understanding of organisational practices, sense-making, and contextual relations, which determine human and technological behaviour [22]. The interpretivist approach assumes reality is a creation of society and that knowledge develops through the recognition of subjective interpretations of experiences that participants have of lived life [23]. This

epistemological standpoint becomes necessary to show how actors in various national and organisational settings internalise and implement AI systems in their marketing strategies.

The interpretivist approach is particularly suitable when phenomena are dynamic, contextual and implicated within socio-cultural contexts [24]. The example of an AI application in B2B marketing of petrochemicals illustrates this case because it presupposes ongoing interactions between the human mind and culture and algorithmic logic. Aithal et al. [25] argue that qualitative inquiry enables the researcher to investigate the micro-levels of behaviour and unofficial organisational practices that are usually invisible to statistical models. In line with that, the qualitative design of the study allows a deep examination of the understanding, application, and acclimatisation of the AI integration in the setting of Norwegian and Chinese petrochemical companies, two culturally dissimilar settings, with analytical depth.

A semi-structured interview approach was used to produce profound information about the participants' experiences and perceptions of AI integration while preserving the confidentiality and comparability of the responses. The approach blends flexibility and structure, which makes it easy to have an open conversation with thematic prompts [22]. The semi-structured interview will be instrumental in the context of the technology adoption studies in complex organisational backgrounds since it will uncover the processes through which people make meaning and negotiate technology change [18]. Moreover, cross-cultural scholars support this design in conducting intercultural research since it allows the phrasing of questions and probing to fit in the local linguistic cues and cultural norms, which improves the level of trust and believability of the responses [26]. Therefore, a semi-structured format was adopted to get in-depth and contextually located stories about AI-based marketing activities' behavioural, strategic, and ethical aspects. Other approaches, like surveys, had been considered inadequate in controlling the richness of cognitive, relational, and cultural processes at the core of integrating AI [27].

### *2.2 Sample and setting*

A purposive sampling strategy ensured that the sample population had a first-hand, practical understanding of AI-facilitated marketing activities in the petrochemical B2B setups. Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental sampling, allows the researcher to select people who can give rich, relevant and diverse information at their own will [28]. The latter is popular in interpretivist qualitative research when the aim of the study is theoretical understanding and not statistical extrapolation [29]. It was conducted among sixteen respondents, eight from Norwegian petrochemical firms and eight from Chinese firms. The size of this sample is congruent with the research by Guest et al. [30], who concluded that thematic saturation of the qualitative interviews is common between twelve and sixteen interviews. On the same note, Kerareinen and Prior [31] affirmed that a B2B qualitative marketing research with twelve to twenty participants makes the research methodologically valid. The sample was drawn according to three inclusion criteria, namely, active engagement in the process of AI-enabled marketing or customer engagement; direct use or management of AI tools (e.g., CRM systems, predictive analytics, recommendation engines); and involvement in international B2B marketing where cultural aspects play a role in the marketing strategy. The digital roles portrayed were Marketing Directors, CRM Managers, Business Development Leads, and AI Project Coordinators- jobs that incorporate technical and strategic viewpoints required to understand AI adoption. The companies were based in Oslo and Stavanger (Norway) and Shanghai and Shenzhen (China), which were considered to be digital innovation hubs of the petrochemical sector [32]. These location choices boosted the cross-comparative design by contrasting mature and decentralised European digital ecosystems with state-backed hierarchical Chinese innovation settings.

### *2.3 Participants*

The sample was chosen purposely as it included sixteen petrochemical enterprise marketing specialists, and it was possible to provide depth cross-contextually and guarantee cultural balance. Eight interviewees were engaged in every country and represented the roles of marketing managers, CRM officers, analysts, and business development leads. Gender composition was equal, as there were eight male participants and eight females, and years of professional experience ranged from four to twenty years. This diversity was essential to capturing multi-level cognitive and strategic orientations to adopting AI [33]. The participants' educational experience was mainly at the master's level in business, data analytics, or engineering management, which guaranteed a highly educated group of participants able to discuss the integration of AI on a managerial and technical level. The

transferability and triangulation of insights were improved because operational and strategic professionals were included. The study produced multi-level and subtle results on the role of cultural cognition as a mediator of AI adoption in cross-border B2B relationships by integrating voices along organisational hierarchies.

### *2.4 Data Collection*

The data were gathered by using in-depth semi-structured interviews that were carried out during the period of January-March 2025. The interviews mostly took place in the English lingua franca of international business. However, those Mandarin-speaking participants were facilitated bilingually so that the language could be linguistically accurate and culturally sensitive. Using a bilingual research assistant enhanced the reliability of semantics and minimised translation bias, a critical safety measure in cross-cultural qualitative research [34]. The duration of each interview ranged between 45 and 70 minutes, which was audio-recorded after giving prior consent. Verbatim transcription was also created immediately after every session to conserve linguistic and contextual subtleties. The open-ended questions identified the participants' experience with AI integration and behavioural reactions toward automation, the perception of how marketing processes have changed, and the cultural or organisational obstacles to the implementation. A pilot study with two participants per country was also conducted to correct question wording, order and flow. The feedback from the pilot interview made slight adjustments to enhance clarity and logical flow, which are aligned with Shoozan and Mohamad [35], who highlight piloting as critical in creating qualitative designs that are valid and culturally adaptable. Besides the interviews, there was also documentary triangulation of existing resources like AI strategy documentation, CRM dashboards and memos, among others, to confirm and supplement interview results. The intersection between data sources boosts qualitative research's credibility, dependability and confirmability.

### *2.5 Data Analysis*

The collected data were analysed through thematic analysis in terms of six phases: familiarisation, coding, theme development, review, definition, and reporting, as suggested by Braun and Clarke [36]. Thematic analysis can be used in interpretivist research where the themes are inductively developed based on the participants' stories without the researcher forcing them into specific categories. Such an inductive method represented the authentic views of the participants about AI-based marketing adjustment. Manual data coding was done to maintain contextual richness and the researcher's reflexivity. Codes were classified under larger thematic groups related to cultural, behavioural, and strategic dynamics. In order to enhance reliability, one of the external qualitative researchers independently coded 25 per cent of the transcripts, and the intercoder differences were debated to a consensus point. This is an acceptable practice that should be adopted by Rose and Johnson [37] to improve validity and openness in cross-cultural qualitative analysis. The cross-cultural comparative matrix was utilised as the secondary layer of analysis to compare the themes of Norwegian and Chinese respondents. This approach is based on Zhao et al. [38], who suggest that cross-case analyses of multi-country studies should be performed with the help of matrices. For example, trust in AI is applied differently: Norwegian respondents focused on transparency and data traceability, whereas Chinese respondents prioritised the hierarchical approval and relations guarantee. These contradictions are manifestations of organisational behaviour logics that are culturally ingrained in relation to AI systems. Results were further put into the dynamic capabilities perspective, whereby the emergent behavioural patterns were also associated with the ability of firms to feel, capture, and reorganise resources in ways that would enable AI-based marketing [18]. The integration of this theory ensured that the results were analytically generalised to organisational theory instead of merely described.

### *2.6 Ethical Considerations*

The research followed the ethical principles presented in the Belmont Report, respecting persons, beneficence, justice, and fidelity, and was in line with the research ethics of MDPI [39]. Respondents were given an informed consent form with the study's objectives, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. The interviews were carried out using the language of choice of the participants, and cultural expectations were honoured to guarantee comfort and honesty. The strict use of anonymisation and secure data management was imposed through the encrypted digital storage per the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the China Cybersecurity Law [40]. There was exclusion of sensitive corporate information, and the non-invasive questioning style was used to reduce psychological or commercial risks. Member checking

was also conducted to increase validity and accountability; the participants reviewed summarised transcripts to ensure their interpretation was accurate. Also, cultural professionals checked the interview guide to be contextually appropriate and linguistically correct. This research paper shows that high moral and methodological standards regarding interpretivist rigour, cultural reflexivity, and procedural transparency have been followed. All these factors ensure the credibility, transferability, and trustworthiness of the research in examining the adoption of AI in the B2B marketing systems, which are culturally different.

## 3. Results

The section highlights the most critical results developed based on a thematic analysis of deep interviews with marketing specialists of the Norwegian and Chinese petrochemical companies. Three general themes relating to the study's goals emerged in the analysis of strategic integration of AI in the context of B2B marketing, Cultural mediation of the adoption and use of AI and behaviour and organisational consequences of the AI implementation (See Table 1). These themes were inductively identified using the transcripts of the interviews and subsequently conceptualised within the dynamic capability framework and national culture. A comparative perspective was used, emphasising how cultural and institutional variances influence AI-driven processes and experiences. The table with the themes, respective subthemes, and quotes representing the two countries has been provided below:

***Table 1: Thematic Analysis Summary.***

| Theme | Subthemes | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Theme 1: Strategic Integration of AI | AI for strategic decision-making (Norway) | Norwegian firms used AI to enhance strategic decisions, market sensing, and pricing analysis, while Chinese firms focused on automating processes for efficiency and scalability. |
| | AI for operational efficiency (China) | |
| Theme 2: Cultural Mediation of AI Adoption | Transparency and explainability (Norway) | Norwegian adoption relied on explainable AI and participatory adaptation, whereas Chinese adoption depended on managerial endorsement and hierarchical integration. |
| | Hierarchical endorsement (China) | |
| Theme 3: Behavioural and Organisational Outcomes | Resistance and adaptation patterns | Both contexts showed initial resistance: digital fatigue in Norway and job security fears in China. Adaptation led to role shifts towards strategic contributions in both countries. |
| | Role transformation | |

### *Theme 1: Strategic Integration of AI in B2B Marketing*

The first theme relates to the strategic incorporation of AI into global B2B marketing processes. Norwegian and Chinese subjects presented AI as a revolutionary feature that enhanced the competitive ability of their companies in the international petrochemical markets. Yet, the ways of integration were contemporary in different cultural settings. In Norway, implementing AI was part of a more comprehensive strategic transformation into data-enabled marketing choices. Respondents explained that AI helps companies improve their sensing capacity by systematically extracting market information from large volumes of data. The marketing manager said,

"*AI assists us in quicker decision-making on pricing and forecasting; it resonates with our logic-oriented values system.*"

Demand forecasting, customer segmentation, and market trend analysis were all carried out using AI-enabled analytics, consistent with the dynamic capability framework, which prioritises environmental sensing [41]. Marketing staff applied AI applications to capture new opportunities within targeted export markets and aligned their outreach strategies. Another Norwegian respondent mentioned that AI is used in strategic pricing:

*"We use AI models to calculate the optimal prices based on the previous deals, the competitor information, and the seasonal changes."*

These operations support the claim of Tanev et al. [42] that AI boosts market intelligence, allowing companies to develop precise and accelerated value propositions for international clients. Norwegian companies applied the output of AI in their weekly strategic sessions, during which human opinion and AI advice were merged to determine how to market their products. According to one of the sales leads:

"*We see AI as a tool, not a replacement.*"

This assertion provides an enhancement strategy for integrating AI such that human knowledge and AI intelligence are not substitutable; they are complementary. In addition, Norwegian respondents stressed the strategic importance of AI in building customer trust. The use of AI-based CRM technologies enabled them to tailor the messages and

anticipate the needs of their clients in advance, enhancing the relational embeddedness of long-term contracts that are characteristic of B2B trade in petrochemicals. This corresponds to the finding by Latinovic and Chatterjee [43], which notes that AI personalisation functionality is increasing customer experience and customer loyalty, a key factor in the high-value B2B marketplace. AI was also identified as a strategic enabler in China, yet its integration was primarily discussed in terms of efficiency and scalability of operations. One marketing executive noted,

*"AI improves efficiency, especially when we deal with high-volume B2B clients and negotiations".*

AI technologies have automated other routine tasks, including writing proposals, scoring leads, and scheduling follow-ups, allowing staff to manage more clients' accounts without compromising service levels. This is echoed by Taguimdje et al. [44], who state that AI augments firm performance through the cost reduction of transactions and the amplifying processing volume increases. The Chinese participants explained the integration of AI as an organisational structure under hierarchical decision-making. One CRM officer opined,

*"Effective task alignment ensures easy AI."*

The implementation of AI was conducted via the top-down process, where managers assessed roles and performance requirements. Such a practice is consistent with the finding of Tian et al. [45], who noted that Chinese companies implement technological change using formal planning and managerial control that reduces ambiguity. Respondents highlighted that AI had been implemented primarily to simplify procedures and not to innovate. According to a business development lead,

*"AI helps us do what we already do, but faster and with fewer errors."*

Rigid task assignments and performance monitoring systems meant that despite efficiency being the primary determinant, strategic learning of AI outputs remained minimal. As opposed to Norwegian companies in which the results of AI were used to guide strategic experimentation, Chinese companies conceptualised AI as an implementation tool in line with standardised goals. Although the respondents in Norway and China had various cultural backgrounds, both emphasised that strategic adoption of AI could only happen when there were alignments with workflows and data environments. Respondents reported that they faced integration issues when AI tools needed some restructuring of data or existing reporting hierarchies. One Norwegian analyst noted,

*"Unless AI complies with our processes it becomes another system that we ignore."*

This echoes Sjödin et al.'s [41] statement that digital transformation success depends on the correspondence of technology, organisational architecture, and decision norms. Overall, AI was strategically implemented in Norway, focusing on market sensing, precise decision-making, and personalising relationships. In contrast, in China, the emphasis was on efficiency, the standardisation of the process, and the scalability of tasks. The two pathways indicate that dynamic capabilities facilitated by AI are possible with culturally particular integration logic.

### *Theme 2: Cross-Cultural Mediation of AI Adoption and Use*

The second theme explores the influence of cultural norms on the adoption and use of AI in marketing functions. The participants' stories highlighted that the process of AI integration was modulated by culturally anchored notions of trust, legitimacy, and authority. The values of transparency, autonomy, and participatory decision-making have mediated the adoption of AI in Norway. One data analyst said,

*"If the AI recommendation is traceable and makes sense, we're more likely to use it."*

Participants showed mistrust of AI products that lack transparency in their results, raising awareness of algorithmic inaccessibility. It indicates that Norway is ranked low on power distance and high on individualism, which cultivates critical thinking and egalitarian knowledge access [6]. Among various specific practices, participants reported adoption processes that included user feedback loops so that AI tools could be adjusted to work with the realities of practical work. One marketing manager said,

*" We like tools that promote autonomy yet fit with open discussion and decentralisation."*

Before enterprise-wide rollouts, AI tools were piloted with cross-functional teams, which encouraged user-driven customisation and promoted acceptance. This participatory implementation strategy complements Barile et al.'s [46] research, which suggests that co-creation facilitates technology assimilation in cultures that regard decentralised decision-making. Furthermore, Norwegian respondents framed AI as a knowledge partner rather than an authority. AI recommendations were not taken seriously but were rather treated as advice that the users could critically assess and then incorporate into the decision outcomes. Such a collaborative intelligence point of

view guarantees human control, reduces blind automation risk, and places AI within the framework of marketing reasoning based on customer trustworthiness and relationship particularity. In China, the adoption of AI depended on vertical authority and common relational legitimacy. An executive overseeing business development said,

*"In our culture, we follow leadership signals. If the manager endorses AI, we follow*".

The approval by managers was outlined as the only way of building the credibility of AI. The other respondent said,

*"We trust AI when it's embedded in platforms that leaders support."*

These statements show that trust in AI is relational and institutional but not technical. Chinese participants characterised AI implementations as systematic training conducted by top managers who demonstrated sanctioned use cases and specified the intended results. Although not everyone was satisfied with the lack of transparency related to AI, leadership support usually suppressed doubts, making usage grow faster. This reflects Shin's [47] claims that in East Asia, the structure of organisational trust determines the acceptance of technology rather than system explainability. In addition, Chinese respondents highlighted that AI systems were deployed with proper discipline and little questioning when they were institutionally validated. A CRM manager gave an example:

*"We do not question it when the boss says that it works."*

This contrasts with the Norwegian culture of scrutinising the users and connotes high power distance values. Although the Norwegian participants valued direct and data-intensive outputs, the Chinese participants preferred AI output as hierarchical and expected summaries of managerial reporting. This choice highlights the necessity of culturally responsive AI interfaces and confirms that technology localisation is critical in achieving effectiveness within contexts [18]. In general, cultural mediation of AI adoption in Norway was based on transparency, autonomy, and participatory adaptation. In contrast, it was based on hierarchical legitimacy, leadership acceptance, and disciplined implementation in China.

*Theme 3: Behavioural and Organisational Outcomes of AI Implementation*

The third theme describes AI integration's behavioural and organisational consequences, addressing employee stress, resistance, adaptation, and capability development. The participants complained about stress and resistance in Norway due to the poorly executed AI rollouts. A marketing strategist explained that imposing systems without staff training makes them feel overloaded and unconfident. Fears of loss of control, role ambiguity, and algorithm accuracy uncertainty often caused resistance. These experiences are by Ballangan et al. [48], who define digital fatigue and technostress as consequences of unguided technological integration. Norwegian firms, however, showed impressive learning-related adaptations. The participants explained internal workshops, peer-led AI clinics, and small groups focused on problem-solving that would help create user confidence and competence. One team lead said,

*"Employing AI has made us even more curious, and we are upskilling via internal workshops."*

This is based on Ghosh et al. [50] transforming capability, where companies develop competencies in operations and cognitive and cultural preparedness to innovate in their technologies. AI adoption also caused work identity transformations as participants mentioned that they no longer complete operational data tasks but instead, focus on strategic interpretation. One analyst said,

*"We spend less time gathering data and more time decoding insights."*

These changes improved role satisfaction and strategy orientation, consistent with Assidi et al.'s [13] observation that dynamic capabilities transform work structures to focus on higher-value contributions. In China, the opposition was mainly affected by the fear of job security.

*"Initially, people were scared, fearing that AI would take away their jobs or unmask their errors," a marketing executive said.*

The participants stated that they were once hesitant to use AI tools to the fullest and feared they could be monitored by managers or lose their positions due to duplication. Informal social learning processes were the means of adaptation. One CRM manager said,

*"We had built a WeChat group where we post AI tips and ease fear."*

The knowledge spread was promoted by peer sharing, AI demystified, and technology utilisation became conventional in everyday practice. AI has also changed the identity of tasks in Chinese companies. Respondents claimed to have transitioned to strategic client management functions. One business development lead said,

*"AI has made us think more deeply about how we position every client; it is no longer about volume but strategy."*

These transitions signal an innovative possibility of AI facilitating cognitive augmentation of employee roles. Behavioural outcomes generally

emphasise that AI integration is a technical and psychological procedure. It was achieved through well-organised onboarding, cultural adjustment, and learning infrastructures. Companies that applied AI in a positive training and leadership context showed less resistance and greater strategic payoff, confirming that organisational learning ability is mediated through realising AI value.

## 4. Discussion

This research investigated the process of AI integration in B2B marketing at petrochemical companies in Norway and China, considering strategic integration, cultural mediation, and behavioural and organisational outcomes. The results contribute to the existing literature by emphasising cultural pathways in creating AI-enabled dynamic capabilities within the industrial B2B environment. The first objective considered the dynamic marketing capability built by AI applications. The findings indicated that Norwegian companies applied AI to improve their strategic sensing, seizing, and transformation processes by leveraging data analytics for pricing, customer segmentation, and demand forecasting. Respondents referred to AI as an extension of their team to make better analytical conclusions, make decisions quicker, and with more confidence, aligning with their logic-based and decentralised marketing culture. This mirrors the dynamic capabilities theory by Teece [55], which focuses on the ability of organisations to combine external expertise into strategic action [50]. These observations are consistent with Beraja et al. [51], who stipulated that AI enhances responsiveness at the firm level in data-intensive environments.

Conversely, Chinese companies embedded AI mainly to automate operational functions like lead scoring and proposal writing, with a preference for using AI as an efficiency tool to execute processes instead of a strategic analysis tool. Marketing experts articulated that AI contributed to significant work efficiency in their daily operations, particularly in handling large volumes of their clients in B2B client negotiations. This nuanced finding extends to Dwivedi et al. [9], who claimed AI universally drives strategic innovation by demonstrating that strategic value is contingent upon organisational structures and integration contexts. Thus, the objective was achieved by determining that AI is developing dynamic marketing in both settings. However, Norway uses AI to build an analytical sensemaking capability, and China builds an efficiency-driven scaling capability.

The second aim explored the mediated behavioural assimilation of AI in cross-cultural aspects. The results indicated that Norwegian respondents valued the clarity and explainability of AI systems. Marketing personnel detailed how they would need their AI-generated advice to be traceable, comprehensible, and incorporateable with their professional judgment systems. This corroborates Peters and Carman [52], who found that explainable AI increases user trust and extends their conclusions by showing explainability is culturally necessary in low power distance societies that value egalitarian knowledge access. Norwegian companies embraced participatory implementation strategies, where AI tools were commonly piloted with user input and counter-checked to optimise use and relevance to the working processes. Barile et al. [46] highlighted that co-creation is key to successful digital assimilation. In contrast, Chinese participants relied on managerial endorsement over technical transparency, reflecting high power distance norms where hierarchical approval replaces individual evaluation [53]. This demonstrates that AI assimilation is shaped by cultural cognition, aligning with dynamic capabilities theory, emphasising that firms' ability to reconfigure technology depends on institutional context and interpretive capacity.

On the other hand, Chinese respondents indicated that their utilisation of AI largely depended on managerial support more than system transparency. Employees indicated they were using AI tools when integrated into officially sanctioned systems and endorsed by supervisors in the sense of trust rooted in legitimacy hierarchies rather than technical analysis. This aligns with Sun et al. [54], who noted that organisational hierarchies influence digital technology acceptance within East Asian companies. Compared to Norwegian marketing employees, who approached AI products critically, Chinese users stated there was little questioning when leaders reached the systems. Thus, the second objective was achieved because the study has demonstrated the culturally determined paths of behaviour adoption: Norwegian companies follow the pattern of transparency and participatory validation to employ AI, whereas Chinese companies use hierarchical legitimation and directed systems to implement AI.

The third aim was to analyse the behavioural and organisational consequences of AI implementation. In Norway, the early backlash was seen because of digital exhaustion and the perceived loss of role autonomy, which Liimatainen [6] has also identified

as problematic. Nevertheless, the close onboarding, training workshops, and peer mentoring changed the resistance into active learning and capacity-building. Participants shared how the integration of AI promoted curiosity and upskilling among their teams, with employees shifting roles in data processing to position-generating strategic insights. This result matches the claims of Stelmaszczyk [56], who believed that organisational learning orientation mediates effective technology assimilation and illustrates Teece's [55] transforming capability, according to which companies engage employees by restructuring their skills to incorporate digital tools.

The sources of resistance in China were the fear of job uncertainty and performance surveillance, which represent automation anxiety in other fast digitalising sectors [57]. Nonetheless, adaptation came in collectivist learning methods, whereby staff formed informal WeChat collectives to share AI tricks, solve technical challenges, and eliminate individual worries. This is an indication of how technology acceptance in hierarchical settings is enabled by social capital mobilisation. Moreover, the respondents reported the impact of AI assimilation on their increased strategic contribution to the employment position and the client relationship through the lens of Mikalef et al. [5], who noted the potential of AI to stimulate cognitive upskilling, supporting the employees in their growing strategic activity. Thus, the third objective was achieved since the investigation established the existence of a behavioural patterning of resistance, a culturally sensitive mode of adaptation, and an explicit redefinition of roles after introducing AI in the two countries.

### *Practical Implications*

This research presents some practical recommendations that could be followed by managers, AI developers, and policymakers, as well as areas of prospective research. To begin with, the application of AI should be culturally adjusted to guarantee its uptake and strategic success. The AI explainability features and participatory training programs should be the prioritised areas of Norwegian companies that aim at increasing user confidence and preserving professional independence, falling within the principles of ethically deployed AI transparency and fairness [58]. In future studies, one should investigate the types of explainability designs most effective in Nordic B2B situations to ensure that users feel confident. Conversely, Chinese companies must promote managerial support and hierarchical AI tool integration to exploit institutional confidence and lessen opposition (Li et al., 2021). Research may also delve deeper into the sources of leadership communication variables and the impact of AI acceptance in high power distance cultures. Second, the AI designers need to develop culturally responsive interfaces, which should be more data-dense for Norwegian users and focus more on summary output based on managerial verification by Chinese users [51]. Interface design preferences could be tested empirically to promote the global usability of AI. Third, companies are expected to invest in culturally oriented learning systems: formal learning events in Norway and informal networks of peers in China to facilitate knowledge dispersion and alleviate anxiety. Lastly, managers must actively overcome psychological obstacles by positioning AI as a supplement, not a substitute, remaining driven and secure in their positions [59].

### *Strengths, Limitations and Future Research Directions*

The study has outlined the development of a cross-cultural, comparative qualitative design that takes into consideration the behavioural and cultural facets of the adoption of AI in B2B petrochemical marketing on a finer level. Semi-structured interviews complemented by a bilingual facilitator and data triangulation provided contextual relevance while offering interpretative richness. For the first time, the incorporation of the dynamic capabilities literature and cultural theory will advance the AI-enabled marketing scholarship in different institutions. Focusing on Norway and China serves as a unique empirical study, providing a rare comparison between Western and Eastern business logics and thus, enriching China- and Norway-related marketing scholarship, as well as the global functions of industrial marketing. The study has limitations in the directions for future research. First, it was a sample of petrochemical companies in Norway and China, which limits the generalisability to other industries or cultures. To confirm such findings, future studies should help replicate the results in various B2B sectors, including manufacturing, transportation and logistics, and pharmaceuticals, via AI-enabled dynamic capabilities [9]. Second, using self-interview data based on the participants' self-reports might present social desirability bias, as the subject might downplay difficulties or opposition. Triangulating interview data with observational data, system usage data, and organisational

documentation would strengthen their validity and offer deeper insights into AI practices [27]. Third, AI integration is captured in a cross-sectional design, restricting insight into the evolution of dynamic capability over time. The research requires longitudinal studies to assess learning curves, cultural adaptation processes, and evolving role structures as the maturity of AI evolves in companies [5]. Fourth, the current research was conducted based on user-level behavioural reactions to AI; future research needs to further study AI on inter-firm relational dynamics, client perceptions, and cross-border B2B negotiations to understand AI's strategic implications in international marketing. Lastly, although the present study was interpretive in its qualitative approach to posing the question of meaning construction, follow-up research should be undertaken in mixed-methods studies defining the correlation between AI adoption practices, cultural adaptations, and measurable marketing performance outcomes. These studies would give strong empirical evidence to steward strategic AI investments and manage cross-cultural changes in B2B arrangements worldwide. Moreover, future studies should adopt mixed-methods or longitudinal designs across diverse industries and cultural contexts to validate and extend these findings. Researchers should also explore organisational and inter-firm dynamics better to understand AI's strategic implications in international B2B marketing.

## 5. Conclusions

This paper delved into the role of petrochemical companies in Norway and China concerning the AI-enabled dynamic capabilities of B2B marketing. It addressed the strategies of integration, cultural mediation, and behavioural results. The results showed that there are clear pathways of integration depending on the cultures. The firms in Norway applied AI to drive better strategic choices and market-sensing, considering it to increase the accuracy of the analysis in its participatory and analytics-based business culture. Conversely, Chinese companies prioritised AI technology regarding operating efficiency, where procedural marketing functions were automated in the managerial hierarchy-based systems to scale operations. Cultural factors heavily mediated the adoption of AI. Norwegian professionals were concerned with transparency and explainability, which fit the norms of low power distance and individualistic reasoning. On the contrary, Chinese workers embraced using the authorities' recommended AI devices, illustrating a high-power asymmetry and a collectivistic trust system. These insights add a new dimension to the dynamic capability theory, referring to cultural cognition and institutional trust determining AI assimilation in international B2B contexts.

There were variations in behavioural results as well. In Norway, early digital fatigue was alleviated with systematic onboarding and peer education, resulting in role reinvention to strategic data analysis. In China, the fear of job security led to resistance, but it was mitigated due to a collectivist learning culture where the employees exchanged tips about using AI informally. In both settings, AI was demonstrated to have the potential to upgrade jobs to higher-value strategic tasks. Companies must tailor AI implementation to cultural norms, invest in explainable AI and participatory learning in Norway, and implement managerial endorsement structures in China. This study's theoretical contribution is integrating cultural mediation in dynamic capabilities enabled by AI and their importance in deriving contextualised insights, showing the usefulness of qualitative research. AI incorporation into B2B marketing is not merely technical but highly cultural and involves applying tactics that incorporate technologies with local behavioural and relational factors to maximise strategic opportunities.

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