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Paper: “Coupling Coordination between Innovation Capability and Financial Competitiveness in China’s Energy Enterprises under the Belt and Road Initiative”

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Peer review:

Reviewer 1: Sherzad Ramadhan
Cihan University-Duhok, Iraq

Reviewer 2: Ghazi Abdulmajeed Al-Rgaibat
Al-albays University, Jordan

ESJ Manuscript Evaluation Form 2026

This form is designed to summarize the manuscript peer review that you have completed and to ensure that you have considered all appropriate criteria in your review. Your review should provide a clear statement, to the authors and editors, of the modifications necessary before the paper can be published or the specific reasons for rejection.

Please respond within the appointed time so that we can give the authors timely responses and feedback.

NOTE: ESJ promotes peer review procedure based on scientific validity and technical quality of the paper (not perceived the impact). You are also not required to do proofreading of the paper. It could be recommended as part of the revision.

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Reviewer Name: Sherzad Ramadhan	
University, Country: Cihan University- Duhok , Iraq	
Date Manuscript Received: 03.03.2026	Date Review Report Submitted: 12.03.2026
Manuscript Title: Research on the Coupling Coordination Mechanism of Innovation Ability and Financial Core Competitiveness of China's Energy Enterprises under the Perspective of "Belt and Road"	
ESJ Manuscript Number:	
You agree your name is revealed to the author of the paper: Yes	
You approve, your name as a reviewer of this paper, is available in the "review history" of the paper:	
You approve, this review report is available in the "review history" of the paper: Yes	

Evaluation Criteria:

Please give each evaluation item a numeric rating on a 5-point scale, along with a thorough explanation for each point rating.

Questions	Rating Result [Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]
1. The title is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.	4
The research topic is relevant and timely, as it explores the relationship between innovation capability and financial competitiveness in Chinese energy enterprises within the context of the Belt and Road Initiative. However, the title is somewhat lengthy and could be improved by simplifying the wording and making the research focus clearer and more concise. I suggest to shorten the topic to "Coupling Coordination between Innovation Capability and Financial Competitiveness in China's Energy Enterprises under the Belt and Road Initiative.	
2. The abstract presents objectives, methods, and results.	4
The abstract clearly outlines the research objective, methodology, and main findings, providing a concise overview of the study. However, it could be improved by briefly	

clarifying key concepts such as “financial core competitiveness” and including more specific quantitative results to strengthen the presentation of the empirical findings.	
3. There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.	3
4. The study methods are explained clearly.	4
The methodology adopts several quantitative techniques such as the entropy method, TOPSIS, the coupling coordination model, and grey relational analysis, which provides a structured analytical framework. However, the study would benefit from a clearer justification of the indicator selection and weighting assumptions, as well as a brief explanation of why equal weights were assigned to the two subsystems in the coupling model.	
5. The results are clear and do not contain errors.	4
The results section presents the empirical findings clearly through tables and quantitative indicators. Nevertheless, the discussion could be strengthened by providing deeper interpretation of the results and linking them more explicitly to the theoretical framework and existing literature	
6. The conclusions or summary are accurate and supported by the content.	1
The manuscript lacks a clearly defined Conclusion section . A separate conclusion should be added to summarize the main research findings, highlight the theoretical and practical contributions, and briefly discuss the limitations and directions for future research. This would improve the overall structure and completeness of the paper.	
7. The references are comprehensive and appropriate.	4
The reference list includes relevant sources related to innovation capability, financial competitiveness, and coupling coordination theory. However, there are some inconsistencies in the formatting and citation style throughout the manuscript. It is recommended that the references be carefully reviewed and standardized according to the journal’s required citation format, and that the completeness and accuracy of all references be verified.	

Overall Recommendation (mark an X with your recommendation) :

Accepted, no revision needed	
Accepted, minor revision needed	XX
Return for major revision and resubmission	
Reject	

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

The literature review covers relevant studies on innovation capability and financial competitiveness; however, its structure could be improved for better clarity and coherence. The discussion would benefit from a more systematic organization, for example, by clearly separating the literature into themes such as (1) innovation capability in enterprises, (2) financial core competitiveness, and (3) the interaction between innovation and finance. Presenting the review in a more structured and analytical way would enhance readability and strengthen the theoretical foundation of the study.

ESJ Manuscript Evaluation Form 2026

Date Manuscript Received: 3/3/2026	Date Review Report Submitted: 7/3/2026
Manuscript Title: <i>Research on the Coupling Coordination Mechanism of Innovation Ability and Financial Core Competitiveness of China's Energy Enterprises under the Perspective of "Belt and Road"</i>	
ESJ Manuscript Number: 0009-0000-3193-4840	
You agree your name is revealed to the author of the paper: Yes	
You approve, your name as a reviewer of this paper, is available in the "review history" of the paper:	
You approve, this review report is available in the "review history" of the paper:	

Evaluation Criteria:

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Rating Result</i> [Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]
1. The title is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.	4/5
<p>The title clearly reflects the core theme of the study and accurately identifies the main variables investigated, namely innovation capability and financial core competitiveness within Chinese energy enterprises under the Belt and Road Initiative. It also appropriately signals the methodological perspective of coupling coordination analysis. However, the title is somewhat lengthy and could be improved for conciseness and readability. A more concise structure could enhance clarity while maintaining the key research focus.</p> <p>Overall, the title effectively represents the research content and scope of the manuscript.</p>	
2. The abstract presents objectives, methods, and results.	3/5
<p>The abstract provides a comprehensive overview of the study, including the research background, objectives, methodological framework, and main findings. It clearly identifies the empirical methods employed, including the entropy method, TOPSIS, coupling coordination model, and grey relational analysis. The results and practical implications are summarized effectively, particularly the three-stage evolution of the coupling coordination process.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the abstract could be improved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing some background information. • Presenting the key quantitative results more explicitly. • Streamlining sentences to enhance clarity and readability. <p>Despite these minor issues, the abstract sufficiently reflects the objectives, methodology, and major conclusions of the study.</p>	
3. There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.	3/5
<p>The manuscript contains several grammatical inconsistencies, typographical errors, and formatting issues throughout the text. These issues do not prevent understanding of the research but reduce the overall readability and professional presentation of the manuscript. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent spacing and punctuation. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasional repetition of sentences (e.g., repeated paragraphs discussing the 2018–2020 analysis). • Minor grammatical inaccuracies in sentence construction. • Formatting problems in formulas and mathematical expressions. <p>These issues can be corrected through careful language editing and proofreading prior to publication.</p>	
<p>4. The study methods are explained clearly.</p>	<p>4/5</p>
<p>The methodological framework is well structured and logically presented. The authors adopt a multi-method quantitative approach combining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entropy weighting method • TOPSIS method • Coupling coordination degree model • Grey relational analysis <p>These methods are appropriate for examining the interaction between innovation capability and financial competitiveness. The explanation of the research framework is generally clear, and the multi-stage analytical process is logically organized. However, several improvements could strengthen methodological clarity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematical formulas are not always clearly formatted. • Some variables and parameters in the equations are insufficiently explained. • The justification for selecting the eight enterprises could be elaborated further. <p>Overall, the methodology is appropriate and scientifically valid but requires minor clarification and improved presentation.</p>	
<p>5. The results are clear and do not contain errors.</p>	<p>3/5</p>
<p>The results are presented systematically through tables and quantitative indicators. The empirical findings are generally coherent and logically interpreted. Key findings include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A gradual improvement in innovation capability among the selected enterprises. • Fluctuating financial competitiveness due to external environmental shocks. • A relatively low but evolving coupling coordination degree between innovation and finance. • Identification of key drivers such as patent authorization quantity, R&D personnel ratio, and asset turnover efficiency. <p>However, several issues should be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some tables contain minor formatting inconsistencies. • The interpretation of certain indicators could be expanded. • The repeated explanation of the 2018–2020 period should be corrected to avoid redundancy. <p>Despite these minor issues, the results are generally reliable and consistent with the research design.</p>	
<p>6. The conclusions or summary are accurate and supported by the content.</p>	<p>3/5</p>
<p>The conclusions are consistent with the empirical findings and reflect the main results of the study. The authors successfully connect the quantitative results with practical policy recommendations. The strategic suggestions provided at the micro (enterprise), meso (regional cooperation), and macro (methodological improvement) levels offer useful insights for policymakers and enterprise managers. However, the conclusion section could be strengthened by:</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarizing the key empirical findings more concisely. Explicitly stating the main academic contribution of the study. Acknowledging the limitations of the research (e.g., sample size and data constraints). <p>Overall, the conclusions are supported by the analysis and provide meaningful implications.</p>	
7. The references are comprehensive and appropriate.	5/5
<p>The reference list is extensive and includes a wide range of recent and relevant academic sources. The literature covers important areas such as innovation capability, financial competitiveness, coupling coordination theory, and energy economics. The manuscript demonstrates strong engagement with both classical theoretical literature and recent empirical studies. Most references are from reputable academic journals and provide a solid theoretical and methodological foundation for the study.</p> <p>Minor improvements could include ensuring consistent citation formatting and verifying the accuracy of several bibliographic entries.</p>	

Overall Recommendation (mark an X with your recommendation) :

Accepted, no revision needed	
Accepted, minor revision needed	
Return for major revision and resubmission	XXX
Reject	

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

The manuscript addresses an important research topic concerning the interaction between innovation capability and financial core competitiveness within Chinese energy enterprises under the Belt and Road Initiative. The study provides a meaningful empirical contribution by applying a coupling coordination framework and combining multiple quantitative methods. The research design is generally sound, and the empirical findings offer useful insights into the dynamic relationship between innovation and financial performance in the energy sector. However, several issues should be addressed before the manuscript can be considered for publication:

- Language and Formatting Improvements.** *The manuscript requires careful proofreading to correct grammatical errors and typographical mistakes. Mathematical formulas and variables should be formatted consistently.*
- Methodological Clarification.** *The explanation of some equations and variables should be improved. The rationale for selecting the sample enterprises should be described in greater detail.*
- Removal of Redundant Text.** *Some paragraphs, particularly in the empirical analysis section, appear duplicated and should be revised.*
- Stronger Discussion Section.** *The discussion could more clearly connect empirical results with existing literature. The academic contribution of the study should be more explicitly stated.*
- Research Limitations.** *The authors should acknowledge limitations related to sample size, data availability, and generalizability. After addressing these issues, the manuscript has the potential to make a valuable contribution to the literature on innovation–finance interaction in energy enterprises and Belt and Road economic cooperation.*