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The Impact of Transformational Leadership and Organizational Culture on Cafe Performance in Makassar City: The Mediation Role of *Artificial Intelligence*

Romansyah Sahabuddin[1], Akhiruddin[2], Tyta Ripal[3]
[1]*Universitas Negeri Makssar*
Email : romansyah@unm.ac.id

Introduction: This study aims to explore the impact of transformational leadership and organizational culture on cafe performance in Makassar City, with a focus on the mediating role of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The urgency of this research arises from the rapid growth of the cafe industry in Makassar, which demands a deeper understanding of the factors that influence performance in a competitive environment.
Objectives: The targeted output of this study is to provide new insights for cafe owners and managers in designing more effective strategies, as well as highlighting the importance of employee well-being and sustainability in the hospitality industry. In addition, this study is expected to enrich the academic literature on the interaction between leadership, organizational culture, and AI technology in the local context.
Methods: Using a quantitative approach, this study collected data through questionnaires from 300 respondents, consisting of cafe managers and employees. Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis to examine the relationship between the independent variables, namely transformational leadership and organizational culture, on the dependent variable, namely cafe performance, with Artificial Intelligence as a mediating variable.
Results: The results of this study are expected to make a significant contribution to the practice and theory of cafe business management, as well as strengthen the cafe's position in an increasingly competitive market.
Conclusions: In summary, the findings show that transformational leadership helps cafes adopt artificial intelligence (AI) effectively, fostering a positive environment for tech advancements. A strong organizational culture also plays a key role in implementing AI successfully within cafe operations. Both transformational leadership and a supportive culture significantly boost cafe performance, leading to happier customers and better efficiency. Additionally, using AI strategically enhances overall cafe performance, highlighting its importance in today's business world. Together, these insights emphasize how leadership, culture, and technology work hand in hand to ensure success in the competitive cafe industry.
Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Organizational Culture, Cafe Performance, Artificial Intelligence, Makassar

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the cafe industry has experienced significant growth, making it a prominent sector within the hospitality and food service industry, particularly in urban areas like Makassar. This expansion has not only increased competition among cafe businesses but also demands a deeper understanding of the factors that drive performance and sustainability in this unique environment. Among these factors, transformational leadership and organizational culture have emerged as critical components in creating an effective work environment and improving overall cafe performance [1].

Transformational leadership is characterized by the ability to inspire and motivate employees to transcend their personal interests for the benefit of the organization [2]. Leaders who adopt this style often build a work culture that supports innovation and collaboration among team members. Meanwhile, organizational culture encompasses the values, beliefs, and behaviors that shape how employees interact with each other and with [3]. A positive organizational culture can increase employee satisfaction, foster teamwork, and ultimately, improve business performance [4].

Furthermore, the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into cafe operations presents a transformative opportunity to leverage data and insights to improve decision-making processes and operational efficiency [5]. AI technology can assist in inventory management, improve customer service, and provide personalized recommendations, which can significantly contribute to improved cafe performance. However, the relationship between transformational leadership, organizational culture, and cafe performance, particularly in the context of AI adoption, remains under-researched [6]. Although the proposed research on the impact of transformational leadership and organizational culture on cafe performance in Makassar, with a focus on the mediating role of artificial intelligence (AI), presents an interesting narrative, there are several critical counter-arguments that need to be considered.

First, the assumption that transformational leadership directly improves organizational culture may overlook the complexity and multifaceted nature of this leadership style. Not all individuals who exhibit transformational leadership characteristics will automatically create a positive organizational culture. Some may even unwittingly foster a culture that is more oriented toward results than employee well-being, which can ultimately lead to burnout and decreased performance. Furthermore, relying on transformational leadership as the primary driver of effective organizational culture may overlook other leadership styles, such as transactional or servant leadership, that can also positively impact organizational performance [7].

Second, the assumption that artificial intelligence plays a mediating role between leadership, culture, and performance raises concerns about its applicability and effectiveness [8]. While AI can provide valuable insights and improve operational efficiency, its role is often overestimated in its ability to truly mediate human dynamics. AI lacks the emotional intelligence and contextual understanding necessary to influence human behavior and relationships in organizational settings [9]. Overreliance on AI can risk neglecting the importance of interpersonal communication and human connection, which are crucial aspects of motivating staff and building a healthy organizational culture [4].

Furthermore, focusing on cafes in Makassar creates a specific context that may not be universally applicable. Unique socioeconomic and cultural factors in the region may influence the research findings, making it difficult to generalize the results to other industries or regions. The dynamic nature of the cafe industry, influenced by consumer preferences and market competition, suggests that other, more pressing factors influence cafe performance, such as service quality, location, and customer engagement, which may not be adequately addressed in the proposed research model. There is a risk of overestimating the significance of organizational culture as an independent variable in driving performance. Culture is often shaped by external factors and industry standards, which may outweigh the direct impact of leadership and AI [10]. Therefore, it is important to consider how evolving market dynamics and consumer behavior may alter the effectiveness of leadership strategies and organizational culture initiatives.

Finally, focusing on performance metrics without considering the broader impact on employee satisfaction, community engagement, and sustainability can create an incomplete picture. Businesses need to align their performance goals with socially responsible practices and employee well-being, especially in an era of increasing consumer awareness of ethical business practices. Ignoring these dimensions may provide short-term gains but potentially undermine long-term sustainability.

Overall, while transformational leadership, organizational culture, and AI are interrelated elements that have the potential to improve cafe performance, it is important to adopt a more nuanced perspective that recognizes the limitations of these variables when viewed in isolation [11]. A more integrative approach, which considers various leadership styles, the complexities of AI, contextual factors, and business implications holistically, can provide a more comprehensive understanding of organizational success in the cafe industry [9]). This research's problem-solving approach highlights the role of transformational leadership, organizational culture, and artificial intelligence (AI) in improving cafe performance in Makassar. By identifying key challenges, such as low levels of innovation and adaptability in management, this study aims to understand how leadership style and organizational culture can create a more productive work environment. Furthermore, the role of AI as a mediator is expected to optimize operational efficiency and enhance the customer experience, thus contributing to the success of cafe businesses in the face of increasingly fierce competition.

Through an in-depth analysis of the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational culture, this study develops strategic solutions that include leadership training, increasing awareness of an innovative culture, and implementing AI technology in business operations. Implementing AI in inventory management, customer behavior analysis, and service personalization can provide a significant competitive advantage for cafes. With this strategy, cafe leaders can more effectively manage their teams, create a work environment that supports creativity, and optimize data-driven decision-making to improve overall business performance.

Regularly evaluating the effectiveness of implemented strategies is a crucial step in ensuring the sustainability of innovation. By monitoring and making necessary adjustments, cafes in Makassar can continue to grow and adapt to market changes and technological advancements. This study is expected to provide new insights into the relationship between leadership, organizational culture, and AI, while also providing practical recommendations for cafe owners and managers in managing their businesses more effectively. The research will highlight practical implications for improving cafe performance.

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OBJECTIVES

This research aims to foster a culture of innovation, where leadership inspires and motivates teams. AI integration is expected to streamline operations and improve decision-making processes. By utilizing AI tools, cafes can better capture customer preferences and streamline service delivery. This study aims to examine the impact of transformational leadership and organizational culture on cafe performance in Makassar and explore the mediating role of AI in this relationship. By understanding how these elements interact, this research can provide valuable insights for cafe owners and managers in designing effective strategies to improve business performance amidst increasingly fierce competition. Through in-depth analysis, this research is also expected to contribute to broader discussions on leadership, organizational culture, and technology in the hospitality industry, as well as offer practical recommendations for business people and academics.

This study presents a novelty by integrating legitimate transformational leadership, organizational culture, and artificial intelligence (AI) in improving cafe performance in Makassar, an approach that has not been widely researched in the food service industry. Different from previous studies that only focus on one or two variables, this study uses a holistic approach by analyzing the role of AI as a mediator using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method and using model fit tests (goodness of fit) such as individual t-tests and overall Goodness of Fit (GOF) criteria, as well as multivariate normality tests (skewness-kurtosis). Furthermore, the focus on the cafe industry in Makassar provides more relevant contextual insights, considering the unique dynamics of the local market. By combining leadership and technology, this study offers practical solutions for cafe owners and managers in implementing innovative strategies that improve operational efficiency and customer experience, while also providing academic contributions in understanding the complex interrelationships between leadership, organizational culture, and AI in a competitive business sector.

METHODS

This research uses a quantitative approach with survey methods and statistical analysis to explore the relationship between transformational leadership, organizational culture, and artificial intelligence (AI) as mediation variables in the context of cafe performance in Makassar. The research process begins with the preparation stage, which includes the preparation of research designs, the development of questionnaire instruments to measure relevant variables, as well as testing the validity and reliability of the instrument. Data was collected through questionnaires distributed to 300 respondents, including cafe owners, managers, and employees who have adopted or plan to adopt AI, using purposive sampling methods.

Data analysis is carried out through multiple regression and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the relationship between variables, as well as test the suitability of the model and multivariate normality. The expected results of this study include the identification of the influence of transformational leadership on cafe performance, an understanding of the role of organizational culture in AI adoption, and empirical evidence of the role of AI as a mediator.

In addition, this research also aims to provide strategic recommendations for cafe owners and managers in optimizing leadership and organizational culture to improve performance through AI technology. Targeted achievement indicators include scientific publications in reputable international journals, presentations of research results in academic or industrial seminars, as well as the application of research results by cafe businesses in Makassar

RESULTS

Respondent Characteristics

Makassar, as one of the major metropolitan areas in Eastern Indonesia, has undergone significant socioeconomic transformation over the past decade. One indicator of this transformation is clearly evident in the growth of the micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) sector, particularly in the culinary and urban lifestyle sectors such as cafes and coffee shops . The development of cafes in Makassar not only reflects increasing purchasing power and changing consumption patterns, but also demonstrates the city's dynamic response to global trends of hangout culture, business digitization, and shifts in urban lifestyles.

The number of cafes in 2025 recorded at least 1200 coffee shops registered as taxpayers spread across 15 districts, with a contribution to restaurant tax revenue of more than IDR 55 billion. This number indicates that cafes in Makassar are not just a lifestyle, but have also become the backbone of regional economic growth, job creation, and driving the tourism and creative economy sectors. The largest number of cafes is spread across four districts, namely : Rappocini, Ujung Tanah, Panakukang, and Tamalate districts. Some areas recorded as having the largest number of cafes are Rappocini District with 96 units, followed by other areas, namely: Ujung Tanah with 64 units, Panakkukang District with 67 units, and Tamalate District with 53 units. The development of the cafe business in the city of Makassar can be seen in the following table.

Table 1. Development of Cafes in Makassar City

District	Total	Percentage
Rappocini	96	8
Ujung Tanah	84	7
Panakukang	67	6
Tamalate	53	4
Totals	300	100%

Source: Data Processing Results, 2025

The development of cafes in Makassar City shows a significant concentration in four districts: Rappocini, Ujung Tanah, Panakukang, and Tamalate. These four districts cumulatively accommodate 300 cafes, equivalent to 27% of Makassar's total cafe population of 1,200. Rappocini District ranks highest with 96 cafes, or 8% of the total. This indicates that this area has a strong attraction for the development of the modern culinary sector, most likely due to the presence of shopping centers, office areas, and dense residential areas. Following in second place is Ujung Tanah with 84 cafes, or 7%, which is interesting considering that this area was once better known as a coastal and port area, but has now experienced a shift in function towards modern consumption spaces.

Panakukang ranks third with 67 cafes (6%), consistent with the district's image as a commercial and upper-middle-class residential center. Meanwhile, Tamalate recorded 53 cafes, or around 4%, indicating potential growth in the southern part of the city. This distribution reflects the dynamics of urban economic change, where people's lifestyles, population growth, and accessibility significantly influence the growth of the cafe business ecosystem in metropolitan cities like Makassar.

A cafe's success in maintaining its existence is no longer solely determined by product quality or strategic location, but also by the quality of leadership and organizational culture implemented in its internal management. Transformational leadership is crucial because cafe owners or managers are expected to inspire, motivate, and encourage employees to exceed targets and adapt to dynamic customer demands. Transformational leaders are not only decision-makers but also agents of change who shape the vision and work values within the cafe environment.

On the other hand, a strong organizational culture creates a collective identity within a team, shapes communication patterns, and determines how employees respond to problems or opportunities. In a business sector like cafes, which relies heavily on customer service, a collaborative, innovative, and responsive work culture can directly impact customer satisfaction and consumer loyalty. However, various reports indicate that not all cafes in Makassar are able to implement transformational leadership principles or develop an adaptive organizational culture. Many cafes are still managed traditionally, authoritarianly, or even lack a clear organizational structure, resulting in stagnant business performance or an inability to compete with new, more dynamic players.

The increasing use of digital technology in cafe operations, particularly in the form of artificial intelligence (AI), has seen some cafes utilize AI in automated ordering systems, customer behavior analysis, and data-driven inventory management. However, adoption of this technology is uneven and is still limited to mid- to large-scale cafes. Furthermore, the mediating role of AI in the relationship between leadership and organizational culture on business performance remains minimal, particularly in the context of MSMEs, such as cafes in developing cities like Makassar. This study attempts to examine the direct relationship between leadership and organizational culture on employee performance, with the mediation of artificial intelligence. This research is novel in examining the dynamics of digitalization, which has become a new reality in the business world.

There are not many studies that simultaneously examine the influence of transformational leadership and organizational culture on cafe performance, making this research interesting. Furthermore, the role of AI mediation as a strategic element in bridging managerial variables and performance has not been explored in depth in the context of small-scale creative industries. This research is important for providing theoretical and practical contributions to enrich the literature on technology-based cafe management and assisting business actors in Makassar in making strategic decisions to increase their business competitiveness in the digital era. The problem examined in this research is the extent to which the role of transformational leadership and organizational culture can influence cafe performance by utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) .

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Structural Equation Modeling Analysis

The analysis model used in this study is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on two model approaches, namely the measurement model and the structural model. The acceptable construct reliability value is at least 0.7 (10), while the minimum limit for the extracted variance is 0.5 (10). To evaluate whether the obtained model has correctly described the relationship between variables, this is shown through the measurement of model suitability (Goodness-of-Fit Measures) as shown in the following table.

Table 2. Goodness -of-Fit Measures

GoF Size	Estimate
Chi Square	1703.91
Degrees of Freedom (df)	588
P-Value	0,000
RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error Of Approximation, < 0.08)	0.083*
GFI (Goodness Of Fit Index = Approaching 1)	0.746*
AGFI (Adjusted Goodness Of Fit Index = Approaching 1	0.712*
NFI (Normally Fit Index)	0.692*
CFI (Comparative Fit Index = Approaching 1)	0.772*
IFI (Incremental Fit Index = Approaching 1)	0.774*
RFI (Relative Fit Index)	0.670*
PNFI (Parsimony Normed Fit Index)	0.646*

Source: Data Processing Results, Lisrel, 2025

The results of the model fit test in SEM analysis are:

- Judging from the RMSEA (Root mean square error of approximation) value for the model studied, which is 0.053, it shows that the model obtained meets the criteria where a small RMSEA value is expected (less than 0.08).
- Judging from the GFI (Goodness of Fit Index) value for the model studied, which is 0.918, it shows that the model obtained has met the criteria, where it is expected that the GFI value will be close to 1 (> 0.90).

The results of the absolute fit measurement show that the model obtained meets the goodness of fit criteria in the RMSEA and GFI measurements, so it can be said that the empirical model obtained is in accordance with the theoretical model.

Transformational Leadership Measurement Model (X1)

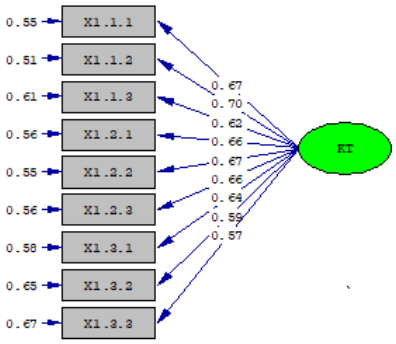

Figure 1. Path Diagram of Transformational Leadership Model (X1)

The SEM analysis model illustrates the relationship between the Transformational Leadership variable in café businesses in Makassar City, comprising nine indicators across three dimensions. The first dimension, Digital Visionary Influence (X1.1), includes indicators X1.1.1, X1.1.2, and X1.1.3, with loading values of 0.67, 0.70, and 0.63, respectively. Notably, indicator X1.1.2 contributes the most, underscoring the importance of leaders conveying a clear digital vision to enhance employee commitment and loyalty. The second dimension, Technology Adaptation (X1.2), consists of indicators X1.2.1, X1.2.2, and X1.2.3, with loading values of 0.66, 0.67, and 0.66. This dimension highlights how leaders' adaptive characteristics towards technology influence organizational efficiency and flexibility, facilitating the integration of digital systems in operations. The final dimension, Intellectual Stimulation (X1.3), encompasses indicators X1.3.1, X1.3.2, and X1.3.3, with loading values of 0.64, 0.59, and 0.57. It reflects leaders' ability to challenge the status quo and stimulate creativity, which is crucial for innovation in the café environment. Overall, the factor loading values, ranging from 0.57 to 0.70, indicate sufficient convergent validity, suggesting that effective transformational leadership in digital contexts is essential for enhancing organizational performance and employee engagement.The analysis results in the figure above show a valid and reliable measurement structure for measuring Transformational Leadership in the cafe business sector. All indicators show a positive contribution to the latent construct and complement each other in representing the reality of leadership in the modern workplace, which is increasingly digitalized and requires high adaptation to change. These findings can be a strategic and academic reference for designing leadership development policies in small and medium-sized organizations operating in the service-based creative industry. In line with [12]emphasizing that transformational leadership involves inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation, which encourages followers to strive to achieve group goals through charisma and inspirational motivation. In addition, [13]it suggests that intellectual stimulation contributes significantly to employee job satisfaction, with a high positive correlation between intellectual stimulation and job satisfaction. This indicates that intellectual stimulation not only improves individual performance but also contributes to job satisfaction and employee retention. In line with that, [14]intellectual stimulation has a positive relationship with employee job satisfaction.Overall, the integration of inspiring digital vision, technology adoption, and intellectual stimulation in transformational leadership enables organizations to transform effectively in the digital age. Leaders who can articulate a clear digital vision, encourage technology adoption, and create an environment that supports innovation will be better prepared to face challenges and capitalize on opportunities in the ever-changing business landscape. Recent literature supports the importance of these three elements as pillars in shaping adaptive and innovative transformational leadership in the digital age.

Organizational Culture Measurement Model (X2)

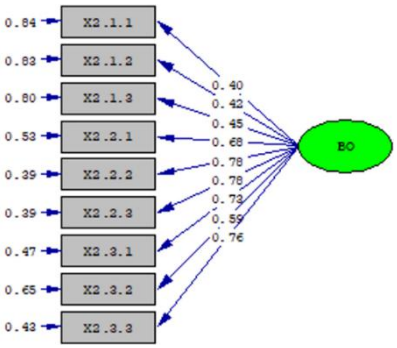

Figure 2. Path Diagram of the Organizational Culture Model (X2)

The SEM analysis illustrates the relationship between the dimensions and indicators of organizational culture, represented by a path model. The model includes three main dimensions: Culture of Innovation and Technology Adaptation (X2.1), with indicators showing loading values of 0.40, 0.42, and 0.45; Culture of Excellent Service (X2.2), where indicators have loading values of 0.68, 0.78, and 0.78; and Collaborative and Learning Culture (X2.3), with values of 0.73, 0.59,

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and 0.76. Each dimension contributes significantly to the overall organizational culture, illustrating that a culture of innovation supports resilience and adaptability, while a strong service culture emphasizes consistency in meeting customer expectations.The collaborative culture fosters knowledge sharing and teamwork.
Overall, the model indicates that all dimensions and indicators are essential in shaping organizational culture, highlighting the need for a holistic approach that integrates technology, service excellence, and collaborative learning. This approach is particularly relevant in the digital era, as organizations that can effectively combine these elements will be better equipped to face future challenges and maintain competitiveness. The findings underscore the complexity of organizational culture as an interrelated set of values and norms, suggesting further research to explore additional dimensions influencing modern organizational culture.
According to research by [15], a thriving organizational culture, which emphasizes flexibility and continuous learning, drives the adoption of Industry 4.0 technologies such as AI and robotics. This culture enables organizations to be more responsive to technological and market changes. Furthermore, individual adaptation to technological innovation is also influenced by organizational culture. As stated by [16], entrepreneurial leadership is crucial in shaping an organizational culture that supports learning and innovation. This type of leadership encourages organizations to be more adaptive and innovative in facing business challenges. Meanwhile, in the context of excellent service, [17]it is highlighted that an organizational culture that supports trust and affective commitment increases the tendency to share knowledge among employees. This, in turn, improves customer service effectiveness and overall customer satisfaction. Furthermore, research by [18]shows that an organizational culture that supports the use of advanced technology can improve operational efficiency and service quality. This type of culture enables organizations to optimally utilize technology in providing services to customers. In terms of collaboration and learning, the study [19]emphasized that an organizational culture that supports collective learning and collaboration between teams enhances the organization's capacity for innovation and adaptation. This culture fosters the exchange of knowledge and experience, which is essential for sustainable organizational development.
Overall, the current literature indexed in Scopus confirms that an organizational culture that supports innovation, excellent service, collaboration, and learning is key to organizational success in the digital age. Organizations that can build and maintain such a culture will be better prepared to face the challenges and changes that occur in a dynamic business environment.

***Artificial* Role Measurement Model *Intelligence* (Y)**

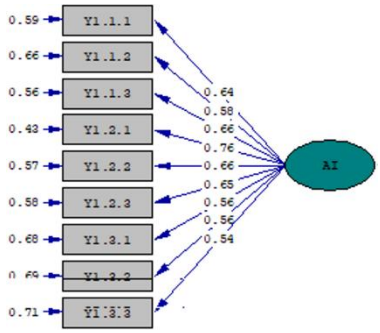

Figure 3. Artificial Role Model Path Diagram Intelligence (Y)

The SEM analysis visualizes the Role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a latent construct comprising three dimensions: Operational Automation (Y1.1), Customer Service Personalization (Y1.2), and Data-Driven Decision Making (Y1.3). Each dimension includes indicators with varying factor loading values, reflecting their contributions to the overall role of AI in organizations. The Operational Automation dimension consists of indicators with loading values of 0.64, 0.58, and 0.66, indicating significant contributions to integrating AI into production and back-office operations. AI enhances efficiency by streamlining processes and minimizing inefficiencies, allowing organizations to proactively respond to operational dynamics.
The Customer Service Personalization dimension features indicators with loading values of 0.76, 0.66, and 0.65. These values highlight AI's role in recognizing customer preferences and providing tailored recommendations, thereby creating a more engaging customer experience. AI not only improves operational efficiency but also fosters sustainable customer loyalty. The Data-Driven Decision Making dimension includes indicators with loading values of 0.56, 0.56, and 0.54, showcasing AI's ability to analyze big data for strategic insights. This enables organizations to detect patterns and make precise predictions, reinforcing the trend toward data-driven management.Overall, the analysis illustrates that AI is integral not just as a technological tool, but as a strategic asset that enhances operational efficiency, customer relationships, and decision-making processes in organizations. Even contemporary literature, such as research [20]and [17], emphasizes that organizations capable of integrating AI into their decision-making frameworks will be more agile, resilient, and adapt quickly to market dynamics.
The integration of AI into decision-making processes not only improves operational efficiency but also strengthens decision quality through deeper and predictive data analysis. [21]has identified four key themes related to the integration of AI into decision-making: the role of AI in improving decision-making processes, the impact of AI on those processes, the ability of AI to transform consumer decision-making processes, and the ethical dimensions and social implications of AI use. The study highlights that AI can improve outcomes and efficiency across sectors such as finance, emergency management, and supply chains, while also emphasizing the importance of a transparent and accountable framework to address emerging ethical issues. It further [22]suggests that AI capabilities significantly and positively impact the speed and quality of decision-making, which in turn improves overall organizational performance.
The study demonstrates that decision-making processes mediate the relationship between AI capabilities and organizational performance, highlighting the importance of integrating AI into decision-making processes for achieving competitive advantage. It also [23]suggests that AI-driven decision-making has a positive impact on company performance. They also found that AI powered by big data positively impacts AI-driven decision-making and the development of AI capabilities within companies. Thus, AI becomes a strategic catalyst for organizational transformation towards a more intelligent, adaptive, and highly competitive decision-making system.

Cafe Performance Measurement Model (Z)

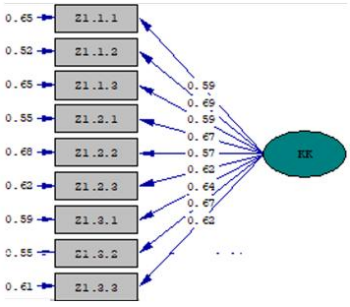

Figure 4. Path Diagram of Cafe Performance Model (Z)

The SEM analysis presents a measurement model for Cafe Performance (KK), consisting of three main dimensions: Operational Performance (Z1.1), Customer Service Performance (Z1.2), and Financial Performance and Business Growth (Z1.3). Each dimension includes three indicators that have been validated for their contributions to overall cafe performance. Operational Performance (Z1.1) is assessed through indicators related to product consistency (0.59), AI use to reduce errors (0.69), and minimizing complaints (0.59). This dimension emphasizes the importance of maintaining product quality and leveraging AI to enhance operational efficiency.

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Customer Service Performance (Z1.2) focuses on customer satisfaction (0.55), digital ordering systems (0.67), and repeat visits (0.57). A robust digital ordering system significantly improves service perceptions, leading to higher customer loyalty. Financial Performance and Business Growth (Z1.3) includes indicators for increased sales turnover (0.68), net profit from AI (0.55), and customer reach via digital platforms (0.61). This dimension highlights the strategic advantage of digital marketing and efficient operations in driving revenue growth.

The model shows all indicators exceed the minimum threshold for convergent validity, reflecting a strong structural foundation. Improvements in one dimension, such as the digital ordering system, positively influence others, demonstrating the interconnectedness of operational quality, customer service, and financial strategies. This integration enhances overall cafe performance and offers practical insights for managerial decision-making in the food and beverage sector.

DISCUSSION

Structural Model

The results of processing using the robust maximum likelihood method, obtained a full model path diagram as shown in the following image:

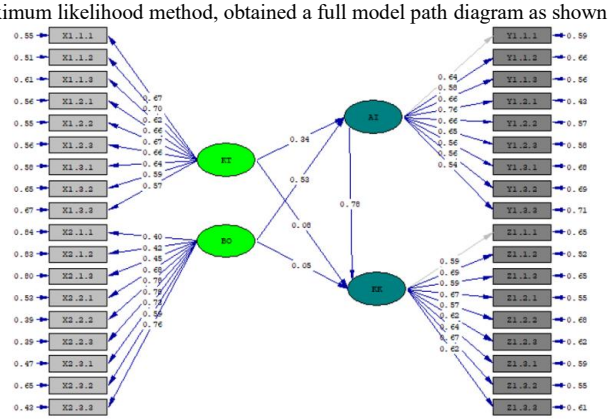

Figure 5. Full Model Path Diagram

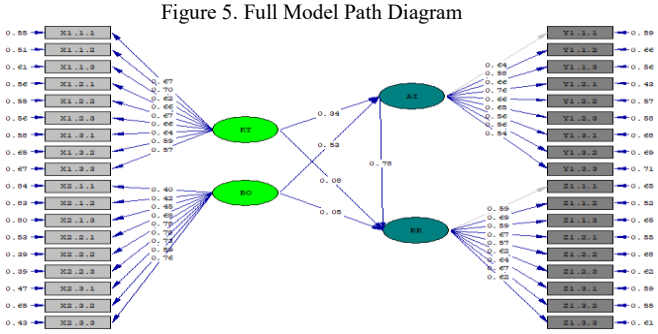

Figure 6. Path Diagram of T Values Between Variables

The figure above is the result of a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis that visualizes the causal relationships between latent constructs in a theoretical model. The construct variables in this study are transformational leadership (KT), organizational culture (BO), the role of artificial intelligence (AI), and cafe performance (KK). Each variable is constructed through three dimensions, each explained by three indicators with loading factor values indicating the extent of each indicator's contribution to explaining the dimensions of the construct variable.

The Influence of Transformational Leadership on *Artificial Intelligence*

The relationship between transformational leadership variables and organizational culture can be explained through the image below.

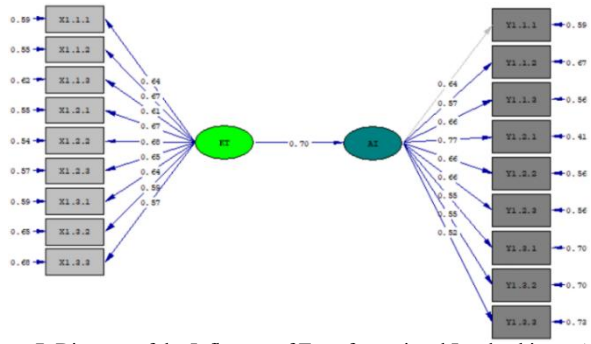

Figure 7. Diagram of the Influence of Transformational Leadership on AI

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis in the figure above aim to test the influence of transformational leadership (KT) on the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI), with each construct measured through nine indicators. This analysis provides in-depth insight into how leadership styles can influence organizational readiness and success in adopting AI technology. In the figure above, the transformational leadership (KT) variable is built through three dimensions, namely: the Digital Vision Inspiration dimension (X1.1) consisting of indicators, namely: X1.1.1, X1.1.2, X1.1.3; the Technology Adaptation dimension (X1.2) consisting of indicators, namely: X1.2.1, X1.2.2, and X1.2.3; and the Intellectual Stimulation dimension (X1.3), consisting of indicators, namely: X1.3.1, X1.3.2, and X1.3.3. Meanwhile, the Role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) variable is built through three dimensions, namely: the Operational Automation dimension (Y1.1) which consists of indicators, namely: Y1.1.1, Y1.1.2, and Y1.1.3; the Customer Service Personalization dimension (Y1.2), which includes three indicators, namely Y1.2.1, Y1.2.2, and Y1.2.3; and the Data-Based Decision Making dimension (Y1.3) which consists of three indicators: Y1.3.1, Y1.3.2, and Y1.3.3.

The SEM analysis results in the figure above show that Transformational Leadership (TC) has a significant influence on the Role of AI in organizations. This is demonstrated through a significant path coefficient between TC and AI, indicating that improvements in TC dimensions positively contribute to the utilization of AI in organizations. In the figure above, the dimensions of Inspiration Digital Vision and Intellectual Stimulation show a stronger influence than Technology Adaptation, indicating that the leader's ability to inspire digital vision and encourage innovative thinking plays a greater role in driving the adoption and utilization of AI. This indicates that the higher the quality of transformational leadership, the greater the utilization of AI technology in the organization. TC dimensions such as Inspiration Digital Vision and Intellectual Stimulation have a stronger influence than Technology Adaptation. This indicates that it is not solely the leader's readiness to use technology that is key, but rather their ability to communicate a digital vision that inspires and stimulates innovative thinking among team members that plays a central role.

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In line with [24], transformational leadership has a significant influence in creating a work environment that encourages the creative and innovative use of AI by instilling confidence in employees, providing freedom of thought, and building a strong technological vision narrative, which can ultimately accelerate AI adoption and enhance organizational creativity. Meanwhile, [25]it is stated that organizations with transformational leaders tend to be better able to integrate AI sustainably into their work culture, creating an environment that supports technological learning and increasing the speed of adaptation to market changes. Likewise, it is [26]stated that AI is able to drive efficiency and create new, more adaptive business models. It is further emphasized that the success of transformational leadership is determined by the readiness of the organizational culture, which is greatly influenced by the prevailing leadership style.

Thus, AI in organizations cannot be separated from the quality of leadership. AI has the potential to accelerate transformation, improve performance, and open up new innovation opportunities, but this success is heavily influenced by the extent to which leaders are able to articulate a strong technological vision and foster a psychological climate that supports learning, experimentation, and technology adaptation within the organization.

The Influence of Organizational Culture on Artificial Intelligence

The relationship between organizational culture variables and the role of artificial intelligence can be explained through the image below.

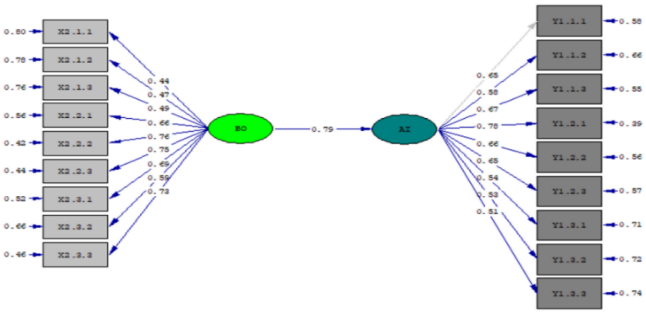

Figure 8. Diagram of the Influence of Organizational Culture on AI

The figure above explains the relationship between organizational culture and artificial intelligence built through dimensions and indicators. The organizational culture (BO) variable includes the Innovation Culture and Technology Adaptation dimension (X2.1) which is measured through the indicators Encouraging Digital Technology-Based Work (X2.1.1), Supporting the Development of AI-Based Creative Ideas (X2.1.2), and Openness to Changes in AI-Based Work Systems (X2.1.3); the Excellent Service Culture dimension (X2.2) which is measured through the indicators Providing Fast and Personal Service to Customers (X2.2.1), Consistently Meeting Customer Satisfaction (X2.2.2), and Strengthening the quality of AI-Based customer service (X2.2.3); the Collaboration Culture dimension (X2.3) which is built through the indicators Sharing Knowledge and Experience in Using AI (X2.3.1), Providing internal discussion or training space (X2.3.2), and Utilizing Technology Through Collective Team Initiatives (X2.3.3). Meanwhile, the Role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) variable is built through three dimensions, namely: the Operational Automation dimension (Y1.1) which consists of indicators, namely: Y1.1.1, Y1.1.2, and Y1.1.3; the Customer Service Personalization dimension (Y1.2), which includes three indicators, namely Y1.2.1, Y1.2.2, and Y1.2.3; and the Data-Based Decision Making dimension (Y1.3) which consists of three indicators: Y1.3.1, Y1.3.2, and Y1.3.3.

The three dimensions of the latent construct variable Organizational Culture (ORC) form a single measurement entity that indicates an organization's readiness and strategic direction in utilizing technology, particularly artificial intelligence . The path coefficient value of 0.79 connecting ORC to AI indicates a very strong and significant influence. This indicates that the higher the intensity of an innovative, collaborative, and service-oriented organizational culture, the higher the level of utilization and integration of AI in the organization's operations and decision-making.

These results have important implications for organizations undergoing digital transformation. Focusing on strengthening an organizational culture that supports technology is key to successful AI implementation. This isn't just about purchasing AI systems or hiring technologists, but about creating a work environment that embraces change, is open to learning, and is willing to collaborate for continuous innovation. This model provides a strong conceptual foundation for developing targeted and impactful change management strategies, human resource training, and technology investments for modern organizations.

Thus, the relationship between Organizational Culture and the Role of AI in this model is not only statistically significant but also practically and theoretically relevant. Organizations with a strong culture of innovation, structured service excellence, and vibrant collaboration tend to be more prepared and successful in integrating AI technology into their work systems. This integration encompasses not only technical aspects like automation and data, but also strategic aspects like personalization and decision-making.

The relationship between organizational culture and artificial intelligence (AI) adoption has been a major focus in various international academic studies. Researchers highlight that the success of AI implementation depends not only on technical aspects but is also heavily influenced by the values, norms, and practices inherent in the organizational culture. [27]They suggest that organizational culture plays a crucial role in AI adoption and organizational performance. They found that a culture that supports innovation and technological adaptation can enhance the effectiveness of AI implementation, which in turn positively impacts overall organizational performance. They further [28]demonstrate that technological readiness and a supportive organizational culture are crucial for a successful AI adoption journey. They emphasize the importance of a shared understanding of AI values and a harmonious integration between technology and organizational culture. An organizational culture that supports innovation, collaboration, and adaptation to technological change is crucial for successful AI implementation. Therefore, organizational leaders must consider cultural aspects as an integral part of their AI adoption strategy, a key factor in successful digital transformation and achieving competitive advantage in an era of ever-evolving technology.

The Influence of Transformational Leadership on Cafe Performance

Amidst the increasingly dynamic competition in the culinary industry, cafe performance is determined not only by product quality but also by visionary leadership. Transformational leadership is a managerial approach that can maximize team potential through inspiration, motivation, and innovation. Transformational leaders not only focus on achieving targets but also create a positive, collaborative, and customer-oriented work culture. In the cafe context, this leadership style is highly relevant for increasing work morale, service creativity, and employee loyalty, which ultimately have a direct impact on productivity and customer satisfaction. The results of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis in this study visualize the causal relationship between the latent construct of transformational leadership (KT) and cafe performance (KK), as shown in the following figure.

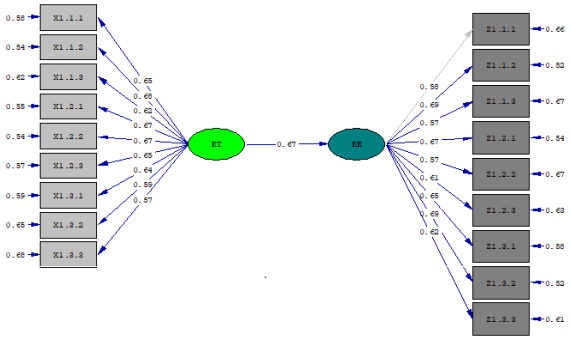

Figure 9. Diagram of the Influence of Transformational Leadership on Cafe Performance

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The figure above is the result of a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis that visualizes the causal relationships between latent constructs in a theoretical model. The construct variables in this study are transformational leadership (KT), organizational culture (BO), the role of artificial intelligence (AI), and cafe performance (KK). Each variable is constructed through three dimensions, each explained by three indicators with loading factor values indicating the extent of each indicator's contribution to explaining the dimensions of the construct variable.

The cafe performance (KK) variable as the second construct is formed by three main dimensions, namely Operational Performance (Z1.1), Customer Service Performance (Z1.2), and Financial Performance and Business Growth (Z1.3), each consisting of three indicators. Operational Performance (Z1.1) reflects the efficiency and effectiveness of daily work in the cafe as measured by indicators Z1.1.1 (the ability to serve products quickly and consistently), Z1.1.2 (the use of AI to increase efficiency and reduce errors), and Z1.1.3 (reducing the number of customer complaints). This dimension emphasizes the internal aspects of performance that focus on speed, quality, and precision in service. Customer Service Performance (Z1.2) explains customer perceptions of the service received, measured by indicators Z1.2.1 (customer satisfaction with the speed and friendliness of service), Z1.2.2 (ease of the digital ordering system), and Z1.2.3 (customer repeat visit rate). This dimension shows that the quality of interactions between staff and customers and digital system support have a direct impact on customer loyalty and satisfaction. The final dimension is Financial Performance and Business Growth (Z1.3), which is evaluated through indicators Z1.3.1 (increasing turnover trend), Z1.3.2 (increased profits through AI systems), and Z1.3.3 (ability to reach new customers through digital platforms). This dimension demonstrates that technology and effective leadership impact not only internal processes but also the bottom line, resulting in increased revenue and market reach.

In the figure above, the path coefficient between KT and KK is 0.67, indicating a positive and significant influence of transformational leadership on the cafe's overall performance. This indicates that the higher the intensity and quality of transformational leadership practices implemented, the higher the cafe's performance, both in terms of operations, service, and finance. This is in line with [29]the statement that transformational leadership is consistently positively correlated with improved organizational performance. Furthermore, it is stated that leaders who inspire, encourage innovation, and provide individual attention to employees can improve the company's operational efficiency and financial results. This shows that transformational leadership plays a key role in improving operational performance, customer service, and financial results in the context of cafes and the service industry in general. Leaders who adopt this leadership style can create a positive work environment, encourage innovation, and increase customer satisfaction, which ultimately contribute to business success, namely cafe performance. Transformational leaders play a crucial role in transforming the way employees work, creating an innovative work culture, and guiding organizations to adapt to technology. A leader's inspiring digital vision has been proven to provide clear strategic direction, establish high performance expectations, and unite the team's energy to achieve common goals. Furthermore, leaders who encourage intellectual stimulation create space for employees to innovate in service delivery, optimize digital ordering systems, and address customer needs with a more personalized, data-driven approach. [30]Effective leadership is crucial in managing an organization's digital transformation. This demonstrates that leaders who are able to integrate technology into organizational processes can facilitate learning, collaboration, and agility, enabling companies to adapt to market changes, reduce uncertainty, and improve decision-making for sustainable growth.

The influence of transformational leadership is also reflected in the contribution of technology to supporting cafe performance. With leaders capable of adopting and integrating technologies such as AI-based management systems, work processes become more efficient and error-free. The result is increased service speed, reduced customer complaints, and improved cost efficiency, which contribute to profit growth. Equally important, the leader's ability to stimulate the team's intellectual capacity helps build employee trust and engagement in digital innovation, ultimately strengthening the foundation of customer service and expanding the customer base through digital platforms. Therefore, the results of this study reinforce the view that transformational leadership is not only relevant in a general managerial context but also highly strategic in enhancing cafe competitiveness and performance in the digital era. The application of this leadership style can bridge the needs of technological change with human resource capacity, creating a work system that aligns with customer expectations and modern market demands.

In the highly dynamic and competitive landscape of the foodservice industry, transformational leadership is key to delivering sustainable service excellence and directly impacting business growth. Is in line with [31] the theory that transformational leadership plays a crucial role in driving digital innovation and performance in large organizations. Transformational leaders are able to inspire and motivate employees to embrace digital innovation processes, create a compelling vision of the future, and foster a culture of innovation and competitiveness. This demonstrates that effective transformational leadership can inspire a clear digital vision, drive innovation, and create a technology-adaptive work culture, ultimately improving overall organizational performance.

The Influence of Organizational Culture on Cafe Performance

Organizational culture is an invisible foundation that shapes how people think, behave, and act in a work environment, including in service industries like cafes. In cafe operations that involve direct interaction with customers, a positive and adaptive work culture can create a consistent and satisfying service experience. Values such as teamwork, innovation, discipline, and customer orientation are important elements that drive work efficiency and customer loyalty. Therefore, the influence of organizational culture on cafe performance is crucial in building competitive advantage and sustainable business growth. Previously, dimensions and indicators that explain the two latent variables of organizational culture and cafe performance were presented. This study will discuss the influence of organizational culture on cafe performance based on data processed using structural equation modeling analysis as shown in the following diagram.

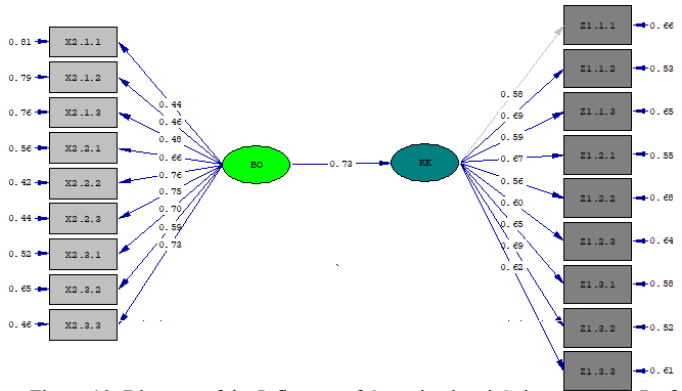

Figure 10. Diagram of the Influence of Organizational Culture on Cafe Performance

Path coefficient in the figure above is 0.73, indicating a strong and statistically significant causal relationship. This figure indicates that the stronger the organizational culture built and implemented, the higher the overall performance of the cafe. This confirms that work culture is not merely a symbolic value within an organization but has a real influence on creating competitive advantage. It can be concluded that organizational culture plays a key role in determining the operational and business success of a cafe. Maintaining strong organizational values, efficient work systems, and collaborative work practices will boost employee performance, increase customer satisfaction, and support sustainable financial growth. In a highly dynamic and competitive industry like the cafe industry, implementing an adaptive, innovative, and internalized organizational culture is a crucial strategy for delivering superior service and fostering high customer loyalty. Therefore, cafe management needs to actively build, evaluate, and develop an organizational culture to align with the vision, technology, and ever-changing market needs.

In line with [32]the statement that an actively involved organizational culture contributes significantly to improving employee performance in the hospitality industry. In his study, he found that factors such as enthusiasm, involvement, trust, and experimentation in organizational culture have a positive effect on employee task and contextual performance. This indicates that a supportive and participatory work culture can improve operational efficiency and customer service quality in a cafe environment. Meanwhile, [33]his study found that organizational culture functions as a significant mediating variable, where a strong and adaptive organizational culture can strengthen the positive effects of leadership practices on the economic, social, and environmental performance of the organization. He further stated [34]that a positive organizational culture aligned with the company's vision can encourage innovation, employee engagement, and adaptability to

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changing market dynamics. He emphasized that a strong work culture can increase productivity and customer satisfaction, which are very important in the competitive cafe industry.

Based on these opinions, it can be argued that a strong, adaptive organizational culture aligned with the company's vision and technology plays a crucial role in improving operational performance, customer service, and financial growth in cafes. Cafe management needs to actively build, evaluate, and develop an organizational culture to create a work system that is efficient, innovative, and responsive to changing market needs.

The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Cafe Performance

In the fast-paced digital era, Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology has become a transformative force that is changing the face of the service industry, including the cafe sector. The presence of AI is no longer merely a complement, but has become a strategic element in improving operational efficiency, personalizing customer service, and making data-driven decisions. From automated ordering systems to analyzing consumer behavior, AI provides new opportunities for cafes to innovate and survive in an increasingly competitive environment. This prologue begins an exploration of how the influence of AI is reshaping performance and service standards in today's cafe industry.

This study will discuss the influence of artificial intelligence on cafe performance based on data processed using structural equation modeling analysis . The previous discussion outlined the dimensions and indicators of each latent variable. The results of the data analysis using structural equation modeling analysis can be demonstrated through a diagram, as shown in the following figure.

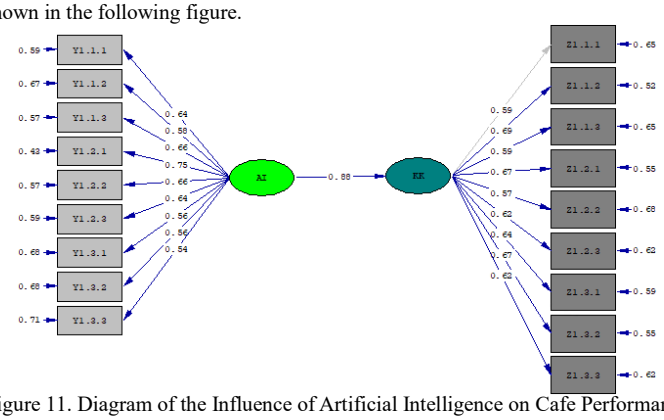

Figure 11. Diagram of the Influence of Artificial Intelligence on Cafe Performance

The use of AI in service systems, inventory management, and customer preference analysis offers significant opportunities for improving efficiency and service quality. Cafes that integrate AI can deliver more personalized experiences, speed up service times, and minimize operational errors. The presented figure is the result of a quantitative analysis using a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach based on Partial Least Squares (PLS), which describes the causal relationship between two latent constructs, namely Artificial Intelligence (AI) as an independent variable and Cafe Performance (KK) as a dependent variable. This model visualizes the path coefficient , the factor loading value of each indicator, and the relationship between dimensions in the structure of the measurement model and the structural model. These results are important in explaining how AI can be a determining factor in improving operational and strategic performance in the context of a modern cafe business. Artificial Intelligence and Cafe Performance in this model are positioned as construct variables, each of which is built by nine indicators divided into three conceptual dimensions.

Overall, all AI indicators have loading values above the minimum acceptability limit of 0.5, which indicates that these indicators are valid in forming the two latent construct variables. The path coefficient from AI to KK is 0.88. This is a very high value in the context of SEM, indicating a very strong relationship between AI utilization and improved cafe performance. In other words, a one-unit increase in the perception or use of AI in cafe operations can increase the cafe's performance score by 0.88 units. This figure indicates a highly significant and practically relevant causal relationship.

Quantitatively, the path coefficient value can be interpreted as more than 77 percent (the squared value of 0.88) of the variance in Cafe Performance that can be explained by AI. The path coefficient value of 0.88 explains that AI is not only a supporting factor, but also a major catalyst in boosting the competitiveness and efficiency of modern cafes. Therefore, the decision to integrate AI should be seen as part of the organization's core strategy, not just an additional option in the era of digital transformation. Thus, it can be argued that AI is the primary predictor of KK, with a dominant contribution compared to other factors that may influence it but are not included in the model, such as location, raw material quality, or product price. This interpretation reinforces the importance of integrating AI as a key strategy in cafe business development in the digital era.

These results also demonstrate that AI has shifted from being a mere technical tool to a driver of organizational transformation. Cafes that want to survive and thrive in today's competitive landscape must adopt a holistic, technology-driven approach. AI adoption needs to be accompanied by employee training, investment in digital infrastructure, and workflow redesign to support technology integration. From a managerial perspective, these results provide a strong foundation for cafe owners and operational managers to incorporate AI into their strategic policies. Steps such as implementing an AI-based ordering system, a chatbot for online ordering, using AI to predict customer trends, and implementing an analytics-based performance dashboard can significantly impact both short- and long-term performance. Aligning work systems and organizational culture with a data-driven approach also strengthens the effectiveness of AI adoption.

In line with [35], it was revealed that the adoption of AI in restaurant management can improve operational efficiency, provide a personalized customer experience, and reduce costs. The study emphasized that AI technology enables restaurants to provide faster and more accurate service, as well as tailor offerings to individual customer preferences. This not only increases customer satisfaction but also encourages their loyalty to the restaurant. Likewise, it [36]stated that the use of AI in knowledge work can improve productivity and work quality, especially for lower-performing workers. However, for complex tasks, AI can degrade performance if not used carefully.

Thus, this model provides empirical evidence that investment in Artificial Intelligence technology can have a significant and positive impact on improving cafe business performance. This impact not only impacts productivity but also service quality, customer loyalty, and competitive advantage. Integrating AI into cafe and restaurant operations can provide various benefits, including increased operational efficiency, personalized service, better customer review management, and increased sales through more effective customer interactions. However, it is important for management to consider ethical aspects, employee training, and appropriate technology integration to ensure optimal AI implementation.

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