

The Impact of Artificial Intelligence Adoption and Agility on Career performance

*AI Adoption and
Agility on Career
Performance*

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ABSTRACT

The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence in the era of industrial revolution 4.0 has transformed work dynamics globally, yet its impact on individual work efficiency and career performance in developing regions, such as South Sulawesi, remains to be seen. This study investigates the influence of artificial intelligence adoption and agility on employees' work efficiency and career performance in South Sulawesi. A quantitative approach was employed, involving a survey of 280 respondents from both private and public sectors using a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire. The variables examined were artificial intelligence adoption, agility, work efficiency, and career performance, with data analysed through path analysis using SmartPLS. The findings reveal that artificial intelligence adoption and agility significantly affect both work efficiency and career performance, directly and indirectly, with work efficiency acting as a mediating variable. Artificial intelligence adoption recorded a total effect of 0.406 on career performance, while agility contributed 0.361. Furthermore, work efficiency had a direct effect of 0.273 on career performance, underscoring its vital role in supporting career advancement. The study suggests that organizations should promote AI adoption and enhance employee agility through training and adaptive skill development.

Keywords: *Agility, Artificial Intelligence, Career Performance, Path Analysis, Work Efficiency.*

ABSTRAK

Kemajuan pesat kecerdasan buatan di era revolusi industri 4.0 telah mengubah dinamika kerja secara global, namun dampaknya terhadap efisiensi kerja individu dan kinerja karir di daerah berkembang seperti Sulawesi Selatan. Studi ini menyelidiki pengaruh adopsi kecerdasan buatan dan kelincahan individu terhadap efisiensi kerja dan kinerja karir karyawan di Sulawesi Selatan. Pendekatan kuantitatif digunakan, melibatkan survei terhadap 280 responden baik dari sektor swasta maupun publik menggunakan kuesioner skala Likert 5 poin. Variabel yang diperiksa adalah adopsi kecerdasan buatan, kelincahan, efisiensi kerja, dan kinerja karier, dengan data dianalisis melalui analisis jalur menggunakan SmartPLS. Temuan ini mengungkapkan bahwa adopsi dan kelincahan AI secara signifikan memengaruhi efisiensi kerja dan kinerja karier, secara langsung dan tidak langsung, dengan efisiensi kerja bertindak sebagai variabel mediasi. Adopsi kecerdasan buatan mencatat efek total 0.406 pada kinerja karir, sedangkan kelincahan berkontribusi 0.361. Selain itu, efisiensi kerja memiliki efek langsung 0.273 pada kinerja karir, menggarisbawahi peran vitalnya

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dalam mendukung kemajuan karier. Secara praktis, studi ini menunjukkan bahwa organisasi harus mempromosikan adopsi kecerdasan buatan dan meningkatkan kelincahan karyawan melalui pelatihan dan pengembangan keterampilan adaptif.

Kata kunci: *Kelincahan, Kecerdasan Buatan, Kinerja Karier, Analisis Jalur, Efisiensi Kerja.*

INTRODUCTION

The development of technology in the Industrial Revolution 4.0 era has brought fundamental changes in the way humans work and interact with technology. One technology that has a significant impact is Artificial Intelligence (AI) (Schwab, 2017). AI not only affects the production process in the manufacturing sector, but also penetrates various sectors such as education, health, and services (Makridakis, 2017). In Indonesia, the implementation of AI is still in the development stage, especially in the private and government sectors in regions such as South Sulawesi. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency in 2023, South Sulawesi is one of the regions with a fairly rapid growth rate in the service and agribusiness sectors, which are starting to integrate AI technology to improve operational efficiency.

However, the adoption of AI also presents new challenges. One of the main issues is resistance to change, both at the organizational and individual levels. Most employees in Indonesia, including those in South Sulawesi, still have low levels of digital literacy. According to a McKinsey report in 2021, more than 60% of the workforce in developing countries face obstacles in understanding and implementing new technologies such as AI (Yusriadi et al., 2023). In addition, uneven technological infrastructure adds complexity to the AI adoption process.

Research on the impact of AI on work efficiency and career development has been widely conducted in developed countries, such as the United States and Europe. A study by Brynjolfsson and McAfee (2014) showed that AI can increase individual productivity through the automation of routine tasks. Meanwhile, research by Davenport and Kirby (2016) and Varshney and Alemzadeh (2017) emphasized that AI helps individuals and organizations in data-based decision-making. However, these studies are less relevant to be applied directly in developing countries such as Indonesia, which have different social, economic, and technological contexts.

In Indonesia, research on AI is still limited, especially that which focuses on its impact on work efficiency and career development. Most studies in Indonesia focus more on the technical aspects of AI implementation, such as algorithm optimization and hardware development (Yusriadi et al., 2023). Very few discuss how AI adoption affects individuals, especially in the context of daily work.

The role of mediating variables in the AI-career performance relationship remains underexplored. Work efficiency is the key mechanism linking AI and career performance, but it did not consider agility as a moderator, which could significantly influence outcomes, highlighting a research gap. This study addresses the gap by integrating AI adoption, work efficiency, agility, and career performance into a single framework, focusing on individuals rather than organizations and examining the unique context of South Sulawesi. Previous research shows multiple factors affect technology adoption and its individual impact: technology enhances work efficiency, especially in innovation-supportive environments, training and experience play a key role, and technology also facilitates career development through skill growth (Brynjolfsson & Hitt, 2000; Stone et al., 2015). While Haylemariam et al. (2024) emphasized work efficiency as a mediator, they overlooked moderating factors like agility, which is crucial for adapting to technological changes. High agility improves adaptability, supporting both work efficiency and career performance (Westerman et al., 2014; Carter & Varney, 2018).

Based on the phenomena, research gaps, and literature reviews that have been discussed, this study aims to investigate the influence of AI adoption and agility on employees' work efficiency and career performance in South Sulawesi. This study is

expected to provide theoretical contributions by filling existing research gaps, as well as practical contributions by providing recommendations for organizations in Indonesia to improve technology adoption and career performance development.

LITERATURE REVIEW & HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The Determinants of Work Efficiency

Work efficiency is a key benefit of AI adoption, defined as the ability to complete tasks quickly, accurately, and productively (Kumar, 2024). AI enhances efficiency by automating routine tasks and reducing human error, while factors such as technical skills, access to technology, and adaptability influence outcomes (Stone et al., 2015; Dalsaniya & Patel, 2022). Work efficiency can be measured through task completion time, accuracy, and quality of work, and overall productivity improvement (Kahya, 2009; Kim et al., 2019; Aldoseri et al., 2024).

In the digital transformation era, AI significantly impacts work processes by automating operations, supporting data-driven decisions, and boosting productivity (Tambe et al., 2019; Russell & Norvig, 2021). Indicators of AI adoption include using AI to automate routine tasks, data-driven decision making, and increasing productivity (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014; Davenport & Kirby, 2016). Agility, the ability to quickly adapt to technological and environmental changes, is crucial for leveraging AI effectively. Individuals with high agility can rapidly learn new technologies, adapt flexibly, and respond proactively to challenges (Westerman et al., 2014; Stone et al., 2015). High agility enhances work efficiency and career performance, and is equally important at the organizational level, where flexible and responsive companies achieve higher productivity (Adhiatama et al., 2023). Moreover, agility strengthens the link between technology adoption and work outcomes (Al Naim, 2023; Muduli & Choudhury, 2024).

H1: AI adoption has a significant effect on work efficiency.

H2: Agility has a significant effect on work efficiency.

The Determinants of Career Performance

Career performance refers to an individual's professional achievements, including promotions, skill development, and career mobility (Setyawati & Rianto, 2022). Technology can enhance career opportunities by enabling skill improvement and career expansion, though automation may also eliminate certain jobs, limiting career growth for some individuals (Frey & Osborne, 2017; Prasetyaningtyas et al., 2023). Factors influencing career performance include work efficiency, education, and adaptability to technology, with effective technology use increasing the likelihood of higher career performance (Zhang et al., 2019). Career performance can be reflected in opportunities for promotion, enhancement of job skills, and confidence in facing career challenges (Westerman et al., 2014; Stone et al., 2015).

AI adoption involves automating routine tasks and supporting data-driven decision-making. It can increase efficiency by reducing manual effort and boosting organizational productivity (Davenport & Kirby, 2016). However, challenges such as resistance to change, insufficient technological infrastructure, and low digital literacy can hinder adoption (Jarrahi, 2018; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2019). Successful AI adoption also depends on organizational readiness to integrate new technology with existing processes (Huang & Rust, 2018).

Research has shown that technology adoption improves work efficiency, which in turn positively impacts career performance (Brynjolfsson & Hitt, 2000). This relationship is strengthened by training, work experience, and agility. Work efficiency serves as a key mediating mechanism linking technology adoption to career outcomes, with individuals who enhance their efficiency through technology achieving better career performance (Arntz et al., 2016; Almosawi et al., 2024).

H3: Work efficiency has a significant effect on career performance.

H4: AI adoption has a significant effect on career performance
H5: Agility has a significant effect on career performance.

Work Efficiency as Mediating Variable

Work efficiency plays a crucial role in explaining how AI adoption and agility translate into improved career performance. The adoption of AI enhances productivity by automating routine tasks and supporting data-driven decisions, resulting in faster and more accurate work processes (Davenport & Kirby, 2016; Bhatia & Gupta, 2020). Nguyen et al. (2019) define work efficiency as the ability to complete tasks effectively with minimal time and errors, and their study demonstrates that AI implementation substantially increases efficiency through process automation and error reduction. This implies that the performance benefits of AI at the individual level emerge primarily through increased efficiency rather than direct technological capability, suggesting a mediating role. Empirical findings by Arntz et al. (2016) confirm this mechanism by showing that efficiency improvements serve as the primary channel linking technology adoption to positive career outcomes.

In addition to AI adoption, agility enhances work efficiency by enabling individuals to rapidly learn, adapt, and respond to technological and environmental changes (Westerman et al., 2014; Kim & Bae, 2016). Agility individuals are more capable of utilizing new tools effectively, resulting in superior work efficiency and productivity (Ghosh et al., 2015). Increased efficiency subsequently supports better career performance by improving job outputs, facilitating promotions, and strengthening professional development opportunities (Zhang & Venkatesh, 2017; Tapscott, 2018). Therefore, efficiency serves as an essential mechanism through which agility influences career outcomes.

H6: Work efficiency mediated the influence of AI adoption on career performance.
H7: Work efficiency mediated the influence of agility on career performance.

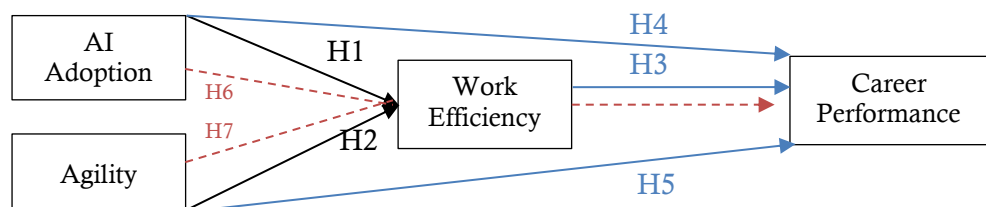


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework Model

Based on Figure 1, this research framework posits that AI adoption and agility drive work efficiency, with AI improving task automation and agility enhancing adaptability (H1, H2). In turn, work efficiency is expected to boost career performance through greater productivity and skill development (H3). Additionally, both AI adoption and agility are hypothesized to directly influence career performance by creating opportunities for promotion and growth (H4, H5). Thus, the framework highlights work efficiency as a mediator while recognizing the direct impacts of AI adoption and agility on career outcomes (H6, H7).

RESEARCH METHODS

This research method uses a quantitative approach with a survey design to collect relevant primary data. The research was conducted in the South Sulawesi region during the period January to June 2024. Respondents consisted of 280 employees working in the private and government sectors, who had experience with AI technology in their work. The sample selection was carried out using a purposive sampling technique, which aims to ensure that the selected respondents are relevant to the research objectives. The number of samples was calculated using the Slovin formula with a margin of error of 5%, so that

the data obtained has a high level of confidence. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This questionnaire is designed to measure four main variables, namely AI adoption, work efficiency, career performance, and agility.

The AI adoption variable is measured through three indicators: the use of AI to automate routine tasks, data-based decision making, and increased work productivity. The work efficiency variable is measured through task completion time, accuracy of work results, and increased productivity. Career performance variables include promotion opportunities, skills development, and confidence in facing career challenges. Meanwhile, agility is measured through the ability to quickly learn new technologies, flexibility in adapting, and a proactive attitude towards change.

Data analysis was carried out using statistical methods, including path analysis to test direct and indirect relationships between variables. Before the main analysis was carried out, the research instrument was tested for validity and reliability. The validity test used the Exploratory Factor Method (EFA) to ensure that the indicators used could measure the intended variables. Reliability was measured using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire.

The data analysis process (path analysis) was carried out using statistical software such as Smart-PLS. The results of the analysis are expected to explain the effect of AI adoption on work efficiency and career performance development, as well as the role of agility in strengthening this relationship. This study not only provides theoretical insights into the relationship between technology and individuals but also produces practical recommendations for organizations in maximizing the benefits of AI in the workplace. This study provides an empirical overview of how AI can be adopted more effectively to support employee efficiency and career development, taking into account individual factors such as agility, especially in the context of a region such as South Sulawesi.

RESULTS

The respondents in this study were 280 employees working in various sectors in the South Sulawesi region, both in the private and government sectors. Most respondents work in agribusiness, manufacturing, and services, which have begun to implement AI technology in their operations. Respondents were selected using purposive sampling, ensuring that they have experience in using AI in the workplace.

In terms of demographics, the majority of respondents are in the 25-45 year age range, reflecting the productive workforce population in the region. The respondents' education levels vary, from a diploma to a postgraduate degree, with the majority having a bachelor's degree. Most respondents have more than five years of work experience, indicating that they have a deep understanding of their job duties and responsibilities.

In terms of job positions, respondents consist of various levels, from operational staff to managerial. This allows the study to identify how AI adoption affects employees with different job responsibilities and challenges. Most respondents also reported that they have used AI for tasks such as data analysis, process automation, and data-driven decision making. With this diversity, the data collected is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the relationship between AI adoption, work efficiency, and career development, as well as the role of agility as a moderating variable.

Table 1 illustrates the distribution of respondents based on four categories, namely gender, age, education level, and type of work. Of the total respondents, the majority were male (56%), while females accounted for 44%. Based on age, the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups accounted for 44% and 35% respectively, while respondents aged 45 years and above were only 21%. In terms of education, most respondents had a bachelor's degree (64%), followed by a diploma (18%) and a postgraduate degree (18%).

Table 1. Respondent Description

Category	Subcategory	Amount	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	156	56%
	Female	124	44%
Age	25-34 Years	122	44%
	35-44 Years	100	35%
	45 Years and above	58	21%
Education Background	Diploma	50	18%
	Bachelor's Degree	180	64%
	Postgraduate	50	18%
	Operational Staff	140	50%
Position at Work	Supervisor	80	28%
	Managerial	60	22%

Table 2. Validity Test

Variable	AVE	R-Table	Information
AI Adoption	0.650	0.5	Valid
Agility	0.641		
Career Performance	0.676		
Work efficiency	0.709		

Table 2 shows the results of the validity test of the research variables based on the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and R-Table values. All variables, namely AI adoption (0.650), agility (0.641), career performance (0.676), and work efficiency (0.709), have AVE values above 0.5. This shows that each variable has good validity, because the AVE value is greater than the minimum threshold of 0.5. Thus, all indicators used to measure the variables of this study are declared valid and suitable for use in further analysis.

Table 3. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	Standard	Information
AI Adoption	0.732	0.7	Reliable
Agility	0.721		
Career Performance	0.762		
Work efficiency	0.794		

Table 3 shows the results of the reliability test of the research variables based on the Cronbach's Alpha value. All variables, namely AI adoption (0.732), agility (0.721), career performance (0.762), and work efficiency (0.794), have Cronbach's Alpha values above the minimum standard of 0.7. This shows that all variables in this study are declared reliable, which means that the instruments used are consistent in measuring each variable. Thus, the data obtained from the instrument can be trusted for further analysis.

Figure 2 is a path analysis model that shows the relationship between variables in the study, namely AI adoption, agility, work efficiency, and career performance. The following is a detailed explanation. The indicators that measure AI Adoption are X1.1, X1.2, and X1.3, which have their respective weights, with the highest value at X1.3 (28.467), indicating the importance of certain aspects in AI adoption. Agility indicators (X2.1, X2.2, and X2.3) show the highest weight at X2.1 (27.407), indicating the importance of an individual's ability to learn quickly in supporting work efficiency. Work efficiency indicators (Z1.1, Z1.2, and Z1.3) have the highest weight at Z1.2 (52.617), indicating that efficiency in terms of time or productivity greatly affects career performance. Career performance indicators (Y1.1, Y1.2, Y1.3) show the highest weighting at Y1.3 (40.726), emphasizing the importance of self-confidence in facing career challenges as a significant factor.

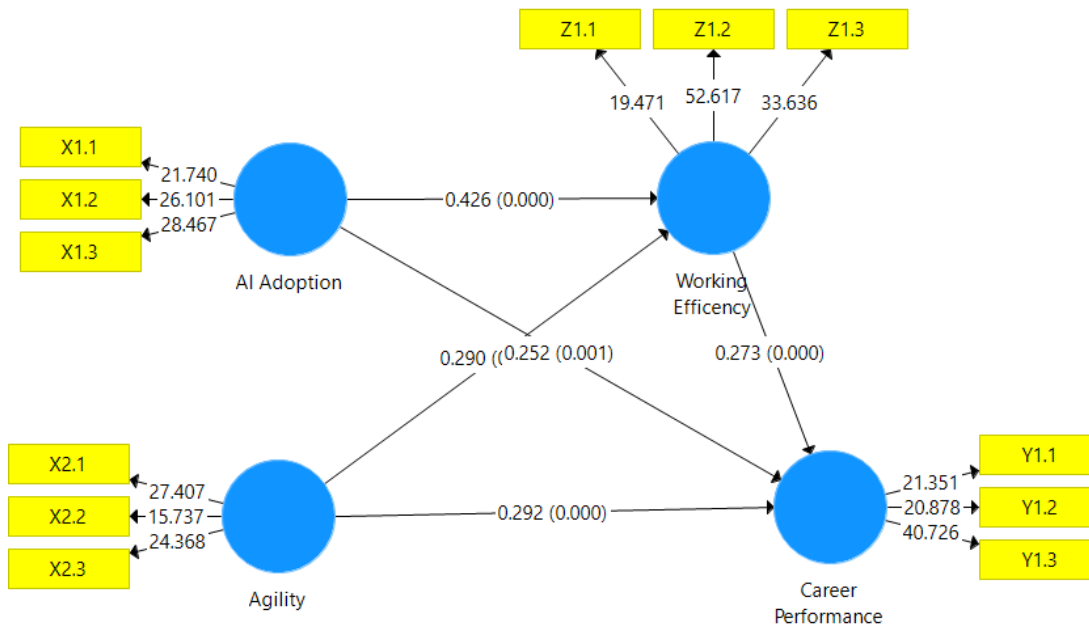


Figure 2. Bootstrapping Model (Path Coefficients & P-Values)

Table 4. Path Analysis

Variable	Coefficient	P-Value	Information
AI Adoption → Work Efficiency	0.426	0.000	H1 Accepted
Agility → Work Efficiency	0.252	0.001	H2 Accepted
Work Efficiency → Career Performance	0.273	0.000	H3 Accepted
AI Adoption → Career Performance	0.290	0.000	H4 Accepted
Agility → Career Performance	0.292	0.000	H5 Accepted

According to Table 4, the results show that AI adoption significantly improves work efficiency ($\beta = 0.426$, $p = 0.000$), while agility also has a positive effect on efficiency ($\beta = 0.252$, $p = 0.001$). In turn, work efficiency enhances career performance ($\beta = 0.273$, $p = 0.000$), confirming its mediating role. AI adoption ($\beta = 0.290$, $p = 0.000$) and agility ($\beta = 0.292$, $p = 0.000$) also directly influence career performance, indicating that both technological adoption and adaptability are critical for career growth, with their impact reinforced through improvements in efficiency.

The analysis of specific indirect effects was conducted to determine how AI Adoption and agility influence career performance through the mediating role of work efficiency. Indirect effects reveal the extent to which these independent variables contribute to career outcomes indirectly, by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of work processes. This approach helps clarify whether improvements in work efficiency serve as a significant transmission mechanism between technological and behavioral capabilities and employees' overall career performance.

Table 5. Indirect Effects

Variables	Specific Indirect Effects
AI Adoption -> Work efficiency -> Career Performance	0.116
Agility -> Work efficiency -> Career Performance	0.079

The results, as shown in Table 5, indicate that both AI adoption and agility exert positive indirect effects on career performance through work efficiency. Specifically, the indirect effect of AI adoption (0.116) is stronger than that of agility (0.079), suggesting that the implementation of AI technologies enhances employees' efficiency, which subsequently leads to improved career outcomes. Meanwhile, agility, representing adaptability and responsiveness, also contributes indirectly to career performance, though to a lesser extent. These findings imply that while personal agility remains important,

leveraging AI tools to optimize task execution and decision-making efficiency plays a more substantial mediating role in boosting career performance.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that AI adoption has a significant effect on work efficiency. With a path coefficient of 0.426 ($p = 0.000$), AI is proven to be able to increase individual work efficiency by automating routine tasks, reducing the time needed to complete work, and increasing the accuracy of work results. This finding is in line with previous research by Brynjolfsson et al. (2017), which emphasized that AI can be an important tool in optimizing work productivity in various sectors. AI serves as a catalyst for data-driven decision-making by enabling rapid and accurate analysis, thereby helping employees make better decisions and focus on strategic tasks (Davenport & Kirby, 2016). Yet, its implementation often faces barriers such as resistance to change and limited digital literacy, particularly in regions like South Sulawesi, where low technological readiness and insufficient training hinder effective integration into work processes.

AI adoption also has a direct effect on career performance with a path coefficient of 0.290 ($p = 0.000$). These results indicate that individuals who are able to adopt AI technology tend to have better career opportunities. AI helps employees develop new skills, such as data analysis skills and technology-based decision-making, which are highly valued in the modern job market. Individuals accustomed to advanced technology have greater chances of attaining higher career positions, as AI allows employees to focus on value-added tasks, enhancing visibility and promotion opportunities (Mindell & Reynolds, 2023). Yet, these benefits are not evenly distributed; in sectors like manufacturing, AI may replace human roles and limit career prospects (Luckin et al., 2016; Frey & Osborne, 2017).

This study confirms that work efficiency significantly mediates the relationship between AI adoption and agility on career performance, showing it as the main mechanism through which AI and agility improve career outcomes. Individuals who enhance efficiency through AI achieve better performance, consistent with Olan et al. (2012), who identified efficiency as a key marker of successful technology adoption, and with Stone et al. (2015), who highlight its impact on productivity, motivation, and job satisfaction. Westerman et al. (2014) and Ghosh et al. (2015) highlight that agility individuals achieve higher efficiency, which subsequently strengthens their career outcomes.

Agility affects work efficiency and career performance. Agility individuals adapt more quickly to technological change, enabling effective use of AI, a skill and equally vital at the organizational level for fostering innovation (Westerman et al., 2014; Savitha & Kumar, 2025). However, agility varies depending on factors such as education, experience, and organizational support, underscoring the need for development programs (Menon & Suresh, 2021). These findings confirm that AI adoption and agility, directly and indirectly through efficiency, enhance career performance, supporting prior studies on the efficiency benefits of AI and the role of agility in navigating technological change (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014; Stone et al., 2015; Kewsuwun, 2020; Oktaviani, 2025; Syamil et al., 2025).

Beyond the direct effects, the indirect effects analysis provides deeper insight into how AI adoption and agility ultimately influence career performance. The results show that AI adoption has a stronger indirect effect on career performance through work efficiency (0.116) compared to agility (0.079). This suggests that AI mainly boosts career success by first enhancing daily work efficiency, freeing employees from routine tasks, reducing errors, and enabling faster, higher-quality output, which then leads to clearer career gains like skill recognition, promotions, and greater professional confidence (Jarrahi, 2018; Brynjolfsson & Rock, 2021). Although agility also contributes indirectly via efficiency, its mediating role is smaller, showing that adaptability matters most when combined with real efficiency gains delivered by AI tools (Sherehiy et al., 2007; Guruprasad et al., 2024).

The findings of this study have important practical and theoretical implications. Organizations should invest in AI adoption through training and infrastructure, foster agility by developing adaptive skills, and provide tools that enhance work efficiency. At the same time, inclusivity must be prioritized to ensure AI supports rather than replaces human roles. Thereby improving employee well-being alongside business outcomes. This study offers novelty by integrating AI adoption, agility, work efficiency, and career performance into one framework, reinforcing prior evidence on the role of technology in improving efficiency and career outcomes while highlighting the mediating role of work efficiency and the effect of agility.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that AI adoption and agility play a crucial role in enhancing work efficiency and career performance. AI adoption directly improves performance and indirectly does so by increasing efficiency, enabling individuals to complete tasks more accurately and quickly while focusing on higher-value activities. Work efficiency emerges as the key mediating mechanism, linking technology use to career advancement. At the same time, agility reinforces this relationship, as employees with greater adaptability are better positioned to leverage AI in optimizing efficiency and achieving superior performance outcomes.

Organizations are encouraged to strengthen AI adoption by investing in technology, enhancing employee digital literacy, and integrating AI into work processes to improve efficiency and career performance. Building agility-based training programs and fostering a culture of innovation will help employees adapt quickly to technological change, while inclusive strategies ensure that all workers receive adequate support. Regular monitoring of AI's impact and collaboration with academics are also essential to refine implementation and maximize long-term benefits.

This study, however, has several limitations, including its restricted geographic focus in South Sulawesi, reliance on cross-sectional quantitative data, and concentration on specific sectors such as services, manufacturing, and agribusiness. External factors such as policies and global trends were not considered, limiting broader applicability. Future research should expand coverage, adopt mixed methods, incorporate external variables, and include longitudinal approaches to capture long-term effects across diverse sectors, thereby enriching insights into the relationship between AI, work efficiency, and career development.

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4864
