Enhancing Service Personalization with AI and Robot Agility

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***Abstract*— Restaurants face increasing challenges in maintaining service flexibility and quality while responding to rapidly changing customer demands in technology-enabled environments. This study investigates how an artificial intelligence climate, customer–artificial intelligence-assisted exchange, and business process innovativeness enhance operational adjustment agility and customer service competencies through robot agility. The study contributes to research on artificial intelligence, digital transformation, and intelligent service systems by explaining how service robots improve organizational adaptability and service performance. Drawing on real options theory, parasocial interaction theory, and hybrid intelligence theory, service robots are viewed as adaptive digital assets that facilitate responsiveness and customer engagement. New empirical evidence was obtained from a two-phase managerial survey of restaurants in Shanghai and Taipei with more than three years of robot deployment. Data from 357 valid responses were analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling. The results indicate that an artificial intelligence climate, customer–artificial intelligence-assisted exchange, and business process innovativeness significantly enhance robot agility, which subsequently improves customer service competencies. The findings demonstrate that integrating service robots with artificial intelligence-enabled processes can increase organizational flexibility and maintain service quality in the restaurant industry.**

Keywords— service robots; hybrid intelligence; robot agility; customer service competencies.

I. INTRODUCTION

AI-powered service robots are increasingly adopted in restaurants as digital assets that streamline operations and enhance customer experience [16][30]. These systems automate routine tasks such as ordering and food delivery, improving service speed, precision, consistency, and operational agility. Building on advances in restaurant automation and customer experience management, this study explains how organizational and technological capabilities jointly strengthen responsiveness, customer trust, and loyalty in AI-intensive environments. It addresses an important gap by examining how agility and perceived service quality shape customer experience within hybrid human–AI service settings.

Service robots improve efficiency, perceived value, and customer satisfaction through adaptive interactions [14][26]. Mechanisms such as CAIX and business process innovativeness accelerate service innovation, strengthen coordination in food and beverage delivery, and support personalized customer experiences, particularly in tourism-oriented restaurant contexts where digital differentiation is essential. Prior studies suggest that CAIX promotes emotionally engaging interactions, while perceived anthropomorphism strengthens trust, satisfaction, and loyalty by influencing emotional responses. These mechanisms collectively explain how AI-driven innovation contributes to long-term relational value and digital service excellence.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews the literature on AI-enabled service robots in restaurant environments, focusing on hybrid intelligence, AI climate, CAIX, business process innovativeness, and anthropomorphism. Prior studies suggest that these organizational and technological capabilities enhance robot agility, adaptive service delivery, and customer service competencies in hospitality settings. Drawing on hybrid intelligence and service innovation perspectives, this section develops the conceptual framework and hypotheses linking AI climate, CAIX, business process innovativeness, robot agility, anthropomorphism, and customer service competencies.

A. Hybrid Intelligence and Human–AI Synergy in Service Systems

Hybrid intelligence refers to the strategic integration of human and artificial intelligence, combining their complementary strengths to address complex service challenges more effectively than either could independently [5]. This paradigm utilizes AI for scalability, speed, consistency, and task automation, while preserving human capabilities in contextual reasoning, ethical judgment, and adaptive decision-making [29]. In service environments, hybrid intelligence supports value co-production through coordinated interactions between employees and AI-enabled service robots.

AI enhances operational efficiency, responsiveness, and personalization at scale, whereas employees contribute emotional intelligence and context-sensitive service to maintain relational quality and adaptability in customer experiences [30]. This synergy is particularly important in dynamic, high-contact service settings. Empirical evidence further suggests that AI-conducive organizational climates strengthen agility, stimulate innovation, and improve resource orchestration, thereby supporting the effective implementation of hybrid intelligence in service innovation.

B. AI Climate and Strategic Integration of Service Robotics

In hospitality, AI-powered service robots support operational efficiency and sustainability by improving energy use and reducing reliance on manual labor [28]. A strong AI climate further enhances innovation readiness by embedding AI into strategic initiatives such as circular economy practices and resource-efficient sharing platforms. At the organizational level, human–AI dynamics shape workforce outcomes.

Khaliq et al. [15] found that perceptions of AI or robotic autonomy can increase turnover intention, highlighting the need to manage human–robot coexistence. Building on this, [30] demonstrated that when trust-enabled robots are paired with data-driven personalization, they strengthen engagement and satisfaction and provide a pathway for strategic differentiation in AI-supported hospitality.

C. Robot Agility

Robot agility in restaurants refers to the ability of AI-enabled service robots to adapt to shifting operational conditions, guest preferences, and real-time service demands [26]. Robots should offer innovative options for risk-tolerant customers and intuitive interfaces for those facing time pressure or high information load. Service providers must identify pain points such as confusion, limited time, or low digital literacy and deliver support aligned with customer capability to enhance service quality. A strong AI climate supported by digital infrastructure, organizational policies, and cultural readiness further strengthens this adaptability.

In AI-enabled hospitality settings, continuous data capture and real-time analytics guide robot behavior and enable context-sensitive adjustments [17]. This environment encourages investment in software updates and algorithmic enhancements to sustain adaptability. An AI-conducive climate promotes innovation through experimentation with automation and robotics. AI-integrated training helps employees coordinate effectively with robots, while machine learning allows robots to learn from interactions and improve performance. These conditions form the foundation for Hypothesis 1:

H1: Artificial Intelligence Climate climate of restaurants positively influences robot agility in restaurant environments.

D. Customer–AI-Assisted Exchange (CAIX)

CAIX refers to the interactive processes between human-like service robots and customers in which communication, feedback, and adaptation drive AI-enabled service innovation [22]. Pei et al. [23] noted that these interactions are reshaping service roles as robots increasingly perform frontline tasks once handled by human staff. Jadhav et al. [13] emphasized that CAIX functions as a real-time learning mechanism, allowing robots to refine responses through repeated encounters and tailor service to individual preferences.

These systems process inquiries instantly, adjust dynamically, and deliver personalized recommendations, such as recalling dietary needs or preferred service styles, which enhances responsiveness and satisfaction. As interaction volume and diversity increase, the depth of available data expands, strengthening robots' ability to make context-sensitive decisions. CAIX therefore acts as a key enabler of robotic agility in hospitality by linking user engagement with ongoing AI refinement. Based on this perspective, we propose the following hypothesis.

H2: CAIX positively influences robot agility in restaurant environments.

E. Business Process Innovativeness

Business process innovativeness in service robot deployment refers to the strategic integration of AI-powered robots into organizational workflows to strengthen coordination between automated systems and human operations [9]. By embedding robots into routine processes, firms can automate tasks, improve workflow adaptability, and enhance operational efficiency through intelligent systems and process redesign.

This capability improves customer experience, resource utilization, and digital innovation across hospitality contexts [9][24]. It also supports personalized service delivery and flexible process adjustments in response to changing customer demands. As robots increasingly perform functions such as order handling and guest interaction, machine learning capabilities enable faster and more adaptive service responses, thereby strengthening robotic agility and strategic responsiveness:

H3: Business process innovativeness and service robot innovation positively influence robot agility in restaurant environments.

F. Customer Service Competencies

Customer service competencies in AI-enabled restaurants refer to an organization's ability to meet guest needs effectively through digitally mediated interactions [30]. Prior studies emphasize that incorporating human-like traits, such as conversational ability and emotional responsiveness, into service robots enhances customer engagement and interaction quality [32]. In addition, GenAI-powered robots increasingly perform complex tasks while delivering highly personalized customer experiences.

AI-driven environments also expand service capacity by integrating automation with adaptive technologies [3]. Robots equipped with real-time feedback capabilities can instantly adjust service parameters, improving responsiveness and coordination with employees. In high-contact settings such as fine dining, robots interpret contextual cues to refine service delivery and strengthen guest experience, while business process innovativeness ensures procedural consistency and enhances customer trust and satisfaction.

H4: Business process innovativeness positively influences customer service competencies in AI-enabled restaurant environments.

G. Anthropomorphism

Anthropomorphism refers to the extent to which a digital or robotic agent is perceived as displaying human-like features or behaviors [20]. In AI-enabled service environments, elements such as facial expressions, conversational speech, and interactive dialogue enable robots to communicate more naturally and engage customers more effectively [7]. These human-like cues evoke emotional responses that positively shape perceptions of robotic agility, adaptability, and responsiveness.

Anthropomorphic design also functions as a heuristic for competence and intelligence. When robots exhibit gestures, facial expressions, or modulated voice tones, users are more likely to attribute cognitive capability, adaptive decision-making, and context-sensitive service to the system. Such perceptions increase tolerance toward minor service failures while strengthening trust, satisfaction, and perceived value. Consequently, anthropomorphic design enhances both the perceived intelligence and relational effectiveness of AI-powered service agents.

H5: Perceived anthropomorphism positively moderates the relationship between robot agility and customer service competencies.

Overall, the proposed research model explains how AI climate, CAIX, and business process innovativeness enhance robot agility in AI-enabled restaurant environments. Robot agility subsequently improves customer service competencies, while perceived anthropomorphism strengthens this relationship, as illustrated in Figure 1. The model emphasizes the joint role of organizational capabilities and AI-enabled interactions in supporting adaptive service delivery and customer experience.

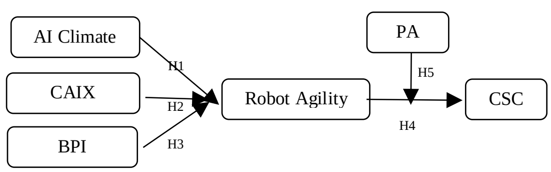

Figure 1. Research model.

Note: CAIX = Customer–AI-Assisted Exchange; BPI = Business Process Innovativeness; PA = Perceived Anthropomorphism; and CSC = Customer Service Competencies.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

This section describes the research methodology used to examine the proposed relationships among AI climate, CAIX, business process innovativeness, robot agility, perceived anthropomorphism, and customer service competencies. It outlines the questionnaire development process, sampling procedure, and data collection approach employed to ensure the reliability and validity of the empirical investigation.

A. *Questionnaire Development*

Following an extensive literature review, the survey items were customized for the research context, yielding 29 preliminary questions. Wording was refined based on initial assessments. Participants answered using a 7-point Likert scale (where 1 means strongly disagree and 7 means strongly agree), as detailed in Table I, with validated measures chosen specifically for this study. To achieve more precise translations, the instrument was adjusted, translated into both Simplified and Traditional Chinese, and examined by experts. Two hospitality management professors and two information management scholars reviewed the questionnaire for clarity, accuracy, and alignment with the research objectives. A pretest with 30 restaurant employees further assessed item clarity and relevance, confirming the suitability of the last version.

TABLE I. ITEMS IN SURVEY

AI Climate [1]	
AIC1	We use service robots to enhance customer experience.
AIC2	We use service robots to provide expert services.
AIC3	We personalize services through robots.
AIC4	We use service robots to support service strategies
Customer–AI Assisted Exchange [16]	
CAIX1	Customers behave respectfully toward service robots.
CAIX2	Customers value robot-delivered services.
CAIX3	Complaints about robot services are infrequent.
CAIX4	Customers are satisfied with robot services.
CAIX5	Customers enjoy interacting with service robots
Business Process Innovativeness [9, 24]	
BPI1	Robot services align with business processes.
BPI2	We redesign workflows for new opportunities.
BPI3	We adapt robot services to changing needs.
Robot Agility [17]	
RA1	We share robot service to reduce costs.
RA2	Service robots enable new applications.
RA3	We share robots to support innovation.
RA4	Service robots improve maintenance speed
Perceived Anthropomorphism [20]	
PA1	Service robots use human-like voices.
PA2	Service robots provide human-like interactions.
PA3	Service robots have human-like appearances.
PA4	Service robots display human-like behavior.
Customer Service Competencies [30].	
CSC1	Customers are satisfied with service robots.
CSC2	Customers view robot adoption positively.
CSC3	Customers enjoy interacting with service robots.
CSC4	Robot interactions are meaningful and enjoyable.
CSC5	Service robots provide valuable service options.
CSC6	Customers look forward to future robot interactions

B. *Sampling Process*

Restaurants in Shanghai and Taipei were chosen based on their continuous use of service robots for more than three years. Data was collected in January 2025 from 100 robot-

 ISBN: 978-1-68558-400-9

assisted restaurants selected through stratified sampling, with 50 from each city. Surveys were distributed by email, and IP verification prevented duplicate entries. This process yielded 357 valid responses, resulting in a 59.5 percent response rate.

IV. ANALYSIS

The data showed that nearly 61.5% of the respondents were female, and over 50% were aged 31 or older. Additionally, 33% of the participants had more than 6 years of work experience.

A. Measurement Model

Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed to evaluate the proposed research model [12]. Measurement reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, composite reliability (CR), and outer loadings. All Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.837 to 0.939, while CR values ranged from 0.892 to 0.952, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. Convergent validity was further examined using average variance extracted (AVE), with all constructs reporting values between 0.673 and 0.821, surpassing the recommended 0.50 level [21]. These results confirm satisfactory internal consistency reliability and convergent validity of the measurement model.

Discriminant validity was subsequently assessed using cross-loadings and the Fornell–Larcker criterion [12]. All cross-loading values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, providing additional support for convergent validity [4]. Furthermore, the square root of AVE for each construct was greater than its correlations with other constructs, confirming adequate discriminant validity. Overall, the findings demonstrate that the measurement model satisfies the required standards of reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

B. Model Testing

The coefficient of determination (R^2) reflects the variance in endogenous variables explained by the model. In this study, R^2 values were 55.2 percent for robot agility, and 44.3 percent for customer service competencies. Effect size (f^2) values were all below the 0.33 benchmark [11], consistent with an explanatory model. Multicollinearity was assessed using the variance inflation factor (VIF), which should remain below 3.3 [10]. VIF values ranged from 0.056 to 0.602, indicating no collinearity issues.

The results indicate that AI climate ($t = 6.47$, $p < 0.01$), customer–AI assisted exchange (CAIX) ($t = 5.92$, $p < 0.01$), and business process innovativeness ($t = 5.60$, $p < 0.01$) significantly enhance robot agility. These findings are consistent with prior studies highlighting the importance of AI-enabled organizational environments and innovation capabilities in strengthening adaptive service performance [15][16]. Furthermore, robot agility significantly improves customer service competencies ($t = 14.314$, $p < 0.001$), supporting earlier research emphasizing the role of agile service robots in enhancing customer interaction quality and service effectiveness [3][8]. In addition, perceived anthropomorphism significantly moderates the relationship between robot agility and customer service competencies ($t = 2.66$, $p < 0.05$).

V. DISCUSSION

The study's results provide valuable insights into the contributions of examining customer service competencies driven by service robots' innovation.

A. Theoretical Contribution

This study extends service robot and AI-enabled hospitality research by moving beyond robot characteristics and customer reactions to examine robot agility as a key organizational capability. Drawing on Real Options Theory, Parasocial Interaction Theory, and Hybrid Intelligence Theory, it develops an integrated framework explaining how AI climate, customer–AI-assisted exchange (CAIX), and business process innovativeness jointly enhance customer service competencies through robot agility. Unlike prior studies that investigate these factors separately, the findings demonstrate their complementary effects in creating responsive and adaptive service systems. The results further show that robot agility mediates the relationship between organizational capabilities and service outcomes, while anthropomorphism strengthens the effectiveness of agile robotic services. By conceptualizing service robots as adaptive socio-technical resources rather than merely automated tools, this study provides a clearer explanation of how AI-enabled hospitality firms achieve superior service performance in dynamic environments.

B. Implications for Practices

This study offers strategic guidance for managers integrating AI-enabled service robots into digital transformation initiatives. Establishing a strong AI climate equips robots to respond to fluctuating customer needs, improving operational agility and enabling flexible deployment across varying service conditions. Such digital readiness ensures that robotic systems can adjust to operational changes and support consistent service delivery.

AI should also advance personalized customer experiences through real-time data use. CAIX plays a central role in agile service delivery, as real-time exchanges and adaptive feedback allow robots to tailor responses and enhance efficiency. Managers can strengthen these outcomes by prioritizing customer-centric design, improving human–robot coordination, and monitoring performance continuously. Business process innovativeness further integrates AI systems, robots, and employees. Intelligent automation supports better decision-making, workflow visibility, and interdepartmental coordination, while investments in task optimization and cross-functional data improve scalability and reliability.

Anthropomorphic design contributes to the relational quality of robot interactions. Features such as expressive cues or modulated voice patterns foster trust and emotional engagement, although managers should balance expressiveness with functional efficiency based on customer expectations. Overall, service robots should be viewed as dynamic actors embedded within a socio-technical system. Strengthening AI climate, CAIX, business process innovativeness, agility, and design features collectively enhance service value, operational flexibility, and long-term competitive advantage.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

This study shows how AI-enabled innovation strengthens operational agility and customer service in robot-assisted restaurants through five key enablers: AI climate, CAIX, business process innovativeness, robot agility, and perceived anthropomorphism. A strong AI climate embeds digital capabilities into workflows, improving flexibility and personalization, while CAIX enhances real-time customer–robot interaction for greater accuracy and relevance. Business process innovativeness further supports seamless coordination among AI systems, robots, and staff, ensuring consistent service execution. Robot agility enables rapid task adjustment and adaptive workflow management, and anthropomorphic cues improve emotional engagement and trust. To achieve these benefits, managers should invest in real-time monitoring, AI-integrated training, and data-driven personalization so that technological infrastructure and organizational routines work together to deliver adaptive, high-quality service and reinforce competitive advantage.

This study improves understanding of how service robots support customer service competencies in AI-enabled restaurant settings. However, certain limitations remain. First, while robot agility and AI capabilities are emphasized, implementation challenges are not fully addressed. Future research should explore barriers such as costs, integration complexity, and employee resistance to better reflect the socio-technical aspects of digital transformation.

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