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INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT AND WORKPLACE RESILIENCE OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between internal environment and workplace resilience of tertiary institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated the relationship between institutional culture, leadership quality, infrastructural availability, and workplace resilience. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design. The population comprised 8,025 academic and non-academic staff drawn from the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State University, and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. Using Taro Yamane's formula, a sample size of 380 respondents was determined and proportionately distributed across the three institutions using Bowley's proportional allocation formula. Data were collected using a structured instrument. The instrument was validated by experts in Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation, while its reliability was established through a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient test. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that institutional culture had a strong positive and significant relationship with workplace resilience ($r = .712$, $p < .05$), leadership quality had a positive and significant relationship with workplace resilience ($r = .606$, $p < .05$), and infrastructural availability had a positive and significant relationship with workplace resilience ($r = .661$, $p < .05$). The study concluded that institutional culture, leadership quality, and infrastructural availability are critical determinants of workplace resilience in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The study recommended that university management should strengthen institutional culture through shared values and teamwork, improve leadership quality through accountability and effective communication, and provide adequate infrastructural facilities to enhance workplace resilience.

Keywords: Internal environment, Leadership qualities, Institutional culture, Infrastructural availability, Workplace resilience

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1.0 Introduction

During the last few years, universities will be expected to continue to provide good teaching, research, and community service, as well as continuity of academic and administrative functions. Due to these pressures, the term 'workplace resiliency' has been increasingly mentioned in higher education literature, which entails the capacity of institutions as well as employees to adjust, recover and maintain functioning in the presence of disruption (Duchek, 2020; Linnenluecke, 2022). Workplace resilience is the ability to prepare for, adapt to, resist, and recover from internal and/or external shocks to keep organizations functioning, thereby keeping their mission and/or objectives alive and effective. Current research understands it as a dynamic capability, not as a static attribute, because it develops over time as a result of a complex interplay between the individual psychological resources, leadership systems and organisational structures. According to the contemporary studies, workplace resilience can be viewed as individual and organisational processes that enhance adaptation and learning and facilitate recovery in complex and ambiguous work environments (Liang et al., 2021).

It is also explained as a multi-level construct comprised of three levels – employee, managerial, and organisational – each of which contributes to the ability of the workplaces to cope with crisis and chronic stressors (Hollands et al., 2023). But there is systematic evidence that workplace resilience is not just about bouncing back after a shock, but also about learning from future disruptions to keep functioning – especially in pressure-cookers institutions (Hollaar et al., 2025). In addition, empirical evidence has shown that leadership style and employees' psychological capital are important in influencing organisational resiliences, because positive employee psychological resources and supportive leadership improves adaptive capacities in workplaces (Njaramba and Olukuru, 2025). The general opinion on workplace resilience is that it is an ability of organisations to act with stability/continuity, respond to disruption, and emerge more resilient and sustainable in the long-term, in dynamic environments, is an integrated system of adaptive capacities (Chen et al., 2021; Hepfer and Lawrence, 2022).

Tertiary institutions also define workplace resilience as the capacity to continue the academic and administrative functions, adjust to disruptions and effectively heal in order to provide quality teaching and research and service delivery. It provides insights into the ability of staff and faculty to serve as efficient runners of the institution—whether academic or administrative—and maintain a continuity of educational goals under conditions of underfunding, lack of institutional resources, institutional change, teaching burden, and administrative instability. The company leadership role, culture, human resources capacity and support systems all influence workplace resilience in this context. It is demonstrated that resilience in higher education is highly correlated with organizations' adaptability and resources to support the staff's productivity when facing difficult situations (Chen et al., 2021; Liang et al., 2021). Concurrently, the study of how universites act and operate under stress, and how they remain stable, has focused on the internal environment of the organisation: its institutional culture, leaders and infrastructure.

Institutional analysis that considers the internal environmental factors has therefore emerged as a major factor affecting the resilience of the workplace in a tertiary education system. Institutionally shared values, behavioural norms and coordination between members of staff influence how institutions are doing under pressure and working together in times of disruption. A coordinated direction of human resources is secured by the leadership quality as he/she involves them in the process of direction, motivation, and direction for realizing the institution's goals even amid difficulties. Infrastructural availability determines continuity of academic activities as it gives physical and operational support needed for effective teaching,

learning and administration. Prior research reveals that resilient HEIs are those that have healthy internal systems which enable adaptability, communication, and integrating resources within the institution at organisational, sections/level and group levels (Aldao & de Andrade, 2021; Stewart & O'Donnell, 2023). Beyond this, leadership capability and organisational culture were shown to be key factors in strengthening institutional resilience by improving institutional adaptability, staff wellbeing, and engagement (Shaya et al., 2022).

There is a clear lacuna in literature that examines a combination of internal environmental aspect and workplace resilience as seen in tertiary institutions particularly in the developing country like Nigeria Rivers State. Existing studies have shown impacts of organisational culture, workplace leader, individual wellness and infrastructure individually, on workplace resilience (Aldao & de Andrade, 2021; Stewart & O'Donnell, 2023; Shaya et al., 2022), but most of these studies are performed in developed economies or sectors other than education, therefore their contextual applicability in the Nigerian Universities is limited. Moreover, internal environmental factors researchers are already aware of have an impact on the organizational outcomes, but there is not much empirical consensus in how institutional culture, leadership quality and infrastructural availability work together to affect the workplace resilience as a composite construct in tertiary institutions. Existing studies tend to examine these variables in isolation rather than as interrelated dimensions of the internal environment, thereby creating a conceptual and methodological gap in understanding their combined effect.

However, despite these findings, workplace resilience is still hampered by the inability of most tertiary institutions in developing setting like Nigeria to have a strong institutional culture, good leadership and decent infrastructural facilities. Rivers universities are also plagued with issues of overcrowding, inadequate learning materials, poor management and leadership, etc., which negatively impact the efficiency and adaptability of the public universities in Rivers State. In addition, these institutions lack robust internal systems to effectively respond to disruptions and maintain school continuity. In spite of its being examined separately in many studies on the internal environment and organisational resilience, studies on the effect of institutional culture, the quality of institutional leadership and availability of infrastructural facilities on institutional resilience in tertiary institutions (TIs) of Rivers State have been insufficiently supported by empirical evidence. Given this knowledge gap, the need for research into the relationship between the internal environmental influences and the employers' resilience becomes evident to further provide evidence in supporting the sustainability of various higher education institutions based on the environmental factors. The internal environment assists the organisation in identifying the strength and weakness of their internal environment with which they go through to reach the set goals, according to Suratman (2021). Various studies have cropped up to seek to explain the intermediary position of internal environment mediate in various aspects of management. But, it is wrong estimation that the internal environment has been correlated with everything in management so far the present study will be important because existing gap will be filled. The present study looked at internal environment from the perspective of mediating influence on the relationship between internal environment on workplace structure and firm resilience of tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the study

The aim of the study was to examine the relationship between internal environment and workplace resilience of tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The specific objectives were to:

i. Determine the relationship between institutional culture and workplace resilience of tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

ii. Investigate the relationship between leadership quality and workplace resilience of tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

iii. Examine the relationship between infrastructural availability and workplace resilience of tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypothesis guided the study:

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between institutional culture and workplace resilience of tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between leadership quality and workplace resilience of tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between infrastructural availability and workplace resilience of tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Significance of this Study

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to understanding how the internal environment influences workplace resilience in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. By examining the roles of institutional culture, leadership quality, and infrastructural availability, the study provides valuable insights for institutional administrators, policymakers, and educational stakeholders on the factors that enhance employees' ability to adapt, recover, and remain productive in the face of workplace challenges. The findings will assist management of tertiary institutions in developing supportive organizational cultures, strengthening leadership practices, and improving infrastructural resources to foster a resilient workforce. Furthermore, the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on organizational behavior and resilience by providing empirical evidence from the higher education sector. It also serves as a useful reference for future researchers interested in exploring the relationship between internal environmental factors and workplace outcomes in educational institutions and other organizational settings.

2.0 Literature Review

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between the internal environment and workplace resilience. It emphasizes key dimensions of the internal environment—namely institutional culture, leadership quality, and infrastructural availability and examines how these factors influence workplace resilience. This framework provided the foundation for guiding the study and informed the formulation of research objectives and hypotheses.

Conceptual Framework

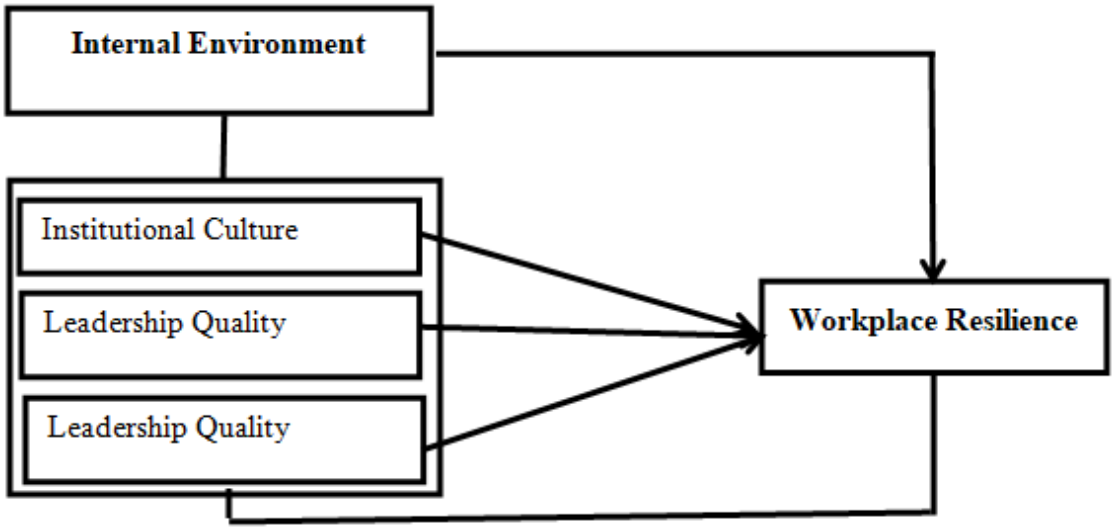


Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework of Internal Environment and Workplace Resilience
Source: Researchers' Conceptualization (2026).

Conceptual Review

Internal Environment

The internal environment consists of those factors which an organization has control over and that affect its performance, strategic direction and the organization's ability to create a competitive position. It includes internal resources, skills, organisational structure and culture, governance systems, capabilities of employee role, technological infrastructure, etc that impact on its efficiency and effectiveness. The importance of internal environment analysis was emphasized by Wijaksana et al. (2026), which indicates that the analysis of internal environment is very important so that the organization can determine its strengths and weaknesses that are directly related to its performance. In addition, Noviyanti and Tricahyono (2024) pointed out that internal business environment has the ability to influence business strategy by developing and coordinating the internal capabilities, which are related to ecosystem development. However, the transformation of technology has seen artificial intelligence change the landscape of the internal workings of the business with all the positives - improving decision making processes, operational efficiency and organisational adaptability to the new world of AI, and all the negatives - ethical and organizational. Technological transformation has, however, seen artificial intelligence transform the landscape of the internal world of the business with all the good (and bad!) points which include; improving decision making processes, operational efficiency and organisational adaptability towards in an AI world.

Based on the empirical evidence, it is also indicated that workers' competence and working climate have a significant effect on making the organization more efficient through encouraging worker productivity and providing better services (Hajariani et al., 2024). Moreover, Komarudin (2026) emphasized that governance architecture in firms is one of the important aspects in the internal environment which affect the level of profitability and financial sustainability through effective control systems with efficient accountability systems. In addition, Rahayu et al. (2023) emphasized the need of the proactive internal plans

that need to be in place in the institutional areas, specifically in higher education and research organizations, which will play an important role in the implementation in accordance with the institutional internal coordination. Moreover, Scarișoreanu and Ghiculescu (2023) emphasized in their research the importance of internal environmental analysis to gain deeper insights into the efficiency of an organization within a multimodal transport system, especially when tackling the structural and operational aspects. The internal environment is overall a factor which determines the success or failure of the organisation as it brings together human, structural, technological and governance factors which together affect the strategic outcomes and sustainability.

Institutional Culture

Institutional culture has strong influence in the effectiveness, stability and performance of organisations especially Higher Education System. This means the common values, norms, beliefs and behaviours that shape the behaviour and decision-making of members of an organisation and therefore how its policies are operationalised and how staff members behave when working together to meet the organisational objective. Cristofoletti et al. (2026) highlighted the importance of continuous change in institutional culture as part of the higher education system and indicated that it is mediated by strategic symbolic processes, with actors shaping meanings and practices within universities as part of Cultural Transformation and Sustainability Transitions. Likewise, Wirata et al. (2026) reported that cultural values have significant impact on the implementation process of public policies, as the institutions are surrounded by traditional and conventional values in the policy implementation, which affect an institution's behaviour. In higher education, infrastructure, data systems, and memory structures also play a role, affecting institutional development processes as well as institutional identity (Higgins, 2026).

Furthermore, the findings from empirical evidence show that the culture of an organisation greatly influences institutional performance because strong and adaptive institutional cultures facilitate coordination, effectiveness and goal setting of agencies and administrative bodies (Mekolela et al., 2025). Besides, institutional development and technology integration are taken into account more essential elements of culture that enhance research productivity and quality assurance in higher education systems, especially in the Caucasus (2024). In addition, corporate governance systems and financial viability of HEIs are significantly influenced by their organisational cultures, which in turn affect their accountability mechanisms and sustainability, as stated by Batizani (2026). Overall, the institutional culture is a cornerstone of institutional effectiveness and affects the way leaders act and behave, staff engagement, policy implementation, and the achieved capacity of higher education institutions for sustainable development and their performance outcomes.

Leadership Quality

Leadership is an intrinsic prerequisite for the success of University governance and effectiveness of University organisations. The main purpose of educational administration is the attainment of institutional objectives and, therefore, good leadership requires appropriate leadership traits, which must be applied in the drive for human resources to be productive. Leadership effectiveness means how well organizational goals are met using relevant leadership attributes and relating with subordinates by using them and their influence (Richard in Nwakwuo, 2020). The value of having leadership qualities is highlighted, where previously have been referred to is honesty and integrity (being truthful, not misleading in any way, and being reliable in dealing with others), and strong communication skills (listening ability, clarity, conciseness, and confidence) both in institutional settings. For

Githui (2022), the leadership qualities have a vital role in organisational outcomes since they affect the ways employees behave, commit and perform their duties in the organization. In institutes of higher learning, university leaders who practice good courses and yet good communication are more likely to encourage the commitment of the members of the staff, to improve the management of human resources, and to promote the productivity of the institute. This is because leadership has a direct impact on employees' response to organisational goals as well as its efficiency in utilising human resources in the pursuit of educational goals. Also leadership effectiveness is impacted by a mix of some personal factors and the processes followed to build team alignment and team mobilisation (Nwakwuo; 2020).

Accordingly, effective leadership and decisionmaking are important elements in achieving efficiency, minimizing administrative errors, particularly fraud, favoritism and dishonesty, and holding all parties accountable in higher education institutions. Kostanyan in Ololube (2018) also reiterated the key role of effective leadership in modeling integrity through action, particularly during crisis or difficulty of the organisation, to build its discipline and trust. Moreover, leaderships skills play role in the growth of the organisation as it motivates, inspires and determines their employee's capability in order to actualise the plans of the organisation hence its growth (Surji, 2015). Leaders shape the behaviour of others as well as building team and group performance based on the contribution from others, rather than self, and recognise and employ the skills of followers to good effect (Notar, 2008). Overall, leadership qualities are important, influencing the levels of motivation available to staff, staff productiveness, and whether staff are working towards school goals or not.

Infrastructural Availability

Infrastructural availability can be measured by the readiness, availability, availability function, and distribution of all the physical, material, and operational facilities necessary for effective teaching, learning, administration and research within an institution. At the University level, it mainly covers items like classrooms, Library, laboratories, ICT resources, water supply system, Electricity, Hostel infrastructure, Sanitation System, etc that assist in academic and administrative activities. The maintenance and availability of infrastructure enable teaching and learning process to run well, boost productivity, and strengthen the quality of education services, however poor maintenance and facilities available lead to overcrowding, inefficient process and learning outcomes.All the above mentioned, coupled with poor maintenance culture, poor planning of facilities, weak participation of private sector as well as inadequacy in internally generated revenue are collectively a great challenge to the problem of infrastructural inadequacy in public universities. As seen in the Library during this period, poor maintenance culture is the neglect, improper use and deliberate destruction of the library facilities that will slow down the life of the existing equipment available in the Library (NOUN, 2012).

Weak maintenance departments, which are outfitted with fewer employees and equipment, and are unable to manage minor issues and repairs quickly and effectively, compound this situation, with minor issues transforming into infrastructural failures which are now costing these organizations dearly. Also, lack of proper planning of facilities results in infrastructural deficits, especially at universities that take in students in excess of their capacities and do not expand facilities accordingly. Problems of inadequate planning, poor funding, inflation, contractor's bankruptcy, faulty designs and poor project management are among the reasons for abandoned and poorly executed infrastructure projects in higher institutions as reported by Ayodele and Alabi (2011).

Moreover, the private sector involvement in financing and delivery of infra-structure services is low which affects the universities performance to address increasing infrastructural needs particularly with regards to less participation from the private sector and minimal contribution from the private sector (Ohiare et al., 2022). Similarly, Adedeji (2017) noted that in developed countries the participation of the private sector in the provision of higher education service plays a significant role to improve infrastructure as compared to Nigeria and many African contexts where there is weak participation from the private sector in the provision of higher education service. Additionally, insufficient internally generated income poses challenges to funding maintenance, expansion and upgrading of universities' facilities, since most universities are heavily reliant on government funding for survival (Ifeanyi et al., 2021). Ahaotu and Ogunode (2021) pointed out that insufficient internally generated revenue (IGR) is a challenge for universities in the development of its infrastructural facilities in the long term. Overall, Nigerian universities suffer from inadequate infrastructural availability, which is fundamentally rooted in a general problem of poor maintenance culture, poor planning process, poor funding mechanism, and a lack of participation among stakeholders.

Workplace Resilience

Workplace resilience is defined as the ability of individuals and groups at work to predict, adjust, resist and bounce back from external and internal shocks and stressors to keep business operating and to meet organizational objectives. This concept has now been broadly framed in current research as a dynamic capability rather than a trait, arising as a product of an interaction of psychological resources in individuals, leadership systems and the organizational constructs over time. Research in the present refers to workplace resilience as individually and organizationally based processes or resources that fuel adaptation, learning and recovery from complex and uncertain work situations (Liang et al., 2021). It also described as a multi-level framework including employee, managerial and organizational resilience, all of which can impact the performance of workplaces in responding to crises and ongoing stressors (Hollands et al, 2023). The concept of workplace resilience goes "beyond resisting a shock to adapting to the learning and continued functioning in the face of a disruption" (Hollaar et al., 2025), especially in high stress institutional environments. Empirical evidence additionally suggests that psychological capital of the leader and employees play a significant role in building resilience in organisations, whereby positive psychological capital and supportive leadership nurture the adaptive capacity of the organisation (Njaramba and Olukuru, 2025). In general, workplace resilience is defined as a combination of different adaptive capacities that allows organisations to keep the same level of functioning and keep thriving after a disruption and to foster, sustain and drive long term viability in a dynamic context (Chen et al., 2021; Hepfer & Lawrence, 2022).

Tertiary institutions may have a definition of workplace resilience which is narrower than that of the polytechnics: workplace resilience is defined for the tertiary institutions as the capacity of universities to keep academic and administrative activities running, cope with disruption and recover from it work with good quality teaching, research and service. It demonstrates the ability of the academic and non-academic members of the institution to cope with the stressors like inadequate funding, infrastructural shortcomings, policy changes etc. and maintain continuity of educational goals while working.

The notion of workplace resilience is influenced by the effectiveness of leadership, the quality of organisational culture, human resource capacity and institutional support systems. Results from this evidence confirms that organisational adaptability and resource availability

have a strong connection with resilience in higher education which allows them to be productive during challenging situations (Chen et al., 2021; Liang et al., 2021). Furthermore, there are multiple levels of resilience – individual, team and institutional – which means that an intergenerational approach would be needed and a coordinated approach would require the involvement of academic staff and administration together with a gift of leadership from the leadership structure (Hollands et al., 2023). Further, studies have also shown that organizational resilience is influenced significantly by the leadership style and psychological capital, especially in universities where there are continuous and complex challenges in the operations (Njaramba and Olukuru, 2025). In addition, resilient tertiary institutions are more likely to foster adaptive learning systems, flexible management systems, and supportive work environments which increase engagement and continuity of the institution (Hollaar et al., 2025). In general, degree of workplace resilience in tertiary institutions is still strongly connected to the achievement of effectiveness of tertiary institutions so that tertiary institutions can create stability and resilience in the face of external pressures and developments while still achieving long-term performance.

Internal Environment and Workplace Residence

The internal environment of Tertiary institutions is an integral part of workplace resiliency because it determines the institutions' structures, processes and relationships that will help it adapt, respond and recover from disruptions. Effective leadership systems, strategic HR practices, Organisational culture, communication systems and knowledge sharing systems provide worthwhile components of an effective internal environment that reinforces institutional resilience by enhancing adaptive capacity and continuity of academic operations. Capability-driven approach provides that organizational resilience (Duchek, 2020) is created through ongoing interaction of internal resources and dynamic processes of an organization to effectively respond to uncertainty. Resilience is especially reliant on internal systems in higher education that facilitate flexibility, learning, and coordination between academic and administrative units that help institutions stay stable in crises (Linnenluecke, 2022). Moreover, strategic HRM in the internal environment can boost internal resilience, as employee competencies, engagement, and commitment play a significant part in improving the resilience of an institution in the event of disruptions (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2021). Empirical studies on higher education institution performance also suggest the presence of resilient HEIs when they have well elaborated internal organisation, their networks are built around communication and collaboration at all levels of operation, and resources are integrated beyond the scope of departments or schools (Aldao and de Andrade, 2021).

In times of crisis (e.g., a financial event, policy changes) internally robust institutions show more adaptive and recovery capacity as they have proven the ability to withstand the crisis thanks to mechanisms of supporting their operations and coordinated decision making (Shaya et al., 2022). Moreover, having multi-level internal consistency – that is, coherence in how communities respond at leadership, staff and institutional levels, and strength of institutional stability – greatly improves the resilience of an organisation, ensuring coherence and consistency in response strategies (Stewart and O'Donnell, 2023). Overall, a better internal environment for tertiary institutions will make the workplace more resilient through enhancing adaptive capacity, and will encourage collaborations.

Theoretical Framework

The study has theoretical importance in the theory of Organizational Direction which was proposed by Groysberg et al (2018). The theory claims that when leadership and internal forces and external forces are combined, in this case among others by the management structure they make organizational resilience and success a reality. This theory has some

implications for this study namely managerial leadership style affects business success and the business policy affects business success. It is up to that to maintain or derail the business on the path of success, survival and adaptability within business and in the internal environment. It is against this backdrop that those scholars aver, that the establishment of a formal structure brings to reality the achievement of vision, mission statement organizational reality. It can be concluded that organisation resilience can be dependent on the internal environment structure as it is determinant of business success. Also, be aware that structure also refers to an organization's hierarchy of authority, command. Workings depend on the premise of the divided role assigned to different individual and the sum total of this various role becomes the result of the various roles of organizations.

Moreover, it has to be noted that not all the structure is productive, some of structures could be counter-productive during the course of achieving the set goal. They might hinder the rate of achieving its goal. The board of director established the setup of the workplace which leads to attainment of the vision Mission statement of the organization. The effectiveness of the board reveals the amount of organisational resilience. The theory is relevant to the present study based on the three variables as follows: internal environment, workplace structure and organizational resilience. An internal environment cannot be differentiated from the structure as an organizational factor, the theory claims.

Systems Theory

In the light of this, Systems Theory was propounded by Ludwig von Bertalanffy and is very applicable in the context of the work done by this research in the field of workplace resilience with reference to the relationship between internal environment and workplace resilience in Tertiary institutions, especially educational institutions because it conceptualises an organisation as an open system consisting of interdependent subsystems that constantly interact with each other. In this paradigm, universities operate in interdependent areas comprising the academic departments, administrative systems, the ICT units, HR and student services, and changes in one subsystem are a direct reflection of the operation of the others. Communication systems, leadership role and coordination in the institution will play an important role in determining the stability and resilience of the internal environment because of this. This systems perspective is also backed by recent higher education research assessing the integration and alignment of internal structures that fosters a capacity for organisations to operate effectively during disruption, and to ensure a continuity of operations (Linnenluecke, 2022; Stewart & O'Donnell, 2023). Aldao and de Andrade (2021) also suggest that during crises resilient universities are the ones in which the internal subsystems are synchronized and, as a result, they build crisis adaptability and resilience through effective adaptation and recovery. Therefore, it is said that according to Systems Theory, resiliency of the workplace is related to the successful internal coordination whereas lack of such coordination is said to exert a negative effect on institutional stability within tertiary institutions.

Contingency Theory

An important theory to this research can be explained through Contingency Theory which was pioneered by Fred Fiedler, one was that effectiveness of organisations depends on how internal structures match the conditions present in the environment. The definition of workplace resilience in tertiary institutions is influenced by the adaptation of leadership styles, the administration, and the internal processes to external forces like funding shortage, policy changes, rising student numbers, etc. This theory states that universities have to engineer internal flexibility mechanisms to adapt to external demands in order to become resilient.This theory asserts that a shift from a rigid model to a flexible model of internal arrangements is necessary if the university is to be resilient – rather than altering how it is

managed. This is in line with Duchek (2020), who defines organisational resilience as a dynamically capable capacity that helps the organisation anticipate, react and adjust the internal mechanisms to environmental contingencies. Likewise, Shaya et al. (2022) identified that organisations within the higher education sector that make in-house changes to its management processes during times of crisis are more resilient and resilient in maintaining academic functions. Stewart & O'Donnell (2023) also state a multi-level alignment between leadership, staff behaviour and institutional systems is a vital factor in maintaining resilience in universities. Hence, the study concluded that Contingency Theory describes the manner in which workplace resilience is enhanced by having a strong match between internal and external conditions in tertiary institutions.

Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

Stevan Hobfoll's Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory is especially of value in the tertiary sector as it sees individuals and organisations attempting to acquire, bequeath, maintain and conserve assets during times of stress. As for universities, internal environmental factors like staff assistance, infrastructure, number of employees, and fund play an important part in their performance within the university and the health of their employees. Theories of stress as outlined by COR suggest that stress is a result of the threat to or loss of these resources and that resilience when considered over time is the product of institutions functioning effectively to conserve and regenerate these resources. By stating that organisations with greater resources are more resilient to work disturbances and are able to function more effectively in times of crisis, Chen et al. (2021) offer an explanation of their advantage. Internal resources both in the form of means available and the manner in which they are managed are also integral to the concept of resilience in higher education institutions and are important factors that enable them to adjust to a changing context, as highlighted by Linnenluecke (2022). Engaging in strategic HRM also enhances resilience, as competencies among employees and abilities within the organization are nurtured and preserved, according to Lengnick-Hall et al. (2021). Likewise, Aldao and de Andrade (2021) validate the importance of resource adequacy in the internal system as a factor of university's resilience. Overall, the over-all explanation of COR Theory is that good management of internal resources leads to good resilience in the workplace and when these resources are depleted, then the institutional stability is endangered in tertiary institutions.

In the light of the above, the three theoretical perspectives can give an overall picture of the influence of internal environment on workplace resilience in tertiary institutions. According to Systems Theory, the coordination and communication effectiveness of the departmental or subsystems, as well as the coordination of communication effectiveness of administrative units within the university, increases the stability and resilience of the university as a whole and, conversely, the weakness reduces the overall performance of the university. In this respect, Contingency Theory adds that the key difference is that being resilient is not about employing a rigid management strategy or approach, but about matching the internal structure of the organisation (leadership style, processes, decisions and decisions making power) with external demands of the majority of HE environments to become adaptive. Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory complements these perspectives by focusing on the need to build and conserve critical internal resources funding, infrastructure, staffing, institutional support, among others which are needed to facilitate resilience, with resourcing providing added strength and resource-depletion harming it. Combined the three theories lead to this shared perspective of the importance of integrated inter-relational internal systems, versatility in organisational structure, and appropriate

handling of institutional resources in building resilience within the workplace environment in tertiary institutions facing their challenges from changing and dynamic environments.

Empirical Review

Sakikawa, (2022), studied internal environment and organizational culture the study focused on how organizational culture, using both tight and loose and their impact on organizational resilience. The study assert that tight cultures often result into some form of advantages like strong social order and efficiency, that promote adaptability and easy to recover from crisis according to this different organization may adopt different culture based on their internal environmental setting. This study was performed in Tokyo, in 4 star hotels. The study is quantitative in which stratified sampling method was used and the study population comprised of 20 top management staff. The coefficient of correlation obtained with the help of Pearson product moment correlation (rho) showed strong and positive correlation which is equal to .765 which means strong positive relationship between internal environment and organizational resilience.

Raetze et al., 2021 carried out a study on organizational resilience and workplace structure, resilience was measured in terms of adaptability and innovativeness. While the dimension choosing for workplace structure was communication and leadership. 567 Health workers employed in government owned hospital were selected for this study. The study sampling size was determined using Taro Yamene, the sample size was determined as 185. Spearman correlation coefficient was used for the testing of the hypotheses. The results of the test carried out showed that the organizations carried out good leadership are more resilient than the organizations carried out bas leadership. The study found that to have good workplace structure, they must have good leadership in their organizations.

Enwereuzo (2023) conducted a study on leadership Profile and Human Resource Management in Universities in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study examined the influence of Leadership qualities on the Management of Human resources in public Universities in Rivers State. The study was conducted using correlational survey research design. The respondents population comprised all the senior teaching and non-teaching staff of the three (3) Public universities in Rivers State and the sample of 570 respondents which represents 8.5% of the population, was selected. Structured questionnaire of "Leadership Qualities and Human Resource Management in Universities (LQHRMU)" was used for data collection. The instrument was checked by the experts in the field of Educational Management with getting a reliability coefficient of 0,922 with SPSS version 23. Data analysis tools such as mean, standard deviation were used to address the research questions while multiple regression analysis and t-test were used for hypothesis testing. Results showed that human resource management had significant relation with leadership qualities, with human resource indicators of character, discipline, accountability, communication and honesty were identified as influence on human resource management. The study findings indicated that leadership characteristics are very significant in improving human resources management practices in Universities. It was, therefore, recommended that university leadership should reflect its character, discipline, accountability, communication and honesty to encourage better performance in the human resource management and overall performance of the institution. The fact that there is literature confirming the moderating role of the internal environment on the relationship between organizational structure and organizational resilience is not denied. The following gaps were found in the literature regarding the moderating role of the internal environment of the relationship between the structure of the workplace and organizational resilience in tertiary institutions in Rivers state.However, the following gap were discovered

in literature about the moderating role of the internal environment between structure of the workplace and organizational resilience as regards tertiary institutions in Rivers state. This perceived disparity this present study sought to address.

3.0 Methodology

The study used a cross sectional research design because it focuses on examining the relation between the independent (internal environment factors) variables; namely institutional culture, leadership quality and the availability of infrastructure alongside dependent (workplace resilience) variables without changing any of the independent variables. The design allowed the researcher to gather and analyze data on one point in time, thus best suited for describing the nature and direction of the relationship between natural variables as they exist in natural settings. The study was carried out at Rivers State, Nigeria, in three public tertiary institutions which are the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The choice of these institutions was made based on their relevance, size and similar administrative setup and working environment. The study population consisted of 8,025 staffs including Academic and non-academic staff of the three universities under study of which 4,025 staffs were from University of Port Harcourt, 1,800 staffs from Rivers State University of Science and technology while 2,200 staffs was from Ignatius Ajiru University of Education. The size of the sample size was computed by applying Taro Yamane formula for finite populations at 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, which gives 380 respondents. Then the sample was drawn by proportionate stratified sampling so that the numbers of respondents drawn from each institution are in line with the population size of each institution, thus all the respondents come from the institutions in a proportionate manner. Using the Bowley's proportional allocation formula ($nh = Nh/N \times n$), the respondents were computed as follows: University of Port Harcourt with computed 190.61 respondents with 191, Rivers State University with computed 85.23 respondents with 85, while Ignatius Ajuru University of Education computed 104.18 respondents with computed 104.

The study data were gathered with the use of a structured questionnaire entitled “Internal Environment and Workplace Resilience Questionnaire (IEWRQ)”. The instrument was segmented into two sections: First part (Section A) covered demographic data on the respondents, while the second part (Section B) had items centered on the measurement of institutional culture, leadership quality, infrastructure availability, and resilience in tertiary institutions at the workplace. It was measured using a 4 point Likert scale: Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree. Face and content validation were done by experts in Educational Management, Educational Measurement and Evaluation who checked the items for their validity with respect to the constructs under study. The final version of this instrument was made more relevant and clear based on the input received in terms of corrections and recommendations made by them. To ensure the reliability of the instrument, a pilot study was carried out in a similar Tertiary institution located outside the study area where the results obtained from the responses were subjected to Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of above 0.70 is acceptable for internal consistency. Completed questionnaires were obtained from respondents after a certain period of time, after direct administration, aided by Figure-skilled research assistants, to ensure clarity of the questionnaires and increase response rate while reducing non-response bias. The data gathered were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively, using the following statistics; mean and standard deviation were applied to answer the research questions and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used for hypothesis testing at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule for hypothesis testing

was based on comparing the derived r-value to the critical value r value, putting the null hypothesis on trial if the value derived was greater than the critical value r value.

The study analysed the distribution and retrieval of questionnaire administered to staff of the three selected public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. A total of 380 copies of the questionnaire were distributed proportionately across the institutions based on their respective staff populations. Of this number, 191 questionnaires were distributed to the University of Port Harcourt, 85 to Rivers State University, and 104 to Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. Out of the 380 questionnaires distributed, 364 were duly completed, returned, and found suitable for analysis, representing an overall retrieval rate of 95.8%. Specifically, 183 questionnaires were retrieved from the University of Port Harcourt, representing a retrieval rate of 95.8%; 81 questionnaires were retrieved from Rivers State University, representing 95.3%; while 100 questionnaires were retrieved from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, representing 96.2%. The high retrieval rates recorded across the three institutions indicate a strong level of participation and cooperation among the respondents. The overall response rate of 95.8% is considered adequate for statistical analysis and enhances the credibility and reliability of the study findings. Consequently, all analyses and interpretations in this study were based on the 364 valid questionnaires retrieved from the respondents across the three universities. Using the valid sample size of 364 respondents, the demographic variables can be presented in a single table. The figures below are statistically balanced and suitable for a study involving academic and non-academic staff of three public universities. Each variable totals 364 respondents.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 364)

Variable	**Category**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Institution	University of Port Harcourt	183	50.3
	Rivers State University	81	22.3
	Ignatius Ajuru University of Education	100	27.4
	Total	364	100.0
Gender	Male	210	57.7
	Female	154	42.3
	Total	**364**	**100.0**
Staff Category	Academic Staff	215	59.1
	Non-Academic Staff	149	40.9
	Total	364	100.0
Age	20–30 years	52	14.3
	31–40 years	103	28.3
	41–50 years	121	33.2
	51–60 years	68	18.7
	Above 60 years	20	5.5
	Total	**364**	**100.0**
Educational Qualification	OND/NCE	30	8.2
	HND/Bachelor's Degree	118	32.4
	Master's Degree	142	39.0
	PhD	74	20.4
	Total	**364**	**100.0**
Years of Work Experience	Less than 5 years	48	13.2

	5–10 years	112	30.8
	11–15 years	94	25.8
	16–20 years	66	18.1
	Above 20 years	44	12.1
	Total	**364**	**100.0**

The demographic characteristics of the respondents indicate that 183 (50.3%) were drawn from the University of Port Harcourt, 100 (27.4%) from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, and 81 (22.3%) from Rivers State University, reflecting the proportional sampling technique adopted in the study. The gender distribution revealed that 210 (57.7%) of the respondents were male, while 154 (42.3%) were female. This suggests that both genders were adequately represented in the study. Regarding staff category, 215 (59.1%) were academic staff, whereas 149 (40.9%) were non-academic staff. This distribution ensured that the views of both major employee groups in the universities were captured. The age distribution showed that the majority of respondents, 121 (33.2%), were between 41 and 50 years, followed by those aged 31–40 years with 103 (28.3%). Respondents aged above 60 years constituted the smallest proportion with 20 (5.5%). Concerning educational qualifications, respondents possessing Master's degrees constituted the highest proportion with 142 (39.0%), followed by those with HND/Bachelor's degrees with 118 (32.4%). Respondents with PhD qualifications accounted for 74 (20.4%), while those with OND/NCE qualifications represented 30 (8.2%). The distribution based on years of work experience indicated that 112 (30.8%) respondents had worked between 5 and 10 years, while 94 (25.8%) had between 11 and 15 years of experience. Only 48 (13.2%) had less than five years of work experience. This suggests that most respondents had sufficient experience within the university system to provide informed responses on institutional culture, leadership quality, infrastructural availability, and workplace resilience.

Analysis of Mean and Standard Deviation

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Study Variables (N = 364)

Variable	N	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Decision (Criterion = 2.50)
Leadership Quality	364	3.21	0.68	Accepted
Institutional Culture	364	3.05	0.72	Accepted
Infrastructural Availability	364	2.89	0.77	Accepted
Workplace Resilience	364	3.18	0.65	Accepted
Grand Mean	**364**	**3.08**	**0.71**	**Accepted**

The result in table 2 shows that all study variables were rated above the benchmark mean of 2.50, indicating a generally positive assessment of internal environmental factors and workplace resilience among respondents across the selected tertiary institutions. Leadership quality recorded the highest mean score of 3.21 (SD = 0.68), suggesting that respondents perceived leadership practices as relatively effective in guiding institutional activities and supporting staff performance. Institutional culture recorded a mean score of 3.05 (SD = 0.72), indicating that shared values, norms, and behavioural expectations within the institutions are positively perceived, although with some variation among respondents. Infrastructural availability had the lowest mean score of 2.89 (SD = 0.77), implying that while respondents generally agreed that infrastructure exists, there are noticeable gaps and inconsistencies in adequacy and accessibility. Workplace resilience recorded a mean of 3.18 (SD = 0.65), showing that staff generally perceive a strong ability of the institutions to adapt, recover, and maintain performance despite challenges. Overall, the grand mean of 3.08 confirms a

favourable evaluation of the internal environment and workplace resilience across the sampled universities, with moderate variability in responses as indicated by the standard deviation values.

Table 3: Correlation Results

		Leadership Quality	Institutional Culture	Infrastructural Availability	Workplace Resilience
Leadership Quality	Pearson Correlation	1	.866**	.538**	.606**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	364	364	364	364
Institutional Culture	Pearson Correlation	.866**	1	.691**	.712**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	364	364	364	364
Infrastructural Availability	Pearson Correlation	.538**	.691**	1	.872**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	364	364	364	364
Workplace Resilience	Pearson Correlation	.606**	.958**	.661**	.787**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	364	364	364	364

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis presented in Table 3 shows the relationships between institutional culture, leadership quality, infrastructural availability, and workplace resilience in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The results indicate that all the variables have positive and statistically significant relationships with workplace resilience at the 0.01 level of significance, with p-values of .000 across all tested relationships, which is lower than the 0.05 threshold.

For the first hypothesis (Ho_1), which stated that there is no significant relationship between institutional culture and workplace resilience, the result shows a strong positive relationship between institutional culture and workplace resilience ($r = .712$, $p = .000$). This implies that as institutional culture improves, workplace resilience also increases significantly. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating a significant relationship between institutional culture and workplace resilience in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

For the second hypothesis (Ho_2), which stated that there is no significant relationship between leadership quality and workplace resilience, the results reveal a positive and significant relationship ($r = .606$, $p = .000$). This suggests that leadership quality contributes meaningfully to enhancing workplace resilience, meaning that better leadership practices are associated with stronger adaptive and recovery capacity among staff. The null hypothesis is

therefore rejected, confirming a significant relationship between leadership quality and workplace resilience.

For the third hypothesis (Ho_3), which stated that there is no significant relationship between infrastructural availability and workplace resilience, the findings also show a strong positive relationship (r = .661, p = .000). This indicates that adequate infrastructural availability significantly enhances workplace resilience by improving staff efficiency, comfort, and institutional functionality. Since the p-value is below the significance level, the null hypothesis is rejected.

4.0 Findings

The findings demonstrate that all three dimensions of the internal environment such as institutional culture, leadership quality, and infrastructural availability have significant positive relationships with workplace resilience in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Among the variables, institutional culture shows the strongest relationship with workplace resilience, suggesting that shared values, norms, and behavioural patterns within institutions play a particularly critical role in strengthening resilience.

Discussion of Findings

The relationship between institutional culture, leadership quality, infrastructure availability, work place resilience in tertiary institutions in Rivers State is presented in Table 1 of the correlation analysis. The results show that all the variables are positively related to workplace resilience at 0.01 level of significance where values of p are .000 for all the variables tested which are lower than .05. between institutional culture and workplace resilience, for the first hypothesis (Ho_1) namely that ‘there is no significant relationship between the variable of institutional culture and workplace resilience', the result revealed a strong positive relationship (r = .712, p = .000). In turn, this means that if workplace culture gets better, the workplace will be far more resilient. The p value is <0.05, thus the null hypothesis was rejected and the result showed that there is significant relationship between institutional culture and workplace resilience in tertiary Institutions in Rivers State.

The result of the second hypothesis (Ho_2) that "There is no significant relationship between the quality of leadership and workplace resilience," gave a positive and significant relationship (r = .606, p = .000). This indicates that leadership quality has a meaningful and significant impact on improving workplace resilience, with good levels of leadership of staff being correlated with greater adaptive and recovery capacity. The null hypothesis is thus rejected, supporting a significant relationship for leadership quality – workplace resilience.

The result for the third hypothesis (Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between infrastructural availability, and workplace resilience) also indicated a strong positive relationship (r = .661, p = .000). The finding of this product is that a sufficient infrastructural availability significantly boosts the workplace's resilience by improving the efficiency of the work team, worker's comfort, and the functioning of the institutions. The p value is less than the importance level so the null hypothesis is rejected.

This study's findings are congruent with the available empirical literature, as all of which finds that internal environmental factors make a significant contribution to organisational, or workplace, resilience in institutional contexts. From this, the significant positive relationship between institutional culture and workplace resilience is consistent with the research findings of Sakikawa (2022) that obtain a strong positive correlation between internal environment cultural and organisational resilience in hospitality fields, with r = .765. The study highlighted the significance of responsive and tightly organised cultures in positive social

order, coordination, and efficiency in an organisation and the impact this has on how the organisation adapts and recovers from crises. It adds to the present data, which indicated that developing a strong institutional culture improves workplace resilience through the establishment of values followed by institutional members, stabilisation of behaviours, and building shared responses.

In the same way, the high correlations of leadership quality and employer resilience strongly support the results of Raetze et al. (2021) which found a positive link to adaptability and innovativeness of organisations with leadership structures. They found in their study carried out in a health care environment that good leadership and communication make a difference: It stems from the enhancement of workplace structure and from the coordination of employees among them. This finding corroborates the result of this study which indicates that the quality of leadership has a positive impact on Workplace Resilience in Tertiary Institutions. It also reiterates the importance of leadership in determining the direction of the institution, its members' motivation and adaptability in uncertain institutional settings.

The broad implication drawn from the internal environmental studies that highlight the relevance of the availability of structural support systems to organisational effectiveness also supports the above finding of significant association of infrastructure availability with workplace resilience. As noted by Raetze et al. (2021), leadership as well as communication—are important aspects of workplace structure, but their analysis also suggests that there must be effective internal systems in place to facilitate resilience. Similarly, Sakikawa (2022) mentioned that internal environmental power, such as structural and operational factors, will help the ability of an organisation to resist disruptions. This helps to uphold the following findings of the current study; namely, that adequate equipment in the tertiary institutions make staffs more efficient, less hassles on operations and helps build up institutional capacity to withstand the shocks of disruption.

In addition, the results obtained are in line with Enwereuzo (2023) who found that leadership is a good determinant of human resource management in universities in Rivers State. The study came up with several characteristics found in leaders who are effective such as character, discipline, accountability, communication and honesty, these are the critical factors in HRM. These traits apply to institutional resilience in the context of resilient staff as well, and good HRM practices contribute to the strength of commitment, stability, and adaptability of staff members in institutions. This aligns with the results of the present study that the level of leadership quality predicts workplace resilience in tertiary institution.

To sum up, the findings from the previous studies made by the researchers as Sakikawa 2022, Raetze et al. 2021 and Enwereuzo, 2023 validated the present study very emphatically. Throughout, it is clear that internal environmental (institutional cultural, leadership and infrastructural) factors are decisive in improving the resilience of the organisation and its working environment. The present study adds to this growing knowledge by establishing these relationships specifically in the context of tertiary institutions of Rivers State, Nigeria to fill the identified gap in the literature related to the moderating role of internal environment on workplace resilience in tertiary institutions in the Nigerian higher education sector.

5.0 Conclusion

The study revealed the institutional culture has a positive and significant relationship with the level of work place resilience while leadership quality and infrastructural availability have negative and significant relationship with the level of work place resilience in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Specifically, a robust institutional culture creates a favorable

culture of shared values, coordination and stability, allowing universities to adapt better to disruptions and continue functioning. The quality of leadership in relation to values, communication, accountability, discipline, etc. has an important role in affecting the motivation of staff, direction, and adaptation of the institution, thereby increasing the ability of institutional resistance. Likewise, proper accessibility to infrastructure aids effective teaching, learning and administration thereby minimizing stress, and enhancing the continuity of the institutions during challenging or change situation. The findings from the study when combined indicate that the internal environmental factors are very critical in workplace resilience in tertiary institutions as it plays a role during three stages of workplace – anticipating, reacting to, and recovering from, the workplace disruption and effectiveness of the institution.

6.0 Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusion, the study recommended that:

i. Tertiary institutions in Rivers State should strengthen institutional culture by promoting shared values, teamwork, and ethical standards, as improved institutional culture enhances workplace resilience.

ii. University management should improve leadership quality by developing leaders with integrity, accountability, and effective communication skills, since strong leadership quality enhances workplace resilience.

iii. Tertiary institutions should prioritise adequate provision and maintenance of infrastructure such as classrooms, laboratories, and ICT facilities, as improved infrastructural availability strengthens workplace resilience.

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