

## **SERVICE EMPLOYEE SKILLS AND RESILIENCE OF RESTAURANTS IN RIVERS STATE**

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### **Abstract**

This study examined the correlation between service employee skills and resilience of restaurants in Rivers State. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. The population of the study was 184 food restaurants in Rivers State. The sample size of the study was 123 restaurants. Structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer research questions while hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance. The analysis was facilitated by the use of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0. The study found a strong, statistically significant relationships across all variables studied. Technical skills emerged as essential, showing very strong positive correlations with adaptability and agility of restaurants, highlighting their foundational role in operational resilience. Similarly, interpersonal skills were strongly linked to adaptability and agility, emphasizing their importance in maintaining service flow and staff responsiveness. The study concluded that service employee skills are key determinants of resilience of restaurant in Rivers State and recommends that managers that seek improved resilience should train staff to acquire or update their technical and interpersonal skills to enable them adjust to dynamic service conditions.

**Keywords:** Adaptability, agility, service employee skills, technical skills, resilience

### **Introduction**

The resilience of restaurants has become a major topic in modern hospitality management due to the exposure of restaurants to economic instability, insecurity, inflation and global crises such as COVID-19 (Ibe & Tunde, 2023; Okon & George, 2022). Resilience here refers to a restaurant's capacity to withstand disruptions, adapt and recover while maintaining quality service. Central to this capacity are frontline service employees, whose skills directly determine the consistency and competitiveness of restaurant operations (Ateke & Nwulu, 2018).

Service employees are the personnel with whom customers make their first contact in their interaction with a firm (Ateke & Nwulu, 2019). These employees are essential to the overall wellbeing and sustenance of businesses (Ateke & Nwulu, 2018). Despite this recognition, there remains a gap between employee skills and resilience outcomes in the restaurant industry in Rivers State (Udo & Amadi, 2025). Post-pandemic challenges, such as labor shortages, inconsistent service delivery, and declining customer trust, further expose weaknesses in workforce capability (Ogundipe & Bello, 2023).

Thus, firms that seek to remain successful in today's highly competitive business-scape must possess competent employees that are skilled in the performance of tasks; and deploy same to perform tasks in which they are proficient (Nwulu & Ateke, 2018). Employee competence in hospitality center around technical skills, including culinary expertise, hygiene and POS

operation that ensure efficiency and quality (Ibrahim & Diri, 2024); and interpersonal skills, like emotional intelligence and teamwork that enhance customer satisfaction and workplace harmony (Adebayo & Igwe, 2020; Bello & Thomas, 2024).

Traditional performance indicators, like profitability or occupancy, fail to reflect human capabilities that sustain organizations during crises (Ishola & Eze, 2023). A holistic approach that integrates employee competence into resilience strategies is therefore necessary. Conversely, toxic or poorly managed work environments, marked by weak leadership, hostility, or lack of resources, can diminish morale, creativity and adaptability (Anaba & Clifford, 2024; Onah & Bassey, 2025).

In Rivers State, infrastructural deficits, unreliable power supply, and security challenges further strain employee performance (Ishaya & Okonkwo, 2025). Yet, there is limited empirical research on how workplace conditions influence employee competence. Ignoring this gap could result in service breakdowns, staff turnover, and reduced customer satisfaction, ultimately affecting employment and economic development (Bello & Thomas, 2024; Udo & Amadi, 2025).

Restaurants in Rivers State are expected to exhibit strong resilience, reflected in their ability to adapt to disruptions, maintain service quality, retain customers, and recover swiftly from challenges. Ideally, such resilience should enable continuous operations and profitability despite external pressures. However, the current reality is that many restaurants struggle with operational stability and consistent service delivery. This reveals a clear gap between expected and actual resilience levels; and inadequate service employee skills is a likely cause of this.

In today's competitive hospitality environment, workers require competencies such as communication, emotional intelligence, adaptability, and problem-solving to sustain flexibility and responsiveness (Adebayo & Oladele, 2020). Yet, many restaurants in Rivers State depend on undertrained or unmotivated staff, and this weaken their ability to cope with crises. Eze and Eze (2019) show that well-trained employees enhance customer satisfaction, organizational learning, and crisis management, all essential components of business resilience.

Also, evidence from the hotel and tourism sectors indicates that competent employees improve guest retention and adaptability during disruptions. Within Rivers State's dynamic hospitality market, strengthening employee skills could transform restaurant resilience by enabling staff handle pressure, manage service interruptions and maintain customer satisfaction.

Thus, this study examined the correlation between service employee skills and resilience of restaurants in Rivers State. The study specifically assessed the correlation between:

- 1) technical skill of service employees and adaptability of restaurants in Rivers State.
- 2) technical skill of service employees and agility of restaurants in Rivers State.
- 3) interpersonal skill of service employees and adaptability of restaurants in Rivers State.
- 4) interpersonal skill of service employees and agility of restaurants in Rivers State.

### **Baseline Theory**

The theory upon which this study was premised, is Organizational Resilience Theory (ORT). ORT (Burnard & Bhamra, 2011), explains how organizations endure, adapt, and recover from disruptions while maintaining competitiveness. ORT define resilience as capacity to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and adapt to both gradual and sudden changes, and growing beyond

Duchek (2020), and Lengnick-Hall et al. (2011) describe resilience as adaptability, flexibility and a dynamic capability shaped by learning and resourcefulness. Firms with adaptive culture, training and preparedness recover faster and perform better in the long-term. However, resilience remains context-specific and hard to measure (Duchek, 2020). In the context of this study, ORT provides a theoretical lens for linking service employee skills to resilience of restaurants in Rivers State. Given the hospitality sector's human-centered nature and local infrastructural challenges, employee competence and continuous learning are crucial. Thus, ORT underscores the need to invest in staff development, leadership, and autonomy as pathways to building resilient restaurants capable of sustaining operations amid disruptions.

### **Concept of Service Employees Skills**

Service-employee skills form the backbone of excellent customer service and organizational performance. These skills include both technical competencies, such as product knowledge and operational efficiency, and soft skills like communication, empathy, adaptability, and problem-solving. Service employees serve as representatives of organizations, and directly shape customer perceptions and experiences. Thus, they require a blend of cognitive, emotional and interpersonal abilities to ensure service quality; as customers' expectations evolve and advances in technology require employees to up-skill.

However, many frontline workers struggle to keep up. Wisetail and Talker Research (2024) found that 83% of frontline workers feel overwhelmed by job-related information, though the same percentage agree that company-provided training enhances their ability to learn required skills, underscoring the need for organizational investment in staff development. Also, Gani et al. (2020) found that job satisfaction rises with autonomy, skill variety, and task identity.

Service employee skills thus, encompass a range of competencies that enable employees deliver high-quality customer service and support organizational success. Key dimensions include technical skills, which involve employees' ability to perform service tasks accurately and efficiently, and interpersonal skills, which focus on communication, empathy and building rapport with customers. These dimensions reflect a holistic view of service employee competence that balances task execution with relational excellence, leading to improved customer satisfaction and organizational performance. But in this study, technical skills and interpersonal skills are adopted as dimensions of service employee skills.

#### **Technical skills**

Technical skills are specific, teachable abilities or knowledge required to perform specialized tasks effectively. They are practical in nature, often involving the use of tools, technology, or systems, and are typically acquired through education, training, or hands-on experience. These skills are essential for ensuring efficient service delivery, operational continuity and risk reduction. For instance, in IT services, help desk agents rely on technical proficiency to diagnose and resolve system issues, thereby maintaining smooth operations and enhancing customer satisfaction.

In today's technology-driven world, technical skills are crucial across multiple sectors. James and Adeyemi (2017) states that technical skills contribute significantly to workforce development, productivity and innovation in technology-based industries. However, the rapid pace of technological advances renders some technical competencies obsolete (Eze &

Nwachukwu, 2018). This underscores the importance of lifelong learning and continuous professional development (Obi & Ndubuisi, 2022). However, technical proficiency alone is insufficient; it must be complemented by soft skills like communication and teamwork.

In the 21st century, high-demand technical skills include digital literacy, coding, data analysis, and cloud computing (Musa & Aliyu, 2020). Yet, access to quality technical education remains limited in many developing regions due to underfunding, poor infrastructure, and inadequate teacher training (Nnamdi & Oluchi, 2017). The rise of online learning platforms that offer flexible access to skill development has partially addressed this gap (Adebayo & Musa, 2023; Ibrahim & Bello, 2021).

Moreover, technical proficiency has become indispensable in diverse industries such as finance, marketing, and healthcare. Ijeoma and Chukwuma (2018) highlight the need for data analytics and financial modeling in banking, while Adekunle and Fatima (2022) stress the use of diagnostic and health informatics tools in medicine. Overall, technical skills remain a cornerstone of professional competence, innovation, and global competitiveness in the modern workforce.

### **Interpersonal skills**

Interpersonal skills are essential abilities that enable individuals communicate and interact effectively with others in personal and professional settings. These include communication, teamwork, empathy, emotional intelligence and conflict resolution, all of which foster collaboration, trust, and mutual respect. According to Goleman (2015), emotional intelligence, understanding and managing one's own emotions and those of others, is central to effective interpersonal interaction.

Communication stands as the foundation of interpersonal skills. Johnson and McHugh (2019) highlight that true communication involves not only speaking clearly but also active listening and interpreting non-verbal cues such as gestures and facial expressions. Emotional intelligence enhances this process by helping individuals respond sensitively to others' emotions (Igwe & Ateke, 2020; Salovey & Mayer, 2017).

In organizational contexts, interpersonal skills are vital for teamwork and productivity. Adair (2020) notes that collaboration requires respect for others' contributions, while Jones and George (2021) emphasize that empathy and open communication are key to successful teamwork. Similarly, conflict resolution, as discussed by Fisher and Ury (2016), depends on focusing on shared interests rather than personal positions, with Thomas and Kilmann (2018) adding that emotionally intelligent individuals resolve conflicts constructively.

Goleman (2015) also underscores the importance of nurturing emotional intelligence through continuous self-awareness and regulation. Consequently, organizations and educational institutions now prioritize interpersonal skills development. Greenberg et al. (2019) observe that training programs focusing on communication, teamwork, and emotional intelligence are becoming common, recognizing that success today depends not only on technical expertise but also on the ability to relate well with others.

### **Concept of Resilience**

Resilience is a multidimensional concept describing ability to endure, adapt to, and recover from stress or adversity. Scholars identify several dimensions that shape resilience. In the service industry, resilience is seen as capacity to handle pressure, setbacks, and challenges

while maintaining high-quality performance (Luthans, 2022). Given the unpredictable nature of customer service, employees often face dissatisfied clients or system failures, making resilience vital for sustaining composure and service standards (Fredrickson, 2021).

In the restaurant industry, resilience encompasses the ability to adapt, recover, and thrive despite disruptions such as economic downturns, pandemics, or supply chain issues (Anderson & Brown, 2020). During crises like COVID-19, resilient restaurants demonstrated operational flexibility by pivoting to delivery and takeout services (Johnson & Smith, 2021). They also embraced technological adaptability, integrating online ordering, contactless payments, and digital tools to maintain operations (Davidson, 2022).

In volatile sectors like the restaurant industry, especially within dynamic environments such as Rivers State, resilience is essential for sustaining operations and competitiveness. Key indices of resilience include adaptability, resourcefulness, robustness, redundancy and agility. In this study however, we focus only on adaptability and agility as dimensions of resilience.

### **Adaptability**

Adaptability is the capacity to modify operations, strategies, or processes in response to changing conditions (Lengnick-Hall & Beck, 2005). For restaurants, this involve revising menus, offering delivery services, or reorganizing spaces to meet new customer or regulatory demands. According to Jones (2019), adaptability involve flexibility and behavioral adjustment to novel challenges, while Miller (2020) describes it as a survival mechanism necessary in a world defined by rapid technological and economic transformation.

Smith and Williams (2021) and Choi (2022) adds that adaptive organizations and leaders are better positioned to sustain long-term success by effectively navigating disruptions and changing market conditions. Green (2023) further notes that adaptability enhances decision-making by fostering openness to multiple possibilities and reducing the risk of failure.

Adaptability comes through organizational learning, though some firms adjust naturally. Richards (2022) stresses the importance of leaders modeling flexibility and fostering a supportive, innovative culture. Carter (2023) links adaptability to flatter, decentralized structures that enable quick decision-making. Likewise, Jones (2019) and Lee (2020) highlight that diverse teams enhance adaptability by bringing varied insights and problem-solving approaches.

### **Agility**

Agility, measures how swiftly an organization can respond or recover from crises (Duchek, 2020), for instance by addressing customer issues, adopting new technologies, or shifting service models rapidly. It also refers to an organization's ability to adapt quickly to changes, embrace challenges, and seize new opportunities in a constantly evolving environment. Sharma and Kaur (2017) explains that agility involve flexibility, rapid decision-making, collaboration, and continuous learning, key traits that enable organizations remain competitive and innovative.

Similarly, Sambrook and Roberts (2020) define agility capacity to adjust to operational, technological, and market shifts through cognitive, behavioral, and emotional flexibility. Such agility improves efficiency and innovation, supported by learning opportunities, flexible work arrangements, and an adaptive culture that encourages problem-solving and proactive growth.

Gupta and Agarwal (2018) highlight that flexible work options, such as remote or hybrid systems, boost productivity and employee satisfaction. Miller et al. (2020) add that responsive leaders who embrace change foster innovation and guide teams effectively in uncertain contexts. Johnson (2019) emphasizes that cross-departmental collaboration enhances problem-solving and teamwork, while Thompson (2021) notes that continuous learning ensures employees remain skilled and adaptable. Patel (2020) further asserts that digital tools, like cloud platforms and analytics, facilitate faster decision-making and greater efficiency.

The benefits of agility are numerous. According to Lee and Zhang (2019), it enhances adaptability to market disruptions and economic changes. Agile organizations encourage autonomy, engagement, and innovation through quick decision-making and calculated risk-taking (Sharma, 2022; Singh, 2019).

However, challenges remain, such as resistance to change in traditional organizations (Roberts & Williams, 2021), limited digital infrastructure, and misconceptions that agility lacks structure (Thompson, 2020; Singh, 2019). Despite these obstacles, scholars agree that agility is essential for sustained growth. As Roberts (2021) concludes, cultivating agility not only improves performance and innovation but also ensures long-term competitiveness in today's fast-paced global business landscape.

### **Service-Employee Skills and Resilience of Restaurants**

Service-employee skills are vital to ensuring success and sustainability of service firms, especially amid challenges like economic downturns, intense competition, and unforeseen disruptions. Skilled employees manage customer interactions effectively, maintain composure under pressure, and ensure a consistent service experience. Service-employee skills form the foundation of organizational resilience. Employees with strong technical and interpersonal skills perform better under pressure, thereby enhancing restaurant resilience.

Employee skills and resilience of restaurants are deeply interconnected. Technical proficiency enable restaurants withstand challenges and adapt to change. Baldwin et al., (2020) emphasize that technical skills are essential for efficiency and adaptability, both of which are central to organizational resilience. Similarly, Ayeh et al. (2021) note that skilled employees can solve problems and manage resources effectively, and maintain service quality even in difficult conditions.

Roper and Davies (2021) observe that customer-facing staff with strong skills help preserve customer loyalty during disruptions, further strengthening organizational resilience. However, technical expertise alone does not guarantee resilience. As Baron et al. (2020) and Ayeh et al. (2021) argue, leadership, teamwork, and culture play equally vital roles. Resilient restaurants are those where leaders encourage collaboration, continuous learning, and adaptability.

Interpersonal skills are crucial for maintaining effective restaurants operations because they foster teamwork and facilitate customer satisfaction, especially in high-pressure environments. According to Zhang et al. (2021), interpersonal skills (communication, emotional intelligence, teamwork, and conflict resolution) are essential for fostering collaboration and adaptability in restaurant settings. These skills enable employees manage stress, reduce conflicts, and maintain positive relationships, all of which strengthen organizational resilience.

Employee skills also foster adaptability, agility, and service continuity. Ogbu and Nwachukwu (2017) and Adebayo and Yusuf (2021) affirm that technically skilled employees enable restaurants quickly adopt new technology and respond to changing customer behaviors. Zhang and Li (2020) and Johnson (2019) further link technical proficiency to agility, allowing for flexible role shifts and rapid process adjustments. Service continuity, as noted by Chukwuma and Effiong (2018), depends on staff capable of maintaining consistent service standards and troubleshooting technical issues.

Interpersonal skills also enhance customer relationship management, allow staff handle complaints empathetically and maintain customer trust even during service disruptions (Lee, 2020; Vargas et al., 2022). This ability preserves a restaurant's reputation and contributes to long-term customer loyalty. Furthermore, these skills promote resilience by helping staff support one another and cope with workplace stress, thereby reducing burnout and improving morale (Chell, 2019; Bohart & Green, 2020). Thus, we hypothesize that:

- H<sub>A1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between technical skill of service employees and adaptability of restaurants in Rivers State.
- H<sub>A2</sub>: There is a significant relationship between technical skill of service employees and agility of restaurants in Rivers State.
- H<sub>A3</sub>: There is a significant relationship between interpersonal skill of service employees and adaptability of restaurants in Rivers State.
- H<sub>A4</sub>: There is a significant relationship between interpersonal skill of service employees and workplace agility of restaurants in Rivers State.

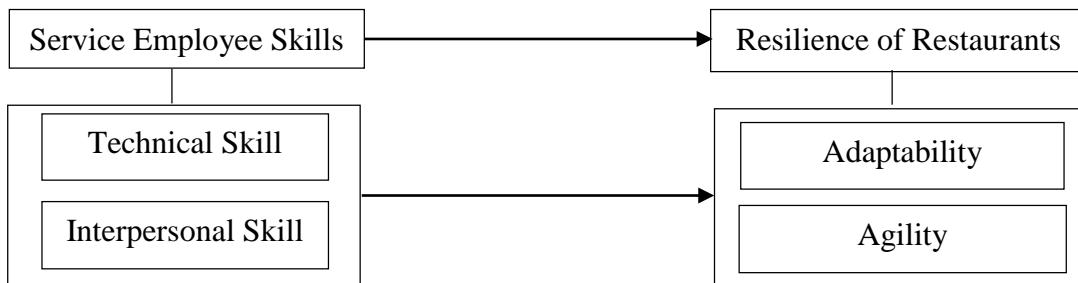


Fig. 1: Operational framework of service employee skills and resilience of restaurants in Rivers State.

## Methodology

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design to examine the relationship between service employee skills and restaurant resilience in Rivers State. The population of the study consisted 184 registered restaurants in Rivers State, from which a sample of 123 was taken. Data were collected using structured questionnaire designed in a 5-point Likert scale. The instrument's validity was established through expert review, while its reliability was confirmed using test-retest method with 20 respondents outside the study area, yielding a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.88. Descriptive statistics was used for univariate analyses, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significance. SPSS version 25.0 was relied upon for the test of hypotheses.

## Result Presentation

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Technical Skill of Service Employees**

S/N	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD	N	Sum	Mean	Std.
1	I can operate restaurant equipment and tools efficiently and safely.	11	59	27	8	4	109	392	3.60	.904
2	I consistently prepare and serve food according to the restaurant's quality standards.	44	30	27	6	2	109	435	3.99	1.023
3	I follow all food safety and hygiene regulations during service.	22	52	28	3	4	109	412	3.78	.927
4	I am proficient in using POS systems and handling transactions accurately.	20	41	34	12	2	109	392	3.60	.973
5	I ensure cleanliness and proper maintenance of kitchen and service areas.	33	33	24	13	6	109	401	3.68	1.185
<b>Grand Mean/Std</b>								3.73	1.0024	

Source: SPSS Result, (2025)

Table 1 reveal that restaurant employees in Rivers State generally consider themselves technically competent, with a grand mean of 3.73 and a standard deviation of 1.0024, indicating moderate variation in responses. The highest-rated skill was food preparation and service quality (mean = 3.99), reflecting strong confidence in maintaining quality standards. Adherence to food safety and hygiene also scored high (mean = 3.78), while equipment operation and POS use showed moderate proficiency (mean = 3.60), suggesting areas needing further training. However, cleanliness and maintenance responsibilities (mean = 3.68; SD = 1.185) exhibited the widest variability, signaling inconsistency among staff performance levels. Overall, the findings indicate a technically capable workforce that excels in core service and safety areas but requires greater standardization and focused training, particularly in digital transaction handling and operational consistency, to strengthen overall technical competence.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Interpersonal Skills of Service Employees**

S/N	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD	N	Sum	Mean	Std.
6	I communicate clearly and respectfully with customers and team members.	17	62	25	3	2	109	416	3.82	.795
7	I listen actively to customers' needs and respond appropriately.	52	37	7	11	2	109	453	4.16	1.047
8	I work well with others, fostering a cooperative team environment.	4	69	20	4	12	109	376	3.45	1.032
9	I show empathy and patience when dealing with difficult situations.	9	45	51	2		109	384	3.52	.753
10	I contribute to a friendly and welcoming restaurant atmosphere.	10	52	29	10	8	109	373	3.42	1.030
<b>Grand Mean/Std</b>								3.674	0.9314	

Source: SPSS Result, (2025)

Table 2 shows that restaurant employees generally perceive themselves as having strong interpersonal skills, with a grand mean of 3.67 and a standard deviation of 0.9314, indicating moderate response variation. The highest-rated skill was active listening to customers' needs (mean = 4.16; SD = 1.047), reflecting strong communication and customer attentiveness. Similarly, clear and respectful communication scored highly (mean = 3.82; SD = 0.795), suggesting consistency in maintaining professional interactions. However, lower mean scores for teamwork, empathy, and creating a welcoming environment (means between 3.42–3.52)

highlight areas where interpersonal effectiveness could be improved. Overall, the results indicate that while employees possess solid interpersonal skills, especially in customer communication, variability in teamwork and empathy suggests the need for enhanced soft-skill training to strengthen overall relational competence within restaurant teams.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Adaptability of Restaurants in Rivers State**

S/N	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD	N	Sum	Mean	Std.
16	My restaurant easily adjust to changes in work schedules, menus, or procedures.	10	54	30	8	7	109	379	3.48	.987
17	My restaurant continuously learn from the environment.	43	31	26	6	3	109	432	3.96	1.053
18	My restaurant respond quickly to changing customer preferences and expectations.	20	53	29	3	4	109	409	3.75	.914
19	My restaurant effectively promote with teamwork and adjustment to management styles.	18	45	31	12	3	109	390	3.58	.984
20	My restaurant is productive despite sudden changes in the environment.	29	37	24	13	6	109	397	3.64	1.159
<b>Grand Mean/Std</b>								3.682	1.0194	

Source: SPSS Result, (2025)

Table 3 indicate that respondents generally agree about the adaptability of restaurants in Rivers State. Item 17, with the highest mean score of 3.96 and a standard deviation of 1.053, shows strong agreement among respondents about being open to continuous learning. Item 18 also received a relatively high mean of 3.75 with a lower standard deviation of 0.914, suggesting consistent agreement on responding quickly to customer preferences. Item 20 had a mean of 3.64 and the highest standard deviation (1.159), reflecting moderate agreement but greater variability in staying productive during sudden changes. Items 19 and 16 had mean scores of 3.58 and 3.48 respectively, indicating general agreement, although item 16 showed slightly less consensus (Mean = 3.48; Std = 0.987). The grand mean of 3.68 and standard deviation of 1.02 suggest an overall positive and fairly consistent perception of adaptability among respondents.

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on Agility of Restaurants in Rivers State**

S/N	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD	N	Sum	Mean	Std.
21	My restaurant switch tasks quickly without losing focus or effectiveness.	16	63	25	3	2	109	415	3.81	.787
22	My restaurant respond immediately to urgent service needs without delay.	49	47	6	5	2	109	463	4.25	.894
23	My restaurant move efficiently between customer service and operational tasks.	7	66	19	4	13	109	377	3.46	1.085
24	My restaurant prioritize tasks effectively in a fast-moving environment.	20	44	41	2	2	109	405	3.72	.851
25	My restaurant maintain a high level of performance under varying work demands.	23	53	15	10	8	109	400	3.67	1.131
<b>Grand Mean/Std</b>								3.782	0.9496	

Source: SPSS Result, (2025)

Table 4 presents respondents' evaluation of agility of restaurant resilience in Rivers State. The grand mean of 3.78 indicates general agreement that restaurants in Rivers State demonstrate agility, while the grand standard deviation of 0.9496 reflects moderate variability in responses. Item 22 had the highest mean of 4.25, showing strong agreement and a relatively low variability (SD = 0.894), suggesting prompt responsiveness is a key strength. Item 21 also showed high agreement (mean = 3.81, SD = 0.787), indicating confidence in task-switching. Conversely,

Item 23 had the lowest mean of 3.46 and a higher standard deviation of 1.085, pointing to more variability in agility across different task types. Overall, the responses reflect agility of restaurants in Rivers State.

**Table 6: Correlations between technical skills of service employees and adaptability of restaurants**

		Technical Skills	Adaptability
Technical Skills	Pearson Correlation	1	.955
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	109	109
Adaptability	Pearson Correlation	.955	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	109	109

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

Source: SPSS Result, (2025)

Table 6 revealed a Pearson product moment correlation coefficient of 0.955 in the correlation between technical skills of service employees and adaptability of restaurants. This high value indicate that a very strong relationship exists between technical skill of service employees and adaptability of restaurants. The positive sign of the correlation coefficient show that a positive relationship exist between the variables, while the probability value (PV) of  $0.000 < 0.05$  shows that the correlation between technical skill of service employees and adaptability of restaurants is statistically significant. Therefore, we accept the alternate hypothesis that a significant relationship exist between technical skill of service employees and adaptability of restaurants in Rivers State.

**Table 7: Correlations between technical skills of service employees and agility of restaurants**

		Technical Skill	Agility
Technical skill	Pearson Correlation	1	.903
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	109	109
Agility	Pearson Correlation	.903	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	109	109

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

Source: SPSS Result, (2025)

Table 7 revealed that the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.903$ ). This value is high, which indicate that a very strong relationship exists between technical skill of service employees and agility of restaurants in Rivers State. It also show that a positive relationship exist between the two variables due to the positive sign of the correlation coefficient. The probability value (PV) of  $0.000 < 0.05$  produced by the test shows that a statistically significant correlation exists between the variables. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

**Table 8: Correlations between Interpersonal skill and adaptability of restaurants**

		Interpersonal Skill	Adaptability
Interpersonal Skill	Pearson Correlation	1	.950
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	109	109
Adaptability	Pearson Correlation	.950	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	109	109

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

Source: SPSS Result, (2025)

Table 8 reveal a Pearson product moment correlation coefficient of 0.950. This high value is suggestive of a very strong relationship exists between interpersonal skill of service employees and adaptability of restaurants in Rivers State. The positive sign of the correlation coefficient show that a positive relationship exist between the variables, while the probability value (PV) of  $0.000 < 0.05$  means that the correlation between interpersonal skill and adaptability of restaurants in Rivers State is statistically of significant. Thus, we accept the alternate hypothesis that a significant relationship exist between interpersonal skill of service employees and adaptability of restaurants in Rivers State.

**Table 9: Correlations between Interpersonal skill and agility of restaurants**

		Interpersonal Skill	Agility
Interpersonal Skill	Pearson Correlation	1	.871
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	109	109
Agility	Pearson Correlation	.871	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	109	109

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

Source: SPSS Result, (2025)

Table 9 revealed that the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient ( $r = .871$ ). This value is high, which indicate that a very strong relationship exists between interpersonal skill of service employees and agility of restaurants in Rivers State. The positive sign of the correlation show that a positive relationship exist between the variables. The PV of  $0.000 < 0.05$  shows that a statistically significant relationship exists between interpersonal skill of service employees and agility of restaurants in Rivers State. Thus, we accept the alternate hypothesis that a significant relationship exist between interpersonal skill of service employees and agility of restaurants in Rivers State.

### Discussion of Findings

The study reveals a strong positive relationship between technical skills of service employees and resilience of restaurants in Rivers State in terms of adaptability and agility. This confirms that technically skilled employees significantly enhance a restaurant's ability to adapt to change. This aligns with studies by Ogbu & Nwachukwu (2017), Eze et al. (2020), and Adebayo and Yusuf (2021), who emphasized that technical skills promote responsiveness to new trends, technologies, and customer needs. The results also the idea that technical competence enables employees to manage dynamic operational challenges efficiently. Previous scholars, Olatunji and Fadipe (2022), Nguyen and Tran (2019), Musa and Ibrahim (2019), and Adeola (2023), found that technical proficiency fosters flexibility, quick decision-making, and improved service delivery during disruptions.

The study reveals a strong positive relationship between interpersonal skills of service employees and resilience of restaurants in Rivers State. This confirms that effective communication, empathy, and teamwork significantly improve adaptability and agility of restaurants in Rivers State. The results revealed that employees with strong interpersonal competence can better respond to operational changes. These results align with prior studies, Zhang et al. (2021), Zhao et al. (2021), Heffernan et al. (2019), and Lee (2020), which collectively emphasize that emotional intelligence, teamwork, and clear communication foster resilience, cohesion, and sustained customer satisfaction during challenging times. In essence, the study concludes that interpersonal skills are vital drivers of adaptability and agility, ensuring operational stability and service continuity in the restaurant industry.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it we conclude that technical skills are fundamental to operational resilience, as they strongly influence adaptability, workplace agility, and service continuity within restaurants. Interpersonal skills were also found to be equally critical, as they ensure effective service flow, teamwork, and staff responsiveness across all dimensions of resilience. It was also concluded that adaptability of restaurants in Rivers State is strongly enhanced when employees possess a blend of technical and interpersonal skills, which allow them to adjust quickly to changing demands. Thus, we recommend managers of restaurant that seek improved resilience should organize regular skill-enhancement training to ensure staff can acquire or update their technical and interpersonal skills to enable them adjust to dynamic service conditions.

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