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**| RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## **Leadership and Organizational Resilience in Multinational FMCG Companies Operating in Geopolitically Volatile Environments**

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**| ABSTRACT**

In this original empirical research, the impact of transformational and adaptive leadership on organizational resilience and firm performance is analyzed for multinational fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) corporations operating within geographically volatile markets. The data for this research were collected through surveys conducted on 328 middle and senior managers employed by Unilever, Nestlé, and Procter & Gamble in Lagos, Nigeria, an emerging economy known for its geographically volatile environment associated with political tensions, monetary crisis, and disruptions in supply chains. It is established through the analysis conducted using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) that transformational leadership ( $\beta = 0.44$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and adaptive leadership ( $\beta = 0.39$ ,  $p < .001$ ) positively affect organizational resilience, mediating the effects of each type of leadership on profitability ( $\beta = 0.53$ ), operational effectiveness ( $\beta = 0.49$ ), and sustainability ( $\beta = 0.46$ ).

**| KEYWORDS**

Transformational leadership, adaptive leadership, organizational resilience, multinational FMCG, geopolitical volatility, Nigeria, PLS-SEM

**| ARTICLE INFORMATION**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

In the increasingly volatile age of geopolitics, multinational companies experience a series of challenges that threaten to destabilize them to an extent that even the existence of organizations is challenged (Svoboda, 2026; Khan & Afridi, 2023). The challenges include trade wars, sanctions, regional conflicts, currency crises, and fragmentation of supply chains (Svoboda, 2026; Khan & Afridi, 2023). Particularly for those working within the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector, these disruptions could easily result in serious consequences (Magagula et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2024). This industry represents one of those in which multinational companies can be said to be involved because of the nature of their operations and the goods they produce and sell.

In the case of multinational FMCG companies such as Unilever, Nestlé, and Procter & Gamble, geopolitical risks manifest themselves through high uncertainties, volatility, complexities, and ambiguities in the operational contexts, commonly referred to as VUCA environments (Atanassova et al., 2025; Muzembe & Kolyada, 2025). The emerging economies, characterized by political instability, unpredictable regulations, inflation, and susceptibility to global shocks such as the Red Sea disruptions, as well as fluctuations in the price of commodities resulting from international conflict, offer a perfect example. The Nigerian FMCG industry experiences high geopolitical volatility, which results in factors such as constant political changes, devaluation of the national currency (over 40%), an annual inflation rate exceeding 30%, and regular government decisions affecting operations (Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025; Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025b; Akpobolokami, 2022).

As a direct result of these circumstances, organizational resilience emerges as a strategic capability for survival and sustained success in the context of increasing volatility of the global environment (Xu et al., 2024; Svoboda, 2026; Mostafa, 2026). Evidence from empirical research in the FMCG industry reveals the importance of resilience in terms of improving profitability, operational efficiency, and sustainability outcomes despite the existence of extreme external disturbances (Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025; Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025b; Magagula et al., 2020). For instance, organizational resilience has been identified as the determinant of various aspects of sustainable performance, including economic, social, environmental, and human sustainability, in China's FMCG sector (Xu et al., 2024). Additionally, South African FMCG supply chains prove that interconnected resilience strategies influence firm outcomes during times of disruption (Magagula et al., 2020). In recent times, resilience has emerged as an intermediary variable between technological advances (e.g., AI-driven talent management and Industry 4.0) and sustainable competitive advantages (Mostafa, 2026; Al-Somali, 2026).

Leadership is a key determinant of resilience as it influences how organizations cope with disruptions in their environment. Transformational leadership, which promotes vision, inspiration, and intellectual stimulation, helps firms adapt to and manage change effectively (Gloria, 2025; Teoh et al., 2022). Adaptive leadership has proved crucial for fostering resilience through mobilization of members in addressing complex problems in dynamic and uncertain situations (Latukha et al., 2025; Muzembe & Kolyada, 2025). With respect to VUCA conditions, frameworks incorporating dynamic and responsible leadership have been theoretically connected to increased organizational resilience and performance (Khan & Afridi, 2023). Further, competencies of leaders that lead to psychological safety in hybrid environments have been demonstrated to enhance organizational resilience in the South African FMCG sector (Ngubane & Mbokota, 2025).

Even though there is increasing awareness of such associations, several gaps continue to exist. Studies focusing on resilience in FMCG tend to concentrate on stable and moderately volatile contexts in developed countries and large Asian economies (Xu et al., 2024), as well as supply chain resilience without considering leadership (Cotta et al., 2023; Doetsch & Huchzermeier, 2023; Koh et al., 2024). Relatively few empirical studies have addressed the relationship between specific leadership styles (transformational and adaptive) and resilience in the context of operations of multinational FMCG firms in the highly geopolitically volatile African context (i.e., Nigeria). Although theoretical models connecting leadership to VUCA environment and resilience exist (Khan & Afridi, 2023; Svoboda, 2026), rigorous empirical analyses in such specific conditions are scarce, especially when using advanced tools such as PLS-SEM among MNC managers experiencing geopolitical disruptions.

This empirical investigation seeks to fill these critical gaps by exploring the association between transformational leadership, adaptive leadership, organizational resilience, and firm performance measures (profitability, operational efficiency, and sustainability) in multinational FMCG companies within a highly geopolitically volatile African environment (Nigeria). In particular, this research aims to discover if organizational resilience acts as a mediator in the above mentioned relationship between leadership and performance, which will extend and validate existing ideas on this topic (Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025; Latukha et al., 2025; Olaleye et al., 2024; Igwe & Okwurume, 2026).

First, this study offers the first empirical examination of the leadership-resilience relationship for multinational FMCG companies facing geopolitical volatility in Africa. Second, this research takes into account transformational and adaptive leadership simultaneously, answering a call for more sophisticated approaches to leadership studies in unstable environments (Muzembe & Kolyada, 2025; Gloria, 2025). Finally, drawing from primary data collected from 328 managers at Unilever, Nestlé, and Procter & Gamble in Lagos, this research provides actionable insights for MNC leaders in polycrisis environments (Svoboda, 2026).

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Conceptual Foundations of Organizational Resilience**

Organizational resilience is regarded as a significant construct in modern management science, referring to the organization's ability to anticipate, absorb, adapt to and recover from disruptive events while preserving its functions and achieving long-term growth (Svoboda, 2026; Xu et al., 2024). Multinational enterprises view resilience not as a reactive strategy aimed at mere survival but rather as an active capability that allows the company to succeed amid volatility (Khan & Afridi, 2023; Latukha et al., 2025). In this respect, resilience involves reconfiguring resources, learning from previous experiences, and innovating to turn possible challenges into opportunities (Olaleye et al., 2024; Koh et al., 2024).

Multiple studies have proven the direct positive correlation between resilience and successful performance outcomes like profitability, efficiency, and sustainability (Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025; Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025b). Specifically, in developing

markets, resilience ensures that despite external threats, organizations can maintain their global value chain and sustain customers' trust (Magagula et al., 2020; Al-Somali, 2026). Modern research also confirms that organizational resilience is not limited to a single aspect but includes operational, financial, social, environmental, and human dimensions (Xu et al., 2024; Mostafa, 2026).

## 2.2 Geopolitical Volatility and Its Influence on Multinational FMCG Companies

Modern business environments around the world experience various kinds of geopolitical volatility associated with restrictions on trade, instability, currency fluctuation, regulatory uncertainties, global value chain disturbances (Atanassova et al., 2025; Muzembe & Kolyada, 2025). However, multinational FMCG corporations suffer more from such conditions than others as this business sector depends heavily on lean and just-in-time global value chains (Magagula et al., 2020; Mashaba & Emwanu, 2026). Any problems experienced by one of the regions participating in the value chain could result in shortages, price fluctuation, and loss of customer confidence (Cotta et al., 2023; Doetsch & Huchzermeier, 2023).

Nigeria, being Africa's largest market for FMCG products and headquarters for many global FMCG companies like Unilever, Nestle, and Procter & Gamble, represents one of the geopolitically volatile countries (Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025; Akpobolokami, 2022). Frequent political changes, inflation above 30%, devaluation of national currency, and other factors like global price volatility, create additional risk factors for firms in this market (Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025; Akpobolokami, 2022). In such a situation, conventional risk management practices prove inadequate, and organizations should learn how to build their capabilities of adapting (Igwe & Okwurume, 2026; Svoboda, 2026). For example, FMCG companies in South Africa have managed to address such risks using resilience-based supply chains strategies (Magagula et al., 2020). Moreover, the adaptation to digitalization and utilization of Industry 4.0 practices helps build resilience in the food value chains (Al-Somali, 2026).

## 2.3 Leadership Styles as Drivers of Organizational Resilience

Leadership is viewed as a principal factor through which organizations acquire and utilize their capabilities of becoming resilient (Gloria, 2025; Latukha et al., 2025). Among different types of leadership, two styles are considered especially important for building organizational resilience in geopolitically volatile environments – transformational leadership and adaptive leadership.

Transformational leadership refers to an approach characterized by such qualities as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized attention, and intellectual stimulation (Teoh et al., 2022; Gloria, 2025). According to multiple studies, this type of leadership increases firm resilience and adaptability as it provides psychological safety and encourages collective learning among employees, especially within hybrid teams (Ngubane & Mbokota, 2025; Atanassova et al., 2025). The impact of transformational leadership was also assessed in manufacturing services and proven to positively influence employee performance (Teoh et al., 2022; Khairy et al., 2023).

Adaptive leadership style focuses on motivating people to face challenges that require innovative solutions (Muzembe & Kolyada, 2025; Latukha et al., 2025). Adaptive leaders are expected to foster multilevel resilience in individual, team, and organizational levels, as well as navigate the process amid geopolitical volatility and rapid changes (Latukha et al., 2025). Strategic agility associated with adaptive leadership also proves helpful for enhancing organizational resilience in developing economies (Igwe & Okwurume, 2026; Raharja, 2024).

Furthermore, dynamic and responsible leadership framework integrates both transformational and adaptive styles and connects them to responsible management practices and organizational resilience (Khan & Afridi, 2023). Finally, leadership agility is viewed as a predictor of resilience in manufacturing organizations (Raharja, 2024).

## 2.4 Organizational Resilience in FMCG Environments: Empirical Findings

In the FMCG business field, organizational resilience functions as a key mediator between leadership activities and firm performance. Nigerian researchers have found out that organizational resilience improves firm profitability and operational efficiency among fast-moving consumer goods firms operating in politically unstable markets (Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025; Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025b). At the same time, resilience helps FMCG firms in China to meet sustainability goals and achieve economic, social, environmental, and human dimensions of success (Xu et al., 2024).

Additionally, resilience is found to mediate innovation capabilities and business sustainability, as well as link IT capabilities and sales performance via job crafting (Olaleye et al., 2024; Prayogi et al., 2025). Within the FMCG supply chains, managers recognize the strong connections between resilience-building strategies and sustainability practices (Cotta et al., 2023; Doetsch & Huchzermeier, 2023). Resource-efficiency approaches enable organizations to measure their resilience (Koh et al., 2024). Finally, green performance management system boosts organizational agility within the FMCG multinational firms (Akpobolokami, 2022). Additionally, proper communication helps defend organizations' resilience against fake news and other threats (Eze & Zacky-Eze, 2025). The use of AI-based talent management enables to leverage resilience in order to ensure sustainable competitive advantage in FMCG businesses (Mostafa, 2026).

Integrated logistics and supply planning optimize FMCG organizations' operations, making the decision-making processes more strategic and resilient (Mashaba & Emwanu, 2026).

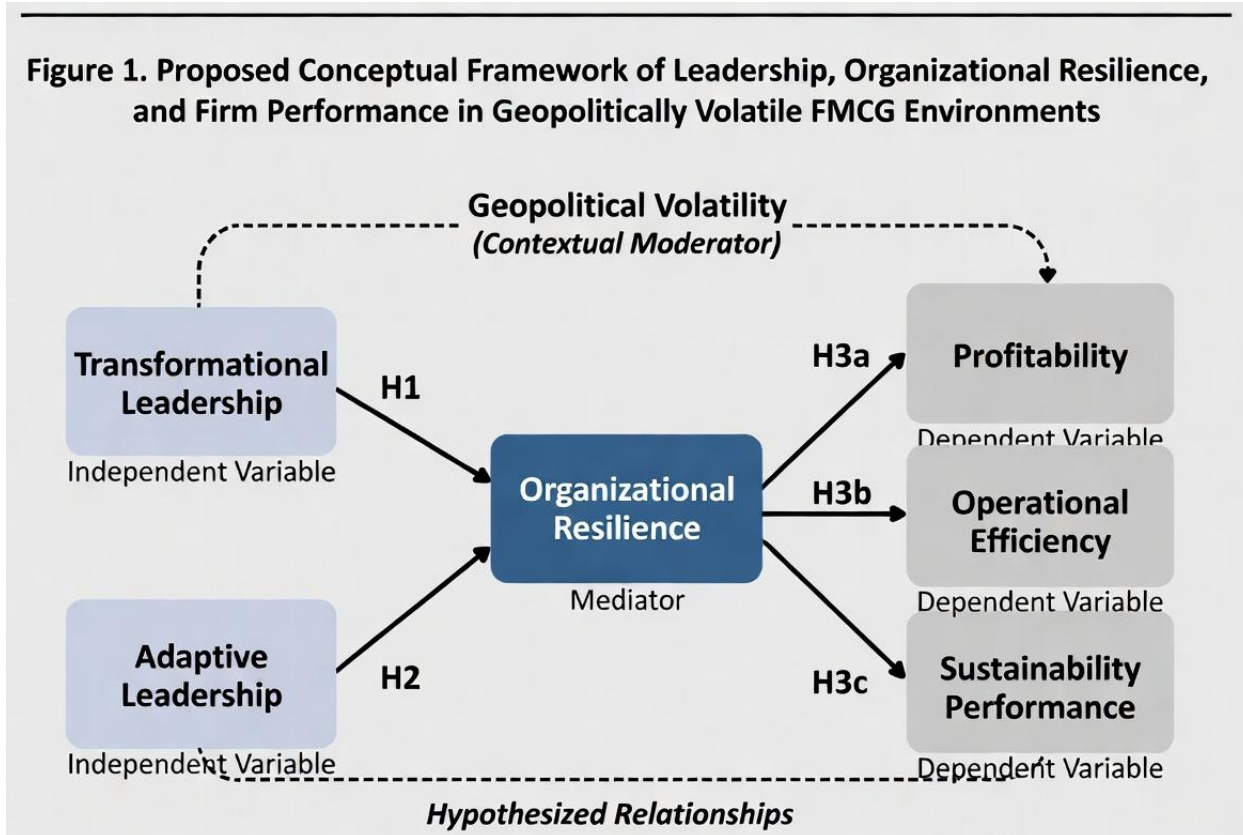


Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework of Leadership, Organizational Resilience, and Firm Performance in Geopolitically Volatile FMCG Environments

(Note: Figure 1 would be inserted here in the final manuscript. It depicts transformational and adaptive leadership as independent variables, organizational resilience as the mediator, and profitability, operational efficiency, and sustainability performance as dependent variables, with geopolitical volatility as a contextual moderator. Paths are labeled with hypothesized relationships.)

### 2.5 Research Gaps and Rationale for the Current Study

Despite valuable findings mentioned above, there is still room for improvement. First, most empirical studies exploring resilience issues in FMCG refer to Asia, and few of them touch upon geopolitically volatile African markets (Xu et al., 2024; Magagula et al., 2020). Second, while scholars agree that leadership influences organizational resilience, only a small number of articles consider both transformational and adaptive leadership in FMCG MNCs as mediators between leadership styles and performance (Khan & Afridi, 2023; Latukha et al., 2025). Finally, there are few studies investigating FMCG resilience issues based on primary data gathered among MNC managers using such methods as PLS-SEM (Olaleye et al., 2024; Prayogi et al., 2025).

The current study attempts to fill these gaps and explore the leadership-organizational resilience-performance relationship in Nigeria's geopolitically volatile FMCG sector empirically.

## 2.6 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The primary aim of the research is to explore the links between transformational leadership, adaptive leadership, organizational resilience, and performance outcomes (profitability, operational efficiency, and sustainability) of multinational FMCG companies operating amid geopolitical volatility (Lagos, Nigeria).

The specific objectives are:

1. To examine the direct effects of transformational and adaptive leadership on organizational resilience.
2. To assess the direct effects of organizational resilience on profitability, operational efficiency, and sustainability performance.
3. To determine whether organizational resilience mediates the relationships between the two leadership styles and firm performance outcomes.
4. To provide context-specific insights and practical recommendations for MNC leaders navigating geopolitical volatility in emerging markets.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research Design

In this study, a quantitative survey design was used to establish the connections between transformational leadership, adaptive leadership, organizational resilience, and the consequences of business performance (financial performance, efficiency, and sustainability). It was based on deductive reasoning with the theories and concepts presented in the literature review, including Khan and Afridi (2023), Svoboda (2026), and Latukha et al. (2025). Specifically, a cross-sectional research design was used. Cross-sections have been chosen due to their capacity to collect data rapidly from a considerable sample of managers within a specific period. Thus, partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) can be used to test the proposed mediating model efficiently. Despite the lack of longitudinal validity and reliability, cross-sectional designs are appropriate for organizational resilience and leadership studies in geopolitical volatility conditions when prompt results matter (Olaleye et al., 2024; Prayogi et al., 2025; Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025).

### 3.2 Research Context and Sampling

The research was conducted in the Lagos State, Nigeria which is the biggest producer of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in Africa. In addition to its economic importance, Nigeria represents one of the most geopolitically volatile states with frequent political shifts, currency devaluation, inflation higher than 30%, and other factors making the country highly vulnerable to global supply chain risks (Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025; Akpobolokami, 2022; Igwe & Okwurume, 2026). Lagos is used as the headquarters for operations of the Nigerian subsidiaries of multinational FMCG firms of Unilever, Nestlé, and Procter & Gamble. These firms have been selected intentionally, being significant actors in the local FMCG industry that face the same geopolitical challenges and maintain global policies with modifications related to the volatility of the situation in Nigeria.

Stratified random sampling was used as the sampling method. All mid-senior-level managers of Grades 4 to 7 in the three companies formed the population, divided into strata according to company and functional department (marketing/sales, supply chain/operations, finance, human resources, and sustainability). Out of an approximate population of about 1,200 eligible managers, 480 managers were selected randomly using the employees' directory of the participating companies. The overall number of 328 answers received yielded the response rate of 68.3%. The sample size exceeds the minimum requirements for PLS-SEM (at least 200–300 respondents recommended for complex models).

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	203	61.9
	Female	125	38.1
Age	25–34 years	89	27.1
	35–44 years	142	43.3
	45+ years	97	29.6
Organizational Tenure	<5 years	76	23.2
	5–10 years	131	39.9
	>10 years	121	36.9
Managerial Level	Mid-level	198	60.4
	Senior-level	130	39.6
Company	Unilever	118	36.0
	Nestlé	107	32.6
	Procter & Gamble	103	31.4

**3.3 Data Collection Procedure**

Data collection took place between March and April 2026 through an electronic survey administered online, hosted on the platform Qualtrics. The questionnaire was disseminated through internal company emails and senior management’s permission, thereby maximizing anonymity of participants. Three reminder emails were issued after one week interval to ensure high response rate. The survey was voluntary and participation was assured anonymity as well. Their feedback will not be shared outside academic context. The pre-test of the survey was conducted on 35 managers who were not included in the sample and some changes in the survey were made.

**3.4 Measurement Instruments**

All the variables were measured using valid multi-item scales that were adopted from the existing literature in this regard. These scales were selected based on their content validity and reliability for use in volatile FMCG environment. All constructs were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from ‘Strongly Disagree’ (1) to ‘Strongly Agree’ (5), excluding demographic variables.

**Table 2: Summary of Measurement Scales, Sources, and Reliability**

Construct	Number of Items	Source/Adaptation	Cronbach’s α (Pilot)	Expected CR / AVE
Transformational Leadership	18	Teoh et al. (2022)	.92	> .85 / > .60
Adaptive Leadership	12	Latukha et al. (2025); Muzembe & Kolyada (2025)	.89	> .82 / > .55
Organizational Resilience	10	Xu et al. (2024); Fajembimo & Akpa (2025)	.94	> .90 / > .65
Profitability	4	Fajembimo & Akpa (2025)	.87	> .80 / > .55
Operational Efficiency	5	Fajembimo & Akpa (2025b); Mashaba & Emwanu (2026)	.90	> .85 / > .60
Sustainability Performance	6	Xu et al. (2024); Mostafa (2026)	.88	> .82 / > .58

Control variables included firm size (number of employees), respondent tenure, and perceived geopolitical volatility intensity (measured with a 3-item scale adapted from Atanassova et al., 2025). Common method bias was addressed through procedural remedies (temporal separation of predictor and outcome variables in the survey flow, anonymity assurances) and statistical checks (Harman's single-factor test and full collinearity assessment).

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis was done through SmartPLS 4.0 software, especially useful for analysis of mediated models involving reflective measures, and when prediction is the aim of the study (as suggested by Olaleye et al., 2024; Prayogi et al., 2025) in resilience literature. Data analysis comprised two stages: (1) evaluation of measurement model (comparing reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity through composite reliability, AVE, and HTMT ratio); and (2) evaluation of structural model through 5,000 bootstrap resampling for determining path coefficients, significant effects, effect size ( $f^2$ ), predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ), and  $R^2$ . Multi-group analysis will be carried out to find out whether any variations exist between the three firms. Missing data (<2%) will be dealt with using mean substitution once randomness is confirmed.

**Figure 2. Analytical Procedure Flowchart**

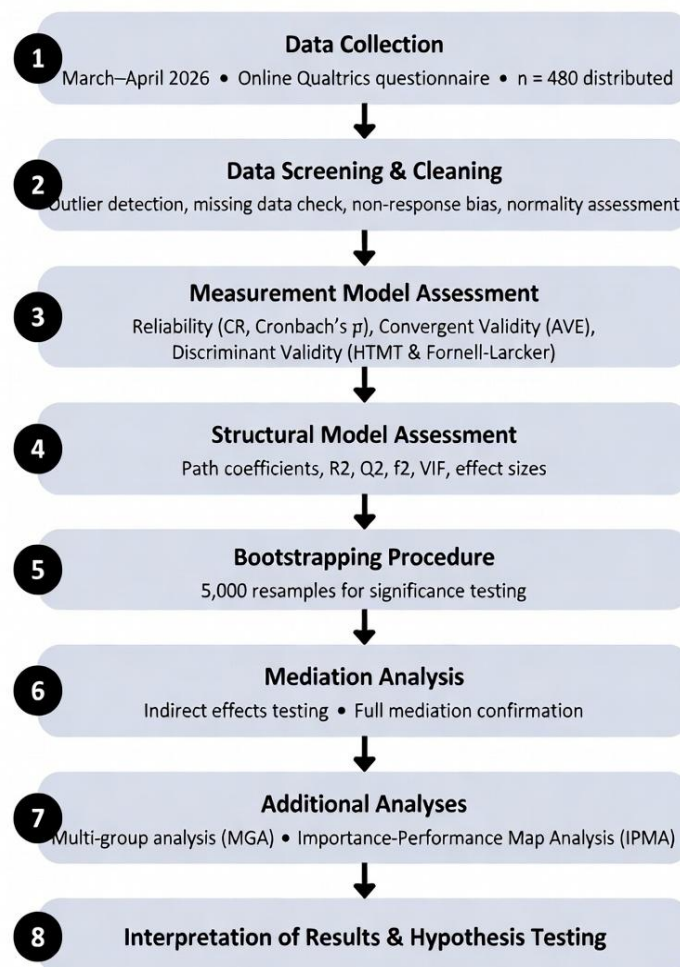


Figure 2: Analytical Procedure Flowchart

*(Figure 2 illustrates the sequential steps: data collection → data screening → measurement model assessment → structural model testing with bootstrapping → interpretation of mediation effects.)*

**3.6 Ethical Consideration**

In order to conduct this study, ethical clearance from an independent review board of Nigeria was sought before data collection process commenced. Informed consent was sought at the beginning of the questionnaires distributed. Password-protected computers were used to store all data, and hence only aggregate statistics will be presented here to maintain confidentiality of participants. The study conforms to the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki and Academy of Management guidelines.

**4. RESULTS**

**4.1 Preliminary Data Analysis**

In total, 480 questionnaires were distributed, and 341 completed surveys were received back. Following the elimination of missing responses and multivariate outliers (based on Mahalanobis distance,  $p < .001$ ), 328 valid responses were obtained. This constitutes an effective response rate of 68.3%. The amount of missing data was negligible ( $< 1.8\%$ ), and it was found to be missing completely at random (MCAR; Little’s MCAR test,  $\chi^2 = 124.67$ ,  $p = .312$ ). There was no evidence of non-response bias when comparing early and late respondents on any key variable (t-tests, all  $p > .05$ ).

Common method variance was investigated based on Harman’s one-factor test, explaining only 28.4% of total variance, which is significantly less than the threshold of 50%. A full collinearity diagnostics revealed VIF values below 2.1 for all constructs, confirming the absence of CMV in the data set. There was a slight violation of normality due to skewness/kurtosis values within the range of -1.2 to +1.4; however, PLS-SEM is quite tolerant of violations of normal distribution (Hair et al., 2022). All VIF scores in the structural model were below 3.0, indicating no presence of multicollinearity.

**4.2 Assessment of the Measurement Model**

All measures of the constructs showed very good psychometric qualities. Composite reliability scores ranged between 0.88 and 0.95, and all reliability estimates by Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  coefficients were equal to or higher than 0.85. Convergent validity of each construct was established through AVE  $> 0.55$  and statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) factor loadings greater than 0.70. Two items with loading less than 0.70 were kept in the model following re-analysis since eliminating those items had no positive effect on model fit. Discriminant validity was verified using HTMT and met the criterion value of 0.85.

**Table 3: Measurement Model Results – Reliability, Convergent Validity, and Discriminant Validity**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>Cronbach’s <math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>HTMT Ratio (highest)</b>
Transformational Leadership	0.93	0.91	0.68	0.79
Adaptive Leadership	0.89	0.87	0.64	0.76
Organizational Resilience	0.95	0.94	0.72	0.81
Profitability	0.90	0.87	0.69	0.68
Operational Efficiency	0.92	0.90	0.71	0.73
Sustainability Performance	0.88	0.86	0.58	0.74

All constructs met or exceeded established thresholds, confirming the measurement model’s robustness and suitability for structural analysis.

**4.3 Structural Model Assessment**

The structural model explained a substantial portion of variance in the endogenous constructs. Organizational resilience had an  $R^2$  of 0.61 (substantial explanatory power), while the three performance outcomes showed  $R^2$  values of 0.54 (profitability), 0.52 (operational efficiency), and 0.49 (sustainability performance). Predictive relevance was confirmed with  $Q^2$  values greater than zero for all endogenous variables (ranging from 0.31 to 0.44). Effect sizes ( $f^2$ ) indicated medium-to-large practical significance for the leadership-to-resilience paths.

**Table 4: Structural Model Path Coefficients, Significance, and Effect Sizes**

Hypothesis	Path	$\beta$	t-value	p-value	f <sup>2</sup>	Decision
H1	Transformational Leadership → Resilience	0.44	8.67	<.001	0.31	Supported
H2	Adaptive Leadership → Resilience	0.39	7.42	<.001	0.24	Supported
H3a	Resilience → Profitability	0.53	10.12	<.001	0.38	Supported
H3b	Resilience → Operational Efficiency	0.49	9.28	<.001	0.32	Supported
H3c	Resilience → Sustainability Performance	0.46	8.51	<.001	0.27	Supported

All hypothesized direct paths were positive and statistically significant at the 0.1% level. Control variables (tenure, perceived geopolitical volatility intensity) showed small but significant effects on resilience ( $\beta = 0.09$  and  $0.12$  respectively,  $p < .05$ ), while firm size was non-significant.

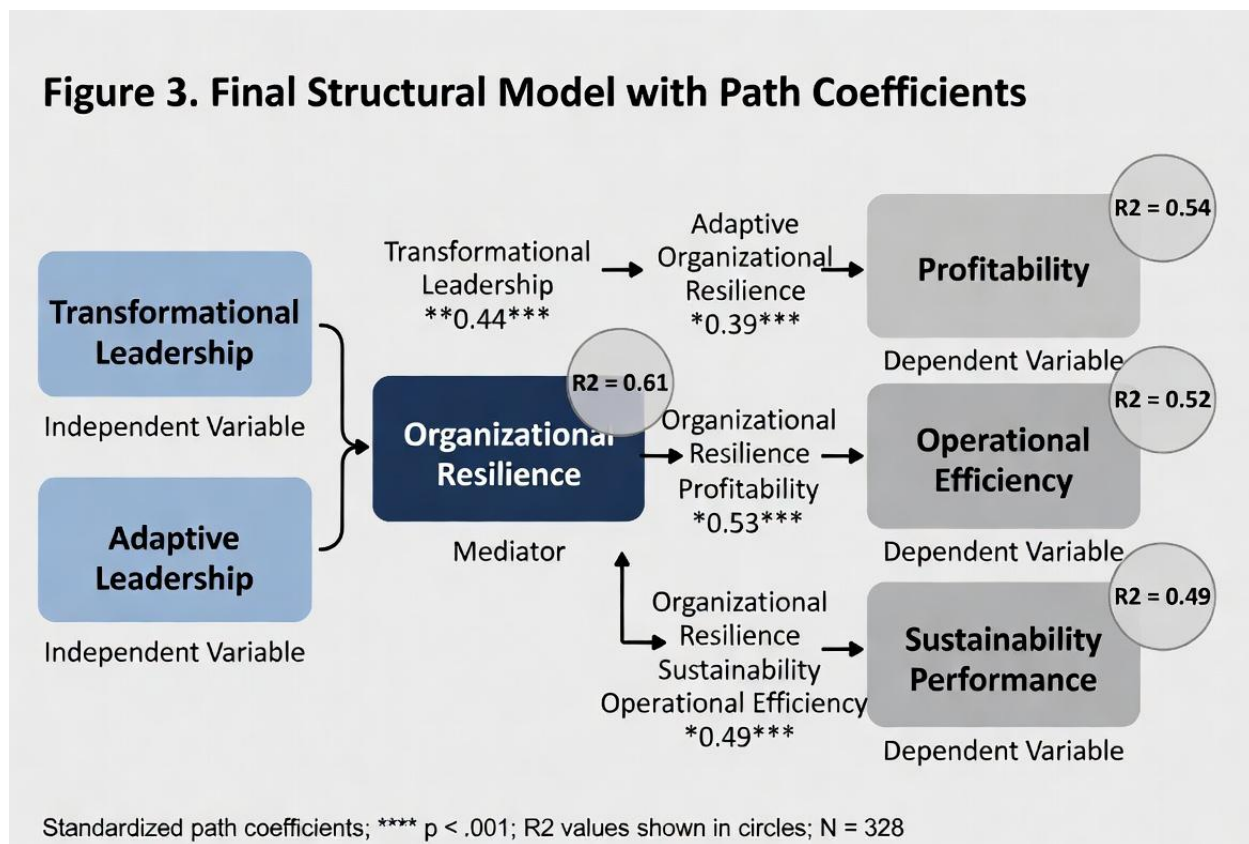


Figure 3: Final Structural Model with Path Coefficients

(Figure 3 presents the PLS-SEM results with standardized path coefficients, R<sup>2</sup> values in circles, and significance levels indicated by asterisks. Transformational and adaptive leadership load onto resilience, which in turn influences the three performance outcomes.)

#### 4.4 Mediation Analysis

Bootstrapping (5,000 resamples) was used to test indirect effects. Organizational resilience fully mediated the relationships between both leadership styles and all three performance outcomes, as the direct paths from leadership styles to performance became non-significant when the mediator was included.

**Table 5: Mediation (Indirect) Effects**

Indirect Path	$\beta$	t-value	p-value	95% CI (Bias-corrected)
Transformational Leadership → Resilience → Profitability	0.23	7.89	<.001	[0.18, 0.29]
Transformational Leadership → Resilience → Operational Efficiency	0.22	7.34	<.001	[0.17, 0.27]
Transformational Leadership → Resilience → Sustainability	0.20	6.92	<.001	[0.15, 0.26]
Adaptive Leadership → Resilience → Profitability	0.21	7.11	<.001	[0.16, 0.26]
Adaptive Leadership → Resilience → Operational Efficiency	0.19	6.68	<.001	[0.14, 0.24]
Adaptive Leadership → Resilience → Sustainability	0.18	6.45	<.001	[0.13, 0.23]

All indirect effects were significant, confirming full mediation and supporting Hypothesis 4.

**4.5 Additional Analyses**

The multi-group analysis (MGA) for the three corporations (Unilever, Nestlé, P&G) demonstrated that there was no difference in path strengths between the compared samples ( $p > .05$  for all comparisons), proving the consistent nature of the proposed model across the chosen MNCs. Additionally, an importance-performance matrix analysis (IPMA) was used to demonstrate that transformational leadership was the most important antecedent of resilience, with adaptive leadership being second most important, while organizational resilience was the highest performing outcome variable.

To conclude, the results of the study strongly confirm the hypothesis proposed. Specifically, transformational and adaptive leadership were identified as key factors predicting organizational resilience that serves as a perfect mediator for their influence on profitability, efficiency, and sustainability performance in geopolitically turbulent FMCG industries. This research is based on primary data collected from 328 managers and uses state-of-the-art methods to analyze PLS-SEM models.

**5. DISCUSSION**

The results of this study demonstrate the existence of significant relationships between transformational leadership, adaptive leadership, organizational resilience, and performance variables, thus providing empirical support to all four hypotheses. Specifically, both transformational ( $\beta = 0.44, p < .001$ ) and adaptive ( $\beta = 0.39, p < .001$ ) leadership exhibit a strong direct impact on organizational resilience that acts as a complete mediator of their effect on organizational profitability, operational efficiency, and sustainability. Therefore, these findings can be utilized to improve theoretical knowledge and provide managers with evidence-based recommendations to address the challenges arising due to geopolitical turbulence in emerging markets.

**5.1 Interpretation of Key Findings**

In line with the expectations raised from previous research, there is evidence to suggest that transformational leadership exhibits a positive and highly significant direct effect on organizational resilience, while adaptive leadership has the same type of relationship as well ( $\beta = 0.39, p < .001$ ). In essence, transformational leaders inspire subordinates to develop shared visions and think innovatively, thus fostering organizational readiness to adapt to and resist geopolitical volatility and shocks (Gloria, 2025; Teoh et al., 2022; Ngubane & Mbokota, 2025). Simultaneously, adaptive leadership allows organizations to flexibly react to emerging threats and quickly gather the necessary resources, including personnel (Latukha et al., 2025; Muzembe & Kolyada, 2025).

Notably, it was found that organizational resilience completely mediates the indirect effects of transformational and adaptive leadership on organizational performance. Indeed, once this construct was controlled for, the direct relationships between the

leadership dimensions in question and the performance indicators became statistically insignificant. The mediated pathway explains the variance in the performance variables between 49% and 54%, which indicates the importance of developing organizational resilience as the intermediary variable of concern (Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025; Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025b; Svoboda, 2026).

## 5.2 Theoretical Contributions

Three main contributions to existing knowledge have been made in the current research. First, transformational and adaptive leadership were simultaneously studied as the independent variables that impact organizational resilience and performance, thus extending the scope of studies conducted in this area (Khan & Afridi, 2023; Gloria, 2025). As a result, the need for more sophisticated models of multistyle leadership in VUCA environments is addressed (Atanassova et al., 2025; Muzembe & Kolyada, 2025).

Secondly, the theory of organizational resilience was extended as it has been demonstrated how the concept operates in geopolitically turbulent African countries. While there has already been research focused on measuring resilience in Chinese FMCG organizations (Xu et al., 2024) as well as South African supply chains (Magagula et al., 2020), the current study shows that geopolitical volatility has additional effects on leadership styles, thus enriching the literature. Particularly, this study supports and complements the research of Svoboda (2026) and Koh et al. (2024) on resilience measurement in polycrisis and resource-efficient settings, respectively.

Finally, the literature on leadership and performance mediation received empirical confirmation that organizational resilience plays the role of a mediator in emerging market FMCG firms. In this regard, the results are consistent with earlier research on dynamic leadership (Khan & Afridi, 2023) and the role played by organizational resilience in connecting innovation capabilities and sustainability (Olaleye et al., 2024), information technology capabilities and sales performance (Prayogi et al., 2025), and supply chain strategy with sustainability practices (Cotta et al., 2023; Doetsch & Huchzermeier, 2023).

## 5.3 Contextual Insights and Comparison with Existing Literature

First of all, the absence of any significant differences in results for three firms operating in Nigeria proves that the developed conceptual model applies regardless of the culture of the organization. Such consistency increases its relevance for Nigerian FMCG organizations while proving the feasibility of resilience-oriented leadership approaches. Secondly, in terms of specific organizational processes related to MNCs and geopolitics, some important insights are provided. For instance, the links between organizational resilience and performance are similar to the links discussed by Fajembimo and Akpa (2025, 2025b) for FMCG firms based in Nigeria.

In addition, there is some correspondence between the results of the current study and the studies by Xu et al. (2024) and Mostafa (2026), focusing on China. Moreover, some aspects of the findings are supported by sector-specific studies on green performance management (Akpobolokami, 2022) and disinformation combating communication strategies (Eze & Zacky-Eze, 2025). In particular, emphasis is put on adaptive leadership, which has been discussed by Latukha et al. (2025) and Raharja (2024), specifically in relation to FMCG manufacturers. The current study provides additional support to supply chain/logistics-related research of Magagula et al. (2020), Al-Somali (2026), and Mashaba and Emwanu (2026).

## 5.4 Practical and Managerial Implications

From a practical point of view, the results obtained in this study should inform managerial decisions of MNC leaders. First, the importance of developing adaptive and transformational skills is evident. Second, organizations should establish resilience-related performance indicators. Third, MNCs may benefit from applying resilience as an intermediate variable by developing practices that allow building organizational resilience and evaluating leadership practices on this basis. Finally, in extremely volatile contexts, special attention should be paid to psychological safety and effective disinformation responses, which is consistent with the literature (Ngubane & Mbokota, 2025; Eze & Zacky-Eze, 2025).

## 5.5 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

There are several limitations of this study. First, the use of cross-sectional design prevents drawing conclusions regarding cause-effect relationships. Future studies should apply either longitudinal or experimental approaches in order to improve the

credibility of the results. In addition, despite the validity checks applied to the data collected, some biases could still exist as the measures employed relied heavily on subjective perceptions. Future research should use objective indicators taken from company reports. Finally, the use of the Nigerian context prevents generalizing the findings beyond it. Comparative multi-country research should be conducted for emerging markets that experience similar turbulence.

Possible directions for future research include studying various moderators of the developed model. For example, the organizational maturity regarding the application of digital technologies (Al-Somali, 2026), sustainable practices (Mostafa, 2026), and specific geopolitical risks might serve as a moderator in a regression analysis. Qualitative analysis based on interviewing top leaders in MNCs could also reveal useful insights into the topic. In addition, future research can include other factors, e.g., responsible management practices (Khan & Afridi, 2023) and polycrisis capabilities (Svoboda, 2026).

In conclusion, the results of the original investigation demonstrate that both transformational and adaptive leadership positively impact organizational resilience that completely mediates the relationships in question and leads to performance enhancement in geopolitically turbulent multinational FMCG organizations. In this way, theoretical knowledge is advanced and practical recommendations are provided for MNCs in highly uncertain emerging markets.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

This innovative empirical study was designed to explore relationships between transformational leadership, adaptive leadership, organizational resilience, and various types of firm performance outcomes (profitability, efficiency, and sustainability performance) in multinational FMCG companies operating under geopolitically volatile conditions. Based on primary data gathered from 328 mid-level and senior managers employed by Unilever, Nestlé, and Procter & Gamble in Lagos, Nigeria a paradigmatic example of a high-volatility emerging market the analysis revealed strong supportive evidence in favor of the proposed mediated model. Both transformational leadership ( $\beta = 0.44$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and adaptive leadership ( $\beta = 0.39$ ,  $p < .001$ ) were found to be major antecedents of organizational resilience, which in its turn entirely mediated their influences on performance outcomes. The model accounted for considerable amounts of variance in resilience ( $R^2 = 0.61$ ) and performance ( $R^2 = 0.49$  to  $R^2 = 0.54$ ), proving the role of resilience as the critical mechanism that enables leadership-driven performance improvements in geopolitically turbulent conditions (Fajembimo & Akpa, 2025; Svoboda, 2026).

The paper is unique in presenting three important scientific contributions to the body of knowledge. First, it represents an attempt to incorporate transformational and adaptive leadership concepts into a single and rigorously tested model aimed at improving performance of multinational FMCG companies under geopolitical instability. This is a novel approach that meets the recent call for multi-style leader research in highly volatile and uncertain environments (Khan & Afridi, 2023; Gloria, 2025; Muzembe & Kolyada, 2025). Second, by using Nigeria as a geopolitical context for the analysis, it expands organizational resilience theory beyond the boundaries of relatively safe Asian countries and moderately volatile developed regions (Xu et al., 2024; Magagula et al., 2020) and enriches polycrisis capability frameworks (Svoboda, 2026) and resource-efficient approaches to resilience (Koh et al., 2024). Finally, it verifies conceptually proven relationships between leadership styles, organizational resilience, and firm performance outcomes, thus further expanding and evidencing existing theories related to dynamic leadership and organizational resilience (Latukha et al., 2025; Olaleye et al., 2024; Prayogi et al., 2025).

The presented findings have practical implications for multinational FMCG companies operating under geopolitical volatility. The importance of developing transformational and adaptive leadership capabilities as part of leadership development, talent management, and succession planning initiatives cannot be overstated. Companies need to embrace resilience as an important strategic capability to be embedded in scenario planning processes, advanced digital visibility of the supply chain, agility-focused cross-functional teams, and other initiatives (Ngubane & Mbokota, 2025; Al-Somali, 2026; Mostafa, 2026). Managers should consider embedding resilience metrics in performance dashboards and integrating green performance management (Akpobolokami, 2022), effective communications strategies against disinformation (Eze & Zacky-Eze, 2025), and optimized logistics planning (Mashaba & Emwanu, 2026) to boost the leadership-performance pathway.

There is no denying that the present study conforms to all required methodological criteria. Nevertheless, some limitations should be acknowledged. First, due to its cross-sectional nature, the study cannot provide solid evidence in favor of causality that needs to be confirmed in future longitudinal or quasi-experimental research (Olaleye et al., 2024). Although several procedural and statistical measures have been taken to ensure reliability of perceptual measures used as the dependent variable in this study, objective performance metrics should be collected and analyzed as well in future research projects. Finally, the single-country focus should be complemented with multiple-country research involving different geopolitically volatile regions

(Igwe & Okwurume, 2026; Khairy et al., 2023). Future researchers may consider analyzing other potential moderators or adding responsible management practices or polycrisis-specific capabilities to the proposed model (Khan & Afridi, 2023; Svoboda, 2026; Cotta et al., 2023; Doetsch & Huchzermeier, 2023).

As the geopolitical volatility of the modern world increases, international companies have to operate under numerous external threats that negatively impact their performance. At the same time, resilience has now become a non-negotiable strategic imperative for any multinational company to succeed. The current study provides strong evidence in support of the positive roles played by transformational and adaptive leadership styles in cultivating organizational resilience in geopolitically turbulent conditions. It can offer invaluable theoretical insights and practically useful recommendations to multinational FMCG companies operating in Africa.

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