

# Significance of Philanthropic Social Responsibilities on Host Communities Loyalty in Delta State

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## ABSTRACT

The issue of corporate social responsibility has been a discourse in several conferences, workshops and academic scholarship. This is as a result of the ensuing conflict between host communities and oil firms in their social interaction in host communities. Also, the interpretation of the concept of CSR by oil firms and host communities and its application has generated a lot of debate as oil firms perceive it as a voluntary donation or provision of infrastructure while host communities see it as a responsibility. This paper examines philanthropic social responsibility by oil firms and how it influence host communities loyalty in Delta State. The paper adopted the quantitative research method that made use of the questionnaire. A sample of 400 was obtained from the study population drawn from selected host communities with the aid of multi-stage sampling method. Mean and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used to analyse the data obtained. The study found out that Philanthropic social responsibility is more than just being a corporate citizen; it is an obligation to meet the needs of stakeholders through social welfare programs, contributions to education, arts, and cultural activities. It recommends that oil companies in host communities should be proactive in preventing adverse impacts of their operations on communities and CSR should be targeted towards this area. Also, when unavoidable or unforeseen impacts do occur, they should respond promptly to rectify those impacts, including appropriate compensation when necessary as this is part of philanthropic social responsibilities.

**Keywords:** Social responsibilities; Host communities; Niger Delta; Social interaction; Nigeria

## I. INTRODUCTION

There is an emergent interest in introducing the concept of Community Relations into corporate operations. Globalization and international markets require an understanding of how to engage with different communities in the resolve of distrust and violence. This type of relationship with the communities is not only the result of a social and humanistic interest in the state of the community development and social problems, but also a viewpoint that supports the corporation–community strategic in order to curb violence and conflicts (Juárez, 2016).

Corporate social responsibility (CRS) is the idea or concept that companies have a duty towards the society beyond its primary obligation to its shareholders or owners and it is said to be voluntary (Amao, 2014). CSR is an increasingly important part of international business. Globalization of world trade and the rise of powerful companies, such as Multi-National Companies (MNCs) is mainly responsible for the rise of CSR practices. CSR encompasses the voluntary codes, principles and initiatives companies adopt in their general desire to confine corporate responsibility to self- regulation that promote community relations (Ekhaton, 2014).

Community relations, is commonly used to describe the interaction between a company, an organization or a government and a particular community. According to Lakin and Scheubel (2010), since the beginning of the 21st century, community relations has become a more concrete concept most in use by companies, organizations and governments to describe their involvements with communities. Businesses and other organizational entities have long practiced community relations to nurture positive, cooperative relations between themselves and the public (Kane, Aaron, & Patrick, 2009). The

application of community relations strategies by companies especially oil companies is becoming a more modern means of resolving the issue of host community distrust which in turn minimizes or eliminates the case of host community violence against the company.

CSR makes corporations responsive to a lot more stakeholders other than just shareholders. These stakeholders could include suppliers, customers, shareholders, the environment, and communities amongst others (Ekhaton, 2014). Thus, corporations are expected to take responsibility for their actions (if any) on the aforementioned stakeholders. CSR explores issues relating to human rights, labour rights or standards, bribery and corruption amongst others. In essence, CSR extends beyond the traditional and legal requirements, expected of corporations with regard to its impact on stakeholders. Thus, CSR has been described as a 'business approach for addressing the social and environmental impacts of company activities' (Frynas, 2009).

The developing countries economy is heavily reliant on the revenues accruing from the oil and gas sector (Ekhaton, 2014). The Niger Delta region where oil Multinational Corporation or Company (MNCs) maintains a significant presence has become a theatre of incessant violent conflicts or crisis. Some of the negative consequences of the MNCs in the oil sector in the developing countries include gas flaring, oil spills, environmental pollution, negative social impacts, conflict and violence. Thus, due to these negative impacts arising from the activities of oil MNCs, many oil companies in the country have developed CSR initiatives in an effort to mitigate these negative consequences. The paper examines philanthropic social responsibility and community engagement. To achieve the objective of the study, a research question and hypothesis is tested in the work.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility**

CSR is generally seen as the business contribution to sustainable development, which has been defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, and is generally understood as focusing on how to achieve the integration of economic, environmental and social imperatives (Strategis, 2003). CSR is the voluntary assumption by companies of responsibilities beyond purely economic and legal responsibilities (Piacentini, 2010). CSR is the degree of moral obligation that may be ascribed to

corporations beyond simple obedience to the laws of the state (Kilcullen & Kooistra, 2019).

Collins (2012) defined CSR as "...the approach that an organization takes in balancing its responsibilities toward different stakeholders when making legal, economic, ethical, and social decisions". Then International Standard Organization define, "Responsibility of organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behavior that contributes to sustainable development, including health and the welfare of society; takes into account the expectations of stakeholders; is in compliance with applicable law and consistent with international norms of behavior; and is integrated throughout the organization and practiced in its relationship" (International Organization for Standardization, 2010).

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a form of self-regulation to monitor and ensure compliance with the spirit of the law, ethical standards, and societal norms. The goal of CSR is to embrace responsibility and encourages a positive impact through its activities on stakeholders. If we assume that corporations must act in a socially responsible manner, then it can be expected that business leaders would seek an accepted "standard" for responsible behavior. Targeted philanthropy becomes a way for companies and communities to pursue a win-win strategy. Morally acceptable philanthropy can also be strategic so that charitable efforts improve the competitive context. Philanthropy can align social and economic goals and improve a company's long-term business prospects (Porter & Kramer, 2015).

Corporate responsibility (CR) is a complex phenomenon since it relates business to society. Since societies differ, concepts about responsibility are bound to differ. Different national, cultural and social contexts call for different sorts of responsibility (Midttun, 2016). The complexity of the CR phenomenon has also led to a proliferation of concepts such as corporate social responsibility (CSR), corporate sustainability, 'business in society', corporate citizenship, social issues in management and corporate accountability (Waddock, 2014).

Egbon (2018) stated that the title corporate social responsibility has two meanings. First, it's a general name for any theory of the corporation that emphasizes both the responsibility to make money and the responsibility to interact ethically with the surrounding community. Second, corporate social responsibility is also a specific conception of that responsibility to profit while playing a role in

broader questions of community welfare. As a specific theory of the way corporations interact with the surrounding community and larger world, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is composed of four obligations: The economic responsibility to make money, the legal responsibility to adhere to rules and regulations, the ethical responsibility to do what's right even when not required by the letter or spirit of the law and the philanthropic responsibility to contribute to society's projects even when they're independent of the particular business. Regardless, corporate social responsibility means every business holds four kinds of obligations and should respond to them in order: first the economic, then the legal, next the ethical, and finally the philanthropic.

Generally, CSR is voluntary in the oil sector in Nigeria. Many MNCs now utilize the Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) as a means of realizing CSR (Egbon, 2018). Thus, companies engage in the CSR initiatives to obtain "social license" to operate in that community or region MOUs are also referred to as examples of Community Development Agreements (CDAs) (Odumosu-Ayanu, 2012). Companies such as Chevron and Shell have variants of the MOUs called Global Memorandum of Understanding (Ekhatior & Anyiwe 2016). Hence, CDAs are akin to MOUs and GMOUs that are prevalent in the oil and gas sector in Nigeria. The MOU is a bilateral or multilateral agreement between two or more parties. It expresses a convergence of will between the parties, indicating an intended common line of action. In this case, it is an agreement between the MNC and the community on how to implement a set of CSR programs within a given time frame' (Osemeke, 2016).

Furthermore, it should be emphasized that MOUs and GMOUs models (operating in the oil and gas sector) entered into between NINCS and communities are not legally binding contracts. Notwithstanding the fact that MOUs and GMOUs are not sacrosanct host communities consider them to be binding and oil MNCs are expected to enforce them. Thus, many NGOs claim that MOUs should be considered as contracts, for example, as an intention to create binding commitments on the part of oil MNCs towards the inhabitants of oil-producing communities (Ekhatior, 2016). Thus, this non-enforceability of MOUs and GMOUs has led to many conflicts and crisis in some communities' even in Egbema and Gbaramatu kingdoms is not an exception.

## 2.2 Philanthropic Social Responsibilities and Host Community's Loyalty

Philanthropic responsibility is a set of standards of behavior to which a corporation subscribes in order to have a positive and productive impact on society representing a framework for the role of business in society. Philanthropic dimension of CSR is also a prominent orientation prioritised by managers in performing CSR, voluntarism, community development, discretionary responsibilities are all facets of the philanthropic dimension. Apart from this dimension there are economic, legal and ethical dimensions of corporate social responsibility (Moir, 2011). Nowadays, it is a common practice to see a lot of products carrying labels which portrays being environmentally conscious or going green as part of engaging in socially responsible investment which does not cause harm to the environment.

Such could be seen even on paper and beverage products depicting approved by an alliance which protects the environment (Kassinis & Vafeas, 2006). However, not all companies view philanthropy in self-interested terms. Many believe that giving to the community is simply the morally right thing to do. When Business Week compiled its 2003 list of the most philanthropic American companies, it polled 218 companies in the Standard and Poor's 500 index (BusinessWeek Online, 2013).

Also, employees feel to work for organizations that seeks the better society, likewise operational managers who promote socially responsible investing claim that investors examine philanthropic history because investors believe there is a correlation between company generosity and how well the company treats its employees (Iannou 2013). It is not surprising, then, that Business Ethics magazine uses corporate philanthropy as one indicator of how "moral" a particular company is when compiling its annual 100 Best Corporate Citizens list (Koehn & Ueng, 2010).

Arguments against philanthropy have typically been based on the grounds that the profits of the firm belong to its shareholders and should be returned to them, not given away to various causes favored by management (Freidman 1962). Koehn & Ueng (2010), it was stated that some organizations even use charity to nation so as to disguise financial restatements of such organisation, many involving fraud. A number of those firms restating suspect earnings appear on lists of top corporate givers or of most ethical firms, prompting doubt that companies can use philanthropy as a kind of moral window-dressing (Koehn & Ueng 2010). Those who argue in favor of

philanthropy contend that the role of business in society has been transformed.

Consumers and policy-makers expect businesses to act as good corporate citizens and this behavior is encouraged by tax-breaks, laws guaranteeing limited liability for corporate agents, and support for programs and institutions that educate future employees (Koehn &Ueng, 2010). In this view, justice demands that corporations use resources to reciprocate the benefits they have accepted from the larger social system. Thus, Michael Porter has argued, “We are learning that the most effective way to address many of the world’s most pressing problems is to mobilize the corporate sector in a context of rules, incentives, and partnerships where both companies and society can benefit” (Porter, 2012).

Educational institutions are integrating philanthropic responsibility into CSR sustainability studies in their curriculum and creating research units for advancement of sustainability studies. CSR has continued to receive more attention from the academia and an increased relevance on how firms are efficiently managed (Barrena et al, 2016). Image creation refers to the perception possessed by stakeholders on the way their expectations are met by the business organisation normally it is attached to goodwill, level of customer loyalty, satisfaction of all stakeholders, views of the organization developed by its stakeholders, the outside world’s overall impression of the company, including views of the customer, shareholders, the media and the general public at large (Jamali, 2008). Good corporate image provides benefits derived from effective marketing strategies, brand identity, increase in opportunities for diversification and a long lasting goodwill. Employing altruistic CSR and emphasizing on environmental management disclosure not only boost corporate image but directly affects corporate financial performance (Usman & Amran, 2015).

Constituents of corporate image creation are many and all depend on the level at which they are perceived to increase financial performance, improve competitiveness of a corporate brand identity, employ innovative techniques in production process, and the effectiveness of response to market conditions (Hull &Rothenburg, 2008). Business organisations need to create a good image to enhance corporate reputation that relates to more organisational performance both socially and financially (Sanchez, 2016). Consequently, business organizations pay particular attention to the image the stakeholders ascribe to them because it assist them do business effectively, anything that

affects their image can possibly reduce customer loyalty and inversely lower down sales. Firms need to create an image of a good corporate citizenry to be favored by regulatory bodies and the government also by settling all dues, fulfilling obligations at the right time, and all elements of the legal dimension of CSR (Obalola & Adelopo, 2012).

Justification on introducing a CSR is based on the expectation that it has the viability of enhancing corporate image through brand identity, strong customer base and loyalty, ability to withstand competition and achieve beyond stakeholders expectation (Porter and Kremer, 2006). Improvement on corporate social performance is what all stakeholders are expecting from a business organisation, therefore the business must respond in alignment with what stakeholders are expecting and exert more efforts in trying to exceed beyond what others are doing in the market coupled with more ethical responsibilities and transparency to all stakeholders in order to create a good corporate image. Aligning philanthropic responsibility activities with stakeholder’s expectation and organisational goals is a step that organizations are opting for in making sure that every area of their business decision making and operations is effectively integrated and connected with CSR (Samuel &Sakhile, 2016; Jamali, 2008). Profitable and successful companies spend a lot on CSR and they comply with all rules and regulations to be regarded as good corporate citizenry and end up with more CSR that boost their corporate reputation (Doukakis et al, 2005; Joyner & Payne 2002; Kitchen & Schultz 2002; Brammer& Millington 2005). Other scholars observed that companies engaging in social responsibility-driven strategies get more corporate image than those performing only on profit-driven strategies (Arjoon, 2000; Marshall, 2005).Philanthropic responsibility refers to voluntary activities or donations to community which is altruistic in nature, from an African context it is an obligation and mandatory dimension of CSR but discretionary in developing countries (Ehie, 2016)

Philanthropic responsibility means serving humanity. This criterion pays attention to the wellbeing of the unprivileged or needy people who badly require our support to sustain themselves on this planet. Companies fulfill their philanthropic responsibility by donating their time, money, or resources to charities and organizations at national or international levels (Odumosu-Ayanu, 2012). These donations are mainly given to a variety of worthy causes including human rights, national

disaster relief, and clean water and education programs in underdeveloped countries.

Philanthropic social responsibilities go beyond simply operating as ethically as possible and involve actively bettering society. This type of corporate social responsibility is frequently associated with donating money to charities, with many businesses supporting particular charities that are relevant to their business in some way. However, philanthropic CSR does not only refer to charity donations (Ekhatior 2016). Other common philanthropic responsibilities include investing in the host community or participating in local projects. The main intention is to support a host community in some way that goes beyond just hiring. By investing in the community, the business encourages loyalty from employees whilst benefiting from an improved support system.

Corporate philanthropy also serves as a way of representing a company's commitment to society, demonstrating that they value the host community beyond simply providing a workforce or source of revenue (Carroll, 2009). For example, businesses might offer their employees the opportunity to volunteer with local charities during working hours or through matching gift programmes where workers' donations to charities are matched by the company (Belsie, 2015).

### III. METHODOLOGY

The study employed descriptive research method that made use of the questionnaire. The sample size of the study is 400. This was obtained using Taro Yamane sample size formula that made use of 95% (0.05) level of significance to derive the formula. This made use the sampling process generate some confidence. Multi-stage sampling method that has both properties of probability and non-probability sampling technique was used to select the respondents that participated in the survey from selected host communities in Delta State.

Descriptive analysis was used in this study consisted of mean. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test for the linear relationship between the variables in hypothesis. A bench score of 2.0 was chosen as the benchmark for the acceptance of any mean score. This means any mean score less than 2.00 was rejected or attracted negative response from the respondents. Also, probability value of 0.05 was chosen as the statistical basis for the acceptance and rejection of the null hypothesis. A value above 0.05 means there is no there is a no relationship while a value below 0.05 shows a relationship. The mean, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were analysed using version 23 of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

### IV. RESULTS

Table 1 Demographic data of respondents

		Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	163	42.3
	Females	222	57.7
	Total	385	100.0
Marital status	Married	193	50.1
	Single	169	43.9
	Divorced	23	6.0
	Total	385	100.0
Origin	Indigene	325	84.4
	Non-indigene	60	15.6
	Total	385	100.0
Years of residence	0-3	13	8.6
	4-6	104	27.0
	7 years and above	248	64.4
	Total	385	100.0
Occupation	Self employed	113	29.4
	Unemployed	197	51.2
	Civil servants	47	12.2
	Others	28	7.3
	Total	385	100.0
Academic level	First degree	282	73.2
	Masters	75	19.5
	Ph.D.	28	7.3

	Total	385	100.0
Age	18-25	72	18.7
	26-33	148	38.4
	34-41	137	35.6
	42 years and above	28	7.3
	Total	385	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents' demographic data. On sex of the respondents, 42.3% of them were male and 57.7% female. Marital status of the respondents revealed that majority of them were married with 50.1% followed by 43.9% who were single and 23% divorced. The origin distribution of the respondents revealed that majority of them were indigenes with 84.4% and non-indigenes had 15.6%. The years of residence in the place showed that majority of them have been living in the places for more than 7 years with 64.4%, others have stayed for 0-3 years with 8.6% and 4-6 years with 27.0%. Also, the occupation distribution of the respondents indicates that majority of the respondents are unemployed with 51.2%, followed with those who are self-

employed with 29.4% and civil servants with 12.2% and finally others with 7.3%.

Academic level of the respondents revealed that majority of them are with first degree as showed in 73.2% which stands for highest response. Masters degree holders had 19.5% and Ph.D. holders had 7.3%. Lastly, age distribution of the respondents revealed that majority them are in the age bracket of 26-33 with 38.4% followed by those in the age bracket of 34-41 with 35.6% and those in the age bracket of 18-25 with 18.7% and finally those 42 years and above with 7.3%. The demographic data of the respondents indicates that majority of the participants are young, unemployed indigenes with first degree who have responsibilities as married people.

Table 2: Analysis of Research Question

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Remark
1.	Building Healthcare Facilities	385	2.12	Accept
2.	Construction of good road networks	385	2.06	Accept
3.	Environmental management	385	1.94	Reject
4.	Assisting the indigent	385	2.26	Accept
5.	Building social amenities	385	2.18	Accept
6.	Good corporate image	385	1.96	Reject
7.	Improve standard of leaving	385	1.80	Reject
8.	Improve standard of life	385	2.00	Accept
9.	Scholarship Program	385	2.20	Accept
10.	Create skill acquisition programs	385	2.04	Accept
GRAND MEAN				= 2.06

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

The table stated above revealed that environmental management mean value was 1.94 which implies that philanthropic social responsibilities has no significant effect on host community's loyalty if the environment is not been taking care of which is agreement with Ozekhome, (2011) asserted that Oil that is spilled in and not recovered will have an impact on the local environment, spreading over a wide area and affecting both terrestrial and marine resources, inappropriate clean up actions can make the situation worse, the development of the region has led to the degradation of some sites reducing their value and use.

Consequently, this an undeniable fact about oil companies no matter their level of CSR. Also, if good corporate image can be significant to host community as a result of philanthropic social responsibilities, the mean value obtained was 1.96 which implies to some extent is slightly significant because 1.96 is closer value to 2.0 mean value while if philanthropic social responsibilities have significant on host community's loyalty in terms improving standard of leaving the mean value obtained was 1.80 which is less than 2.00 it therefore rejected. Finally, every other item was accepted.

Table 3: Pearson test for philanthropic social responsibilities and host community's loyalty

		philanthropic social responsibilities	host community loyalty
philanthropic social responsibilities	Pearson Correlation	1	.194**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	385	385
host community loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.194**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	385	385

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

From Table 3, it can be observed that the Pearson correlation coefficient,  $r$ , is 0.194 and that it is significant at ( $p = 0.000$ ). This means that the null hypothesis is rejected. In conclusion, there is a significant relationship between philanthropic social responsibilities and host community's loyalty

## V. DISCUSSION

The study established from the hypothesis tested that philanthropic social responsibilities affects host community's loyalty. There was a positive correlation between philanthropic social responsibilities and host community's loyalty. This finding is in line with Barrena et al, (2016) where it was argued that educational institutions are integrating philanthropic responsibility into CSR sustainability studies in their curriculum and creating research units for advancement of sustainability studies. CSR has continued to receive more attention from the academia and an increased relevance on how firms are efficiently managed (Barrena et al, 2016).

Image creation refers to the perception possessed by stakeholders on the way their expectations are met by the business organisation normally it is attached to goodwill, level of customer loyalty, satisfaction of all stakeholders, views of the organization developed by its stakeholders, the outside world's overall impression of the company, including views of the customer, shareholders, the media and the general public at large.

Arguing in the same line Jamal, (2008) postulated that good corporate image provides benefits derived from effective marketing strategies, brand identity, increase in opportunities for diversification and a long lasting goodwill. Employing altruistic CSR and emphasizing on environmental management disclosure not only boost corporate image but directly affects corporate financial performance as was corroborated by Usman and Amran, (2015). According to Hull and

Rothenburg (2008), constituents of corporate image creation are many and all depend on the level at which they are perceived to increase financial performance, improve competitiveness of a corporate brand identity, employ innovative techniques in production process, and the effectiveness of response to market conditions.

Business organisations need to create a good image to enhance corporate reputation that relates to more organisational performance both socially and financially (Sanchez, 2016). Consequently, business organizations pay particular attention to the image the stakeholders ascribe to them because it assist them do business effectively, anything that affects their image can possibly reduce customer loyalty and inversely lower down sales. Firms need to create an image of a good corporate citizenry to be favored by regulatory bodies and the government also by settling all dues, fulfilling obligations at the right time, and all elements of the legal dimension of CSR (Obalola & Adelopo, 2012).

This was further supported by Porter and Kremer (2006) work where it was Justification on introducing a CSR is based on the expectation that it has the viability of enhancing corporate image through brand identity, strong customer base and loyalty, ability to withstand competition and achieve beyond stakeholders expectation (Porter and Kremer, 2006). Improvement on corporate social performance is what all stakeholders are expecting from a business organisation, therefore the business must respond in alignment with what stakeholders are expecting and exert more efforts in trying to exceed beyond what others are doing in the market coupled with more ethical responsibilities and transparency to all stakeholders in order to create a good corporate image.

Aligning philanthropic responsibility activities with stakeholder's expectation and organisational goals is a step that organizations are opting for in making sure that every area of their

business decision making and operations is effectively integrated and connected with CSR (Samuel & Sakhile, 2016; Jamali, 2008). Profitable and successful companies spend a lot on CSR and they comply with all rules and regulations to be regarded as good corporate citizenry and end up with more CSR that boost their corporate reputation (Doukakis et al, 2005; Joyner and Payne 2002; Kitchen and Schultz 2002; Brammer and Millington 2005). Other scholars observed that companies engaging in social responsibility-driven strategies get more corporate image than those performing only on profit-driven strategies (Arjoon, 2000; Marshall, 2005). Philanthropic responsibility refers to voluntary activities or donations to community which is altruistic in nature, from an African context it is an obligation and mandatory dimension of CSR but discretionary in developing countries (Ehie, 2016).

## VI. CONCLUSION

The study found highly significant positive relationship between philanthropic social responsibilities and host community's loyalty. Philanthropy is more than just being a corporate citizen; it is an obligation to meet the needs of stakeholders through social welfare programs, contributions to education, arts, and cultural activities. Philanthropy is more of a voluntary act that is desired, and business organizations are not considered unethical if they do not participate in it. The benefits of taking on philanthropic responsibilities make it virtually an avenue to gain legitimacy, build reputation, and use as a long-term strategy. Corporate citizenship is impossible to achieve without taking responsibility and contributing to societal development which will virtually give positive view to host communities.

Oil companies in host communities should be proactive in preventing adverse impacts of their operations on communities and CSR should be targeted towards this area. Also, when unavoidable or unforeseen impacts do occur, they should respond promptly to rectify those impacts, including appropriate compensation when necessary as this is part of philanthropic social responsibilities.

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