



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF FIRMS IN SOUTH-SOUTH NIGERIA (A SURVEY OF AIRTEL AND MTN NIGERIA LIMITED)

Cassius A. Ogar, PhD 

Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences,
University of Cross River State (UNICROSS), Nigeria
cassiusogar@unicross.edu.ng, cassiusogar02@gmail.com

Efenji Fidelis Idajor

Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences,
University of Cross River State (UNICROSS), Nigeria

Godwin Undie Ntitim

Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences,
University of Cross River State (UNICROSS), Nigeria

Utibe Eyo

Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences,
University of Cross River State (UNICROSS), Nigeria

Abstract

The study is titled Social Responsibility (SR) and the Sustainability of firms in South-South Nigeria: a survey of Airtel and MTN. The researcher adopted an interpretivist philosophy with a blend of qualitative and quantitative approach. A descriptive design in a deductive reasoning approach was adopted. The study aimed at establishing the Impact of SR on firms in the long-run. It was hypothetically assumed that there is no relationship between Social Responsibility and Organizational Sustainability. A sample population of 1946 was drawn from the two companies which covered three categories of stakeholders; employees, customers and

community leaders. A sample size of 332 respondents was arrived at through Taro Yamane formula. The simple random technique was adopted in the instrument administration. Structured closed-ended questionnaire as well as interview method was adapted to source for primary data for the study. Pearson Product Moment Correlation technique was used to test the hypotheses in the study. Findings revealed that; Both network providers are not adequately involve in SR activities in the region, secondly, host communities that have benefited from the identified service providers' SR benevolence tend to demonstrate more client loyalty to the companies hence buttressing the fact that there exist a causal relationship between SR activities and corporate sustainability. The researcher recommends that: the identified companies operating in the region should be more socially responsible for sustaining economic development of the area.

Keywords: Customers, Organization, Social responsibility, Sustainability, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

The world of business today is characterized with activities aimed at endearing firms into the minds of host communities and organizations attempting to proffer solution to social problems. Firms now have the consciousness of giving back to the society in which they operate at their own capacity majorly as way of accountability. This purported conscience of businessmen has been referred by different scholars as “corporate social responsibilities, corporate societal responsibility, corporate social responsiveness, corporate social performance, corporate citizenship, business citizenship, stake holding company, business ethics, sustainable company and triple bottom line approach” (Valor 2005: Rondinelli, 2000 & Zairi & Peters, 2002). Historically, social responsibility is traceable to the year 1953 with the work of Bowen’s book which was titled social responsibilities of businessmen. At that point in time, emphasis was placed on businessmen social conscience rather than the organization itself (Valor, 2005). In the attempt of the above, there was a sort of managerial revolution and an increasing demand by the public on companies which led to some form of hostility as a result of increasing social problems; thus, demanding change on business operation (Pivato, Misani & Tencati, 2008). Moon (2007) observed that adding to the increasing shift in business operations, companies started incorporating certain policies and regulation that are environmentally friendly, thus, giving rise to the new approaches. At this point in time, it became obvious that companies have to abide by the law. However, the debate about SR intensified (Valor, 2005). Moon (2007) argued that companies merely complying with requirements of the law were no longer enough owing to the fact that SR was favored as it was believed to overcome the inefficiencies driven

from regulation. Valor (2005), opined that SR position itself as a challenge to the neo-classical business model that at that time, began becoming a paradigm. However, stakeholders in our contemporal society now incorporate ethical values in their economic decision partially and selectively. They try to do this as a way of giving back to the environment in which they acquire resources from.

Statement of the problem

As the concept of corporate social responsibility increasingly grow in organizations, it has increasingly generated some key issues of concern including financial implications, corporate objectives and core value system consideration, security etc. With the growing social crises all over the world and harsh business climate, especially in Nigeria, the question is how can businesses be effectively mobilized to achieve Social Responsibility (SR) exacerbates the aforementioned. Furthermore, the issue of stakeholders trust has also been identified as a challenge in the quest for effective SR activities in organization especially in a society like Nigeria where corruption has permeated all fabric of organizational leadership including members of benefiting communities, social responsibility drive has been hindered by so many factors which this study seek to unravel.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to determine how Social Responsibility impact on organizational sustainability. The specific objectives are:

1. To determine the impact of Social Responsibility on the sustainability of firms
2. To ascertain the impact of Social Responsibility on host community development in South-south Nigeria.
3. To investigate the effect of Social Responsibility on Youths development in South-South Nigeria.
4. To determine the influence of Social Responsibility activities on customer patronage.

Research question

The following research questions were advanced by the researcher to facilitate the understanding of the topic;

1. What is the impact of Social Responsibility on corporate firms' sustainability?
2. What the impact of Social Responsibility on host community development in South-South Nigeria

3. What are the effects of Social Responsibility on Youths development in South-South Nigeria?
4. To what extend does Social Responsibility activities influence customer patronage in South-South Nigeria?

Research hypotheses

Three (3) hypotheses were formulated by the researcher to enhance the validation of the theoretical assumption of the study. There include:

H₀₁- There is no relationship between Social Responsibility (SR) and organizational sustainability.

H₀₂- There is no relationship between Social Responsibility (SR) activities of firms operating in South-South Nigeria with the development of host communities.

H₀₃ - there is no significant relationship between Social Responsibility and Youths development in South-South Nigeria.

H₀₄- There is no relationship between Social Responsibility activities of firms operating in South-South Nigeria with customer patronage.

Significance of the study

The study is significant in the following areas: firstly, it will create more awareness on the subject matter to all readers, secondly, it will serve as a reference material for scholars interested in this area of discourse, thirdly, it will create further consciousness to contemporal organizations to be more socially responsible to their environment in which they operate. It will also serve as a policy thrust document for government at all level that will help to enhance the policy drive and legislation on Social Responsibility of Business. Finally, it will serve as an assessment tool for organizations operating in South-South Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Concept of social responsibility

The subject of Social Responsibility is so important that outstanding organizations such as, Wall-Mart, General Electric, IBM, Google, Johnson and Johnson, Intel, Nestle, Unilever, etc have all adopted it as a working policy (Adekoya, 2011). Some scholars have also attempted defining CSR on the basis of governance gap. In line with this perspective, Amaeshi, Adegbite, and Rajwani (2016) defines CSR as the formal and informal way in which businesses make contributions to improving the governance social, ethical, labour and environmental conditions

of developing countries in which they operate, while remaining sensitive to prevailing religious, historical and cultural context. CSR refers to how corporation meets social, environmental, and economic demands of their multiple stakeholders especially in their attempt of meeting the goals of sustainable development (Babalola, 2012; Kenneth, Adi, Ogbechie, Amao, & Olufemi, 2006). From the foregoing, CSR is, viewed as voluntary actions that organizations initiate beyond their compliance with legal requirements, to addressing both its own competitive interests and the interest of wider society including host communities in the form of welfare support services and palliatives (Amaeshi, Adegbite, Ogbechie, Idemudia, Kan, Issa, & Anakwue, 2016). Although, interest has been growing in recent years, the concept of SR is not really new, the idea that businesses have a social role can be traced back over a century (Amaeshi, Adi, Ogbechie, & Amao, 2006). The first modern definition of social responsibility was postulated by Bowen (1953). In his view point, business operators are responsible for the consequences of their actions in a sphere wider than that covered by their profit and loss statements (Arnold, & Valentin, 2013). Today, policy makers, companies and citizens are paying increasing attention to CRS (Babalola, 2012). The Commission for the European Communities (2001) defines Corporate Social Responsibility as a “concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis”. Thus, a business organization configuration of principle of social responsibility, processes of social responsiveness, and policies, programmes and observable outcomes as they relate to a firm’s societal relationships is referred to as CSR (Pivato, Misarri, & Tencati, 2008).

Adeyanju (2012) stated in his discussion that today SR has become an enterprise development mechanism between small enterprises and large corporations. Akinpelu, Ogunbi, Olaniran, and Ogunseye (2013), opined that RS is an obligation that all corporations owes it diverse stakeholders in their respective business environment. Many scholars in the world of business have attempted in defining Social Responsibility (SR), for instance, Mordi, Opeyemi, Tonbara, and Ojo, (2012) “defines SR from legitimacy view points as corporation’s moral obligation to the society carried out for the purpose of promoting societal values and peaceful relation in the operating environment. Social Responsibility activities in Nigeria began from the acts of Multinational Organizations (MNCs) tasks in the extraction divisions of the Nigerian economy, particularly in the oil sector. Their activities in networks came about in SR breaks, for example, oil spillage, gas flaring, militancy/ network tumults and dumping of harmful waste materials in streams. These activities wrecked the wellsprings of pay for the networks which are for most part cultivating and angling, prompting far reaching neediness and fomentation from

the networks. In total, these raised worries about the job of organizations in the Nigerian culture (Osemeke, Adegbit, & Adegbite, 2016).

The Need For SR In Organisations And Communities

A review of organizational performance reports and studies by external observers shows that a complex mix of forces drive Multinational Corporations to practice good Corporate Citizenship (Rondinelli & Berry, 2000). Subsequently, SR activities in Nigeria have not been vital, in a way which gives an exhaustive commitment of organizations in the public eye and country building, however, SR have been socially situated, mirroring the religion, ethnicity, conventions and collective way of life of the individuals which includes sharing, fellowship and agreement. All things considered SR activities in Nigeria have been for the most part optional and magnanimous, described by gifts, foundations and network improvements. Most corporate elements, for example, MNC and money related foundations are paying attention to SR activities. Some have SR offices and distribute their natural/SR reports notwithstanding their yearly reports. Their SR activities include generally sponsorship in sports, beautification of streets, giving gifts and undertaking executions. A portion of these undertakings incorporate the arrangement of borehole water, youth strengthening, schools and human services habitats for the networks (Osemeke, Adegbit, & Adegbite, 2016; Bolanle, Olanrewaju, & Muyideen, 2012).

It has also become imperative in today's complex world of business for firms to stay competitive. Thus, to stay competitive in the global market place, Multinational Corporation have developed strong supply claims which serve the need of the company as well as meet the needs of their customers in attempt to be socially responsible (Choi, Feng, Liu, & Zhu, 2019). Rondinelli and Berry (2000) emphasized that, many multinational companies see immediate and direct business benefit from proactive environmental management in the form of lower costs, less risks and liabilities, and more efficient operations when firms are more socially responsible. Many companies also receive long-term returns from promoting sustainable development including stronger competitive advantages, preservation of crucial resources and raw materials, favourable corporate image, and opportunity for new product development, when they are promoted in a socially responsible manner (Dartey-Baah, & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2011; Dejan, Hassan, Siraj, & Turunen-Red (2019). Dusuki, and Yusuf (2008) observed that socially responsible multinational companies who practice CSR activities leads to stronger sales and customers loyalty, increased productivity and quality, an enhanced ability to attract and retain employees and some in some cases to reduce regulatory oversight or more favourable treatment by regulatory agencies (Ite, 2004).

Innocent, Olakunle and Ogunjirin (2015), asserted that, multinational corporations now focus on sustainable development as an objective of environmental citizenship through the following objectives;

- **Philanthropic support for environmental activities;** they do this through;
 - a. Developing and preserving wildlife habitats, on or near their facilities.
 - b. Creating artificial or manmade natural resources such as reefs, wetlands, and lakes
 - c. Promoting and preserving bio- diversity in areas in which they operate
 - d. Providing financial support for board environmental and natural resource programmes not immediately related to their operations.
 - e. Offering financial assistance to national and international environmental interest groups promoting sustainable development, scholarship programmes for indigenes of host communities etc.
 - f. Undertaking voluntary remediation of natural resources degraded by other operations or those of their corporation.

- **Internal-oriented Social Responsibility Practices:** They achieve this through;
 - a. Internal management of materials, products, and processes that have potentially negative environmental impacts and reduce efficiency in their operations.
 - b. Also because of their fear of legal liability, many multinational companies now realize that productive environmental management can be good business leading to more efficient cost-effective and profitable results.
 - c. Through enhanced regulatory compliance to reduce the corporations' negative environmental impacts of hazardous emission in communities in which they are located.
 - d. Adoption of pollution prevention and clean manufacturing practices that prevent pollution before it occurs.
 - e. Material reduction, recycling and re-use.
 - f. Resources conservation. And,
 - g. Through redesign of products and processes to achieve more beneficial environmental impacts for customers and communities.

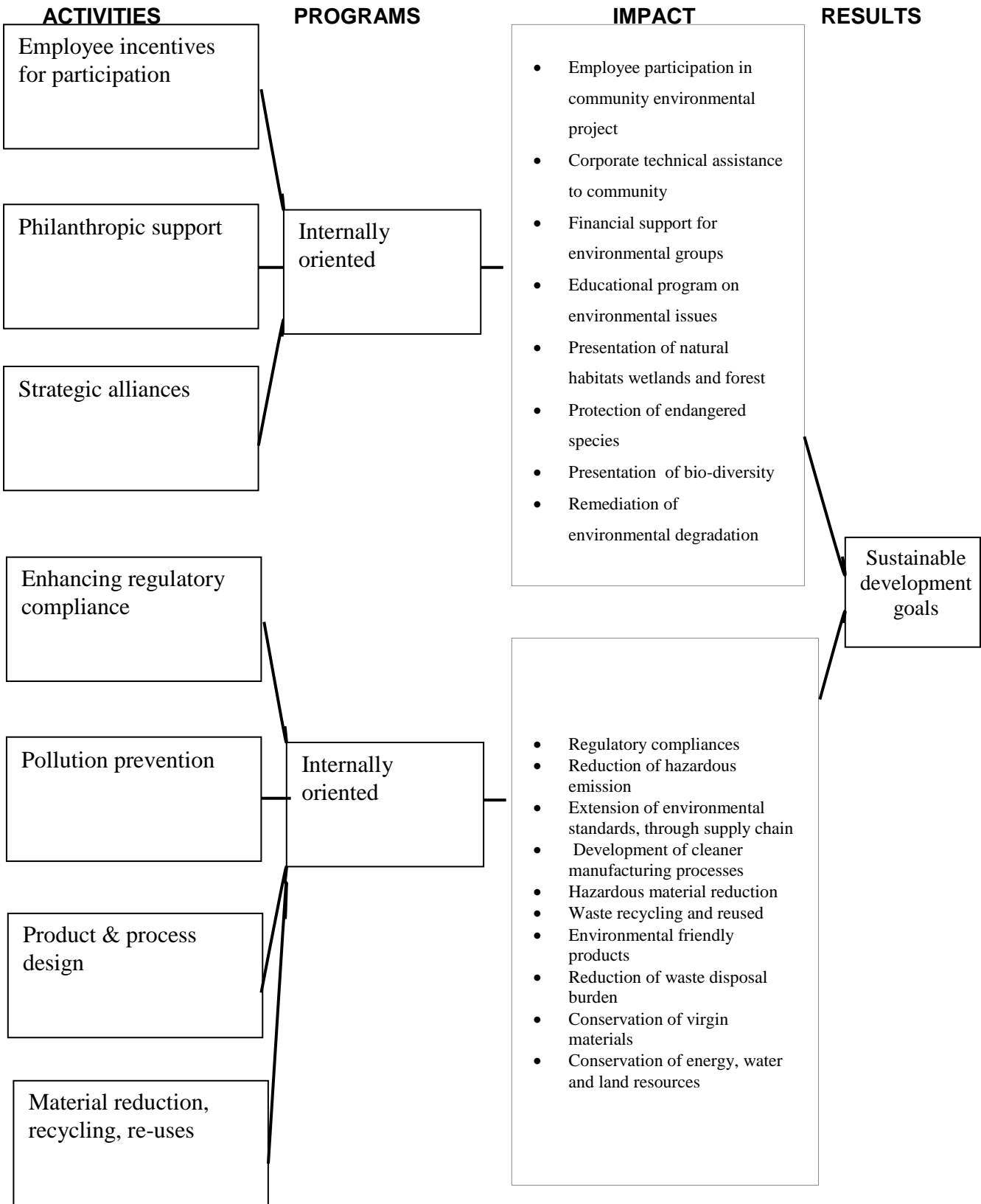


Figure 1. Practical model for Corporate Social Responsibility and sustainable development adapted from Rondinelli and Berry, (2000).

Drivers Of Social Responsibility (SR)

From the foregone section of the study, it is an affirmative that organizations now consider SR practices as part of their operation practices. It is relevant to wonder that factor could have been behind accelerated determinant for the growing interest in CSR activities all over the world. Moon (2007) advocated that Scholars all over the world have identified the following factors to be significant determinant of SR;

1. Market drivers

Vogel (2005), advanced that a number of market drivers have merged that contributed to the growth of SR. There include; customers, employees, investors, business supplier, and consumers. The mentioned factors impact on companies differentially. Today, there are new consumers demand for socially responsible products, and services which have been evidence on their spending habits. Employees today are also considered as important drivers as employers now have the consciousness that employees are only attracted to firms with goodwill reputation. Some employees are keen to work in companies that ensure life balance (Moon, 2007). For those considering investment options, companies that are socially responsible attracts investors with mainstream investment fund from stock exchange base on risk and governance factor which many companies address in SR terms (Moon, 2007). Egbon, Idemudia, and Amaeshi (2018) argued that, many organizations sees CSR as part and parcel of their competitive edge, this imposes pressure on their competitors to match their SR investments. Furthermore, through responsible supply claims and audit system, small and medium sized companies and those global supply claims, business customers, especially those in the branded retail markets are imposing SR. to gain wider niche markets (Fadun, 2014).

2. Social drivers

With the growing trend in NGO pressures, media attention, general social expectations and business associations/coalition, companies are increasing striving to be socially responsible in order to be more widely acceptable by their customers, employees and investors (Garriga, &Melé, 2004). Contemporarily, the media has always acted responsively to companies' actions by publishing stories and articles about social irresponsibility often through an implicit partnership with some notable NGO (Goleva, 2019).

3. Globalization drivers

Today globalization is often regarded as an opportunity for business exploitation of under-developed labour market, social standard and guardianship of natural resources (Moon, 2007). Globalization also raises new imperative for business legitimacy across borders. This has informal numerous new sorts of business behavior to manage and report CSR. Distinctively, companies are developing corporate codes to enable them better articulate and embed their SR

across various countries of their operations and across their supply chains (Babalola, 2012). International organization such as the UN Global compact and International Business Leaders Forum agree to the need of global SR activities by multinational companies. This has been contained in several reports (Dejan, Hassan, Siraj, & Turunen-Red, 2019).

4. Governmental drivers

All over the world, various governments are demonstrating maximum interest in encouraging social responsibility (SR) (Hamidu, Haron & Amran, 2018). The United Kingdom (UK) for instance in this respect is playing a leading role by having a Minister for CSR and variety of policies and initiatives are been put in place to coax corporations to be more socially responsible (Hawes, & Young (2019). In different world submits, leaders of several governments have been encouraging business leaders to address the issues of unemployment, urban decay and other notable social issues (Fadun, 2014). Significantly, some governments now make provision for organizational support and facilities for corporate social responsibility (SR). They achieve this through funding research, stakeholder discussions, mobilization and coordination of SR Academy, designed to spread SR skills and competencies among companies, more explicit partnerships such as the Ethical Trade Initiative, trade unions developing labour standards (Goleva, 2019). Governments have also introduced “soft regulations” to encourage more responsible business. This has been demonstrated through establishment of Acts that ensures social environmental and ethical practices by organizations (Hamidu, Haron & Amran (2018).

Strategic Options Corporations Become Socially Responsible

It is worthwhile providing, by way of summary, the various activities, programmes and projects which an organization can undertake to earn the title of a socially responsible company. These projects and programmes may include the following:

- (1) Constructing roads and bridges, and building public schools in towns and various communities.
- (2) On the part of companies, providing employee welfare through giving them good pay, other fringe benefits including housing and medical facilities.
- (3) Providing parks, garages, recreation centre for public use.
- (4) Providing health-care facilities and making effort to protect the environment
- (5) Funding research projects and encouraging the endowment of professional chairs in the universities
- (6) Sponsoring sporting activities nationally and internationally
- (7) Contributing to welfare and security in communities, villages and towns

(8) Doing something to stem the tide of social ills, such as, armed robbery, prostitution, kidnapping, drug-pushing, ritual killing, etc. (Peddada, & Adam, 2019)

Role Of SR In Company And Community Development

Socially responsible companies contribute to community development in the following areas:

1. To share the negative consequences as a result of industrialization.
2. Closer ties between corporations and community.
3. Helping to get talents.
4. Role in transfer of technology (TOT).
5. SR helps to protect environment.
6. SR is for human right corporate sustainability
7. Interdependency between a corporation and community
8. A SR program can be seen as an aid to poverty alleviation.
9. A SR program helps in data gathering for other public organization function.

Challenges Of Social Responsibility In Nigeria

Businesses are constantly being accused of making huge profits; damaging the local environments and exhibiting gross indifference to the plight of their host communities and society at large this have put them constantly under internal and external pressures to fulfill broader social goals (Peddada, & Adam, 2019: Pepple, 2019: Potluri, & Raime, 2018). In accessing the performance of Corporate Social Responsibility a lot of emphasis has been on comparing what corporations take from society against what they give without considering whether they have the capacity to give more than what they gave (Pepple, 2019). The huge resources at the disposal of business, have given the wrong impression and has made society see Business as having unlimited ability to use Corporate Social Responsibility as a vehicle for development but reality on ground suggest otherwise. For business to carry out the task of SR efficiently both economic (including the general financial condition of the firm, the health of the economy) and institutional factors (public and private regulations, the presence of non-governmental and other independent organizations that monitor corporate behaviour, institutionalized norms regarding appropriate corporate behaviour, and organized dialogues among corporations and their stakeholders) must be in place, (Pepple, 2019) these factors are missing.

The attempt to push business to attend to other issues even when attending to such other issues enhances the prospect of profitability is suicidal due to the absence of two

important planks – Economic and Institutional factors. Business engagement in solving social problems increases social overhead costs and these costs cannot be borne out of profit but out of capital which will lead to fewer and poorer jobs and impaired standard of living (Pepple, 2019). The economic environment is not conducive for business. Double taxation, increased production cost, increased stock, poor purchasing power etc makes business survival difficult. In spite of these challenges the demand for business to engage in SR is increasing. As a popular pun says; “it is not enough for business to do well; it must also do good.” but in order to “do good” a business must first “do well” (and indeed “do very well”) (Pepple, 2019). Social Responsibility as a voluntary activity constitutes a challenge to its implementation. The non-regulation makes it clumsy. There is no boundary as to what can be asked from an organisation or a limit to what an organisation can give. Businesses are left at the mercy of their host communities in particular and the society in general. The efficiency of SR is hampered by this open-ended approach. Businesses have folded because of much demand on them by the society in the name of SR. The present situation does not allow business to plan; in most cases they are forced into signing MOUs they know they can't keep in other to have “peace” Ambiguity in the meaning of SR is another problem. Is SR what an organisation does to promote its business interest directly or what it does that may promote its interest but was not intended originally? This is the ambiguity question (Peddada, & Adam, 2019: Pepple, 2019: Potluri, & Raime, 2018).

It is even more difficult to understand when one realizes that every act of a corporate body is in the long run directly beneficial to the business. When an organisation builds a road that leads to its business location as it is common with SHELL, is that SR? To the company, it has constructed a road that is beneficial to the community and that is SR because it is expected that members of the community will benefit from the use of the road but the community does not see it from that perspective (Peddada & Adam, 2019). When a business concern builds a health facility for its workers and allows the community access to it at no cost, the community sees that as the “company clinic” and in most cases demands a health center for the community. This “confusion” arises because while the communities believe that SR is the additional responsibilities of businesses to local and wider communities (Peddada & Adam, 2019) business believes it is any action carried out by business that impacts society positively no matter who gains more. Another major challenge to the implementation of SR is community entitlement mentality. Most communities believe that SR in whatever form they conceive it is their entitlement as such the presence of business organisation in their communities especially multinational companies (MNC) is an opportunity to get all they want even if it is through extortion and blackmail.. This sense of entitlement has led to communities demanding the

possible and impossible from business. This has made it difficult for business especially multinational companies to satisfy most of its host communities through SR. It is not uncommon to hear host communities say 'they have not done anything for us'. This assertion in most cases is made against the facts available. Another important challenge facing business in the implementation of SR is funds. As pointed out by Peddada and Adam (2019), the financial capability of a firm determines its ability to carry out SR. The reverse is the case in Nigeria where financial capability is not taken into consideration. It only requires the presence of the firm. The wrong notion being carried along is that every firm is financially capable to engage in SR unless it closes shop. The demands of stakeholders on business are growing by the day while the resources to meet these demands are dwindling. It is no longer news that SR projects have joined the list of abandoned projects in Nigeria. This is because most organizations' agree to carryout projects they know are beyond their financial capacity in order to have the license to operate (Potluri & Raime, 2018).

Airtel And MTN Social Responsibility Initiatives

Airtel has a vision of becoming Nigeria's most loved brand, Airtel concept for Social Responsibility is not limited to conventional SR programmes, but the company aim at positioning itself as an integral part of society hence being socially responsible. Like every other company operating in Nigeria, Airtel in their operational dealings, they maintain high ethical standards, and compliance with rules and regulation in its methods and practices of doing business. Across the nation, Airtel is in strong partnership with Government at all level in the provision of educational facilities for the less privilege children. This initiative is in partnership with the Ministry of education in building and maintaining schools across the country through provision of academic facilities including books, desks and infrastructures for Airtel host communities. Across the six geopolitical zones, Airtel has practicalized 'the adopt a school programme'. In south-south region for example, Airtel built and renovated class room blocks at Ediba Presbyterian Primary School in Abi Local Government Area of Cross River State. Also, in Amumara, a community in Mbaise, Imo State, they also constructed class room blocks just to mention few. Airtel has maintained a robust capacity building programme for hundreds of primary schools teachers to ensure quality education delivery and has invested millions in multi-million naira renovation projects and donations. Other Airtel SR initiative which the South South region has been benefiting include: Airtel Touching lives initiative, Employees Volunteer Scheme, ARS (Airtel Rising Stars) – Goals for Education, Airtel Christmas Charity Campaign, tagged 'Five Days OF love', Partnership with the Police Programme and Adopt-a-school Programme earlier mentioned. With particular reference to the Christmas Charity Campaign,

Airtel visited various orphanage homes across the country including the South-South region, donated relieve materials to IDP camps with food stuffs, electronic gadgets, clothing etc. 'Airtel Touching Lives is an inspiring corporate social responsibility initiative that seeks to offer practical relief, hope, opportunities and credible platforms to liberate and empower the underprivileged, disadvantaged and hard to reach persons in our society'.

Similarly, MTN Nigeria PLC, a Multinational Telecom provider has also been involved in SR drive. Recently, the company declared to have transformed a total of 510 communities in about 454 local government areas of the country which include numerous host communities in the South-South. In specific term, the MTN Foundation has facilitated the provision of School Learning materials in Ajakurama Community of Ovia South West Local Government Area in Edo State, a Health Centre in Okochiri community of Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State. This Health Centre received health equipment and supplies worth millions of naira. In the same vein, Umuchieze community in AhiazuMbaise of Imo State recently benefited Solar Powered Borehole. Many communities in Akwa Ibom, Abia, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Rivers etc, had witnessed the nomination of their citizens in various prestigious Awards all targeted at giving back to host communities as SR initiatives. For instance, MTN Foundation has continued to implement feasible sustainable social programmes that are beneficial to Nigerian society. Their SR agenda covers: Health, Education, Economic Empowerments – Small Scale Business Start-ups, Skill Acquisition training programmes, Adhoc projects, Mobile clinics, Youth empowerments, MTN disability programmes, and Entertainment projects which the South South region are beneficiaries.

Theoretical Review

A number of theories apply to the SR discourse such as the utilitarian theory, managerial theory, rationality theory, and the stakeholders' theory. The anchor theory of the study is the stakeholder theory, the theory was considered suitable because, it attempts to evaluate the various needs of all stakeholders in business which is the core theme in Social Responsibility study.

Stakeholders theory

The first person to define stakeholder theory was organizational theorist Ian Mitroff in his book Stakeholders of the Organizational Mind, which came out in 1983. Shortly thereafter, an article about stakeholder theory was released in 1983 in the California Management Review by philosopher and professor of business administration R. Edward Freeman. Freeman doesn't cite Mitroff as a source, rather he attributes stakeholder theory to discussions at the Stanford

Research Institute. He went on to publish his own book, *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, shortly after the article. In Freeman's book, he identifies and models stakeholder groups within a corporation, describing and recommending ways to manage their interests and determine who really counts from the perspective of the company. Increasing value for stakeholders will improve the business in all aspects. But stakeholder theory notes that there are several interested parties that must be included under the umbrella of stakeholder, such as the company's employees, customers, suppliers, financiers, communities, governmental bodies, political groups, trade associations, trade unions and even competitors, as they too can impact the company. The list of who the stakeholders are is not universally agreed upon, and even the definition of a stakeholder remains contested by some. Even the academic literature is in conflict. There are many books and articles on the subject and most cite Freeman as its father. Freeman says he stood on the shoulders of giants, such as building from research in strategic management, corporate planning, systems theory, organization theory and corporate social responsibility, the latter of which was first discussed by the Italian economist Giancarlo Pallavicini in an article published in 1968. More recently, in 1995, ethicist Thomas Donaldson has argued that stakeholder theory has descriptive, instrumental and normative aspects that are mutually supportive. Descriptive is used in research to identify and define characteristics and behaviors of companies and how they're managed. Instrumental uses empirical data to find connections between management of stakeholders and reaching corporate goals. Normative is a core theory on the function of the corporation and how it can morally carry out its processes, ensuring that management sticks to positive philosophical guidelines.

Empirical Review

This section of the study gives a review of the empirical work of some notable scheme in the area of discourse.

Pepple (2019) investigated corporate social responsibility in Nigeria: The challenges of implementation. His work was practically focused on the issues that negate the efficient implementation of SR in Nigeria. He argued that when stakeholders are carried along, organizations achieve sustainability. He posited that the challenges of SR include; entitlement mentality by host communities, lack of boundary for operation etc. He suggested that for active state intervention in the practice of SR through the establishment of efficient and open or transparent negotiation procedures and mechanism for disagreement resolution with a descent threshold for participations. Jeremiah (2018) conducted a study titled; corporate social responsibility contribution to environmental sustainability in developing countries. This study was conducted in Nigeria. The accountability perspective thought it was a conceptual

investigation, he discovered that corporate social responsibility enhances response of corporation to environmental issues, he also argued that the damages associated with industrial pollution is reduced when firms adopt accountability perspective of corporate social responsibility. Again, Innocent Olakunle and Ogunjirin (2015) conducted their investigations on Social Responsibility and Entrepreneurship (SRE): antidotes to poverty insecurity and underdevelopment in Nigeria. The paper adopted the qualitative research method replying on the use of secondary data published by institutional bodies using econometrics, their findings indicated that a negative relationship between gross domestic product and poverty. They concluded that there is a significant relationship between positive relationship between gross domestic product and SR. Iyaya (2014) investigated into “the challenges of Social Responsibility in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria”. He argued that in the Niger Delta Region there exist a variance between practice and implementation of the components of SR. He also accused the government of Nigeria to have failed in their enforcement responsibility. He suggested that government should pass legislations that will promote the interest of government in the region by corporations operating in the region.

Orlitzky, Siegel and Waldman (2011) also demonstrated their interest on the discourse. In their research titled; Strategic Social Responsibility and Environmental Sustainability, with theoretical approaches to strategic Social responsibility conducted in United States of America, they concluded that, economic theories of strategic SR has the greatest potentials for advancing this field of inquiry. The qualitative perspective further affirmed the need for corporate social responsibility activities of corporations in recent time. Similarly, Pivato, misani and Tencati (2008) investigated on the Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Consumers Trust; the case of Organic Food conducted in the United Kingdom (UK), using the survey design; they hypothesized that the first result of SR activities is the creation of trust among stakeholders. Their empirical analysis on consumer of organic products provided support for their hypothesis. Showing that SR influence consumers trust and that, that trust in turn, influence consumers action. They concluded that, the more a company is committed to developing abroad policy, and the more it is able to communicate this to stakeholders, the more customers reward its concrete actions through specific behaviours. In another hand, Moon (2007) in his work titled; the Contribution of Corporate Social Responsibility to Sustainable Development conducted in the United Kingdom (UK). He used the hart’s A natural –resource based view of the firm. The popper compared SR with sustainable development. He identified new drivers of SR to include; market drivers; social drivers; government drivers; and globalization as a driver of SR. He concluded that, the recent surge of interest in SR is explained by both the increasing

socialization of markets and changing imperatives of national and global governance. He further opined that many businesses are less concerned about their reputations.

Morsing and Schultz (2006) also conducted a study on the discourse titled; Corporate Social Responsibility Communication: Stakeholder Information, Response and Involvement Strategies with an approach on stakeholders expectation, conducted in Denmark, the review used a case study strategy where they considered SAS group annual report and sustainability report, KMD strategy report 2004, novezymes annual integrated report 2004, etc. They discovered that in line with the development of stakeholder's theories, they contended that stakeholder's involvement become increasingly more important for ensuring that a company stays in tune with concurrently stakeholder's expectations. They summarized that, managers need to improve on their corporate stakeholders information strategy to keep their general public better informed about SR initiatives to achieve legitimacy, and good reputation. Furthermore, Valor (2005) also conducted a study on Social Responsibility and Corporate Citizenship towards Corporate Accountability, conducted in the United Kingdom (UK). Using a descriptive survey method, he discovered that companies will only incorporate social and environmental objectives in their agenda when economic agents show that they also seek the values by incorporating them into their economic decision. He concluded that stakeholders have incorporated ethical values in their economic decision only.

Partially and selectively, this he further stressed that when stakeholders makes it clear for companies to incorporate social and environmental ethics in their business operations, managers finds it difficult and relevant to sacrifice profits in favor of common good.

In the same vein, Zairi and Peters (2002) conducted a study titled; the Important of Social Responsibility on Business Performance, Managerial Audit. Their focus was royal mail of England they applied simple percentage and frequency of support for community based activities processes. They discovered that, it was evidently clear that social responsibility consciousness pays off in the long run and that there is a direct link with" bottom-line results". They concluded that social responsibility depends on some significant internal and external factors associated with the need to direct economic benefits and various efficiencies. Rondinelli (2000) conducted a study on the environmental citizenship in multinational corporation social responsibility and sustainable development in the United Kingdom (UK). They adopted a survey design where they conducted a study of 23 multinational companies and their involvement in corporate citizenship and social responsibility activities /practices, they discovered that the sample of the multinational companies (MNC's) reviewed showed that they directly identify corporate environmental citizenship with stakeholder environmental interest groups, and communities to address important environmental problem.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher adopted an interpretivist research philosophy, with a blend of both quantitative and qualitative deductive reasoning strategy owing to the fact that the study is content specific and the researcher draws his conclusion from a combination of arguments presented by different scholars based on the discourse.

The study also adopted a descriptive research design with a survey strategy, covering two (2) major selected companies in the communication sector (MTN and Airtel) in Nigeria.

In attempt to establish the causal relationship between corporate social responsibility and organizational sustainability, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Techniques was adopted by the researcher to test the hypotheses in the study. Closed ended questionnaire was adopted as instrument for gathering Primary data from three sets of respondent groups which include; customers of the two network providers, community leaders and workers of the two selected networks who are also part of the stakeholder's forum of the study. The questionnaire was designed on a five likert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Agree). Secondary data were sourced from; business review reports on the subject, online archives, textbooks gathered from domestic libraries, scholars' literatures from online journals publications etc. furthermore, the researcher also adopted an interview method alongside a well structural closed-ended questionnaire instrument in gathering primary data for the study.

The sample population adopted from the two (2) network from the identified stakeholders were; 1106 and 840 respectively. Thus, the sample size for the study is 332 respondents which were arrived at through the application of Taro Yamani formula as shown below;

$$\begin{array}{rcl} \text{MTN} & = & 1106 \\ \text{AIRTEL} & = & \underline{840} \\ & & \underline{1946} \end{array}$$

$$\text{Thus; } n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1946}{1+1946(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1946}{1+1946(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{1946}{1+4.865}$$

$$n = \frac{1946}{5.865} = 331.79 \triangleq 332 \text{ respondents}$$

The simple random sampling technique was adopted in the administration of the study instrument.

The three hypotheses formulated in the study will be tested in the section using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient technique. Statements in the research

instrument associated with the hypotheses will be used to test the statistical validity of the hypothetical assumptions.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Testing Hypothesis One

Ho₁ – there is no responsibility between corporate social responsibility and organizational sustainability.

From the research instrument, statement number two (2), five (5) and statement number ten (10) used to test that stated hypothesis.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient formula =

$$r = \frac{n \sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{(\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2/n) (\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2/n)}}$$

The x and y variables are derived from the gathered respondent rate of respondents of the study where x variable represents the scale of strongly agreed (SA), and agreed (A), and y variables represents strongly disagreed (SD) and disagreed (D).

Thus, X = (SA, A)

Y = (SD, D)

Table 1. Contingency Table For Hypothesis One

| X | Y | XY | X ² | Y ² |
|----------------|------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| 68 | 46 | 3,128 | 4,624 | 2,116 |
| 102 | 112 | 11,424 | 10,404 | 12,544 |
| 162 | 24 | 3,888 | 324 | 576 |
| 96 | 46 | 4,416 | 26,244 | 2,116 |
| 120 | 46 | 5,520 | 14,400 | 2,116 |
| 92 | 70 | 6,440 | 8,464 | 4,900 |
| ∑ = 640 | 344 | 34,816 | 64,460 | 24,368 |

Where, n = 6, ∑ x = 640, ∑ y = 344, ∑ xy = 34,816, ∑ x² = 64,460, and ∑ y² = 24,368.

Therefore,

$$r = \frac{n \sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{(\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2/n) (\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2/n)}}$$

$$r = \frac{6(34,816) - (640)(344)}{\sqrt{6(64,460) - (640)^2} \sqrt{6(24,368) - (344)^2}}$$

$$r = \frac{6(34,816) - 220,160}{\sqrt{386,760 - 409,600} \sqrt{146,208 - 118,336}}$$

$$r = \frac{208,896 - 220,160}{\sqrt{(-22,840)(27,872)}}$$

$$r = \frac{-11,264}{\sqrt{-636,596,480}}$$

$$r = \frac{-11,264}{-25,230.86}$$

$$r = \frac{-11,264}{-25230.86}$$

$$r = 0.446437$$

$$r = 0.45$$

Thus, there exist a weak positive correlation between corporate social responsibility (CSR) of firms and firm sustainability

Testing Hypothesis Two

H₀₂- There is no relationship between Social Responsibility (SR) activities of firms operating in South-South Nigeria with the development of host communities.

From the research instruments statement number three (3), seven (7), and eight (8) are used to test the validity of the assumption of the hypothesis. The variables (x & y) remain as stated in the earlier scale. (SA, A, & SD, D respectively).

Table 4. Contingency Table For Hypothesis Two

| X | Y | XY | X ² | Y ² |
|--------------|-----|-------|----------------|----------------|
| 142 | 38 | 5396 | 20164 | 1444 |
| 82 | 66 | 5412 | 6724 | 4356 |
| 50 | 126 | 6300 | 2500 | 15876 |
| 28 | 124 | 3472 | 784 | 15376 |
| 102 | 58 | 5916 | 10404 | 3364 |
| 86 | 82 | 7052 | 7396 | 6724 |
| Σ 490 | 494 | 33548 | 47972 | 47140 |

Where $n = 6$, $\Sigma x = 490$, $\Sigma y = 494$, $\Sigma xy = 33548$, $\Sigma x^2 = 47,972$, $\Sigma y^2 = 47,140$

$$\text{Thus } r = \frac{n \Sigma xy - \Sigma x \Sigma y}{\sqrt{(\Sigma x^2 - (\Sigma x)^2) \sqrt{n \Sigma y^2 - (\Sigma y)^2}}}$$

$$r = \frac{6(33548) - (490)(494)}{\sqrt{6(47,972) - (490)^2} \sqrt{6(47,140) - (494)^2}}$$

$$r = \frac{201,288 - 242,060}{\sqrt{287,832 - 240,100} \sqrt{283,840 - 244,036}}$$

$$r = \frac{-40,772}{\sqrt{(47,732)(38,804)}}$$

$$r = \frac{-40,772}{\sqrt{1,852,192,528}}$$

$$r = \frac{-40,772}{43,037.11}$$

$$r = -0.95$$

Therefore, there is a weak negative correlation between Social Responsibility activities of firms operating in South-South Nigeria with the development of host communities. This implies that companies operating in the area need to do more to enhance the socioeconomic development of communities in the area.

Testing Hypothesis Three

H₀₃ – there is no significant relationship between Social Responsibility and Youths development in South-South Nigeria.

Statements from the research instrument which includes; statement number, one (1), number six (6), and nine (9) are used to test the validity of the hypothetical assumption. The statistical variables are as earlier stated.

Table 3. Contingency Table For Hypothesis Three

| X | Y | XY | X ² | Y ² |
|----------------|------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| 78 | 182 | 14,196 | 6,084 | 33,124 |
| 42 | 46 | 1,932 | 1,764 | 3,116 |
| 42 | 128 | 5,376 | 1,764 | 16,384 |
| 68 | 90 | 6,120 | 4,624 | 8,100 |
| 60 | 134 | 5,040 | 3,600 | 17,956 |
| 48 | 86 | 4,128 | 2,304 | 7,396 |
| 84 | 58 | 4,872 | 7,056 | 3,364 |
| 120 | 100 | 12,000 | 14,400 | 10,000 |
| Σ = 542 | 824 | 56,664 | 41596 | 98440 |

Where, $n = 8$, $\sum x = 542$, $\sum y = 824$, $\sum xy = 56,664$, $\sum x^2 = 41,596$, $\sum y^2 = 98,440$

$$\text{Hence, } r = \frac{n \sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{n(\sum x^2) - (\sum x)^2} \sqrt{n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2}}$$

$$r = \frac{8(56,664) - (542)(824)}{\sqrt{8(41,596) - (542)^2} \sqrt{8(98,440) - (824)^2}}$$

$$r = \frac{453,312 - 446,608}{\sqrt{(333,768 - 293,764)} \sqrt{(787,520 - 678,976)}}$$

$$r = \frac{6704}{\sqrt{(39,004)}(108,544)}$$

$$r = \frac{6404}{\sqrt{4233,650,176}}$$

$$r = \frac{6704}{65066.51}$$

$$r = 0.10$$

Therefore there exist weak positive relations between Social Responsibility and Youths development in South-South Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The analysis of the results gathered from both those interviewed and those who filled and returned the questionnaire are as follows;

Firstly, it was gathered that so many communities in the south-south region of Nigeria are yet to benefit or have a taste of Social Responsibility (SR) services by the identified companies existing in the area. Secondly, the result gathered demonstrated that indeed the customer base of the network has been influenced by some of its SR practices, but, it was obvious from the general perception of the customers and major stakeholders that the established customers based on the three networks (MTN and AIRTEL) are not absolutely attributed to their SR activities engagement alone, it was established that their customers lose its attribute to other known factor such as ; service quality, delivery, advertising, etc. in the region. Similarly, it was also deduced that the said network providers have not significantly involve in notable environmental / decomposition in host communities. According to respondents, this was attributed to their low physical involvement with ecological features, this promoting their acceptability in communities by all stakeholders.

Furthermore, it was also deduced from the information gathered that the identified service providers and other companies operating on the region have been confronted with lot of challenges negating their personal implementation of SR programs in the region judging from the perspective of government and its various agents interest, communities representative interest, Corruption in all strata, etc. Again, it was established in the course of the empirical study that the relationship between communities that have benefited in SR programmes network providers, have strengthen their ties with the companies which has been demonstrated in continuous patronages, referrals, etc. which has positively impacted on the service providers in terms of sales and profitability index.

On account of implementation strategy, it was ascertained that they have been poor implementation of SR policies by the companies' kin the region. Respondents perceived that this could be attributed to poor monitoring and evaluation criteria established by the companies, some argued that the SR practical processes fail because the organization tend to adopt a

holistic approach in the area instead of applying contingent approach owing to particular environmental factor in the region. Some respondents posited that the implementation processes of the companies are heavily politicized by the field agent which has hampered their full delivery in the region. The result gathered also clearly, emphasizes the poor role government and its agents played in SR drive. It was deduced that, the government at all level in the area have failed in the enforcement drive of SR policies framework of companies. Some respondents emphasizes that some government agents indulge in fraudulent and sharp practices for their own selfish aggrandizement , betraying the interest of government and the social benefits accruable to host communities. The study also clearly revealed that environmental protection agencies, and other non-governmental organization (NGO's) have significantly influenced the mobilization of SR activities in the region particularly from oil producing companies it was observed that, environmental protection agencies and their NGO counter parts have achieved very little in terms of SR drive with the network providers judging from their minimal physical involvement in ecological features of the environment, but, some respondents reacted that, in recent times, there are significant protest organized by some NGO against the radiation effect on lives of clients where network masts and antenna are located. The study also revealed that the SR practices of the companies in focus have sparely contributed in curbing youth restiveness in the region, this was attributed to the fact that so many communities were yet to benefit from the companies benevolence. In general, notable companies in the area have not also contributed significantly enough to help in ameliorating youths restiveness in the area , the growing unemployment in the region has wasted youth involvement in unscrupulous activities which has perpetually threaten social co-existence especially on foreign investors. Lastly, it was gathered that on the premises of the UN sustainable development goals (SDG's) drive, the selected companies have been actively involved in ensuring that they are reliable partners of the UN global targets. Staff interviewed reviewed that their companies are doing everything humanly possible to conduct business ethically not just in the region but across the nations of the earth in which there business are located.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

It is concluded that SR is about business, government and civil society collaboration. The bottom line is the achievement of win-win situation among the three entities. From the social point of view, SR should benefit community because the latter has a very complex structure as it consists of individuals with various levels of control of resources physically and intangibly. Therefore, SR necessitates a multidisciplinary approach in its perspective and practice. Experience has made one thing certain that sustainable SR solutions at community,

provincial and national levels are based on partnerships between government, civil society and business. It is also concluded that skills needed by SR managers do vary due to the diverse disciplines involved and also the complexity of the roles and responsibilities of a SR initiative.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The government and its agents at all level should be more pragmatic in their approach to SR delivery in host communities. In Nigeria, mechanism should be put in place to check corrupt practices and ensure proper accountability and monitoring of personnel involve as community liaison officers between government, host communities and multinational companies.
2. Companies operating in communities especially in the Niger Delta region should be more committed in their social service delivery and community development services that will continue to impact on the local citizens as well as improve the economic development of the region.
3. Host community should ensure that they continue to provide enabling environment for Multinational Companies. This will encourage investors and ensure the security of established corporations. The leadership of host communities must address the issue of sharp practices in representing their communities in SR negotiations with operating companies in their areas. They should also continue in community youth mobilization and orientations against social vices such as militancy, kidnapping, etc.

AREA FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Scholars across the globe are to investigate the subject matter in consideration of other gray areas such as Social Responsibility and cultural diversity, Social Responsibility and gender variation, Social Responsibility and Security in host community.

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