

Participation of Indigenous Construction Companies in Corporate Social Responsibilities for Economic Development

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Abstract

The study assesses the participation of indigenous construction companies in fulfilling Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Kaduna State, Nigeria. That was achieved through the examination of the level of awareness of indigenous construction companies on Corporate Social Responsibility, evaluation of the degree of participation of indigenous companies in Corporate Social Responsibility activities and the examination of their input in the provision of social infrastructural facilities within their area of operations. Secondary data were obtained through the review of relevant literature on the subject area and primary data were obtained through questionnaire survey. Out of the 100 questionnaires administered to construction companies' staff and members of host communities, 75 were filled and returned representing 75% of valid response rate. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive tool with the help of Software Package for Social Science (SPSS). The results obtained reveal that most indigenous construction companies are aware and engaged in Corporate Social Responsibility. Furthermore, result also reveals that some category of companies surveyed in this study view Corporate Social Responsibility as voluntary while the other category of companies consider it as mandatory. The study also found that companies surveyed pay more attention in discharging the legally required Social Responsibility activities. The study concludes that all construction companies regardless of their size, geopolitical coverage and equal level of participation should consider social responsibility as an essential tool for healthy business and not a bottleneck to success. Lastly, companies should contribute their own quota for the betterment of the community and the society at large.

Keywords: *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Concept of CSR, CSR Initiatives, Policy for Social Responsibility*

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Background to the Study

The main "responsibility" of corporations within the world of business has been to make money and increase shareholders value. However, a recent development of being responsible for the environment and local communities, working conditions and ethical practices known as corporate social responsibility (CSR) has emerged. The beginning of modern Corporate Social Responsibility can be traced back to the 1920s. The concept rose into the public domain during the mid-20th century and has gained increasing attention over the past two decades.

There is a growing recognition of the impact corporations have on employees, customers, communities, the environment, competitors, business partners, investors, shareholders, government and others. It has become clear that firms contribute to their own wealth in the long run and to overall societal wealth by consistently considering the effect they have on the world at large

The European Commission defined CSR as "a concept whereby companies decide voluntarily to contribute to a better society and a cleaner environment. It is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis". Ijaiya (2012) also defines CSR as "the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large

Construction industry has been able to offer a wide range of significant benefits to human development, it is also often viewed as an industry which is dangerous, environmentally damaging and one that can impact negatively on communities. These are all impacts which are notable aspects of CSR and understanding them more clearly could help the industry to reduce its negative impacts and provide even greater benefits to future development (Brown, 2012). Indigenous companies' participation in Corporate Social Responsibility is low if not non-existent in the construction industry. Communities where the indigenous companies are located are most affected by their activities. Companies need to look beyond alleviating the problems caused by their activities. Construction companies have to learn to merge profit making with corporate social responsibility, corporate organizations could be responsible for what the society is interested in.

Challenges of Corporate Social Responsibility

CSR initiatives face many challenges and are often seen as deterrent to even the best-intentioned plans. According to Nadaf (2013) the challenges of CSR are lack of community participation in Corporate Social Responsibility, need to build local capacities, issues of transparency, non availability of well organized non-governmental organization, visibility factors, narrow perception towards corporate social responsibility, non availability of clear corporate social responsibility guidelines, lack of consensus on implementing corporate social responsibility issues. In furtherance, it has been observed that there is lack of awareness of CSR which in turn affect participation of indigenous construction companies. In that regards, assessing the awareness and participation of indigenous construction companies will help in determining their understanding on CSR and input in the provision of social infrastructural facilities.

Objectives of the Study

To this end, this study aims to assess the participation of indigenous construction companies in carrying out corporate social responsibility (CSR). It examined the level of awareness of indigenous construction companies on CSR, evaluates the degree of participation of these companies in CSR activities and examined their input in the provision of social infrastructural facilities within their area of operation.

Research Questions

- (i) What is the level of awareness of indigenous Construction State in Kaduna State?
- (ii) What is the degree of participation of the indigenous construction companies in Kaduna State?
- (iii) What is the input of indigenous construction companies in the provision of social infrastructural facilities in Kaduna State?

Literature Review

Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) refers to a business practice that involves participating in initiatives that benefits a society. According to Nicholas (2015), CSR is a process which aims to embrace responsibility for the company's actions and to encourage a positive impact through its activities on the environment, consumers, employees, communities, shareholders and all other members of the society who may be considered as stakeholders. Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) defines Corporate Social Responsibility as “achieving commercial success in ways that honour ethical values and respect for people, communities and the natural environment.

Alan (2010) also views Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as “the commitment of business to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families, the local community and society at large to improve their quality of life. One broad framework used to categorise CSR initiatives includes actions under the domains of employee relations and diversity programs, ethical materials sourcing, product design, marketing programs, the environment, human rights, and corporate governance. CSR is seen by leading companies as more of a collection of discrete practices and occasional gestures or initiatives motivated by marketing, public relations or other business benefits. Rather it is viewed as a comprehensive set of policies, practices and programmes that are integrated throughout business operation and decision making processes that are supported and rewarded by top management (Nicholas & Eugene, 2015). Watts (2008) views CSR as the continuing commitments by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families, as well as the local community and society at large. In a nutshell, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) could be summarized as thus: “a concept whereby companies decide voluntarily to contribute to a better society and a cleaner environment”. In relation to the construction industry, Bryant (2014) stated that Corporate Social Responsibility does not only encompass what a firm does externally, but internally as well. Designers specify, and construction companies build, hundreds, thousands or even several thousand miles from their corporate headquarters. This provides many challenges as well as opportunities for the construction firms to demonstrate their level of corporate responsibility to the community in which they carry out their construction activities.

Types of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

One of the most used and quoted model is Carroll's Pyramid of corporate social responsibility. It indicates that CSR comprises four kinds of social responsibilities that involves; economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic and considers CSR to be framed in such a way that the entire ranges of business responsibilities are embraced.

Economic Responsibilities: This is about the responsibility to make profit and this responsibility serves as the base for the other components. It implies that business have an obligation to produce goods and services which society requires, sold the goods and services to society at a fair price, which would provide profits adequate to ensure the perpetuation and growth of the business and finally which would adequately reward investors for their risks.

Legal Responsibilities: With regard to the legal aspect, society expects organizations to comply with the laws and regulations of the society

Ethical Responsibilities: about how society expects organizations to embrace values and norms even if the values and norms might constitute a higher standard of performance than required by law. At its most fundamental level this is the obligation to do what is right and to avoid harming stakeholders.

Philanthropic Responsibilities: Philanthropic responsibilities are those actions that society expects for a company to be a good corporate citizen. This is embedded in philanthropic activities, where business is expected to contribute financial and human resources to the community and to improve the quality of life

Policy for Social Responsibility in Nigeria

In a developing country like Nigeria, the concept of Social responsibility is still finding it feet. Recently studies have shown that companies having had huge profits, instead of satisfying fundamental needs of the population by utilizing their vast productive capacities, have thrown thousands of workers out of work, thereby creating more societal problems than solutions. Corporate social responsibility is however mostly perceived as corporate philanthropy and requires organizations to impact positively on their environments. Companies traditionally played this role by undertaking community development projects such as the award of scholarships to indigenes from the host community, donations to sports, charity, social interest works and hospitals. Civic centres, small and medium scale projects for employment generations, skill acquisitions etc. and support for ethical interest objectives are also common examples. Most companies that spend on such projects usually report them in their annual report to show compliance. These days in Nigeria, it has become fashionable for organizations in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria to use CSR projects as a forum for advertisements. Such expenditures of profit rather than a charge against profit suggest that the company is not selfishly giving all to its shareholders alone after paying government taxes (Igwe and Nwadiolor, 2015).

Barde and Tela (2015) found that indigenous Nigerian companies perceive and practice CSR as corporate philanthropy, aimed at addressing socio-economic development challenges in Nigeria. CSR was mainly seen from philanthropy perspective as a way of “giving back” to the

society. CSR in Nigeria is aimed at addressing the peculiarity of the socio-economic development challenges of the country (e.g. poverty alleviation, health care provision, infrastructure development, education, etc.) and would be informed by socio-cultural influences (e.g. communalism and charity). They might not necessarily reflect the popular western standard/expectations of CSR, such as: consumer protection, fair trade, green marketing, climate change concerns, social responsible investments among others (Amaeshi, Adi, Ogbechie and Amao, 2006)

According to section 46 of 1980 companies Act, part IV provided that “the matters to which the directors of a company are to have regard in the performance of their functions shall include interest of the company's employees in general as well as interest of its members”. With the pace of development in Nigeria, companies will invariably have to redefine its objectives to include those of the communities within which it carries out its business activities. The need for Nigeria to legislate on corporate social responsibility lead to the passage of the bill that proposes that business spend 3.5% of its gross profit before tax on CSR has made its way through the National Assembly (Ezenwankwo, 2009). Furthermore, the bill also proposed the establishment of a commission whose duty is to provide standard, integrating social responsibility and international trade issues, conducting research and investigations into community needs, informing businesses of request and ranking organization according to their CSR initiatives (Iwunze, 2009). Subsequently, the commission would publish an annual report of social and environmental impact of business activities, develop policies to encourage corporations to become engaged in the community and ensure that companies sponsor cultural and educational activities that add value to the Nigerian socio-political and technological development. Idas (2009) suggested that “rather than legislating, the Nigerian government should try to promote corporate social responsibility through persuasion and complementary services”.

In Nigeria, corporate social responsibility is part of the larger obligation of the firm to its host community under extant law notably where natural resources is explored. Organizations are called upon to take responsibility for their operations impact on society and the natural environment that is meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet theirs. Environmental sustainability, maintaining global standard and remaining committed to financial obligation to deliver have force organizations to tune their framework, they have reshape their short term and long term agenda to stay ahead of global trend. (Arthur, 2010).

Methodology

An extensive literature review was conducted in order to get relevant information on the study regarding issues to do with concept of CSR, CSR initiatives, policy for social responsibility in Nigeria etc which were used as guide for respondents to rank in the questionnaire. 100 questionnaires were distributed to Construction Companies' staff and members of host communities in which 60 respondents from the four construction companies were given the questionnaires to filled (15 numbers to each company). Similarly, 40 questionnaires with the same contents were administered to members of host communities (10 numbers to each community) in Kaduna State. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire is divided into two parts. Part 'A' contained the respondents' personal

information which deals with their qualification, experience, profession. Part 'B' is based on those relevant information that were used to achieve the research aim. Out of the one hundred (100) questionnaires distributed, seventy-five (75) were completed and returned representing 75% valid response rate. Data collected were analyzed using Descriptive Analytical tool.

Sample Size

The sample size used for this study was randomly drawn. This is because the other category of respondents' (members of host communities') population's is not known. That is supported by assertion made by Field (2005) where he stated that when a population is infinite/unknown, the sample size randomly selected should not be less than thirty $n=30$.

Data Presentation

Data Presentation on Response rate, Respondents experience and Profession

Out of the 100 questionnaires administered to the construction professionals and the members of host communities 75 were retrieved representing 75% effective valid response. Furthermore, 40 questionnaires were distributed to the host communities (at the various local government secretariats), 30 questionnaires were responded to and returned representing (75%). This becomes the accessible population that the research used throughout this study.

Data presentation on Respondents' Experience (construction companies' staff) is as follows;

1 – 5years forms 22.2% (n = 12), between 6 – 10years forms 33.3% (n = 15), 11 – 15years forms 26.7% (n = 12) and 16years & above forms 22.2% (n = 8). That shows majority of the respondents are highly experienced in the construction industry. That will also help the validity and reliability of data obtained in this study.

Data presentation on respondents' (construction companies' staff) respective companies/workplace is as follows;

Respondents from Construction Company "A" forms (33.3%; n = 15), followed by Construction Company "B" with 24.4% (n = 11), Construction Companies "C" and "D" have percentages of 22.2% (n = 10) and 20.0% (n = 9) respectively. That shows the data obtained from the survey was directly from indigenous companies operating in the different host communities. That will further authenticate validity and reliability of data obtained in this study.

Data presentation on respondents' professions (construction companies' staff) is as follows;

Civil/Structural Engineers' forms 57.8% (n = 26), M & E Engineers' forms 13.3% (n = 6), Builders' forms 8.9% (n = 4), Quantity Surveyors' and Architects' have 11.1% (n = 5) and 8.9% (n = 4) respectively.

Data Analysis

(Construction Companies' Staff) view regarding level of awareness of indigenous construction companies on Corporate Social Responsibility:

Table 1.1 shows that the respondents (construction companies' staff) are of the view that indigenous construction companies are highly aware of the following CSR initiatives; improve education, Education on corporate responsibility, high regards for social responsibility, community involvement in organizing employment, contributing to social development, making compulsory payment of 3.5% annual profit before tax. This is because the computed mean values for the CSR initiatives are equal or greater than the grand mean. But the respondents ranking shows that the indigenous construction companies do not have much awareness of these CSR initiatives; Demonstration of social action and Organizing ICT programs for students. This is because the computed mean values are less than the grand mean.

Furthermore, results also reveal that 76.6% of the Indigenous construction companies have high awareness on CSR. While 23.4% of the Indigenous Construction companies do not have much awareness of CSR

1. Construction companies' Staff

Table 1.1: What is the level of awareness of Indigenous Construction Companies in CSR?

S/No	CSR initiatives	Mean	Remarks
1	Improve education	2.76	Accepted
2	Education on corporate responsibility	2.76	Accepted
3	High regards for social responsibility	2.58	Accepted
4	Community involvement in organizing employment	2.56	Accepted
5	Contributing to social development	2.56	Accepted
6	Making compulsory payment of 3.5% annual profit before tax	2.51	Accepted
7	Demonstration of social action	2.40	Rejected
8	Organizing ICT programs for students	2.40	Rejected

Grand Mean = 2.57

Data Analysis on “(construction companies' staff)” view regarding degree of indigenous construction companies' participation in Corporate Social Responsibility

Table 1.2 shows that indigenous construction companies' highly participate in these CSR initiatives; scholarship, provisions of social infrastructure, donation of hardware/software materials, community education improvement, community empowerment and financial contribution to schools and associations. This is because the computed mean values for the

CSR initiatives are equal or greater than the grand mean. But the respondents ranking shows that the indigenous construction companies do not much participate in Renovation of school. This is because the computed mean values are less than the grand mean. Furthermore, results also show that 86.4% of the indigenous construction companies are participating in Corporate Social Responsibility while 13.6% of the indigenous construction companies are not fully participating in Corporate Social Responsibility.

Table 1.2: What is the level of Participation of Construction Companies in CSR?

S/No	Items	Mean	Remarks
1	Scholarship	2.71	Accepted
2	Provision of social infrastructure	2.69	Accepted
3	Donation of hardware/software materials	2.64	Accepted
4	Community education improvement	2.60	Accepted
5	Community empowerment	2.56	Accepted
6	Financial contribution to schools and associations	2.56	Accepted
7	Renovation of school	2.49	Rejected

Grand Mean = 2.61

Data Analysis on construction companies' staff views regarding input of indigenous construction companies in the provision of infrastructural facilities in their area of operations

Table 1.3 shows that indigenous construction companies' have high input in the provision of these infrastructural facilities in the area of their operations; local market construction, building of health centers, building and renovation of hospitals and provision of boreholes. This is because the computed mean values are equal or greater than the grand mean. But the respondents ranking shows that the indigenous construction companies do not have much input in the provision of these infrastructural facilities in the area of their operations; renovation of school building, building of sport complex and construction of roads. This is because the computed mean values are less than the grand mean.

Furthermore, results also show that 60.0% of the indigenous construction companies provide social infrastructural facilities in the area of operations while 40.0% of the indigenous construction companies do not have much in the provision of social infrastructural facilities in the area of operations

Table 1.3: What is the Input of Indigenous Construction Companies in the provision of Infrastructural facilities in their Areas of operation?

S/NO	Facilities	Mean	Remarks
1	Local market construction	2.71	Accepted
2	Building of health centers	2.67	Accepted
3	Building and renovation of hospitals	2.67	Accepted
4	Sinking of boreholes	2.58	Accepted
5	Renovation of school building	2.38	Rejected
6	Building of sport complex	2.36	Rejected
7	Contraction of roads	2.36	Rejected

Grand Mean = 2.53

Host Community

Data Analysis on Members of Host community view regarding level of awareness of indigenous construction companies in Corporate Social Responsibility

Table 2.1 shows that the respondents (members of host communities) are of the view that indigenous construction companies have high awareness on the following CSR initiatives; improve education, demonstration of social action, making compulsory payment of 3.5% annual profit before tax, organizing ICT programs for students and contributing to social development. This is because the computed mean values for the CSR initiatives are equal or greater than the grand mean. But the respondents ranking shows that the indigenous construction companies do not have much awareness of these CSR initiatives; community involvement in organizing employment, high regards for social responsibility and education on corporate responsibility This is because the computed mean values are less than the grand mean.

Furthermore, results also show that 57.5% of the Indigenous construction companies have awareness o Corporate Social Responsibility while 42.5% of the Indigenous Construction companies do not have much awareness of Corporate Social Responsibility

2. Member of host Communities

Table 2.1: What is the level awareness of Indigenous Construction companies in CSR?

1	Improve education	2.73	Accepted
2	Demonstration of social action	2.62	Accepted
3	Making compulsory payment of 3.5% annual profit before tax	2.62	Accepted
4	Organizing ICT programs for student	2.60	Accepted
5	Contributing to social development	2.53	Accepted
6	Community involvement in organizing employment	2.49	Rejected
7	Provision of basic infrastructures	2.49	Rejected
8	High regards for social responsibility	2.42	Rejected
9	Education on corporate respons ibility	2.29	Rejected

Grand Mean = 2.53

Data Analysis on Members of Host Communities view regarding degree of Indigenous Construction Companies participation in Corporate Social Responsibility

Table 2.2 shows that indigenous construction companies' highly participate in these CSR initiatives;. Provision of social infrastructure, scholarship, community education improvement, financial contribution to schools and associations. This is because the computed mean values for the CSR initiatives are equal or greater than the grand mean. But the respondents ranking shows that the indigenous construction companies do not much participate in renovation of schools, donation of hardware/software materials and community empowerment. This is because the computed mean values are less than the grand mean.

Results also show that 59.8% of the indigenous construction companies are participating in Corporate Social Responsibility while 40.2% of the indigenous construction companies are not fully participating in Corporate Social Responsibility

Tables 2.2: What is the Degree of Participation of Construction Companies in CSR?

S/NO	Items	Mean	Remarks
1	Provision of social infrastructure	2.84	Accepted
2	Scholarship	2.73	Accepted
3	Community education improvement	2.67	Accepted
4	Financial contribution to schools and associations	2.62	Accepted
5	Renovation of schools	2.53	Rejected
6	Donation of hardware/software materials	2.47	Rejected
7	Community empowerment	2.29	Rejected

Grand Mean = 2.59

Data Analysis on Members of Host communities view regarding input of indigenous construction companies' in the provision of infrastructural facilities in their area of operations

Table 2.3 shows that indigenous construction companies' have high input in the provision of these infrastructural facilities in the area of their operations; building and equipping of community health centers, building and renovations of hospital, construction of roads and provision of community sporting complex This is because the computed mean values are equal or greater than the grand mean. But the respondents ranking shows that the indigenous construction companies do not have much input in the provision of these infrastructural facilities in the area of their operations; renovation of school and equipping them, provision of boreholes and local market construction. This is because the computed mean values are less than the grand mean.

Results also show that 58.7% of the indigenous construction companies provide social infrastructural facilities in the area of operations while 41.3% of the indigenous construction companies do not provide social infrastructural facilities in the area of operation.

Tables 2.3: What is the input of indigenous construction companies in the provision infrastructural facilities in their areas of operation?

S/NO	Facilities	Mean	Remarks
1	Building and equipping of community health centers	2.82	Accepted
2	Building and renovations of hospital	2.76	Accepted
3	Construction of roads	2.73	Accepted
4	Provision of community sporting complex	2.62	Accepted
5	Renovation of school and equipping them	2.60	Rejected
6	Sinking of boreholes	2.58	Rejected
7	Local market construction	2.51	Rejected

Ground Mean = 2.66

Discussion of Findings

The result shows that most indigenous construction companies are aware and involved in corporate social responsibility. That is encouraging compared to some years back where few companies were in support of policies encouraging corporate social responsibility. This because in the past, most of these construction companies support these policies where it only turn out in their favor and disregard them when they seem overbearing.

Furthermore, some category of companies surveyed in this study view Corporate Social Responsibility as voluntary while the other category of companies' considers it as mandatory. It is likely that enlightenment programs toward educating companies to view CSR as mandatory. This is because they owe their host communities a duty to contribute for their development which in turn the communities help in providing conducive environment for their smooth operations. Consequently, it also reveals that construction companies participate mostly in employee/workforce development. The study also found that companies surveyed pay more attention in discharging the legally required Social Responsibility activities, such as paying of 3.5% annual profits before tax. Most companies provide little as regards to social and infrastructural facilities and rarely provide facilities for community development in their area of operations.

Conclusions

The level of awareness of the companies' surveyed in this study on corporate social responsibility initiatives is generally above average. This is because companies sometimes support or review policies regarding corporate social responsibility activities, and this could be addressed when executives cease to be rigid and become more accommodating. It can however be concluded that the degree of participation of these companies in corporate social responsibility activities is a little bit above average, and their participation evolved mostly on community involvement in organization employment, training and development of their employees and rarely contributes towards community development in their area of operation. That gives a non-encouraging assessment as those employees do not address the

provision of basic needs for the community .and also non-provision of community affairs development i.e. provision of access roads, educational facilities, donation of hardware/software materials, community empowerment and issuing of scholarship to qualified candidates etc. That shows lack of needed commitment on part of the companies in providing some of the need of their host communities as contain in CSR initiatives.

Regarding companies input in the provision of social infrastructural facilities that are contain in corporate social responsibility initiatives was generally on the average. In areas of provision of some facilities such as access roads, some companies solely provide for their own benefit and good working environment. Furthermore, members of host communities believe that some companies often contribute on training fund for community development. In furtherance, companies choose certain obligations they carry out especially regarding community development rather than seek to address issues arising in the sphere of work contract.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following;

- a. There is the need for a positive change of attitude particularly for top managers and other key staff handling CSR in companies. This is because the change in attitude will help in moving from closed system to the open system which will also incorporate modern management where decision making could be decentralized to enable managers outside the corporate headquarters make decision on certain social issues as they are closer to the community they are operating.
- b. The companies should undertake periodic audit of its corporate social responsibility and assess its contribution and review the policies if necessary with a view to breach the gap that exist.
- c. There should be regulatory law by the government making it mandatory for the companies to participate in corporate social responsibility activities beside the legally recognized such as paying of 3.5% annual profits before tax
- d. Corporate Social responsibility initiatives of all companies must be targeted toward improving quality of lives of communities where they operate.
- e. All construction companies regardless of their size, geopolitical coverage and equal level of participation should consider social responsibility as an essential tool for healthy business and not a bottleneck to success.
- f. Construction companies need to be innovative in their implementation policy of CSR and exploring ways to improve on the initiatives in order to make them more social responsible organisations.
- g. Companies need to contribute its own quota in its own way for the betterments of the community and the society at large.

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