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EVALUATION OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY STRATEGIES OF SHELL AND AGIP OIL COMPANIES IN OGBIA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, BAYELSA STATE

UKAEGBU Michael Ibe, PhD.
Email: michaelibe22gmail.com

And

NENGIBO, Moneyman Eniya
Email: enireal30gmail.com
Department of English and Communication Art
Faculty of Humanities
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education
Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

The study evaluated corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip Oil Companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State. The objectives of the study were to find out the corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip Oil Companies, determine the level of effectiveness of the corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip Oil Companies and determine the challenges facing Shell and Agip oil companies in carrying out their cooperate social responsibility in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State. The study adopted the stakeholder theory. It used the survey research design. A population of 549,774 was used for the study and a sample size of 400 was determined using Taro Yamane's statistical formula as a guide. The multi stage sampling technique was used for the study. The study used questionnaire as instrument for data collection. The use of tables, percentages and weighted mean score computed from a four point likert scale was employed to present and analyze the data. The findings revealed that community development, economic empowerment, education, skill acquisition, health programmes, jobs and infrastructural development were the corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip Oil Companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, in Beyelsa State. The finding revealed that the corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip Oil Companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, in Bayelsa State were poor and low which is the reason for the incessant crises between oil companies and host communities in Bayelsa State. The finding showed that insufficient funding, lack of transparency and trust, poor attention given to community needs, presence of political and regulatory frameworks and limited stakeholder engagements were the inherent challenges facing the Shell and Agip Oil Companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, in carrying out their corporate social responsibility in Bayelsa State. The study concludes that the oil companies should improve on their corporate social responsibility strategies to address the lingering crises between them and their host communities. It is however recommended that oil companies should engage in community development environmental protection, economic empowerment, education and health programmes, provision of job opportunities for the people, sincere stakeholder engagement and infrastructural development to foster peaceful co-existence with host communities in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.

Key words: Evaluation, corporate social responsibility, strategies, Shell and Agip Oil Companies, Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State

INTRODUCTION

Corporate social responsibility is a phenomenon that helps multinational companies to identify and address the core needs of the people in the communities where they operate. It is the philosophy where companies provide jobs for the people, provide infrastructure and improve the socio-economic lives of the people. Corporate social responsibility strategies refer to the tactics and techniques used to interact with and meet the needs of the communities. Ojo (2025) states clearly that multinational companies employ stakeholder engagements, meetings, dialogue, visitation, etc, as strategies to create good harmony with their host communities. They are used to avert crises and conflict which may affect productive capacity of these oil companies if they are not harnessed effectively. Ogbedengbe (2020) states that oil and gas companies operating in Nigeria and by extension Niger Delta States should identify the key communities and stakeholders where they are found and pay priority attention to their felt needs. Harrison & Wicks (2021) revealed that stakeholders in the communities where companies are situated are very important and that they play phenomenal roles in influencing members of their communities. Nwocha (2016) reiterates that stakeholders that influence the acts and policies of corporate bodies are customers, employees, communities, suppliers, shareholders, media, non-governmental organisation, regulatory agencies and government. When multinational companies from time to time engage the relevant stakeholders in the communities where they operate, it may led to peace, order and stability between them. But if they neglect or fail to give attention to proving jobs, infrastructure and other needs to the stakeholders and communities, it may lead to crisis or conflict.

Robbins (2024) states categorically that the onus is on an organisation to create means to manage these different parties and generate relationships that lead to strategic cohesive for the benefits of all parties directly and indirectly. This is done by integrating the interests of all groups in a strategic fashion that ensures the long term and on going successes of the organisation. In doing this, it is very important to analyze and evaluate the actual behaviour of all the stakeholders and identify their co-operative potential and competitive threats, using the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis method, (Adeleke, Ogundele & Oyenuga, 2019). (Gregory, 2019) corroborates the apt view that organisations carry out plans programmes, policies and projects that will affect the lives of the people in the communities. He stresses further that organisations must identify vital elements before it can embark on corporate communication strategies in order to be effective at the long run, such elements include; information, consultation, involvement and partnership, furthermore, Tamuno-Koko (2017) provides answer to the question what do communities want and why?

The first action of the community relations personnel would be to explain his organisation to the communities as the foundation to building a good relationship. The communities would need to know what you do and how you do it. Is your process environmentally friendly? What are your policies on labour, contracts and contractors and who are your owners or shareholders? Perhaps, what communities want to hear most is your organizations corporate social responsibility policy and programmes. This would mean understanding what your communities want and why? And your responses to those needs (Tamuno-Koko, 2017 Pp.63-64).

However, Ibulobo (2024) identifies the immediate, short term and long term needs of communities, which include;

i) Prosperity: employment and award of contracts and assistance to establish business economic wellbeing or empowerment.
ii) A clean and healthy production or manufacturing process that preserves their environment and way of life.
iii) Provision of educational and health facilities to communities.
iv) Provision of social amenities and other recreational and cultural pursuits.
v) A stable government for the community.
vi) Provision of scholarships for communities from time to time.
vii) Sponsoring special events such as cultural festival dances and historic events in the communities; and
viii) Promoting socio-economic / web of communities.

Nwocha (2016) also avers that for peace to reign between oil multinational companies and lost communities, the memorandum of understanding reached must be implemented and reviewed from time to time to meet up with the current trends and developments in Nigerian society especially when the need arises. The multinational companies must carry out needs assessment plan and identify relevant stakeholders representing the totality of communities, interest so as to enjoy their peaceful co-existence and at the same time continue effective production and maximize meaningful sales, marketing and profits. However, it is against this backdrop that this study Evaluates Corporate Social Responsibility Strategies of Shell and Agip Oil Companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.

Statement of the Problem

Corporate social responsibility has become a key expectation for oil companies operating in resource-rich but environmentally sensitive regions like in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Shell and Agip, have consistently claimed to implement corporate social responsibility initiatives aimed at improving the lives of host communities through projects in education, healthcare, infrastructure, and environmental protection. However, there remains a significant gap between these reported efforts and the actual experiences of local communities, who often express dissatisfaction over unfulfilled promises, lack of transparency, and minimal impact on their well-being.

The persistence of environmental degradation, poverty, unemployment, and social unrest in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State raises serious questions about the effectiveness, relevance, and sustainability of the corporate social responsibility strategies adopted by these oil companies. Moreover, there is limited empirical research that critically evaluates and compares the corporate social responsibility approaches of Shell and Agip, in the state, especially in terms of community participation, project delivery, and long-term impact.

This study, therefore, seeks to evaluate the corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State, with a focus on their implementation processes, community perception, and overall contribution to sustainable development. It aims to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement in order to enhance corporate social responsibility effectiveness and foster better company-community relations.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to evaluate corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip Oil Companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State. However, the specific objectives are to;

i) find out the corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip oil companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.

ii) determine how effective are the corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip oil companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.

iiii) determine the challenges facing Shell and Agip oil companies in carrying out their cooperate social responsibility in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.

Research Questions

From the foregoing therefore, the following questions are raised to guide the study;

i) What are the corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip oil companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State?

ii) How effective are the corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip oil companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State?

iii) What are the challenges facing Shell and Agip oil companies in carrying out their corperate social responsibility in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate social responsibility refers to the ethical obligation of business to contribute positively to society while conducting their operations. It encompasses a range of activities including environmental sustainability, community development and fair labour practices. According to Osesie (2014) corporate social responsibility can be divided into four categories: economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities. The importance of corporate social responsibility lies in its potential to enhance company's reputation, build customer loyalty and mitigate- risks associated with social and environmental issues.

Corporate social responsibility refers to the ethical responsibility of businesses to contribute positively to society beyond their financial and operational objectives. Corporate social responsibility practices include social welfare programmes, environmental sustainability initiatives, and efforts to improve community welfare. According to Carroll (2017) corporate social responsibility is represented as a multi-dimensional construct involving economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic components, which seek to balance profitability and responsibility. Corporate social responsibility refers to the voluntary actions and ethical practices that businesses adopt to contribute positively to the social, environmental and economic well-being of their stakeholders,

Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility Strategies

A corporate social responsibility strategy is a structured plan that outlines how a company intends to address its social, environmental and economic impacts. This strategy is crucial for aligning a company's operations with stakeholder expectations and societal needs. Porter & Kramer (2016) argue that an effective corporate social responsibility strategy should be integrated into the core business model and involve stakeholder engagement. It should also focus on creating shared value, benefiting both the company and the communities in which it operates.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy refers to the structured approach that organisations adopt to integrate social and environmental concerns into their business operations and stakeholder interactions. It encompasses a company's commitment to acting ethically, contributing to economic development and improving the quality of life for the workforce, their families, the local community and society at large.

Corporate Social Responsibility Strategies of Oil Companies

The oil sector in Bayelsa State plays a critical role in Nigeria's economy, contributing significantly to national revenue. However, it also faces significant scrutiny regarding its environmental and social impacts. As a result, oil companies operating in this region have developed various corporate social responsibility strategies aimed at addressing community needs, environmental sustainability, and economic development. Examines the Corporate Social Responsibility strategies implemented by upstream oil companies in Bayelsa State, focused on the oil companies' objectives, initiatives, and outcomes.

The objectives of corporate social responsibility strategies amongst oil companies in Bayelsa State are multifaceted, reflecting the complex, interplay between corporate operations and community needs. These objectives guide the design and implementation of corporate social responsibility, initiatives, aiming to create a positive impact on both the company and the local environment. Understanding these objectives is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of strategies in addressing social and environmental challenges (Porter & Kramer, 2016).

Community Development

One of the primary objectives of corporate social responsibility strategies in the oil sector is community development. Companies recognize that their operations can significantly impact local communities, both positively and negatively. As such, they aim to enhance the quality of life through initiatives that address basic needs such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure (Idemudia, 2014). Community development efforts not only improve living standards but also foster goodwill and social license to operate, which is critical for the long-term sustainability of oil operations.

Theoretical Framework

The stakeholder theory was used to anchor the study.

Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder Theory was prominently developed by R. Edward Freeman in 1984. Freeman's seminal work, Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach, introduced a framework that redefined the relationships between businesses and various stakeholders.

Stakeholder theory posits that organisations should consider the interests of all parties affected by their operations- not just shareholders. This includes employees, customers, suppliers, communities, and the environment. The central premise is that companies can achieve long-term success by creating value for all stakeholders, thereby fostering sustainable practices and ethical decision-making (Freeman, 1984). Freeman categorized stakeholders into two main groups: primary stakeholders, who are essential for the survival of the organization (e.g., employees, customers, suppliers), and secondary stakeholders, who influence or are influenced by the organisation but do not have a direct transactional relationship (e.g., community members, activists, and governments).

Stakeholder theory is relevant to the current research because it provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the dynamics between oil companies and their diverse stakeholders in Baylesa State. By applying this theory, the study can critically evaluate the effectiveness of corporate social responsibility strategies, highlight areas for improvement, and propose recommendations that align with the interests of all stakeholders involved with oil companies in the Niger Delta communities, especially, Bayelsa State.

Empirical Studies

The studies below are examined which are related to the Evaluation of Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy of Shell and Agip Oil Companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Baylesa State. They include:

A study by Efe (2013) examined "Environmental Impact of Oil Exploration and Corporate Social Responsibility Practices in the Niger Delta". This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of corporate social responsibility initiatives in mitigating environmental degradation caused by oil exploration in the Niger Delta. This research employed a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative interview with quantitative surveys to gather comprehensive data from various stakeholders. The study focused on local communities affected by oil exploration, including fishermen, farmers, and representatives from oil companies.

They found a significant gap between the corporate social responsibility commitments made by oil companies and the actual benefits perceived by the local communities. While some initiatives aimed at environmental protection were identified, many community members reported dissatisfaction and lack of meaningful engagement from the companies. This study establishes a baseline for understanding the relationship between corporate social responsibility and environmental sustainability, crucial for evaluating the current practices of oil companies in Baylesa State. The study concluded that corporate social responsibility initiatives need to be more aligned with community needs and environmental sustainability. It was recommended that oil companies should enhance stakeholder engagement and increase transparency in corporate social responsibility reporting. The study is related to the present study because it engages relevant stakeholders to identify and meet their felt needs.

Nwankwo (2014) examined "Corporate Social Responsibility Strategies of Oil Companies and Community Development in Bayelsa". This study aimed to explore the impact of corporate social responsibility strategies on community development within Bayelsa State, by focusing on various sectors such as education and healthcare. A case study approach was utilized, examining specific oil companies and their corporate social responsibility projects in selected communities.

Residents of targeted communities and corporate social responsibility managers from the oil companies were included in the study. The study highlighted various corporate social responsibility projects implemented by oil companies, noting both successes and failures. While some initiatives made a positive impact, many community members felt that benefits were unevenly distributed. This research provides insights into the effectiveness of Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives in community development, informing the evaluation of current strategies in Baylesa State. It concludes that stakeholder engagement with adequate participation will ensure equal rights and benefits. The study recommended a more equitable distribution of corporate social responsibility benefits and emphasized the need for increased transparency in project implementation to build community trust. The present study utilizes stakeholders' theory while the pervious study employed system theory.

METHODOLOGY

This study used survey research design. Wimmer & Dominick (2011) see survey research as the process of discovering the current situation on subject matter by eliciting opinions, attitudes and information from people. Survey no doubt enables a researcher investigate problems in realistic settings. Okon (2014) reiterates that the justification for its use however is hinged on its versatility in eliciting data from a variety of people. Survey research method seek to obtain relevant information from the respondents on evaluation of corporate social responsibility strategies of upstream oil companies in Bayelsa State. The population of the study comprises of the residents of Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State. The population of the study is 549,774.

A sample size of four hundred (400) were randomly drawn from the total population of population 549,774 using Taro Yamane's statistical formula as a guide. The multistage sampling technique was used for the study to elicit responses from respondents from Shell and Agip in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State. Data were collected through questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire was segmented along psychographic and demographic variables. Since, the focus is on Evaluation of Corporate Social Responsibility Strategies of Shell and Agip Oil Companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.

Items on the questionnaire are designed to elicit responses in that regard. The instrument has sections A and B. Section A was used to elicit responses from respondents' background while section B was also employed to obtain vital information from respondents' responses to the questions contained in the instrument. Also, the questions contain opened and closed ended questions which were geared towards eliciting knowledge based responses. While interview was conducted on some stakeholders in the host communities of the multinational oil companies under study.

The data were collected, presented and analyzed in descriptive statistics. That is, the use of tables, percentages and weighted mean score (WMS) computed from a four point scale. In analyzing data, from the four-point scale, Likert type questions in the instrument, response to questions are weighted as follows:

Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points
Agree (A) = 3 points
Disagree (D) = 2 points
Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point

From these, the WMS is 2.5 (4+3+2+1) divided by 4, using the formula:
WMS = εfx= Summation of frequency x
εf = Number of frequency
Therefore, the Criterion mean is 2.5 which is accepted but less than 2.5 is rejected from the calculated value.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Out of the four hundred (400) copies of questionnaire distributed to the respondents relevant to the Evaluation of Corporate Social Responsibility Strategies of Shell and Agip Oil Companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State, only three hundred and ninety six (396) were returned. This figure was used for the analysis, Data were presented in tables, simple percentage and four point likert scale and weighted mean scores.

Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question One

What are the corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip oil companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State?

Table 1: The corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and, Agip oil companies in Ogba Local Government Area, Bayelsa State

S/No	Statement	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	N	E	Mean score	Remark
i	Community development	200	100	90	6	396	1286	3.2	Agreed
ii	Environmental protection	150	230	10	6	396	1316	3.3	Agreed
iii	Stakeholder engagements	300	90	4	2	396	1480	3.7	Agreed
iv	Economic Empowerment	200	190	3	3	396	1379	3.5	Agreed
v	Education and skill development	190	200	2	4	396	1366	3.4	Agreed
vi	Health programmes	150	230	10	6	396	1316	3.3	Agreed
vii	Infrastructural development	200	190	3	3	396	1379	3.5	Agreed
viii	Causing divide and rule politics	4	2	190	200	396	402	1.0	Disagreed
	Grand Mean = 6.2								

Source: Field survey, 2026

The results in table 1 above revealed that community development, environmental protection, stakeholder engagements, economic empowerments, education and skill development, Health programmes and infrastructural development were the corporate social responsibilities strategies of Shell and Agip oil companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.

Research Question Two

What is the level of effectiveness of corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip oil companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa?

Table 2: The level of effectiveness of corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip oil companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.

S/No	Statement	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	N	E	Mean score	Remark
I	Very High	4	2	200	190	396	619	1.6	Disagreed

Ii	Very low	300	90	4	2	396	1379	3.5	Agreed
iii	Very poor	200	100	900	6	396	1286	3.2	Agreed
Iv	High	10	6	150	230	396	588	1.5	Disagreed
	Grand Mean = 2.5								

Source: Field survey, 2026

Table 2 above showed that the level of effectiveness of corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State were very poor and low.

Research Question Three

What are the inherent challenges facing Shell and Agip oil companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State?

Table 3: The inherent challenges facing Shell and Agip oil companies in carrying out their corporate social responsibility in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State

S/No	Statement	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	N	E	Mean score	Remark
i	Insufficient finding and receives	200	190	3	3	396	1379	3.5	Agreed
ii	Lack of transparency and trust	190	200	2	4	396	1366	3.4	Agreed
iii	misalignment with community needs	150	230	6	10	396	1312	3.3	Agreed
iv	Political and regulatory factors	200	100	90	6	396	1268	3.2	Agreed
v	Limited stakeholder engagement	190	200	2	4	396	1366	3.4	Agreed
vi	Ethnic and religious factors	4	2	190	200	396	402	1.0	Disagreed
	Grand Mean = 4.5								

Source: Field survey, 2026

Table 3 above showed clearly that insufficient funding, lack of transparency and trust, poor attention to community needs, political and regulatory factors and limited stakeholders' engagements were the challenges facing Shell and Agip oil companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State?

Discussion of Findings

Research Question One

What are the corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip oil companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State?

The findings revealed that community developments, economic empowerments, education and skill acquisition, Health programmes and infrastructural development were the corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip oil companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State. This agrees with Efe (2013) that most multinational oil companies operating in Niger Delta especially Bayelsa State employed stakeholder engagements, economic empowerment, infrastructural development and education and skills acquisition as their corporate social responsibilities and peaceful co-existence with them.

This corroborates with the view of Oso (2024) that multinational oil companies employ the use of social responsibility strategies such as stakeholder engagements, media relations, community relations and provision of infrastructural facilities and educational as well as scholarship and it has made well as scholarship and it has made them to enjoy peace in the communities.

Research Question Two

What is the level of effectiveness of corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip oil companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State?

The findings revealed strongly that the level of effectiveness of corporate social responsibility strategies of Shell and Agip oil companies in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State were very poor and low. This is evident in the incessant crises that have been happening between the companies and host communities that have led to vandalization of oil pipelines, disruption of activities and loss of lives of the residents as a result of clash with companies' security operatives. This is in tandem with the assertion of Oso (2024) that multinational oil companies have failed to address the problems of host communities by providing jobs, infrastructure, scholarships and building good community relations. This resulted in conflict and clashes which adversely affected most oil companies financially. Also communities loss their residents due to restiveness and unwholesome practices.

Research Question Three

What are the inherent challenges facing Shell and Agip oil companies in carrying out their corporate social responsibility in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State?

The findings revealed that insufficient funding and resources, lack of transparency and trust, misalignment with community needs, political and regulatory factors and limited shareholders engagements were the inherent challenges facing Shell and Agip oil companies in carrying out their corporate social responsibility in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.

This agrees with Eke (2016) that inadequate funds, political and regulatory factors and poor stakeholder engagements as challenges inhibiting Shell and Agip oil companies in carrying out their corporate social responsibility in Niger Delta States.

Also, Philips (2023) reiterates that bureaucratic bottlenecks, stringent policy, culture and tradition, political instability, greed and poor co-operation were challenges inhibiting the effectiveness of corporate social responsibility of upstream oil companies in Bayelsa State.

Conclusion

It is really appalling that in recent times most multinational companies in the Niger Delta communities have unhealthy relationship with the people in the host communities. This has led to incessant and untold crises which have affected the companies operation and adversely affected the communities. The people have suffered environmental degradation, their sea, land and air are polluted without commensurate compensation. There has been alarming rate of poverty, suffering, hardship and neglect in these communities. Oil companies must as a necessity assess the level of effectiveness of their corporate social responsibility strategies to their host communities so as to employ other strategies to address the lingering conflict affecting them.

Recommendations

From the findings and conclusion, these recommendations are made;

i) Multinational oil companies such as Shell and Agip should engaged in community development, environmental protection, economic empowerment, education and Health programmes and infrastructural development to foster peaceful co-existence with host communities in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.

ii) Multinational oil companies such as Shell and Agip should engage in corporate social responsibility strategy effectively and consistently to achieve a higher level performance in Ogbia Local Government area, Bayelsa State.

iii) Multinational oil companies such as Shell and Agip should adequately fund the community projects and programmes that align with the needs of the communities and their aspirations.

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