

Corporate Social Responsibility Performance of Oil Multinationals in the Niger Delta: A Revisit from the Eyes of Host Communities

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Abstract

This paper examined CSR performance of oil companies from the perspective of host communities in the Niger Delta. A questionnaire instrument was employed to elicit the perceptions of host communities using 355 participants selected by random sampling from 48 communities across three states. The data were analyzed with descriptive method, Kendall's W test and Mean Rank Statistics. The results showed a weighted mean score less than 3.0 performance score criterion for all specified CSR dimensions indicating a perception of poor performance in each dimension. The mean of the mean scores was also less than 3.0, indicating a perception of poor overall performance. The Kendall's W was 0.831; X^2 was 507.037 at $p=.000$, indicating a high level of concordance between the respondents from the communities in their perception about CSR performance by oil companies. The results indicated high level of dissatisfaction by host communities about the CSR performance of oil companies.

Keywords: *Corporate Social Responsibility, Oil Multinationals, Host Communities, Performance, Niger Delta*

Introduction

Society is increasingly being confronted with a litany of problems ranging from economic and social problems to physical environmental problems and government is having difficulties solving the problems as her resources are unable to accommodate the problems. Consequently, government and society as a whole are now looking out to industries for support in providing solutions in many areas. The necessity to seek support from industries is against the backdrop that industries operate in the society and derive from it their sources for their operations (Inyang, 2013) and thus, their survival depends on the survival of society. Impliedly, the wellbeing of society must be of interest and concern to industries (Nickels, Mchugh & Mchugh, 2003). It is considered by government and society that, beyond the distribution of the output from their production process for consumption by society, industries have a responsibility to impact society positively, (Davis, 1975) by ploughing back into society part of their wealth to solve societal problems. This consideration brings to the fore the issue of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

However, each time the question of corporate social responsibility is ignited, the Multinational oil companies are usually on the front burner (Guenther et al., 2007). This may perhaps, be because they provide more evidence of the effects of industrial activities on society. Although, other companies cannot be absolved of CSR negligence (Ikelegbe, 2005) but the agitation for CSR by society is more visible against

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oil producing companies (Ali & O’Faircheallaing, 2007). The question that is often begging for answer is, to what extent have oil multinationals supported the process of development of society and the agenda of government in this regard, and more proximately, cushioned the effects of their activities on the inhabitants of the places they operate? It is in response to these question that the need to evaluate the corporate social responsibility performance of the oil multinationals operating in the various communities in Nigeria’s imperative and of currency.

The general view of Nigerians is that oil multinationals are yet to fully wake up to their responsibility towards society, particularly to support government in providing for their host communities. The seemingly insensitivity of oil multinationals about the effects of their industrial activities on society and the general socio-economic problems of society has generated great concern over the years (Ite, 2004). The level of dissatisfaction by the host communities about the low level of commitment to CSR agenda by oil companies have been expressed in aggressive and violent agitations. In the stream of harmful effects associated with industrial activities of oil companies in Nigeria, the most visible and worrisome, perhaps, particularly to the host communities is the loss of economic resources and sources of livelihood from land and waters (Ite, 2004). This is particularly so in the Niger Delta where the oil multinationals mainly have their operational presence. In these communities it has been shown by studies that the land and waters are no more yieldful (Olisemauche & Avverosuoghene, 2015; Mathew et al., 2018; Osuagwu & Olaifa, 2018) and are unable to support economic activities even at the subsistence level, thus, making uncertain the survival of the people.

The oil companies have on their part claimed that they are paying attention to the plight of the communities by way of infrastructural development as a way to compensate them and ameliorate the hazardous environmental and difficult socio-economic conditions they suffer (Musa, Yusuf, Mc-Ardle & Banjoko, 2013) and accordingly, have shown in their annual report, huge budgetary provisions for CSR as evidence of their commitment to the welfare of their host communities (Frynas, 2005; Otumam, 2009). But have these budgets been translated to concrete infrastructures and facilities, and accessible programmes? This is the bugging question.

A number of scholars (e.g. Enouh & Eneh, 2015; Merchant, 2014) have examined CSR initiatives and performance in Nigeria by the oil multinational companies with a view to finding the gaps and the solutions to the outcries and demand for attention by host communities (Musa, *et. al.*, 2013). These previous studies relied on the responses from government and its agencies, and those from the multinational companies, to evaluate the CSR performance of the companies with regards to their host communities.

This study elicits the views of the host communities to evaluate the extent of CSR performance of the companies. Although it has been reported in a number of studies (e.g. Li, 2012; Maden, *et al.*, 2012; Assiouras, Ozgen, & Skourtis, 2013) that it is difficult to measure the extent of CSR performance from the viewpoint and imperative of the host communities, this study, nevertheless, argues that the host communities are the immediate recipient stakeholders by whose accounts CSR performance can be best ascertained and evaluated. Consequently, the paper examines the extent to which CSR actions of oil multinationals in Nigeria have addressed the social, economic and environmental problems, using the data from the field responses of the host community dwellers. The study focuses on the Niger Delta because the region has the greatest presence of oil multinationals and yet with no or very little government attention, making it one of the least developed regions in Nigeria. A reality that has necessitated the demand by oil communities for oil multinationals to step in the shoes of government through CSR initiatives to fill the development gap that the government is unable to fill (Amadi & Abdullah, 2012).

Literature Review

The Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Although there is no universally agreed definition of CSR because of its multi-disciplinary nature (Garriga & Mele, 2004), it is generally used to refer to when organizations reach beyond their basic business responsibilities of abiding by the law and regulations, maximizing profits, and meeting the needs of the shareholders to extend their activities to the local and global environments and support and promote

development projects in the communities in which they operate (Anderson & Bieniaszewska, 2005). CSR implies taking actions that are not stipulated by any legal instruments but that lead to the provision of public good or voluntary internalization of externalities (Musa, Yusuf, Mc-Ardle & Banjoko, 2013).

In the view of Moir (2001), CSR is the abiding commitment by businesses to act morally, justly and contribute to economic development of the local community and society in general. Similarly, the European Environmental Agency (2012), argues that CSR is mainly a chosen and deliberate process whereby businesses embrace social and environmental concerns in their business and their interaction with stakeholders. In the view of Bowen (1953) CSR 'refers to the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society'. Although, Bowen used 'businessmen' in his proposition, he implied corporations. Orlitzky (2007) stated that CSR is a "universal remedy for solving the global poverty gap, social exclusion and environmental degradation".

Corporate social responsibility is the responsibility towards society by corporate bodies in providing for society its basic needs. Nickels, *et al.*, (2003) define corporate social responsibility as a business's concern for the welfare of society as a whole. Extending this definition Stoner, Freeman & Gilbert (2001) state that CSR is the responsibility of business to act in the interest of society to solve social problems *i.e.* problems of public interest. In the view of Emeson (2003), CSR refers to management's obligation to make choice and take actions that will contribute to the welfare and interest of society as well as of the organization. It is the role of business in solving current social issues over and above legal requirements. CSR is not about developing system of production and distribution to meet the consumption needs of society, but to contribute to economic development and well being of society by converting minor parts of their proceeds into social capital. According to the view of Buchholz (1991) the concept of social responsibility includes:

Responsibility that helps in solving social problems, especially those created by the organization

Responsibility that makes companies has impacts that go beyond market place transactions

Responsibility that makes companies serve a wider range of human values than can be captured by sole focus on economic value.

In sum, CSR involves the relationship between companies and the physical and social environments in which they operate (Werther & Chandler, 2006). The common theme in the definitions is that CSR is an effort by organizations outside the purpose for which it is set up, to improve the quality of life of members of society. CSR is a framework for bail out in economies

with institutional deficiencies and inadequate state resources. The dimensions of CSR vary according to the deficiencies in various economies (Assiouras *et. al.*, 2013); hence CSR dimensions have been adapted appropriately in every economy according to its deficiencies.

The Origin and Evolution of CSR in Nigeria

The concept of CSR is not new in Nigeria. There has been some rudimentary form of CSR in Nigeria before the 'organized' form of CSR was imported into the country through the multinational corporations. Before the western form of CSR, some companies engaged in various

forms of CSR even though the reporting methodology of their activities did not conform to global standard (Udeh & Nwadiakor, 2014). However, the organized CSR in the western form in Nigeria dates back to the 1960s when UAC and the multinationals in the Oil and Gas sector came into Nigeria.

The first MNCs that entered into Nigeria practiced CSR in conformity with the pattern of CSR in their home country (Jones, 1999; Van-Tulder & Kolk, 2001). While UAC activities were focused on consumer protection, fair trade, and green marketing, the CSR activities by the Oil and Gas MNCs were focused

mainly on environmental protection and remedying the effects of their extraction activities on the host communities.

However, with increasing socio-economic development challenges in the country (e.g. poverty, poor health care system, poor infrastructure development, poor education system) the focus of CSR of firms shifted to include socio-economic development and community investment, such as the provision of drinkable water, health care delivery system, good education facilities etc, which did not necessarily reflect the popular western paradigm, but rather addressed the peculiarity of the socio-economic development challenges of the country. In many cases, however, the localized CSR initiatives paradigm by the MNCS in Nigeria have come in the form of ad-hoc measures and have therefore, not been sustained (Amaeshi, Adi, Ogbechie & Amao, 2006). Unlike the western paradigm of CSR which is driven by the desire for consumer protection, fair trade, and civil society pressures, the Nigerian CSR is driven by philanthropic motives, the desire to create improved brand value, and to avert the wrath of host communities (Amaeshi, Adi, Ogbechie & Amao, 2006). Essentially, MNCs have adopted three approaches to CSR initiatives in Nigeria, *viz*, philanthropic, economic support, and compensatory approach (Mordi, Opeyemi, Tonbara & Ojo, 2012). However, it has been argued that many of the Nigerian oriented CSR initiatives of the MNCs do not meet the needs of the communities they were meant to serve (Christian-Aid, 2004).

A major landmark in the formalization of CSR initiatives in Nigeria was in 1987 with the illegal dumping of toxic wastes in Koko, Delta State. This prompted the promulgation of a legal framework for the control of disposal of toxic and hazardous waste in any environment in Nigeria. This decree heralded the establishment of the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) in 1988 with a mandate to protect and develop the Nigerian environment. It was to monitor and regulate the activities of the multinationals operating in the country. The focus was on the protection of the physical environment.

The Ogoni crisis in the 1990s brought another dimension and attention to CSR in Nigeria on a global scale, as a result of shell's involvement in environmental damage and human rights violations in Ogoni land. The crisis marked the beginning of contemporary CSR in Nigeria (Ijaiya, 2014; Udeh & Nwadiakor, 2014). Since then, CSR has become a trend in the Nigerian corporate arena. It is now an essential and significant component of external relations of organizations. Every big organization now communicates about its CSR activities to the public as part of social communication. The Ogoni crisis is regarded as a major milestone in the evolution and formalization of CSR activities in Nigeria because the experience of the crisis prompted the passage of a CSR bill in the National Assembly, to establish a CSR commission 20 years after, whose objectives included *inter-alia*, ensuring that companies “contribute to economic, social and environmental progress of affected communities” and respect the human rights of those affected by their activities” in conformity with the country's international obligations (Mordi et al., 2012). Although there are questions about the validity and rationality of obliging business organizations to adopt the traditional responsibility of government to provide for socio-economic needs of people, nevertheless, with establishment of the commission, CSR became widely accepted in Nigeria to mean corporate contributions to socio-economic development (Ijaiya, 2014).

Although, the primary mandate of the commission focused on the protection of the physical environment of operational areas, but a critical aspect of the discourse was that environmental protection must not be limited to the physical environment but should also include non-physical environment. It is argued that environmental protection implies ensuring that all conditions that are capable of causing hardship and threat to the stability of society and human survival are eliminated, and ensuring on the other hand that positive conditions are promoted to guarantee the

livelihood and security of lives and promote coexistence. It, therefore, includes all actions to establish live supporting economic and social conditions. Thus, the concept embraces support for

positive conditions in physical and non- physical human environment.

CSR Compliance Enforcement in Nigeria

Maiangwa & Agbiboa (2013) discussed the insensitivity and unresponsive attitude of oil multinationals to social problems in Nigeria and government incapacitation and inefficiency to enforce the laws and compel the companies to comply to global requirements, and emphasized the point that the situation is purely an instance of lack of environmental justice. They asserted that the notion of environmental justice applies, among other things, “to the right to free and reasonable access to a secure and attractive environment that is healthy and conducive to the wellbeing of all people”. Clammer (2012) posit that ecological justice includes the enforcement of environmental rights that include the provision of basic needs such as shelter, a means of subsistence and health care services. Thus, the idea of environmental justice as presented by Clammer (2012) implies an idea of human rights in the aspects of economic, social and environmental issues which affect a specific people, in this instance, the Niger Delta people.

Although, the multinationals have made several statements to indicate their readiness and willingness to tackle social and environmental problems and engage in the development of their host communities (Frynas, 2005), published statistical data and campaigns by stakeholders and communities seem to suggest that their efforts, particularly of the oil companies in the Niger Delta, towards dealing with the environmental and social problems in their host communities have been grossly inadequate and inefficient. For instance, the compensatory strategy adopted by the multinational companies especially in the oil industry, which involves making extra-judicial monetary awards to their host communities has been highly criticized by civil society organizations, for lack of transparency and fairness (Maiangwa & Agbiboa, 2012). Amnesty International has specifically pointed at Shell in this regard (Olowu, 2011). In the opinion of Olowu cited in Maiangwa & Agbiboa (2012) the compensatory gestures made by the oil multinationals only feed into the culture of institutionalized corruption, greed and gilded placation that currently exists in Nigeria, which is, thus ultimately more pacifying than it is transforming.

There are insinuations that the government of Nigeria has over the years been complacent in the enforcement of CSR compliance by MNCs in Nigeria. In some cases, it has been argued that the Nigerian government is an accomplice of the MNCs, particularly, the oil companies, in their devastating activities and their insensitivity to CSR in their host communities and operational areas in the country (Enouh & Eneh, 2015). In the view of many observers and commentators the oil MNCs in Nigeria “take advantage of the combination of corrupt practices and loose legal and regulatory framework.” (Dandago & Arugu, 2014). The international doctrine is that national governments have the responsibility to enforce CSR laws and environmental protection governance. The United Nations has emphasized that the state has the responsibility and the burden to enforce CSR laws.

But as the UN Secretary General’s 2009 Special Representative for Business and Human Rights’ framework, identified, even though the framework confers on the states the primary responsibility to enforce compliance to CSR laws, the states in many instances “lack the resources to do so, or may even be complicit in violations” (Igho, 2014) and to evade CSR obligations. This is perhaps the case with the Nigerian state. The role of the Nigerian government is suspicious because the Nigerian government is a partner of the MNCs in their oil development projects based on the provision of the indigenization law and this makes it difficult to genuinely regulate the activities of the Oil MNCs and enforce environmental protection compliance or engagement in CSR projects. The Nigerian scenario is, therefore, worsened by the involvement of government in the business activities of the oil companies (Enuoh & Inyang, 2014).

However, the Nigerian government has claimed that it is on top of the fight against insensitivity by the MNCs towards socio-economic and environmental problems and their avoidance of CSR activities. According to government, it has adopted approaches including promulgation of laws and regulatory/control measures for the compliance to CSR requirements for the development of the Nigerian society, and the protection and management of the environmental impacts and human health risk associated with oil and gas production and manufacturing operations of MNCs in the country (Ijaiya, 2014; Frynas, 2005).

But considering environmental protection as a single major concern, analysts have noted that “despite the putative environmental policy framework, successive Nigerian governments have failed to effectively implement either the National Policy on Environment (NPE) that ensures sustainable development or any of the related environmental policies and/or legislative instruments aimed at reducing negative impacts of energy production and use on the environment” (Musa et al., 2013). Besides, the Nigerian environmental laws do not significantly, set any specific standards for the multinational companies to meet in order to protect and preserve the physical environment in the country. The situation is the same for the general CSR laws aimed at ensuring that companies are involved in solving societal problems that may not be directly related to environmental degradation or protection. In both regards, the statutes and regulations are formulated in such vague and unclear terms that make compliance and enforcement almost impossible (Dandago & Arugu, 2014; Kiikpoye, 2011). In the circumstance, compliance has been left to the companies using their own initiatives and voluntary CSR policies and schemes implementation, in what can be regarded as self-regulation by MNCs (Kiikpoye, 2011).

Methodology

The method adopted for the study was both descriptive and inferential. The data for the study were collected through a field survey of opinion of host community members about social responsibility performance of Oil multinationals operating in their communities. A Questionnaire instrument was used to elicit information. A combination of purposive and haphazard (convenience) sampling method was employed. The sample for the study was drawn from the Niger Delta, using three states in the region *viz*, Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers states. The sample units were communities in these states and the respondents were from these communities. These states were selected on the premise that they constitute some of the areas where oil multinationals operate and therefore provide a valid source of information from which data for the assessment could be generated through the participation of host community members.

For validity and reliability, the questionnaire was pilot tested with 4 oil producing communities in Delta State with 10 respondents from each community. This pilot test was not included in the study analysis but the suggestions, comments and remarks provided by it were incorporated to improve upon the content and construct of the questionnaire. The questionnaire solicited information about the respondent’s perceived level of social responsibility engagement/performance by oil multinational companies in their state and community of reference, in the areas of environmental cleanup to avoid pollution and ecological damage; safe disposal of industrial wastes; provision of social amenities and physical infrastructures; provision of employment to host communities’ members; establishment of entrepreneurial skill acquisition centers; provision of educational facilities and scholarship awards; agricultural promotion, among others.

Cluster sampling was used with each state constituting a cluster to make sure that respondents were drawn from each of the states to provide the perspective on the situation in each sample state. A random sampling method was used for the selection of the communities and the survey participants. A sample of 500 potential respondents was selected from the three states from which an actual sample of 355 respondents was drawn. The questionnaire was administered in 16 communities from each state to make a total of 48 host communities from the three states, with a total of 355 respondents. The respondent sample size was determined using the method suggested by Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009) based on an estimated response rate of 50%. The data generated from the survey was analyzed with non-parametric statistical methods using Kendall’s W test and mean rank statistics.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The summary of the data generated from the field survey of host communities in the three sampled states of Nigeria is presented in tables 1& 2. While the summary of the inferential analysis results are presented in tables 3&4.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of the Demographic Variables

VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STATE		
Delta	110	31.0%
Bayelsa	112	31.5%
Rivers	133	37.5%
Total	355	100.0%

TOWN		
Urban	99	27.9%
Rural	256	72.1%
Total	355	100.0%
GENDER		
Male	267	75.2%
Female	88	24.8%
Total	355	100.0%
AGE		
35-54yrs	107	58.3%
55-64yrs	114	32.1%
Above 64yrs	34	9.6%
Total	355	100.0%
EDUCATION		
SSC/GCE	33	9.3%
NCE/OND	64	18.0%
B.Sc./HND	171	48.2%
Postgraduate Degree	87	24.5%
Total	355	100.0%
INDIGENSHIP		
Indigene	269	75.8%
Non-indigene	86	24.2%
Total	355	100.0%
LEADERSHIP POSITION		
YES	121	34.1%
NO	234	65.9%
Total	355	100.0%
LEADERSHIP POSITION HELD		
None	234	65.9%
Member of executive council	39	11.0%
Traditional chief	32	9.0%
King's Cabinet Member	13	3.7%
Youth Leader	37	10.4%
Total	335	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The demographic distribution shown in table 1 above has certain implications for the analysis of the

perspectives about the CSR performance of oil companies in host communities. These implications are presented under the discussion of findings.

Table 2: Distribution of Responses from Each State for Each Company

Company State	Chevron Oil & Gas	Shell Oil & Gas	Saipem Oil & Gas	Exxon/ Mobil Oil & Gas	Schlumberger Oil & Gas	Total Oil & Gas	Halliburton Oil & Gas	Addax Oil & Gas	Texas Overseas	Total
Delta	43 (38.7 %)	56 (38.4 %)	17 (26.6 %)	68 (27.6%)	14 (33.3%)	33 (24.8 %)	23 (35.4%)	29 (31.5 %)	32 (38.6 %)	315 (32.1 %)

Bayelsa	39 (35.1%)	55 (37.7%)	22 (34.4%)	87 (35.4%)	09 (21.4%)	49 (36.8%)	13 (20.0%)	17 (18.5%)	22 (26.5%)	313 (31.9%)
Rivers	29 (26.1%)	35 (24.0%)	25 (39.1%)	91 (37.0%)	19 (45.2%)	51 (38.3%)	29 (44.6%)	46 (50.0%)	29 (34.9%)	354 (36.1%)
Total	111 (11.3%)	146 (14.9%)	64 (6.5%)	246 (25.1%)	42 (4.3%)	133 (13.5%)	65 (6.6%)	92 (9.4%)	83 (8.5%)	982

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The distribution in table 2 showed that a total of 982 responses were generated from all the three states for the 9 oil multinational companies that were identified by respondents as having operations in the different communities in the states. The total of 982 responses resulted from respondents' identification of more than one oil company having presence in their communities, consequent upon which, respondents had to fill their responses on each of the companies operating in their communities. By state distribution, Rivers state had the highest proportion of responses with (36.1%), with Delta State and Bayelsa State having 32.1% and 31.9% respectively. This indicates that there was a higher presence of oil companies in Rivers state than the other two states accordingly. The table also indicates the level of presence of each company across the three states. For instance, the total responses for Exxon/Mobil showed that it had more presence across the three states with 256(25.1%) responses of the 982 total responses from all the three states, followed by Shell (14.9%), Total (13.5%), Chevron (11.3%) and others behind them respectively, as shown in the table.

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of the Performance Rating of Companies by Communities in the

Specified Aspects of CRS

S/ N	Specific CSR Variables	Measurement Scales/Percentages					Mean Scores	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	Rank Scores	Remark
		V/Low (1)	Low (2)	Moderate (3)	High (4)	V/High (5)					
1	Provision of social support facilities	-	240 (67.6)	109 (30.7)	-	6 (1.7)	2.36	0.031	0.576	1	
2	Provision of Physical Infrastructure	-	270 (76.1)	85 (23.9)	-	-	2.24	0.023	0.427	2	
3	Environmental Protection	121 (34.1)	124 (34.9)	110 (31.0)	-	-	1.97	0.043	0.807	3	
4	Education	30 (8.5)	316 (89.0)	9 (2.5)	-	-	1.94	0.017	0.327	4	
5	Employment	137 (38.6)	129 (36.3)	89 (25.1)	-	-	1.86	0.042	0.787	5	
6	Entrepreneurship & vocational	143 (40.3)	125 (35.2)	87 (24.5)	-	-	1.84	0.042	0.790	6	

	skill Development										
7	Management of Hazardous Production Effects	136 (38.3)	150 (42.3)	68 (19.2)	1 (0.3)	-	1.81	0.039	0.744	7	
8	Promotion and support for Agriculture	163 (45.9)	109 (30.7)	83 (23.4)	-	-	1.77	0.043	0.802	8	
	Overall Mean Score						1.97				

Source: Field Survey, 2020 (where low is < 3.0 and high is > 3.0)

As shown in table 3, performance rating in each specific CSR dimension was based on Likert's 5-point scale of measurement, and the benchmark for average CSR performance criterion was set at a weighted mean of 3.0, such that a weighted mean performance level of >3.0 was regarded as high performance and a weighted mean performance level of <3.0 was regarded as low performance. Considering the mean scores, based on the criteria, CSR performance was rated lowest in the promotion and support for Agriculture, by oil companies, with a mean score of 1.77

and a standard deviation of 0.802; while CSR performance was rated highest in the provision of social support facilities with a mean score of 2.36 and a standard deviation of 0.576. The performance ratings in other CSR dimensions are shown in the table. Note that, the value for each CSR dimension under each rating scale is the total number of respondents across the three states for all the companies and not for each state or each company.

All of the mean scores were less than the average performance criterion of 3.0, which suggests that in general, the respondents/communities rated as low the CSR performance of oil companies in their communities, in all the specified dimensions of CSR. This was also shown by the mean of the mean scores being far less than the average performance criterion at 1.97, indicating that beyond the performance in each specific dimension, the aggregate performance was low. In other words, the mean of the mean scores suggested that the overall performance in CSR by the oil Multinationals was very poor. The mean scores of the dimensions and the mean score of all mean scores were generally lower than the average performance criterion by a high magnitude which suggests that the ratings are far from normal distribution. The distribution was skewed towards a general agreement by host communities that oil multinationals had not performed well (*i.e.*, performed below the expectations of the communities) in their CSR obligations. The result provided by the mean score is supported by the sum of percentage responses on very low and low performance in each CSR dimension which is generally far higher than the percentage of joint responses on moderate, high and very high performance in each CSR dimension.

The mean scores and ranking of the specified CSR dimensions also suggest the level of prevalence of each environmental and social problem in the communities across the states. The mean scores suggest the level of decadence in each dimension of the physical and social environment across the communities and the level of dissatisfaction by the communities about the involvement of oil companies in ensuring that these problems are mitigated. Lower mean score corresponds to lower involvement/commitment of oil companies in solving the problem and therefore, higher presence of the problem in the communities. The mean of the means reflects the level of general dissatisfaction about the general condition of life in the region and the commitment of oil companies to mitigate the condition.

Table 4: Kendall's W test and Mean Rank Statistics

S/N	Specific CSR Variables	N	Mean Rank	Kendall's W ^a	Chi-Square	Df	Asymp. Sig	Rank Score
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1.	Provision of social support facilities	355	5.60	0.831	507.037	7	.000	1
2.	Provision of Physical Infrastructure	355	4.46					2
3.	Environmental Protection	355	4.44					3
4.	Education	355	4.18					4
5.	Employment	355	4.08					5
6.	Entrepreneurship & vocational skill Developot.	355	4.01					6
7.	Management of Hazardous Production Effects	355	3.92					7
8.	Promotion and support for Agriculture							8

Source: field Survey, 2020

To further strengthen the result in table 3, Kendall's W test (coefficient of concordance) was used to measure the extent of agreement among the respondents from the various oil communities of the states under study, in their responses about the general performance in CSR by the oil companies in their communities. The result shown in table 4 and table 3 indicate that the mean rankings were exactly the same. The overall result shown in table 4, *i.e.* $W = 0.831$, $X^2 = 507.037$, $df = 7$ and $p = 0.000$ showed that there exists statistical significance which was strong and above moderate range. Therefore, the extent of agreement among respondents from across the various host communities in the states under study, on the CSR performance of oil companies in their communities in the specified dimensions, was strong. The high overall W concordance statistic showed that the similarity in ratings (responses) by respondents of the companies' performance in the specified CSR dimensions was not by chance. This was also demonstrated in the Chi-Square value which showed a high degree of association of the assessments made by the respondents in the rating of CSR Performance in the dimensions specified, with respondents' observation/experience in each dimension. This implies that the observations/experiences of respondents regarding CSR actions by oil companies in their communities across the three states

were similar, and the ratings among the respondents were factual.

Discussion of Findings

The descriptive statistics with respect to the demographic data showed that there was high possibility for objective and valid or reliable responses by respondents. The percentage of male respondents was 75.2% as against 24.8% for females, suggesting that there are more data provided by males than females and considering that males by their nature are more inclined to travelling around, they are more positioned to have knowledge about the CSR activities and performance of oil companies in their states and communities, which are reliable. Impliedly, 75.2% of the responses are reliable in the sense that it reflects greatly what is visible or actually on ground in the communities, on a more dispersed or wider view, even where the responses from females may be regarded as restricted to observations about CSR actions in their immediate communities, and therefore, insignificant for the purpose of generalization.

The urban-rural distribution of respondents also has implications for the validity of the responses provided by the communities. There is always the tendency to put development focus in the urban areas since they represent the areas of population pressures on facilities and infrastructures that need urgent attention. Because of limited resources, focus is usually on urban areas in development agenda and this takes attention from the rural areas. This is perhaps what has accounted for the level of responses on CSR actions and performance in rural areas with 72.1% as against 27.9% for urban areas where the provision of infrastructures and social facilities and support by government are prevalent and therefore deficiency in CSR actions and performance are less visible or noticeable, and with less concern by communities about CSR activities of companies in their areas. Supposedly, the high percentage of respondents from rural

communities is a reflection of the level of concern about the environmental and socio-economic challenges in the areas and the need for actions by oil companies in these areas that have largely been responsible for the challenges (Dandago & Arugu, 2014).

The age distribution of the respondents showed that the age bracket of 35 years-54 years has the highest number of respondents with 58.3%, followed by persons in the age bracket of 5 years-64 years with 32.1% and 9.6% for persons above 64 years. The implication of the age distribution is that greater number of persons with wider view of their environment have supplied the information for the analysis in the study. The age brackets with the greater respondents are more oriented towards travelling and are therefore, persons who may have travelled across their communities to be able to have good assessment of the developments in their communities, so that whatever information they provide can be largely valid and reliable.

The respondents' distribution by educational qualification showed that bulk of the respondents were educated, with 72.7% holding degrees and HND certificates; 18% holding NCE/OND certificates and only 9.3% are SSC/GCE holders. The implication of this is that the respondents are largely informed and are able to appreciate their environment, thus, the information provided in their responses are largely well informed and valid in terms of their assessment of the CSR performance of oil multinationals in their communities.

From the indigenship distribution of respondents, 75.8% were indigenes and 24.2% were non-indigenes. The distribution does not have any practical implications for the validity of the data generated or the results of the study because observations about CRS actions and assessment of performance of companies by community members is not based on indigenship. Both indigenes and non-indigenes live in the same community and are exposed to the same situation with similar effects. Thus, the number of indigene respondents *viz-a-viz* non-indigene respondents does not make any material difference and impact on the validity of the responses.

It was also shown that a preponderant of respondents did not hold leadership positions in their communities with 65.9% compared to the number of respondents who held leadership positions with 34.1%. This has implications for the validity of the responses and the results produced from the analysis. The percentage of respondents who did not hold leadership positions in their communities suggests the potential level of un-biasness and the presentation of the reality of the situation that is possibly devoid of selfish considerations by leaders. This is considered against the background that overtime there have been accusations by community members that their leaders short changed them by conniving with the oil companies to pay financial compensations to the communities to avoid involvement in physical projects, and often such financial payment are negotiated and made to the community leaders at the expense of the communities. Consequently, community leaders usually respond in favour of the oil multinationals who are their benefactors. Barely 34.1% of respondents having leadership position suggests a lower level of responses that may not reflect reality and therefore, a higher validity of the responses and results of the study.

The results of the inferential analyses indicated that oil producing communities were largely in agreement that oil multinationals have not performed well in their CSR to the host communities. This is corroborated by earlier reports by Ojo (2012); Enuoh & Eneh (2015) who found in their studies that CSR is not meeting the needs of the host communities as expected. The similarities in the responses across the researched communities suggest that the communities share a common expectation for socio-economic infrastructural development, capacity building and poverty reduction. Based on the degree of concordance indicated by Kendall's W test, it is evident that the assessment among respondents is reliable.

The expression by the communities as shown by the mean scores in table 4 is that the most neglected area of CSR obligation to the communities is that of Agriculture. The level of neglect of Agriculture in CSR provision is evidenced by the devastation to Agricultural activities reported in Irhivben & Omonona (2013); Inoni, Omotor & Adun (2006); Iheke, Achu & Nwaneri (2019); Ekanem & Nwachukwu (2015); Osuagwu & Olaifa (2018). The concern for Agricultural support is not unexpected considering that the operations of

many of the companies have affected the soil and waters causing low yields from agriculture (Ekpebu & Ukpong, 2013; Ahmadu & Egbodion, 2013; Osuagwu & Olaifa, 2018). Evidently, the host communities are predominantly agrarian communities, who rely on agricultural produce for livelihood (Akpokodje & Salau, 2015). Agriculture, therefore, constitutes an area in which they need support to help them improve their productivity, particularly, from the oil companies whose operations have been known to have negative effects on agricultural resources and produce in the host communities (Akpokodje & Salau, 2015).

The negative effect of oil exploration activities on Agriculture in host communities of delta, Bayelsa and Rivers states have been largely documented in the literature. For instance, in the study of the effect of oil exploration on Agriculture in Rivers state, by Ekanem & Nwachukwu (2015) it was found that the state had lost more than 20% of its arable land to oil spills. Iheke, et. al., (2019) also found negative effect of oil spillage on farmers' productivity in Rivers state. In Delta state similar findings were made by Inoni, et al., (2006) with regards to crop yield and farmers income; and by Irhivben & Omonona (2013) in Agricultural development generally. Ekpebu & Ukpong (2013) studied Bayelsa for the effect of crude oil production on Agriculture and Rural Development, and found similar results. The implication of these findings is that Agriculture and rural development need very great support, thus, the rural communities expect better deals in CSR than they currently get from the companies in Agriculture.

The management of hazardous effects of oil production activities has also been expressed as another area of concern where CSR actions are grossly inadequate after Agriculture. The dissatisfaction by oil communities about the level of commitment by oil companies in the management of the hazardous effects of production activities is borne out of the frequent oil spill

incidences in the operation areas and the effects of the chemicals released on human lives. Several studies have provided evidence of such incidences and the problems which were associated with them (e.g. Ijaiya, 2014; Chijioke, Ebong & Ufomba, 2018; Atubi, Ogbijah, & Ojeh, 2015). However, there are evidences that oil companies have been engaged in cleaning up the areas where oil spills occur, but the general opinion seem to be that they could do better particularly considering the space of time it takes them to act. The low rating of CSR performance in entrepreneurship and vocational skill development, implying dissatisfaction is necessitated by the lack of employment opportunities from government and even from the oil companies themselves, and the only occupation which is agriculture is no more viable because of the effects of oil operations. This makes it exigent for greater support for entrepreneurship and vocational skill development, particularly from the oil companies.

Commitment to environmental protection and provision of physical infrastructures were scored more positively, with provision of social support facilities being the aspect of CSR given the best attention by oil companies. The scenario is explained, perhaps, by the fact that environmental protection is a phenomenon of global attention with a focus on the activities and production processes of companies and their effects on the environment and multinationals are consequently ensuring that they avoid the risk of attracting global attention. However, findings of previous studies (e.g. Dandago & Arugu, 2014; Enuoh & Eneh, 2015) have shown that the physical infrastructures provided are usually situated to serve their interest with focus on the cities where they have their headquarters and operating/administrative offices, and residential areas with considerable presence of their staff members.

In the area of education, findings in this study indicate that the CSR performance of the companies was above average, but the performance in education is most likely to be in the aspects of provision of physical infrastructure (building reconstruction) and provision of facilities such as laboratory equipment and books. This argument is in line with findings from previous studies (e.g. Best & Seiyefa, 2013). The low CSR performance in scholarship awards may be due to corrupt practices which usually attend scholarship awards. There are research evidences (e.g. Enuoh & Eneh, 2015) that scholarship awards made by companies are usually hijacked and diverted to children of community leaders and the rich in the communities who in most cases are not even qualified for the awards, leaving out the children that are qualified, and consequently negating and defeating the purpose of the awards and their essence. The children of the poor members of the communities who are supposed to benefit from the scholarships are skimmed out by their leaders. Since the generality of the community members are unable to access the scholarship or are excluded, the general

perception has been that there are no supports from the oil companies for the education of host community members.

Understandably, the provision of social support facilities requires less financial commitment and therefore provides greater attraction for the oil companies to engage their efforts in CSR. Hence, it is not surprising that the companies have given it the greatest attention as shown from the assessment responses from the communities, with the highest mean score.

Findings from the survey also suggest that companies avoid involvement in physical projects; rather they prefer to pay financial compensation to affected communities, and in a lot of cases, through the connivance with corrupt community leaders, who negotiate such compensation in their favour. There is evidence that such negotiations, in a lot of cases, have led to community internal squabbles, conflicts and clashes between the community members and their leaders when it is discovered that they have been short changed.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The goal of this study was to assess the performance of oil companies in the Niger Delta from the opinions of the host communities' members. The consideration is that no one would know how comfortable one is in a shoe than the one who is wearing it, not even the one who made the shoe would know better. From the analysis of the opinions of the members of the host communities of the oil companies it is shown that there is great dissatisfaction about the CSR performance of oil multinationals in these communities. The poor performance can be attributed to lack of adequate interest in the socio- economic wellbeing of the communities. The fabulous budgetary provision by oil companies and the claims laid to the development of the areas are only on paper. They do not translate to reality. Evidently, it is because of the poor socio-economic supports and development actions from organizations towards host communities that the incidents of violent agitations are prevalent in the region.

As some authors have suggested in the literature, a major challenge in making CRS performance a reality is that, the oil companies, mainly provide financial compensations to the host communities and often through the intermediation of traditional rulers and leaders who presumably represent their communities. Bulks of the budgets for CSR presented in their annual accounts are used for the purpose of financial compensation. Unfortunately, such CSR provisions in cash never get to the people, with the effect that, the benefit of corporate social actions is not felt by the communities. With this approach, developmental actions from the companies cannot be assured, and social and economic dissatisfaction cannot be eliminated. With the current socio-economic hardship in the region and the approach to CSR where neither government nor the oil multinationals are thinking about what to do differently, dissatisfaction and discontentment will remain unabated, and agitations and violence will continue to rear their heads in the Niger Delta communities as they continue to suffer from environmental degradation and hazardous conditions occasioned by oil exploration.

All of these point to the fact that discharge of corporate social responsibility in the Niger Delta oil communities is more of an ad-hoc approach. Simply stated, corporate social actions in the communities are motivated more by public concerns, reactions and agitations, than by voluntary and organizational deep commitment to environmental policy by management. The concerns of the communities are not addressed until there is a public outcry and some actions that tend to cause some disorder or threat to the operations and existence of the companies. An ad-hoc approach is merely reactive and does not engender environmental stability and certainty. It is only when organizations take proactive approach to tackle the problems of the communities that stability and certainty can be assured.

Evidently, with the current approach to CSR in the Niger Delta, CSR would not be adequate to fill the gap created by government inadequacies in the provision of social and economic capital for survival, and consequently alleviate the poverty and suffering of the people in the region (Eweje, 2006; Enuoh & Eneh, 2015). To use the words of Musa, et al., (2013) "CSR performance is not adequate to be deployed as means to offset or to adjourn government role to deploy resources for social and economic development in the Niger Delta". Impliedly, the agitation for resource control will continue to be a course of action for the oil

producing communities under the circumstance. CSR can only be used effectively to abate underdevelopment of the region and alleviate poverty of the people if government begins to see CSR as affirmative duty and becomes much more serious with enforcing the CSR compliance laws in the country.

Consequently, this study posits that the way to improving the oil companies CSR performance lie in attitudinal change by oil companies and government, to be proactive to the needs of the communities and potential problems. The companies must make policies geared towards solving critical socio-economic problems without waiting till they are asked to do so by militant youths. Social responsibility must be seen by companies as part of their success factor which must be given emphasis and pursued with seriousness. All over the world social responsibility has become inalienable aspect of corporate success that business evaluates and measures. It must become so in Nigeria to ensure that agitations for better conditions of life are minimized. Government must take a strong stand to monitor the companies' social responsibility activities and make sure that they are doing what is expected of them and not just paying lip service to CSR obligations to their host communities. CSR performance measurement must be based on the achievement of some specific strategic project(s) over time. The choice of significant CSR projects to be undertaken must be community driven with inputs from the host communities.

Data Availability

The authors confirm that all data generated or analyzed during this study are included in this published article. Furthermore, primary and secondary sources data and data supporting the findings of this study were all publicly available at the time of submission.

Ethical Approval Statement

Our institutions do not require ethical approval for studies involving opinion survey. However, the participants were required in the survey to provide their opinion about the performance of the relevant companies operating in their communities since they were the ones affected by the companies activities and were therefore in better position to assess their performance in terms of their corporate social responsibilities obligations.

Informed Consent Statement

The study was a field survey of opinion of individuals who were willing to provide their viewpoints on the corporate social responsibility performance of the oil companies in their communities. The participants were first approached to find out if they were interested and willing to express their opinion in a filled out questionnaire on the corporate social responsibility performance of the oil companies operating in their areas. Upon this, those who responded positively were administered the research instrument. Thus, only those who consented to express their opinion participated in the study.

Competing Interests/Conflicts Statement

The authors declare no competing interest

Author Contributions Statement

The paper is co-authored by the persons listed and everyone contributed an aspect of the work.

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