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The Culpability of Corporate Social Responsibility Interventions in the Spatial Variation of Quality of Life in Rural Settlements.

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Abstract

The study undertook an analytical assessment of corporate social responsibility interventions, and identified it's influence on spatial variation in quality of life in selected rural settlements in Bayelsa State. Fifteen communities; ten oil and gas bearing communities within the Nun River Oilfield benefitting from corporate social responsibility interventions and five neighbouring non-oil and gas bearing communities that does not benefit from such interventions were covered by the study. The study utilised only primary source of data which was collected through survey method; a well-structured questionnaire was designed and administered on 398 respondents in all sampled communities selected through the simple random sampling technique. Data were both descriptively and statistically analysed. The results of the descriptive analyses showed variations between communities. Similarly, results of an ANOVA test showed that F-ratio calculated 1527.552 was greater than tabulated value of 3.84, and P-value 0.000 was significant at 0.05 level, suggesting that corporate social responsibility interventions caused significant quality of life variation in Nun River Oilfield Communities and the Neighbouring ones. The study also shown inadequate provision or non availability of basic amenities in the sampled communities, even in greater percentages in Neighbouring Communities, which foreshadows negative consequences for quality of life. Hence, it is recommended that Government at all levels should build rural infrastructures and services to improve quality of life of individuals and communities. The provision of basic amenities in these rural settlements shall also forestall rural–urban migration and associated consequences

Introduction

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has no single universally accepted definition, as it has been defined in different ways by different authorities. For example, Barry (1999) asserted that CSR essentially means companies acting for the benefit of others, while also improving their own businesses. Another definition of CSR was advanced by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, which defines it as "the continuing commitment by businesses to contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the communities" (Holme & Watts, 2000). CSR has also been defined as a management approach in which the company takes all stakeholders' interests into account during the course of business (White, 2006).

Companies are increasingly giving attention to their core values and to the development of CSR (Barry, 1999). Hence, Poster and Kramar (2002) asserted that engaging in CSR can be the most cost-effective way, and even the only way to improve a firm's competitiveness and deliver both social and economic reimbursement to host communities. Similarly, Nyuur, Ofori and Debrah (2012) averred that the shared barter of benefits of CSR activities between companies and their host communities is far-reaching. The adoption of CSR can lead to higher growth, reduction in income inequality and poverty; hence, governments and companies are embracing the concept of CSR (Jenkins, 2005). In the words of Carroll and Shabana (2010), companies without CSR programmes may find that they are behind the curve and suffer from decreased competitive advantage. Likewise, Nyuur, Ofori and Debrah (2012) noted that companies that fail to integrate CSR initiatives into their operations leave themselves over to negative stakeholders' perceptions and consequences. One of the key findings of their work is that the oil and gas companies greatly understand and appreciate the concept of CSR in their operations.

Okafor (1998) also noted that CSR interventions are usually implemented in host communities within a company's operational area. Hence, it has become a critical channel in the provision of basic amenities in host communities, which has the potentials of impacting positively on QoL. For example, a study on the relationship between basic amenities and QoL concluded that improved standards of QoL of individuals and communities can only be assured by the availability of basic facilities, without which, such communities may be abandoned with far reaching consequences on QoL (Casini, Contini & Scozzafava, 2011).

Similar views were held by Ali, Malkami and Betawi (2008) that lack of basic amenities negatively affect QoL; while Meyers (2016) succinctly noted that the provision of basic amenities significantly guarantees improved QoL. The positive impact of basic amenities on QoL, probably prompted the suggestion by Bayode, Adewumi and Odunwole (2011) that CSR intervention programmes should be intensified and aimed at the provision of basic amenities for host communities.

According to Bella (2013) the concept of QoL is one of the most studied issues in contemporary time, and it has been widely noted as a multifaceted and multidimensional concept, which is difficult to define. Nevertheless, McCrea, Shyy and Stimson (2006) defined QoL as a multifaceted term, which involves the idea of a good life, a valued life, a satisfying life and a happy life. The authors also stated that QoL is variously used; to refer to prosperous societies, to the conditions of the environment in which, people live, to people's attributes, even to people feeling happy and being satisfied with life. Since the conditions of the natural and living environment, the needs of the individuals in a society, as well as the importance of these needs are constantly changing over time, QoL assessment remains central (McCrea, Shyy & Stimson, 2006).

In the same vein, Das (2008) opined that the concept of QoL is multifaceted and has been described in both subjective and objective terms. The author noted that subjective aspect refers to the sense of well-being and the perception of life satisfaction by individuals, and further stated that it pertains to quality of a place. Studies based on this aspect use subjective indicators of how people perceive and evaluate the conditions around them. According to Bella (2013) such conditions can be assessed in an objective way, independently of the individuals' opinion, by using objective indicators that describe the environment in which individuals live. Haas (1999) opined that QoL is defined by the all-round assessment of current life circumstances of people and places. Duval (2000) aligned with the people-oriented approach, and also stated that certain conditions such as unbiased allocation of income, diminution of poverty, provision of basic needs like food, education, health care, water and sanitation, housing, electricity etc are needed for socio-economic development. The author further noted that these conditions are central for improved QoL. Similarly, Davis (2010) stated that people should be at the core of all development, and that the provision of basic amenities should form the spotlight of intervention programmes.

Many studies have reported the spatial aspect of QoL stressing the importance of the provision of basic amenities. For example, Mabuza, Poggenpoel and Myburg (2010) noted that the availability of resources and basic amenities has positive relationship with QoL. Likewise, Meyer (2016) noted that the provision of basic amenities such as decent housing, sufficient food and access to other essential goods and services would allow for increased participation in recreational/leisure time activities critical to improved QoL of individuals. Babatunde (2010) recommended an improvement in the provision of infrastructure, equitable distribution of resources and better environmental management to enhance QoL particularly in oil and gas bearing communities.

There has recently been a lot of research about the relationship between CSR and profitability on one hand, and improvement of QoL of host communities on the other hand. As earlier mentioned Okafor (1998) noted that CSR is a veritable programme when it comes to provision of basic amenities in host communities. CSR can have positive effect on financial performance, competitive advantage, employee satisfaction, and overall reputation as well as on improvement of QoL of individuals and communities (Carroll & Shabana, 2010). The authors also stated that major players in the industry noted that CSR is environmentally responsible,

the industry benefits socially and financially from it, and that the industry realise that, if it neglects CSR, it will suffer grave social and economic consequences. According to the authors the major players in the industry have evidently engaged in CSR, currently providing health, educational services, scholarship, potable water and other basic services to the host communities which have contributed significantly towards the improvement of QoL, especially in host communities. This paper seeks to fulfil the singular objective of ascertaining the role of CSR intervention on QoL variation in selected Nun River Oilfield Communities and Neighbouring Communities, and a hypothesis which states that CSR interventions of oil and gas companies do not significantly affect spatial variation in QoL.

The Study Area

The study area has a total of fifteen (15) communities, which comprised of ten Nun River Oilfield Communities namely; Oporoma, Onyoma, Angiama, Luduon, Aguobiri, Bolou-Aguobiri, Agiama-gbene, Igeibiri, Obololi and Osokama and five Neighbouring Communities namely; Otuan, Oweikoroghe, Anyama, Ondewari and Ozezebiri in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. Southern Ijaw Local Government Area has a total area of $2,68^2$ kilometres with a population of 319,413 (National Population Commission, 2006). The studied communities are shown in the map of Southern Ijaw Local Government Area (see Figure 1).

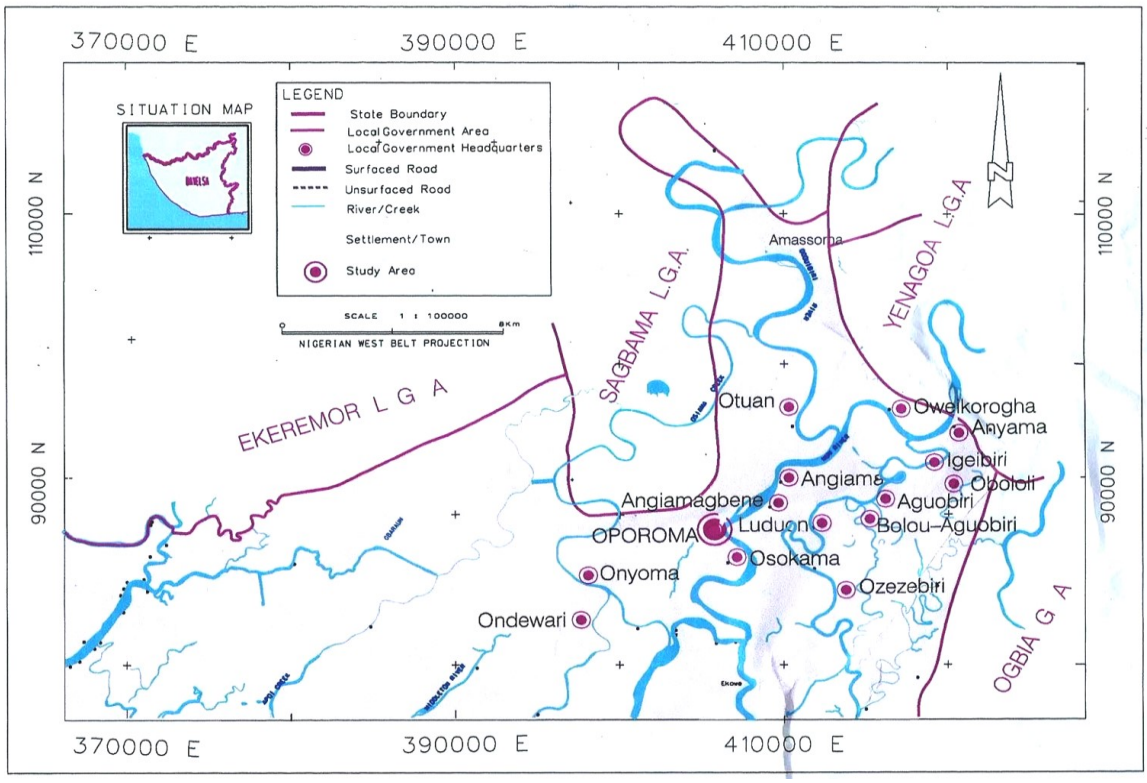

Figure 1. Southern Ijaw Local Government Area Showing the Studied Communities
Source: Office of the Surveyor-General, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

The studied communities had a total population of 54,982 people as at 2019. The geographical coordinates of the central point of the study area which is Oporoma is in latitude $4^0\,48^1\,17^{11}$ North and longitude $6^0 04^1 44^{11}$ East. The Geology is made up from top to bottom with Benin, Agbade and Akata formations (Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited, 1998). The area lies in the wet equatorial climate region of the Niger Delta. It is typically a humid tropical climate characterised by high rainfall and high temperature (Gobo, 1998). The area experiences both dry and wet seasons. The temperature of the area ranges between 23 and 32ºC with little monthly variations. The vegetation cover of the study area and that of the Bayelsa State is typical of the fresh water areas characterised by grasses and trees. The surface soil of the area shows moderate suitability for crop production.

The area is rich in natural resources which include oil and gas, with oil wells in most communities and pipelines crisis-crossing the area. the major economic activity of the area is agriculture including fishing, farming, forestry, lumbering, hunting, gathering of wild forest products and tapping of palm wine and brewing of local gin are the primary economic activities in the area (Allison-Oguru, Zuofa & Berepubo, 1999).

Materials and Methods

The study adopted the descriptive and explanatory research designs. The research utilized mainly primary data, which entailed the use of a well-structured and validated questionnaire and direct physical observation of infrastructural amenities provided through CSR

interventions. The research included all ten (10) oil bearing communities covered by SPDC operations and five (5) neighbouring non-oil bearing communities, totalling fifteen communities in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area (SILGA) of Bayelsa State.

The total projected population of Nun River Oilfield Communities and Neighbouring Communities' was 103, 608. The sample size for the study was 398, which was determined adequate for the study using the Taro Yamane formula for determining sample size from a given population. The multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for the study. Firstly, the respective sampled communities constituted 15 clusters, from which the 398 samples were drawn. Secondly, the proportionate sampling technique was adopted to determine the number of samples to be drawn from each community based on its population size. Thirdly, having determined the respective sample size for each community, the systematic sampling technique at every four housing interval was used to identified the respondents for the study.

A set of 398 structured questionnaires was administered to the sampled 398 respondents, male or female household head that was available as at the time of visit. The questionnaire was administered directly by hand to the respondent to fill and return. This measure was adopted to improve the number of retrieved questionnaire. The obtained data from the administered questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics (percentages, means and graphical illustrations) and analysis of variance (ANOVA), which was adopted to test the hypothesis, which states that CSR interventions of oil and gas companies significantly affect the spatial variation in QoL in the studied communities. The statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) was used to conduct the ANOVA test.

Results and Discussion

This section focuses on presentation of results and discussion of findings which enlightens the audience on how the result is presented to achieve the objective of the study. As earlier stated a total of 398 questionnaires were administered, out of which 340 representing 68% was retrieved and analysed.

CSR Intervention in Nun River Oilfield and Neighbouring Communities

A comparison of the impact of CSR interventions in the Nun River Oilfield and Neighbouring Communities was undertaken, and the distributions shown in Fig 4.1

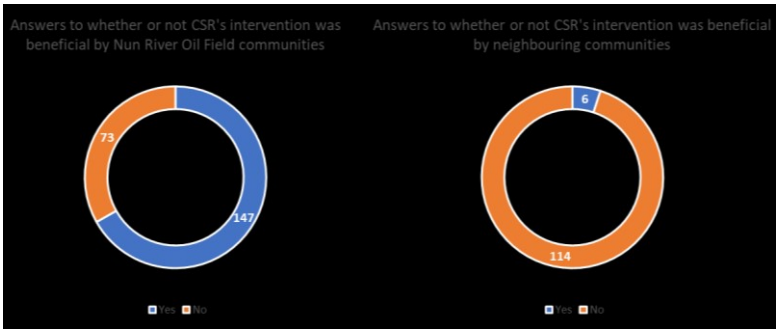

Fig 4.1: CSR interventions in Nun River Oilfield and Neighbouring Communities. Source: Field Survey, 2020

Results showed that in the Nun River Oilfield Communities 147(67%) of the respondents said that CSR interventions projects were undertaken by the SPDC, and 73(33%) said such projects were not undertaken. In the Neighbouring Communities the results showed that only negligible 6(5%) of respondents said that CSR interventions were undertaken and 114(95%) of respondents said CSR interventions were not undertaken in their community.

4.2 IMPACT OF CSR INTERVENTIONS

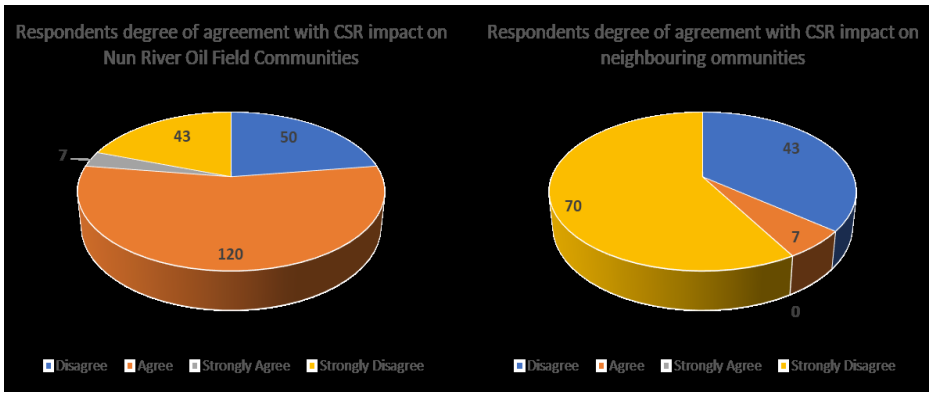

Fig 4.2: Respondents degree of agreement with CSR impact on Nun River Oilfield and Neighbouring Communities. Source: Field Survey, 2020.

In the Nun River Oilfield Communities, the results showed that 50(23%) of the respondents Disagree to the assertion that CSR interventions have had positive impact on QoL in their community, 120(55%) agree, and 7(3%) of respondents strongly agreed to the assertion that CSR intervention have had positive impact on the QoL in their community and 43(19%) strongly disagreed. In the Neighbouring Communities the results showed that 43(36%) disagree to the assertion that CSR intervention have had positive impact on the QoL in their community, 7(6%) Agreed and 70(58%) strongly disagreed. No respondent strongly agreed to the assertion that CRS interventions have had positive impact on the quality of life in their community.

QoL Rating in Nun River and Neighbouring Communities

A comparison of QoL rating between the Nun River Oilfield and Neighbouring Communities was determined, the rating ranged from poor, good and very good, and the distributions are illustrated in Fig 4.3;

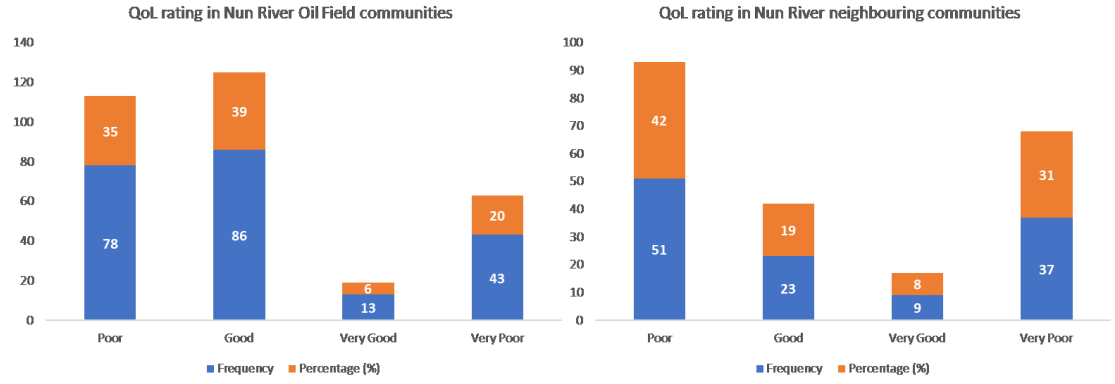

Fig. 4.3: QoL rating in Nun River Oilfield and Neighbouring Communities.
Source: Field Survey, 2020

Results in fig 4.3 showed that in Nun River Oilfield Communities 78(35%) of the respondents rated QoL as poor, 86(39%) rated QoL as good, 13(6%) rated QoL as very good and 43(20%) as very poor. In the Neighbouring Communities the results showed that 51(42%) rated QoL as poor, 23(19%) rated QoL as good 9(8%) of respondents said QoL was very good and 37(31%) as very poor.

The hypothesis which states that CRS interventions of oil and gas companies significantly affect spatial variations in QoL was tested using Analyses of Variance (ANOVA), and the statistical results shown in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1:
ANOVA analysis of the effect of CSR interventions on the spatial variation in Qol

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	107.244	1	107.244	1527.552	.000[b]
	Residual	23.730	338	.070		
	Total	**130.974**	**339**			

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The result of the ANOVA test revealed that the value of the F-ratio calculated 1527.552 is greater than the tabulated value 3.84 at 5% level of significant and also, the p-value 0.000 is less than the significant level 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative which states that CRS interventions of oil and gas companies significantly affect spatial variations in QoL is accepted.

In summary, results showed that 85% of respondents in the Nun River Oilfield Communities indicated that CSR intervention project were undertaken by SPDC in their communities as against over 77% of respondents in Neighbouring Communities who indicated that CSR intervention projects are not undertaken in their communities. Research findings showed that CSR interventions were undertaken mainly in the Oilfield Communities. Likewise, analyses of benefits of CSR intervention in the Nun River Oilfield and Neighbouring Communities revealed that over 67% of respondents in Oilfield Communities said CSR interventions were beneficial and only a negligible 5% of respondents in Neighbouring Communities who said CSR interventions were beneficial to their communities; 58% of respondents in the Nun River Oilfield Communities agreed to the assertion that CSR intervention projects have had position impact on their QoL experience as against only a negligible 6% in the Neighbouring Communities who agreed to the assertion.

Secondly, results of the ANOVA analyses revealed that CSR interventions significantly affected spatial variation in QoL between the Nun River Oilfield and Neighbouring Communities. The finding of this study confirm Babatunde (2020) conclusion that QoL of one rural community vary from the QoL of another due to economy and population dynamics and availability of social amenities and that of Akinyemi, Owoaye, Popoola and Ilesanmi (2012)

also concluded that QoL in natural resources rich communities are likely to present a significantly different and better QoL compared to adjoining sterile communities.

Recommendations

Given the observed a general lack of basic amenities in the study area, most especially in the Neighbouring Communities. Therefore, we recommend that government at all levels should design and undertake rural infrastructure development such as road networks, pipe-bone water, electricity, health, educational facilities other public amenities to enhance QoL in the rural communities. Secondly, government at all levels; Federal, State and Local Government should revive the agricultural sector by providing technical assistance through extension services and ensure the provision of storage techniques/facilities and market. This will also generate employment and hence boast the people's income level, thereby reducing the level of poverty in the area and inherent rural – urban migration.

Conclusion

The study primarily examined the role CSR interventions in QoL variation in Nun River Oilfield Communities and Neighbouring Communities in Bayelsa State. The results from both descriptive and statistical analyses showed significant variation of QoL between the Nun River Oilfield and Neighbouring Communities. Secondly, and CSR interventions were largely responsible for thesignificant variation in QoL.Key recommendations have been suggested which we believe shall help government, development agencies and partners in the formulation and implementation of rural infrastructure development policies and schemes.

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