

## **Conflict Management through Corporate Social Responsibility in Shell, NNPC and Chevron in Delta and Rivers States**

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### ***Abstract***

*This study examined the conflict management through Corporate Social Responsibility Programmes of Shell, NNPC and Chevron in Delta and Rivers States. The objectives were among others to find out the extent unfulfilled Corporate Social Responsibility obligations may have caused conflicts between Shell, NNPC Chevron and the host communities in Delta and Rivers States, Nigeria. The frustration-aggression theory was adopted. The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey design. The population of this study is made up two streams, the public relations units and departments of the oil companies and the residents of the communities where the companies operate. For the oil companies, Shell, NNPC and Chevron, the public relations staff 145. The population of the residents of the communities of the two states, Rivers and Delta States was 145 from the oil companies and 1,841,110 from the host communities the population of the study with the total 1,841,255. The sample size for the study is 384 according to Krejcie and Morgan sample table. The sampling techniques used in this study were multi-stage cluster and purposive. The researcher obtained the data for this study using questionnaire and interview guide. The researcher adopted quantitative and qualitative methods to present and analyze the data gathered from the respondents. The finding revealed that the extent unfulfilled CSR obligations responsible for the conflicts between Shell, NNPC and Chevron, and the host communities in Delta and Rivers State were high extent. The host communities accepted that the extent of unfulfilled CSR obligations responsible for the conflicts between Shell, NNPC and Chevron and the host communities in Delta and Rivers State were a high. The study concluded that a concerning trend wherein unfulfilled CSR obligations have led to conflicts between the multinational oil*

*companies and their respective host communities. The study recommended that it is imperative for Shell, NNPC and Chevron to prioritise their CSR commitments, engage in meaningful dialogue with community stakeholders and implement transparent accountability mechanisms to ensure the fulfilment of promises.*

**Keywords:** *Conflict Management, Corporate Social Responsibility, Oil Companies*

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## **Introduction**

In the last two decades, there have been drastic changes in the relationship between the private sector and their stakeholders. One of the most significant corporate trends of the last decade is the growth of corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a means of conflict management between the oil companies and their stakeholders, especially their host communities. Corporate social responsibility (CSR), as an aspect of Public Relations (PR), implies that organisations consider the interests of society by taking responsibility for the impact of their activities on customers, employees, shareholders, communities and the environment in all aspects of their operations. This obligation is seen to extend beyond the statutory obligation to comply with legislation and sees organisation voluntarily taking further steps to improve the quality of life for employees and their families as well as for the local community and society.

Though corporate social responsibility is used concurrently in law, marketing and public relations, it should be noted that the concept has distinct meanings and implications in the three fields. In marketing, the ideal concept is social marketing (SM) which, according to Kotler et al. (2012), is the systematic application of marketing along with other concepts and techniques to achieve specific behavioural goals for a social good. Social marketing can, thus, be applied to promote, for example, merit goods, and make the society avoid demerit goods and promote that which considers society's well-being as a whole. This may include asking people not to smoke in public areas, asking them to use seat belts, and prompting to make them follow speed limits. In law, Corporate Social Responsibility refers to the legal obligations that apply to each business organisation and how such organisations comply with the legislations as well as the necessary actions needed to enforce such legislations.

Utting and Ives (2016) view the concept of corporate social responsibility in two dimensions. First, corporations should go beyond both the minimal standards laid down in law and the piecemeal interventions that characterise philanthropy by adopting a range of voluntary initiatives aimed at minimizing malpractice and improving their social, environmental and human rights performance and impacts. And, second, modern, well-run companies need to be more responsive to the concerns of multiple stakeholders and aspects of management that have to do with risk, reputation management and organisational learning.

Gawel (2016) quotes the Canadian Business for Social Responsibility as describing CSR to be "a company's commitment to operating in an economically, social and environmentally sustainable manner, while recognising the interests of its stakeholders, including investors, customers, employees, business partners, local communities, the environment and society at large" (p.11). A socially responsible company should act in such a way as to address these areas through the development of corporate policies and by obeying the law. The company is responsible for treating its employees well, respecting the communities in which it operates,

developing sound corporate governance, ensuring environmental preservation, and supporting philanthropy, human rights and economic prosperity.

Ajala (2011) notes that corporate social responsibility is a concept that emphasises the responsibility to plan and manage an organisation's relationships with all those involved in or affected by its activities. She views corporate social responsibility as an excellent opportunity to "bank" good will in the community since it is a social investment. The concept of social responsibility notes Black (2019) is adopted to highlight a company's direct involvement in the community's affairs. The continued acceptance of a company and even its survival depends to a great extent on its demonstrating, not only an awareness of the problems of the society, but also, a willingness and capacity to do something about these problems.

Thus, every organisation finds its equilibrium within the environment in which it operates in the same way that an individual co-exists within a family unit. Because the organisation is not a lifeless commodity, but a living entity, the corporate relations desk must identify ways of listening to and responding to the sensitivity of those concerned with it or affected by its activities. This, therefore, brings into focus the relationship existing between oil firms or companies and their various stakeholders including the communities in which they operate. These oil firms cannot isolate or segregate themselves from their stakeholders including communities in which they operate and they cannot pretend not to acknowledge the hazards involved in their operations. Mitee (2019) notes some of the hazards as the destruction of communities' means of livelihood. This could be in the forms of oil spillage, premature deaths and respiratory illness as a result of toxic substances emitted from gas flares as well as the destruction of farmlands due to the construction of oil pipelines. These hazards pose some nauseating problems to the various host communities and in most cases result to conflicts and misunderstanding between these oil companies and the communities in which they operate. It is understandable that without any good harmonious relationship with the locality of its operations, no oil company can function successfully. Yet since inception, oil companies in Nigeria are laden with environmental crisis caused by Oil pollution, oil spillage, gas flare, transportation and storage of oil products.

In the specific case of oil pollution, it could be said that oil pollution occurs when the above happens as a result of, or in the course of the extraction, storage or transportation of petroleum oil. According to Wangbu (2018), oil and water do not mix, but when oil spills on water, toxic chemicals from the oil do mix with water and stay there for a long time. The thicker part of the oil spreads over the surface and prevents air from getting into the water, hence, fish, animals, and plants that live in the water are not able to breathe. This therefore, means that when oil spills on water, chemicals left behind may make the water unsafe for drinking, even after the visible oil on the water is removed. When the oil spills on land, it destroys the soil by choking out the air and killing the living things that make soil healthy. The same thing happens when oil gets on the human skin or the skin of animals. The oil covers the skin and blocks air from getting in toxins from the oil also enters the body through the skin, causing illness. The activities of these oil companies have caused a lot of harm or damage to environment directly or indirectly in the communities where they operate. This threatens the survival of several plants, and has already harmed many land, air, sea, animal and plant species in the locality.

The environmental damage that is as a result of oil retraction and production has directly affected human life in their area of operation. Damages include pollution of water

resources and contamination of the soil. Human beings are affected greatly by environmental pollution because it is destroying the vegetation, livestock, and the health of the human body. It is important to note that oil is often spilled during transport through pipelines, trucks, ships and leakages from storage tanks. It is the oil companies' responsibility to prevent spills and to clean them up when they happen. Oil and oil products get spilled literally every day in the host communities. These spills have caused and still cause damages to the soil, groundwater, animals, and people. The oil companies do not inform the host communities when a spill happens. Moreover they do not usually contain the spill and clean it up right away. The main problem is that most of the pipeline infrastructures are deteriorated. This spillage is a violation of a multitude of national and international laws and regulations on environmental pollution and damage. As a result of the high frequency of oil spills many host communities have been badly affected to the point that drinking water has been contaminated, and the ecosystem and soil composition have been altered irreversibly (A community guide to environmental health 2012).

Apart from oil spillage and pollution, gas flaring is also a cause of conflict between the oil companies and their host communities. When oil is found together with natural gas, oil companies may burn the gas to separate it from the oil. This is called gas flaring. Gas flares expose workers, communities, and wildlife to pollution that causes cancer, skin diseases, asthma, bronchitis, and other health problems. This gas flaring is dangerous, wasteful, and very polluting. Selling the gas is a better and more reasonable alternative to burning it off but this is more costly and difficult because gas must be stored under pressure, increasing the risk of fires and explosions.

This explains why companies flare the gas even though it increases the harm to people and the environment. Gas flaring by the oil companies has cost many lives, and the poisons released by Nigerian gas flaring have contributed more to climate change and global warming than all other. Comrade Che Ibegwura, a man from Rivers state, Nigeria states that "for years, we have lived with continuous flaring of gas. Our farmlands have been polluted. We labour hard to plant, but little comes out. Our roofs are corroded. Our air is polluted. Our children are sick, even the rainwater we drink is contaminated with black soot from the gas flares. We cannot continue with this suffering" (A Community Guide to Environmental health, 2012, p.9). The most painful part of this is that the oil companies and government regularly wash their hands off their host communities most impacted by oil development. These communities are left on their own to try to determine how much and what kind of illness this has caused, and to search for ways to restore their communities' health. Gas flaring is associated with air pollution and has long term effect on humans.

There have also been demonstrations over the years from most communities where these oil companies operate due to environmental degradation, palpable poverty, lack of basic social amenities and employment opportunities. The conflict is also as a result of problems connected with poor attitude to spill clean-up, unnecessary delay in environmental impact assessment and non-payment of compensation to the areas that their environment affected. In many instances, the grievances have turned into outright antagonism, leading to abduction of company staff or officials, sabotage of company properties and violence against companies (Palowei et al., 2014). According to Egbe & Paki (2011) "the presence of SPDC in a community spells doom arising from countless oil spillages and gas flares that renders the

environment desolate with devastating consequences on the local economies” (p.129), particularly, the rivers and farmlands. It is pertinent to note that for some time now the relationship between the oil companies and their host communities drastically changed because of the crisis. In order to solve this problem, the idea of corporate social responsibility becomes necessary as to plan and manage the organisation’s relationship with everybody involved in or affected by all its activities in every sphere of operations. This is because the main idea of corporate social responsibility is about organisations giving back to societies where they make profit, which is also a way of managing conflict. Based on the foregoing, this study, therefore, examines the conflict through corporate social responsibility in Shell, NNPC and Chevron in Delta and Rivers States.

### **Statement of the Problem**

For sometimes now, the oil industry has been heated up by assorted conflicts and crisis situations. In reaction there have been calls from governments, experts, concerned observers and spirited individuals, asking the oil companies operating in the industry to increase commitments to corporate social responsibility programmes. Companies have also reacted by claiming social responsibility commitments and responsiveness. Some companies equally have reeled out figures of stupendous millions and billions of petro-dollars they have been spending on corporate social responsibility projects and similar programmes. If this is true why the continuous conflict between the oil companies (Shell, NNPC, and Chevron) and their host communities?

For instance, the youths of Egbeda in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State in 2018 and 2019 had conflicts with Shell that led to the vandalization and destruction of their operational facilities. Their vehicles were seized temporarily and lives were lost because of the involvement of the Nigerian military in the conflict. Between 2019 the people of Omudioga and Obelle communities in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State had crisis with the oil companies operating in their communities which resulted to the closure of flow stations, Rigs and also the molestation of oil company staff, because of the Oil Companies’ empty promises of benefits to their host communities. The unfulfilled Corporate Social Responsibility programmes as in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) did not go down well with the community.

This has made such conflicts intense, incessant and violent. In another note the host communities are against the operation of the oil companies because of the inadequate compensation for environmental damage. This has resulted in violent demonstrations and litigation claims against these companies for environmental damage since environmental impact assessments by companies have not reflected the environmental impact of such operations on the host communities. So, despite claims of huge expenditures by oil companies (Shell, NNPC, and Chevron), there are still perceived shortcomings in corporate social responsibilities of the oil companies thus exacerbating conflict in the communities, which requires assessment in the communities studied where there are conflicts with the respective oil companies. This study, therefore, is an investigation into the conflict through corporate social responsibility in Shell, NNPC and Chevron in Delta and Rivers States.

### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study was to assess the conflict through corporate social responsibility in Shell, NNPC and Chevron in Delta and Rivers States. The objectives of this study were to;

1. find out the extent unfulfilled Corporate Social Responsibility obligations may have caused conflicts between Shell, NNPC Chevron and the host communities in Delta and Rivers States, Nigeria.
2. investigate the potentials of corporate social responsibility programmes of Shell, NNPC and Chevron as conflict management approach in oil producing communities in Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were derived from the objectives of the study;

1. To what extent are unfulfilled Corporate Social Responsibility obligations responsible for the conflicts between the oil companies and their host communities in Nigeria?
2. What are the potentials of Corporate Social Responsibility programmes of Shell, NNPC, and Chevron as a conflict management approach in the selected communities in Delta and Rivers State, Nigeria?

### **Literature Review**

#### **Evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility**

The debate about Corporate Social Responsibility has been said to have begun in the early 20th century, and growing concerns about large corporations and their power. According to Sethi (2011) the ideas of charity and stewardship helped to shape the early thinking about CSR in the United States. Ida Tarbell's 1904 work, *The History of the Standard Oil Company* helped the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States to break up the company on antitrust grounds. Similarly, Upton Sinclair's 1906 book, *The Jungle*, led to the passage of the pure Food and Drugs Act and the Meat Inspection Act by the United States Congress. These as noted by Sethi (2011) can be seen as early attempts to mandate socially responsible corporate behaviour.

The term corporate social responsibility itself according to Gawel (2016) came into common use in the early 1970s although it was seldom abbreviated. The term stakeholder, meaning those impacted by an organisation's activities, was used to describe corporate owners beyond shareholders from around 1989. Many large companies now issue a corporate social responsibility report along with their annual report. The CSR report concentrates on their non-financial social activities (usually positive contributions in nature). The increased awareness of CSR had also come about according to Korten (2015) as a result of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, in which a major goal is the increased contribution of assistance from Large Organisations, especially Multi-National Corporations, MNCs, to help alleviate poverty and hunger, and for business to be more aware of their impact on society. There is a lot of potential for Corporate Social Responsibility to help with development in poor Countries, especially Community-based initiatives. In the United Kingdom (UK), as noted by Kitten (2015) the term Corporate Responsibility is increasingly used instead of Corporate Social Responsibility, as a conscious move to expand the boundaries away from purely social or Community issues to include broader areas of governance and environmental sustainability.

#### **Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility**

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) emerged as part of business ethics imploring firms to be responsible in their dealings with their stakeholders and help in addressing important social and environmental issues (Farrell et al., 2010). Since the call from Bowen (2011) urging the managers to be socially conscious of their activities, the concept has grown and expanded to many areas like social, environmental and sustainability and shifted

attention from managers to firms (Valor, 2015). The negative impacts of the activities of businesses on the society and the environment and the desperate need by businesses to regain public confidence coupled with the inability on the part of the government to address those pressing issues lend a voice to the clarion call on the business for assistance in tackling those concerns and thus increased their CSR efforts (Prior et al., 2018, Chen et al., 2018). The concept is highly a debated one, and the question of what actually should be the role and function of business took the centre stage as proponents of CSR is of the view that to be responsible and ethical, firms should go beyond the legal minimum is addressing those social and environmental issues (Farrell, 2010).

Others relying on the business case of CSR opined that CSR activities will be beneficial to firms in the long run, prominent was the stakeholder theory put forward by (Freeman, 1984). They contended that CSR activities will increase the satisfaction of the stakeholders and thus improved on the firm's corporate image and patronage (Frooman, 2019). Similarly, the institutional theory posits that firms are motivated to be ethical because the benefit to such behaviour is high (McWilliams, et al., 2016). Likewise, the resource-based-view-of-the-firm theory (Hart, 2015) claims that CSR practices can give a firm a competitive advantage over their competitors. Other writers tried to link CSR activities to the firms' financial performance and concluded that they have a positive outcome (Khan et al., 2012; Farrell et al., 2010; Crane & Matten, 2017).

### **Corporate Social Responsibility and the Environment**

Initially, CSR activities do not include environmental activities even though there was recognition of the need for firms to limit their resource use and its effect on the environment (Krumwiede et al., 2012). Environmental aspects of CSR were probably first introduced by Backman (1975) and have recently constituted an essential aspect of CSR, they include activities such as waste recycling, pollution prevention and control, green initiatives, and the efficient use of energy and resources (Krumwiede et al., 2012). Coelho et al., (2011) express the view that support for the environment is an essential aspect of the business strategy and should not be voluntary. Acceptance of such, they stated is the accomplishment of CSR in acknowledging environmental activities and their sustainability effects. It is therefore imperative, they advised, that firms meticulously evaluate each stage of their decision-making process and the effects of their decisions on their host communities and the environment.

Ali and O'Faircheallaing, (2017) reveal that the activities of the oil and gas industry often commence and expose a series of environmental issues and the oil and gas industry occupy a vital place in CSR debate and how it could be actualized. It also discovered that many oil and gas firms as a regular practice, incorporated environmental reporting as an aspect of their CSR activities to show their proactivity in encouraging sustainable development (Guenther et al., 2017). It is the view of Hilson and Basu, (2013) that CSR stresses the protection of the environment, a mind-set that has resulted in the extensive acceptance of the need for viable and progressive environmental management strategies. Conventionally, they stated, that approaches to CSR must include, as the least precondition, the assessment of environmental performance using appropriate indicators. Beard et al. (2011) agree that the protection of the environment should be uppermost in priority and higher in moral plinth than profit-making. It is their view that the environment is impacted in different ways by activities of firms which disrupts ecosystem, depletion of natural resources and emission of waste and

pollutants. Lo, et al., (2010) suggest that the oil and gas industry is likely to be in the forefront in implementing environmental protection activities as they are more likely to be persuaded to do so by their stakeholders considering the nature of their business.

### **Conflict and Conflict Management**

Conflict is a growth industry and is inevitable in daily interactions and inherent in human relationships. Even the teeth and the tongue in their age long symbolic relationship sometimes conflict with each other. Though not necessarily a dysfunctional experience, conflicts can produce negative results when not properly handled. According to Zartman, (2011), conflict is an inevitable aspect of human interaction.” Thus, environmental issues including water, food security (scarcity), degradation of crop/farmland and forests, aquatic life among other issues, all contribute to the likelihood of increased conflicts as people of various interest groups (such as the State, profit-oriented organisations, indigenes of the land, and petrobusiness) compete to satisfy their basic needs (Okolo, 2016). This implies that, two or more people want the same thing and there is not enough to go round (Ihejirika, et al, 2011; Okocha, 2013), conflict becomes inevitable if there is no compromise. The emergence of environmental conflict has been traced to the social effects produced by environmental stress, among which is reduced agricultural production, economic decline, and disruption of regular and legitimized social relations (Homer – Dixon, 2011; Okolo, 2014). Today, the people of the Niger Delta are reacting violently to the degradation of their environment by the exploration activities in the region (Okolo, 2014; Okocha, 2013).

### **Expectations of the Host Communities of Shell, NNPC, and Chevron.**

Nigeria is a mono-cultural based economy, with the mainstay of the national economy derived from sale of crude oil found in the Niger Delta region in the Southern part of country. This region is made up of nine states and as an estimated population of about 28 million amounting to 16.7% of the Nigerian population (Obi 2019). This Niger Delta has suffered the dire effects of oil exploration with concomitant environmental degradation for decades. The revenue that accrue from the oil accounts for about 95% of Nigeria’s foreign exchange earnings and 95% of federal revenue (Obi, 2019). Billions of US dollars have accrued to the country from the combined operations of various oil companies such as Shell, Chevron, and NNPC, which conduct oil and gas business on behalf of the country. The NNPC operates mainly through joint venture contract. The greatest joint venture partner of NNPC remains: Shell Petroleum Development company, Chevron, Mobil, Texaco, Elf and Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG).

Despite the inundation of these oil companies and the heightening of their operations in the host communities, there is marked unmatched development in the host communities in particular and the Niger Delta region in general. The oil companies claim and shows evidences of several executed projects in the host communities as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility. The claims include: construction of, roads and schools, provision of portable water, electricity, sponsorship, scholarships, and; supporting health campaign programmes among other. Notwithstanding, the host communities seem not to have acknowledged the effectiveness and efficiency of the CSR in taking care of their major interests. Omole (2010) observes that the relationship of cordiality which existed between oil companies and oil host communities in good old days has given way to hostility and violence. The hostility takes the



form of pipeline vandalism, kidnapping, shutting down of oil companies' facilities, seizure of oil installations, militancy, intra and inter-community conflict (Alabi & Ntukekpo, 2012).

### **Theoretical frameworks**

#### **Frustration-Aggression Theory**

Frustration-aggression theory, more commonly known as the frustration-aggression hypothesis was propounded by Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mower, and Sears (1939) and stated that the occurrence of aggressive behaviour always presupposes the existence of frustration which always leads to some form of aggression. The theory holds that violent behaviour stems from inability to fulfil needs and that aggression is the outcome of frustration. Frustration is the feeling of irritation and state of annoyance when something blocks an Individual from doing something to achieve a goal. Frustration is a complex phenomenon. It has significant differences in definition in psychology Yangicher (2017).

There are a number of key characteristics that differentiate frustration from other related categories of conflict, stress, concern, deprivation, etc., for example, the situation must include social influence on a personality and have a certain time characteristic (Lukin, 2013; Rosenzweig, 2011; Tarabrina, 2011). With regard to the intensity of the aggression, Dollard et al. (1939) put forth the suggestion that the strongest aggressive reactions are those directed toward the perceived sources of the frustration. Aggression toward the source of the frustration is one type of retaliatory behaviour (Zillmann & Cantor, 2011). However, the aggressive response to a frustration can also be directed toward individuals not responsible for the interference with the attainment of a goal (Geen, 2011).

The Frustration- Aggression theory rests on the basic stimulus- response hypothesis and the questions that this theory raises are: 1. Does all frustration lead automatically to aggression? 2. And can all aggression and conflict be traced to some catalytic frustration? The relevance of frustration aggression theory is hinged on the fact that host communities who are frustrated have an innate disposition to do violence to its source in proportion to the intensity of their frustrations. The theory is an eye opener to the relevant authorities in the organisation because it suggests that individual teachers will become aggressive when there are obstacles (perceived and real) to their welfare. That aggressive behaviour is not motivated by genuine hostility, but by frustration (Malice, 2017).

All these discussion on the theory imply that there is no smoke without fire" and that an angry man is a hungry man. Finally, the basic assumption of the Frustration- Aggression theory is that all aggression, whether interpersonal or international, has its roots causes in the frustration of one or more actor's goal achievement. That is to say that conflict can be traced to the fulfilment of personal or group objectives and the frustration that this breeds. Since the demand for basic human needs has always exceeded the supply, all human conflict can be traced to an actor's failure to obtain what it needs. The frustration -aggression theory is a perfect theory to explain why members in multi-national companies under the auspices of different host communities to take actions against the authorities/leaders and unleashed unprecedented grudges and disorder. That is if host communities experience frustration, this leads to aggression. The aggression is a cathartic release of the build-up of frustration. If the member is prevented from achieving a goal within the organisation by some external factor, then this will lead to frustration which will always lead to aggression in the organisation.

### **Empirical Review**

Gbali et al. (2021) carried out a paper for publication on “Corporate social responsibilities of international Oil Companies as a panacea to conflict management in selected host communities in Southern Nigeria.” The study examined corporate social responsibility and management of Oil-related conflicts in South-South Nigeria. The CSR was seen as rooted in the relationship between employee, business and State-social relationship. The population of the study area was 2,358,000. The Taro Yamene formula for sample size determination was used to arrive at 400 for the study of the 27 host Communities. Three core oil producing States were selected. Out of these three State, three Local Government areas and three communities each based on their oil producing capacity. Data collection was semi-structured: questionnaire interviews, focused group discussion. Secondary data was by reports, books, and journals. Descriptive tool such as frequency, mean, standard deviation, tables and maps was used to answer research questions. The statistical tool for hypothesis testing was independent T test. The study revealed that frequent conflicts in the study area have been characterized by the relationship between Oil prospecting Companies and their host communities; a close look at the conflicts shows that most of such have direct or indirect link with IOC’s, as a result of inadequate CSR management. Some recalcitrant cash-in by way of vandalism, etc., others through legitimate agitations. The impacts of a supposed sustainable development of oil and gas exploration in the area is hitherto environmental degradations, e.g. effluents, unemployment, lack of social amenities, non-inclusion.

Nkwede et al. (2018) did a paper on “Transnational corporate and the politics of environmental degradation in Nigeria: Analysis of 2011 Unep’s report on Ogoni land.” The paper was an attempt to critically analyse the 2011 United Nations Environmental Programme’s report on Ogoni land as it concerns the politics of environmental degradation in Nigeria and to ascertain how it can successfully resolve the imbroglio. It adopted a case study method of political inquiry as well as theory of Corporate Social Responsibility in the analysis of the subject matter. The paper found out that among others, UNEP got involve in Environmental Impact Assessment on Ogoni land in order to protect the economic interest of its member nations. The successful implementation of the report depends on the integrated efforts of all major actors.

Muoboghare and Guanah (2023) carried out a study on “Misconception of corporate social responsibility of oil companies on their host communities, a study of Shell petroleum development company ad communities in Delta State, Nigeria.” The aim of the study was to gain an understanding of the current perception of CSR among residents of the Niger Delta in Nigeria. It was anchored on Stakeholder theory. A secondary research was conducted to explore previous views and evolution of CSR, but it only provided insight into the concept without any conclusion. As a result, a primary research was carried out using an ethnographic qualitative method in eight oil producing communities in Delta state, where the inhabitants were reluctant to disclose information to strangers. The findings revealed that while the residents had a favourable perception of CSR, they were inflexible in their insistence that it should be mandatory for SPDC to undertake CSR initiatives due to the environmental hazards resulting from the company's operations. It was recommended that public enlightenment programmes, on behalf of the SPDC/Government/Communities, could help change people's perception about who is responsible for what, and how the communities should be managed.

It was also recommended that SPDC should strengthen its community relations team to interact more with the community and improve its corporate image. The reviewed study and the current study are related as both studies focus on corporate social responsibility of oil companies on their host communities in Nigeria. The area of divergence is on the objectives, scope and methods.

### Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey design. The population of this study is made up two streams, the public relations units and departments of the oil companies and the residents of the communities where the companies operate. For the oil companies, Shell, NNPC and Chevron, the public relations staff 145. The population of the residents of the communities of the two states, Rivers and Delta States according to 2006 population census as projected by 2.5 annual growth rate for 17 years was 1,841,110. When 145 from the oil companies and 1,841,110 from the host communities the population of the study would be 1,841,255. This is therefore the population of this study.

The sample size for the study is 384 according to Krejcie and Morgan sample table. To get the sample from the population, the study used the multistage cluster sampling technique. For the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), the researcher purposively selected opinion leaders and members of various groups within the cluster areas in the four LGAs who have a fair degree expert knowledge about the study intentions. The researcher obtained the data for this study using questionnaire and interview guide. The researcher adopted quantitative and qualitative methods to present and analyze the data gathered from the respondents. The qualitative method, that is the interview was analyzed using explanation building data analysis ,while the quantitative method of data analysis was presented using statistical tools as tables of frequency distribution, simple percentages and weighted mean score (WMS) based on a 4-Point Likert-Scale.

### Results and Discussions

**Table 1: Extent Unfulfilled CSR Obligations Responsible for Conflict between Shell and Host communities in Delta and Rivers States**

Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total	Total Weighted (fx)	Remark
There exists conflict between the company and the host communities	25 (100)	9 (27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	127	3.74	Very High Extent
The unfulfilled CSR programmes are responsible for conflicts between my company and the host communities	22 (88)	12 (36)	0 (0)	0 (0)	124	3.65	Very High Extent
Finance is one of the major challenges faced in executing CSR programmes in my company	11 (44)	7 (21)	8 (16)	8 (8)	89	2.62	High Extent

Unconducive environment is a major challenge faced in executing CSR programmes in my company	18 (72)	12 (36)	0 (0)	4 (4)	112	3.29	High Extent
Embarking on genuine dialogue is one of the way my company respond to on-going conflicts with the host communities	16 (64)	14 (42)	4 (8)	0 (0)	114	3.35	High Extent
The fulfillment of CSR programmes as at when due to host communities helped forestall impending conflicts with the host communities and my company.	15 (60)	13 (39)	6 (12)	0 (0)	111	3.26	High Extent
Greed on the part of the host communities is a factor responsible for conflict between host communities and my company	10 (40)	14 (42)	6 (12)	4 (4)	98	2.88	High Extent
Corruption on the part of CSR project executors is one of the factors responsible for conflict between host communities and my company.	6 (24)	10 (30)	8 (16)	10 (10)	8	2.35	Low Extent
Flawed priorities in CSR programmes selection is a factor responsible for conflict between host communities and my company.	5 (20)	12 (36)	7 (14)	10 (10)	80	2.35	Low Extent
<b>Grand Mean</b>					<b>91</b>	<b>2.68</b>	<b>High Extent</b>

Table 1 showed that the extent unfulfilled CSR obligations responsible for the conflicts between Shell and the host communities in Delta and Rivers State were high extent.

**Table 2: Extent Unfulfilled CSR Obligations Responsible for Conflict between NNPC and Host communities in Delta and Rivers States**

Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total	Total Weighted (fx)	Remark
There exists conflict between the company and the host communities	20 (80)	17 (51)	0 (0)	0 (0)	131	3.54	Very High Extent
The unfulfilled CSR programmes are responsible for conflicts	22 (88)	15 (45)	0 (0)	0 (0)	133	3.59	Very High Extent

between my company and the host communities							
Finance is one of the major challenges faced in executing CSR programmes in my company	11 (44)	10 (30)	8 (16)	8 (8)	98	2.65	High Extent
Unconducive environment is a major challenge faced in executing CSR programmes in my company	18 (72)	12 (36)	3 (6)	4 (4)	118	3.19	High Extent
Embarking on genuine dialogue is one of the way my company respond to on-going conflicts with the host communities	16 (64)	14 (42)	7 (14)	0 (0)	120	3.24	High Extent
The fulfillment of CSR programmes as at when due to host communities helped forestall impending conflicts with the host communities and my company.	15 (60)	13 (39)	9 (18)	0 (0)	117	3.16	High Extent
Greed on the part of the host communities is a factor responsible for conflict between host communities and my company	10 (40)	17 (51)	6 (12)	4 (4)	107	2.89	High Extent
Corruption on the part of CSR project executors is one of the factors responsible for conflict between host communities and my company.	6 (24)	11 (33)	8 (16)	12 (12)	85	2.30	Low Extent
Flawed priorities in CSR programmes selection is a factor responsible for conflict between host communities and my company.	5 (20)	12 (36)	10 (20)	10 (10)	86	2.32	Low Extent
<b>Grand Mean</b>					<b>111</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>High Extent</b>

Data in Table 2 showed that the extent unfulfilled CSR obligations responsible for the conflicts between NNPC and the host communities in Delta and Rivers State were high extent.

**Table 3: Extent Unfulfilled CSR Obligations Responsible for Conflict between Shell and Host communities in Delta and Rivers States**

Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total	Total Weighted (fx)	Remark
There exists conflict between the company and the host communities	21 (84)	8 (24)	0 (0)	0 (0)	108	3.72	Very High Extent
The unfulfilled CSR programmes are responsible for conflicts between my company and the host communities	19 (76)	10 (30)	0 (0)	0 (0)	106	3.66	Very High Extent
Finance is one of the major challenges faced in executing CSR programmes in my company	11 (44)	7 (21)	5 (10)	3 (3)	78	2.69	High Extent
Unconducive environment is a major challenge faced in executing CSR programmes in my company	18 (72)	11 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	105	3.62	High Extent
Embarking on genuine dialogue is one of the way my company respond to on-going conflicts with the host communities	14 (56)	11 (33)	4 (8)	0 (0)	97	3.34	High Extent
The fulfillment of CSR programmes as at when due to host communities helped forestall impending conflicts with the host communities and my company.	10 (40)	13 (39)	5 (10)	0 (0)	89	3.07	High Extent
Greed on the part of the host communities is a factor responsible for conflict between host communities and my company	10 (40)	14 (42)	3 (6)	2 (2)	90	3.10	High Extent
Corruption on the part of CSR project executors is one of the factors responsible for conflict between host communities and my company.	6 (24)	6 (18)	8 (16)	9 (9)	67	2.31	Low Extent
Flawed priorities in CSR programmes selection is a factor responsible for conflict between host communities and my company.	5 (20)	7 (21)	7 (14)	10 (10)	65	2.24	Low Extent
<b>Grand Mean</b>					<b>90</b>	<b>3.10</b>	<b>High Extent</b>

Table 3 indicated that the extent unfulfilled CSR obligations responsible for the conflicts between Chevron and the host communities in Delta and Rivers State were high extent.

**Table 4: Extent Unfulfilled CSR Obligations Responsible for Conflict between Shell, NNPC and Chevron and Host communities in Delta and Rivers States**

Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total	Total Weighted (fx)	Remark
There exists conflict between the community and the oil company operating in my community	117 (468)	116 (348)	14 (28)	6 (6)	850	3.36	High Extent
The unfulfilled CSR programmes are responsible for the conflicts between your community and the oil company	123 (492)	111 (333)	10 (20)	10 (10)	855	3.38	High Extent
The company have failed in delivering CSR programmes obligations to the host communities	112 (448)	116 (346)	13 (26)	12 (12)	832	3.29	High Extent
Greed on the part of the beneficiaries is one of the factors responsible for the unabated conflicts between your community and the oil company	120 (480)	110 (330)	19 (38)	4 (4)	852	3.37	High Extent
Embarking on genuine dialogue is one of the ways my community responds to on-going conflicts between it and the oil company.	93 (384)	117 (351)	27 (54)	16 (16)	805	3.18	High Extent
The fulfillment of CSR programmes as at when due by the oil company would help to forestall impending conflicts between the host community and the oil company.	119 (476)	112 (336)	3 (6)	20 (20)	838	3.31	High Extent
Corruption on the part of CSR executors is a factor responsible for the unabated conflicts between my community and the oil company.	118 (472)	110 (330)	16 (32)	9 (9)	863	3.41	High Extent
<b>Grand Mean</b>					<b>842</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>High Extent</b>

As indicated from Table 4, the host communities accepted that the extent of unfulfilled CSR obligations responsible for the conflicts between Shell, NNPC and Chevron and the host communities in Delta and Rivers State were a high.

**Table 5: Potentials of Corporate Social Responsibility Programmes of Shell as Conflict Management Approach in Host Communities**

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Total Weighted (fx)	Remark
There are systematic approaches or strategies upon which CSR programmes executions are based in my company	16 (64)	14 (42)	4 (8)	0 (0)	114	3.35	Agreed
The proactive and the reactive are some of the strategies used in the execution of CSR programmes in my company	12 (48)	14 (42)	6 (12)	2 (2)	104	3.06	Agreed
Regular consultation, carrying out developmental projects and participation in decision making by host communities on community related issues, and scale of preference are some of the strategies in the execution of CSR programmes in my company.	20 (80)	14 (42)	0 (0)	0 (0)	122	3.59	Strongly Agreed
To some extent the CSR as a conflict management approach has helped in making the environment conducive for oil exploration, exploitation and increase in production and supply to global market.	16 (64)	13 (39)	5 (10)	0 (0)	113	3.32	Agreed
The introduction of the CSR programmes as crisis management approach has reduced physical assault of your company's personnel and litigation against my company by host communities	18 (72)	10 (30)	3 (6)	3 (3)	111	3.26	Agreed
CSR as approach in conflict management has reduced community incidents such as blockades, protests, and	16 (64)	15 (45)	3 (6)	0 (0)	115	3.38	Agreed



disruption oil facilities located in the host communities and make the environment conducive for oil exploration and exploitation.

**Grand Mean** **113**    **3.32**    **Agreed**

Data in Table 5 revealed that the potentials of Corporate Social Responsibility programmes of Shell as conflict management approach in the host communities were systematic approaches or strategies upon which CSR programmes execution were based, regular consultation, and participation of host communities in decision-making.

**Table 6: Potentials of Corporate Social Responsibility Programmes of NNPC as Conflict Management Approach in Host Communities**

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Total Weighted (fx)	Remark
There are systematic approaches or strategies upon which CSR programmes executions are based in my company	16 (64)	14 (42)	7 (14)	0 (0)	114	3.08	Agreed
The proactive and the reactive are some of the strategies used in the execution of CSR programmes in my company	12 (48)	14 (42)	9 (18)	2 (2)	110	2.97	Agreed
Regular consultation, carrying out developmental projects and participation in decision making by host communities on community related issues, and scale of preference are some of the strategies in the execution of CSR programmes in my company.	20 (80)	14 (42)	3 (6)	0 (0)	128	3.46	Agreed
To some extent the CSR as a conflict management approach has helped in making the environment conducive for oil exploration, exploitation and increase in production and supply to global market.	16 (64)	13 (39)	5 (10)	3 (3)	116	3.14	Agreed
The introduction of the CSR programmes as crisis management approach has	18 (72)	13 (39)	3 (6)	3 (3)	120	3.24	Agreed

reduced physical assault of your company's personnel and litigation against my company by host communities	16 (64)	15 (45)	3 (6)	3 (3)	118	3.20	Agreed
CSR as approach in conflict management has reduced community incidents such as blockades, protests, and disruption oil facilities located in the host communities and make the environment conducive for oil exploration and exploitation.							
<b>Grand Mean</b>					<b>118</b>	<b>3.19</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Table 6 showed that the potentials of Corporate Social Responsibility programmes of NNPC as conflict management approach in the host communities were systematic approaches or strategies upon which CSR programmes execution were based, regular consultation, and participation of host communities in decision-making

**Table 7: Potentials of Corporate Social Responsibility programmes of Chevron as Conflict Management Approach in host Communities**

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Total Weighted (fx)	Remark
There are systematic approaches or strategies upon which CSR programmes executions are based in my company	16 (64)	13 (39)	0 (0)	0 (0)	114	3.35	Agreed
The proactive and the reactive are some of the strategies used in the execution of CSR programmes in my company	12 (48)	14 (42)	6 (12)	2 (2)	104	3.06	Agreed
Regular consultation, carrying out developmental projects and participation in decision making by host communities on community related issues, and scale of preference are some of the strategies in the execution of CSR programmes in my company.	15 (60)	14 (42)	0 (0)	0 (0)	102	3.52	Strongly Agreed

To some extent the CSR as a conflict management approach has helped in making the environment conducive for oil exploration, exploitation and increase in production and supply to global market.	16 (64)	13 (39)	0 (0)	0 (0)	103	3.55	Strongly Agreed
The introduction of the CSR programmes as crisis management approach has reduced physical assault of your company's personnel and litigation against my company by host communities	13 (52)	10 (30)	3 (6)	3 (3)	91	3.14	Agreed
CSR as approach in conflict management has reduced community incidents such as blockades, protests, and disruption oil facilities located in the host communities and make the environment conducive for oil exploration and exploitation.	16 (64)	10 (30)	3 (6)	0 (0)	100	3.45	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>					<b>86</b>	<b>2.97</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Data in Table 7 showed that the potentials of Corporate Social Responsibility programmes of Chevron as conflict management approach in the host communities were systematic approaches or strategies upon which CSR programmes execution were based, regular consultation, and participation of host communities in decision-making

**Table 8: Potentials of Corporate Social Responsibility programmes of Chevron as Conflict Management Approach in host Communities**

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Total Weighted (fx)	Remark
The CSR as a conflict management strategy of the oil companies is rated as very effective in my community.	16 (64)	13 (39)	116 (232)	108 (108)	443	1.75	Strongly Disagreed
The introduction of the CSR programmes as crisis management approach has reduced physical assault of the company's personnel	12 (48)	14 (42)	117 (234)	110 (110)	434	1.72	Strongly Disagreed

and litigations against my community								
The CSR as an approach in conflict management has reduced community incidents such as blockades, protests, and disruption oil facilities located in my community and make the environment conducive for oil exploration and exploitation.	25 (100)	14 (42)	108 (216)	106 (106)	464	1.83		Strongly Disagreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>					<b>447</b>	<b>1.77</b>		<b>Strongly Disagreed</b>

Data in Table 8 showed that the host communities disagreed that the potentials of Corporate Social Responsibility programmes of Shell, NNPC and Chevron served as conflict management approach in the host communities.

### Discussion of Findings

#### Research Question 1: To what extent are unfulfilled Corporate Social Responsibility obligations responsible for the conflicts between the oil companies and their host communities in Nigeria?

The finding revealed that the extent unfulfilled CSR obligations responsible for the conflicts between Shell, NNPC and Chevron, and the host communities in Delta and Rivers State were high extent. The host communities accepted that the extent of unfulfilled CSR obligations responsible for the conflicts between Shell, NNPC and Chevron and the host communities in Delta and Rivers State were a high. The Findings with regard to interview extract revealed that unfulfilled CSR programmes obligations, poor maintenance from stakeholders and lack of commitment to development were identified as causes of conflicts between the oil companies and the host communities. Also, it was also revealed that the fulfilment of CSR programmes as at when due and regular communication between your community and the oil company helped to forestall impending conflicts between the host community and the oil company.

This finding is in line with the study of Gbali et al (2021) on “Corporate social responsibilities of international Oil Companies as a panacea to conflict management in selected host communities in Southern Nigeria.” The study revealed that frequent conflicts in the study area have been characterized by the relationship between Oil prospecting Companies and their host communities; a close look at the conflicts shows that most of such have direct or indirect link with IOC’s, as a result of inadequate CSR management.

The frustration-aggression theory upon which this study was anchored gives significance to this finding. The theory posits that frustration, stemming from the thwarting of an individual’s goals or desires, can lead to aggression. This theory is relevant in understanding the psychological mechanisms underlying various forms of aggression, including interpersonal conflicts, violence and social unrest. By recognising how frustration can escalate into aggressive behaviour, individuals and societies can better address underlying causes of conflict and implement strategies to mitigate aggression. Moreover, the theory highlights the

importance of addressing sources of frustration to prevent the escalation of aggression, emphasising the need for effective conflict resolution, social justice and psychological support mechanisms in promoting peace and harmony within communities and societies.

**Research Question 2: What are the potentials of Corporate Social Responsibility programmes of Shell, NNPC, and Chevron as a conflict management approach in the selected communities in Delta and Rivers State, Nigeria?**

The data showed that the potentials of Corporate Social Responsibility programmes of Shell, NNPC and Chevron as conflict management approach in the host communities were systematic approaches or strategies upon which CSR programmes execution were based, regular consultation, and participation of host communities in decision-making. The host communities disagreed that the potentials of Corporate Social Responsibility programmes of Shell, NNPC and Chevron served as conflict management approach in the host communities. The interview extract revealed that though there exist conflict management strategies, however, the three oil companies (Shell, NNPC, and Chevron) are not well disposed to the strategies and do not utilize them in the planning and implementation of their corporate social responsibility programmes.

This study corroborates the study of Nkwede et al. (2018) “Transnational corporate and the politics of environmental degradation in Nigeria: Analysis of 2011 Unep’s report on Ogoni land.” The study found out that among others, UNEP got involve in Environmental Impact Assessment on Ogoni land in order to protect the economic interest of its member nations. The successful implementation of the report depends on the integrated efforts of all major actors. Also, the finding upholds the study of Muoboghare and Guanah (2023) on “Misconception of corporate social responsibility of oil companies on their host communities, a study of Shell petroleum development company ad communities in Delta State, Nigeria.” Their study revealed that while the residents had a favourable perception of CSR, they were inflexible in their insistence that it should be mandatory for SPDC to undertake CSR initiatives due to the environmental hazards resulting from the company's operations.

The frustration-aggression theory which this study was underpinned gives backing to the finding of this study. The theory provides insight into the underlying mechanisms driving conflicts in host communities where multinational oil companies operate. According to the theory, aggression arises when individuals or groups are prevented from achieving their goals due to perceived obstacles or frustrations. In this context of the study, host communities may experience frustration due to perceived lack of access to resources, environmental degradation, or socio-economic disparities exacerbated by the activities of oil companies.

**Conclusion**

This study highlights a concerning trend wherein unfulfilled CSR obligations have led to conflicts between the multinational oil companies and their respective host communities. This underscores the importance of fulfilling corporate social responsibility commitments to maintain positive relationships and foster sustainable development. Addressing these unmet obligations is crucial for restoring trust and harmony between the companies and their communities.

The study sheds light on the untapped potential of corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes by Shell, NNPC and Chevron as conflict management approaches within host communities. Despite the existence of systematic approaches or strategies for CSR programme

execution, such as regular consultation and participation of host communities in decision-making processes, the companies have not fully embraced or utilised these strategies in their planning and implementation. This disconnection between established strategies and actual practice suggests a missed opportunity for effective conflict management and community engagement. There is clear need for the companies to align their CSR strategies more closely with systematic approaches and actively involve host communities in decision-making processes to effectively mitigate conflicts and foster sustainable development.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the result of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. It is imperative for Shell, NNPC and Chevron to prioritise their CSR commitments, engage in meaningful dialogue with community stakeholders and implement transparent accountability mechanisms to ensure the fulfilment of promises.
2. Multinational oil companies should integrate community consultation and participation mechanisms into their CSR planning and implementation processes to enhance their impact and build stronger relationships with host communities.

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