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An Assessment of Utorogun Gas Plant Corporate Social Responsibility on Its Host Communities in Delta State

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Abstract: Over the years, production activities by multinational oil and gas companies have pitched them against their host communities resulting in severe conflicts. This paper examined implementation of Utorogun Gas Plant corporate social responsibility (CSR) on its host communities in Delta State. Data were drawn from civil societies, indigenes of the host communities, supervisory agencies of government, and staff of Utorogun Gas Plant. Seventy-two in-depth interviews were held at Otor-Udu. Iwhrekan and Otu-Jeremi (also refer to as Otor-Ughievwen) which are the host communities to the Utorogun gas plant. Each group was representative of the population based on gender, and age group i.e. elderly men (*eghwesha*), elderly women (*eghweya*) and the youths (*Ighele* or *Emoha*). The paper identified a gap between CSR as a policy of SPDC and its implementation. The findings showed that the activities of Utorogun Gas Plant seriously threatened the livelihood of its host communities due to uncontrolled gas flaring. Also, projects executed by Shell are far below expectations of their CSR as a policy. The paper concluded that the Shell implementation of its CSR policy on its host communities is very poor.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility, Gas Flaring, Exploitation, Environmental Degradation.

INTRODUCTION

Ukoli (2004) asserts that industrialisation is key and a major contributor to socio-economic development of any nation, however, its activities and operations also create environmental problems that are harmful to human existence. As societies witnesses more growth and expansion of industrialisation, the society also grapples with the huge amount of industrial wastes generated as a result of industrialisation. These hazardous industrial wastes, eventually constitutes huge problem for the society to curtail.

Economic development has created significant environmental consequences, which in turn has its toll on sustainable development of developing countries. Thus, environmental consequences as a result of industrialisation has exacerbated poverty level because it deprives host communities of opportunity to engage in their source of livelihood, which is mostly farming and fishing. Nevertheless, since environmental degradation affects source of livelihood of people, there is need for environmental sustenance in order to secure and protect the environment, which implies indirectly protecting the source of livelihood of the people. In view of this, when the environmental resources i.e. land is depleted, it may lead to economic decline, deterioration of social fabric, and destabilisation of political structure. Political will is an essential requirement for surmounting poverty, and this could prevent environmental degradation within the sustainable human development and institutional change (UNDP, 2004).

The past six decades have witnessed significant degradation of the Niger delta environment resulting in deterioration and decline in the region's environment and economy respectively. Ojameruaye (2004) asserts that the environment of Niger delta region has been gravely degraded as a result of oil exploitation activities that has damaged lakes, rivers, groundwater, land, plants, animals, forests and fisheries in the region. Ojameruaye avers that except remedial actions are embarked upon, the economy of the entire region will collapse.

Utorogun gas plant is wholly operated by Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), sited at the western part of the Niger delta. This plant was constructed by Shell to supply gas to the fertilizer company at Onne and the Egbin power station in Lagos so as to generate electricity for local consumption. The people of Utorogun communities have continually been exposed to the hazards of volatile and uninhibited gas flaring for over five decades. The 2021 report of World Bank on gas flaring among countries of the World shows that Nigeria falls among the seven countries that flares more gas in the world. Nigeria is alleged to account for flaring 617 billion cubic feet of associated gas in 1989. World Bank (2021) further reported that Nigeria flares 76% of its gas in 2021, while USA and UK flares only 0.6% and 4.3% of gas in 2021 respectively.

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Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC, 2021) establish that Nigeria flared an estimated 1,252.26 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of natural gas into the atmosphere between 2016 and 2020. Nigeria flares 42.6% of its entire natural gas production, this ranks Nigeria as the highest natural gas flaring country in the world. In its valuation, the NNPC further insinuate that Nigeria alone flares 20 percent of the world total natural gas. The flared gas in turn produces poisonous and harmful fumes that is responsible for many environmental and health problems in the Niger delta. Ojewale (2021) infers that gas flaring comes next after oil spills as the second most destructive environmental pollutant in the Niger Delta, exposing host communities to cancer, asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia, neurological and reproductive health challenges, and deformities in children. Agricultural production, which is the mainstay of the Utorogun host communities is inhibited by gas flaring from the gas plant. The flaring of gas increases soil temperature, leading to acid rains, low yield in harvest among other effects. Fumes as a result of the flares also result in black rainfall, which eventually affect aquatic life and wildlife (Ojewale, 2021).

Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), operator of Utorogun gas plant has corporate social responsibility (CSR) policy, however, the host communities have not really benefitted from the CSR policy of the company because, the policy only merely exist on paper and not in practice. The partial or non-implementation of corporate social responsibility policy, have placed the Utorogun host communities at the mercy of looking inwards and embarking on self-help projects. The main thrust of this paper is to examine implementation of SPDC corporate social responsibility on its host communities in Delta State. This is to ascertain the extent to which SPDC has been able to translate its corporate social responsibility theories into practice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Corporate Social Responsibility

The major concern of organisations in the arena of business has traditionally been to earn profits and boost shareholders shares value (Catalyst Consortium and USAID, 2002). This implies that financial gain of the corporations has been their motivating force. Nevertheless, in the past three decades, there has been a paradigm shift in the meaning of corporate responsibilities to a broader concept that now include the environment, local communities, working conditions and ethical practices. This new concept is referred to as corporate social responsibility (CSR).

There is no all-embracing definition for CSR, however, Chandler (2016) sees CSR as transparent business activities that focuses on ethical values, in agreement with statutory provisions, and respect for people, communities, and the environment. Also, farther than profit making, Chandler avers that organisations are charged with entirety of their effect on people and the planet. Catalyst Consortium and USAID (2002) describes CSR as the "corporate triple bottom line", which means the entirety of an organisation's financial, social and environmental performance in operating its business. As the business sector expands its investments in CSR in its three usual areas (the workplace, marketplace and community), it becomes imperative to build corporate partnership that can assist in expanding, enhancing and sustaining its health efforts in developing countries.

One of societal major concern, according to International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD, 2007), is the growing impact of the activities of Multinational Oil Companies (MNOCs) on employees, customers, host communities, environment, governments etc. This is to guarantee sustainable, equitable and non-discriminatory development. The IISD avers that the yearnings and aspirations of current and future generations will continue to be a mirage unless Multinational Oil Companies (MNOCs) adopt social and environmental values as its core objective. These values must be designed in such a way so as to promote respect for natural systems and international standards while carrying out its business activity.

Some scholars (Etzioni, 1988; Fombrun, 1997; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001; & Wood, 1991) were of the view that CSR implies an organisation's activities and position as it affects perceived societal or stakeholder obligations. Other scholars (Carroll, 1999; Griffin, 2000; Moir, 2001; & Rowley & Berman, 2000) conceptualises CSR based on some approaches with respect to empirical study. A lot of scholarly works have been advanced on that which exemplify CSR. Carroll (1979) recognise four responsibilities of any organisation, namely: economic responsibility, legal responsibility, ethical responsibility, and discretionary responsibility.

- Economic responsibility. Organisations are expected to produce goods and commodities that consumers want, yield profits, offer employment;
- Legal responsibility. Organisations are mandated to act in accordance with local, state, federal, and relevant international laws;
- Ethical responsibility. Organisations are bound to fulfil other social anticipations, not documented as legislation, such as preventing tragedy or social laceration, taking into consideration people's moral rights, carrying out legitimate lawful action; and
- Discretionary responsibility. Organisations are required to accomplish extra functions and activities that are valuable to society, such as participating in various types of social or cultural ventures, and motivating employee through training and industry-leading remunerations.

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Agwasim (2021) describe CSR as communal responsibility of an organization towards its host communities and in extension, the society whereupon it operates. It is another way of recompensing the host communities where the organization derive its benefits through a mutual or symbiotic partnership. It is expected that such MNOCs carry out its CSR through provision of potable water, good and efficient primary health care facilities, low cost housing, and electrification of host communities and recruiting members of host communities into the MNOCs.

ORIGIN OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Chaffee (2017) traced the origin of the social characteristics in corporate behaviour to the ancient Roman Laws, which was visible in organisation like orphanages, asylums, and hospitals homes for elderlies and the poor. As a result of the expansion of the British Empire and the capture of new lands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which led to the to corporations being used as a tool for social development. In subsequent centuries, as a result of the expansion of the British Empire, the British crown exported its corporate laws to its American colonies.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries witnessed the emergence of the Christian religious ideology and perspective regarding social state of affairs in response to the moral failure of society. This was glaring in terms of the high incidence of poverty of the entire people in the British Empire and some parts of Europe (Harrison, 1966). This religious perspective in social reforms acceded to the Victorian philanthropy that views social problems dominated by poverty and ignorance in addition to child and female labour (Carroll, 2008). Carroll avers that the religious origin of the Victorian social benevolence offers Victorian Philanthropists an advanced level of principle and benevolence, and by late 1800's, the humanitarian efforts concentrated on work force and the establishment of welfare schemes. Heald (1970) stated that an undisputable fact is the establishment of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) an interest group that started in London in 1844 with the aim of employing Christian principles to business enterprise of the time.

CSR: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

The establishment of welfare programmes assumed a sympathetic dimension between late 1800's and early 1900's in order to safeguard and keep possession of employees and some organisations consider enhancing their standard of living (Carroll, 2008; & Heald, 1970). Heald recalled the 1875 case of Macy in the USA, in which some businessmen donated funds to an orphan asylum and by 1887 reported it in their financial books as miscellaneous expenses. This era witnessed the growth of urbanisation and industrialisation characterised by large scale production (Agudelo *et al.* 2019). This usher in new apprehension to farmers and small organisations in the employment market to be able to compete with the new interdependent economy, formation of trade unions in quest for improvement in workplace conditions, and the fear of the middle class of possible deprivation of religious and family values in the new industrial society (Heald, 1970).

Business managers started undertaking the task of harmonising profit maximisation with establishing and sustaining a balance with the request of their customer (consumer), employees and the community between 1920's and early 1930's. This is responsible for the reason managers are seen as trustees for the various group of external relations with the organisation, which in return developed into social and economic responsibilities adopted by organisations (Carroll, 2008).

The conceptualisation of the construct of corporate social responsibility in the early 1950s and 1960's led to scholars focusing attention on the social level of analysis of CSR (Lee, 2008). Carroll (2008) identified the post-World War II times and the 1950's as the period when the activities of organisations were tailored transcending philanthropic activities. These early investigations of CSR together with the social context of that period attracted enthusiasm from scholars, and one of such scholars was Keith Davis. Davis (1960) revealed that the significant social, economic and political changes raised pertinent concerns for entrepreneurs or industrialists to reconsider their responsibility in the society and their social responsibility.

Other scholars who contributed to the debate of that period on CSR were Frederick (1960); McGuire (1963); & Walton (1982). Frederick (1960) advanced a new theory of business responsibility hinged on five conditions:

- to have a principle of value (economic production and distribution,
- to be hinged on contemporary concepts of management and administration,
- to admit the historical and cultural traditions the present social context,
- to acknowledge that the conduct of a businessman is a consequence of its function in the society, and
- to distinguish that trustworthy business attitude does not come about by chance, rather, it is the fallout of intentional and purposely efforts.

Waterhouse (2017) reported that there was intense persuasion on organisations towards the end of 1960s to act in line with the social anticipations of the period, most of which were strongly conveyed in the form of protests and environmental and anti-war crusade.

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The 1970s witnessed the establishment of some of today's outstanding organisations with regard to social responsibility (Agudelo *et al.*, 2019). The anti-war sentiment, general social context, and an increasing sense of awareness in the society during the late 1960s, according to Waterhouse (2017), led to inability of many businesses to be able to accomplish the yearnings and needs of members of the public as a result of low level of confidence. The new social expectations, and new regulatory frameworks of the 1970s, in the words of Carroll (2015), pave the way for a dispensation of managing corporate social responsibility. This led to the promulgation of a number of legislations that took into consideration social concerns of the period and offer a wide-ranging set of functions to organisations.

The 1980s usher in an era when governments reduced regulations on the private sector organisations by minimising their oversight function in regulating corporate behaviour. This led to managers focussing on accomplishing the social expectations of the various interest groups of that era (Agudelo *et al.*, 2019). As such, Thomas Jones in 1980 regarded CSR as a decision-making process that determines corporate behaviour (Jones, 1980). This precipitates the establishment of new frameworks, models, and methods directed at assessing CSR from an operational viewpoint. Some outstanding works include that of Tuzzolino & Armandi (1981), who recommended a demand pecking-order framework by which an organisation's socially responsible performance can be evaluated based on five criteria (profitability, organisational safety, affiliation and industry context, market position and competitiveness, and self-actualisation. Carroll (2008) concluded that the most significant societal anxiety and anticipation of corporate behaviour during the 1980s focus on environmental pollution, employment discrimination, consumer abuses, employee health and safety, quality of work life, worsening urban life, oppressive practices of multinational corporations.

The 1990's ushered in an era of globalisation, which also impacted on CSR. Exceptional international events of the 1990's impacted the international approach regarding social responsibility and the strategy towards sustainable development. The most pertinent consist of the establishment of European Environment Agency in 1990, the UN summit on the Environment and Development that took place in Rio de Janeiro which gave rise to the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the adoption of Agenda 21 and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992, and the adoption of Kyoto Protocol in 1997. The establishment of these international organisations and the adoption of international treaties depicted international interventions for determining higher standards in respect of climate-related issues and, indirectly to corporate behaviour (Union of Concerned Scientists, 2017).

The year 2000 was referred to as watershed in the annals of the United Nations when the Millennium Declaration with its eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) fix a fifteen-year international agenda that culminated in 2015. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) declare CSR as a framework for UN-Private sector cooperation in order to achieve the MDGs, which strengthens and promoted global acceptance of the concept. This led to the establishment of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) in 2000, with the objective of filling the vacuum in managing human rights and social and environmental issues in order to introduce global values into the markets (United Nations Global Compact n.d.). In 2011, the renewed European Union (EU) Strategy for CSR covering the period 2011-2014 was published by the European Commission (EC).

Speaking on the future of CSR, Carroll (2015) anticipated more engagement of stakeholders, predominance and capability of ethically conscious consumers, the extent of expertise of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), employees as motivating force for CSR, as well as extra CSR activity above, below, and across the global supply chain. CSR in the future will employ up to date technology as part of new business frameworks and strategies. In this regard, Agudelo *et al.* (2019) posited that business frameworks need to comply and progress with the intention of accepting current tools, which they will take part in through a comprehensive and extensive framework hinged on the principles of social responsibility to such an extent that it incorporate the concept of sustainability, the development of shared values, and the need for organisations review their purpose in order to deal with what is more desirable for the world.

Gas Exploitation in the Niger Delta

Exploitation of crude oil started in Nigeria in 1958, and since 1973 it has dominated and turned out to be the livewire of the nation's economy, contributing more than 90 percent of the total export and 80 percent of total revenue accruing to Federal government. The volume of natural gas in the earth ranks the country's reserve as the tenth largest natural gas reserve in the world. However, due to lack of the needed physical infrastructure required to harness and process the natural gas from the reserve, the country continue to flare the gas.

With the global shift from flaring of natural gas to liquefying as a means of mitigating the effect of greenhouse gases on the environment. However, in Nigeria, the continual flaring of gas leading to release of greenhouse gas into the environment thereby worsening impact of climate change on the region. This have led to gradual extinction of the mangrove forest, which is synonymous with the Niger delta region; thus contributing to the felling of the dying mangrove trees, which are being used by rural dwellers as firewood for cooking, thereby reducing or diminishing the mangrove forest and aggravating the crisis of climate change. With the huge demand for liquefied natural gas, this resource has become a huge source of income for countries like Nigeria that has large reserve of unexploited natural gas. Nevertheless, some multinational oil companies entered into natural gas liquefying venture in conjunction with the federal government and the state-owned oil company, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) as a joint venture. Such gas production companies include Utorogun Gas Plant and Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas Company. As a result of the activities of these oil and gas producing companies, Bassey (2001) reported that gas is being flared throughout the day at temperatures of 13-14,000 degrees Celsius. The heat generated from this flare poses a serious health hazard to the members of host communities and danger to the environment. Bassey also disclosed that 35 million tons of carbon dioxide and 12 million tons of methane are discharged into the atmosphere from gas flaring, which put Nigeria at the top of the countries that discharges the highest greenhouse gases in the world.

Theoretical Underpinnings: The Triple Bottom Line Theory

The triple bottom line is a theory of corporate social responsibility that builds on the premise that organization is a member of the moral community, and this gives it social responsibilities (Table 1). It emphasizes corporate social responsibility and spur organisations to contemplate social and environmental impacts as well as drive for profits. Slaper & Hall (2011) avers that this theory lay emphasis on sustainability, and stipulates that organisations should weigh their actions on three independent scales: economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

Environmental Sustainability

As a result of the increasing rate in the population of developing economies in sub-Saharan Africa and some parts of Asia, this have also led to enormous increase in their consumption rate (Conway, 2018). Conway claimed that the increase in economic wealth and prosperity of developed economies, also have with it an upsurge in consumption rate. Furthermore, the satiable desire for improvement in quality of living globally, which also have its attendant impact in terms of been unsustainable. Conway concluded that the effect of this unrestrained growth on the environment are countless in respect of input (supply of raw materials) and output (emissions) perspective.

DEFRA (2013) assert that from the viewpoint of an output, pollutants and waste released as part of the current economic model have impacts on the environment. Emissions as a result of greenhouse gas (GHG) effect (consisting of carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF_6) have increased gradually as economic output also experience increases. Janssens-Maenhout *et al.* (2017) established that there has been steady rise from 27,660,218 kilotonnes (kt) of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2E) in 1970 to 53,526,302 kt (CO_2E) in 2012. These GHGs disallow the long-wave infrared radiation from escaping from the earth's atmosphere whilst permitting the short-wave radiation from the sun to enter, thereby allowing GHGs to accumulate in the environment, leading to surge in the temperature of the earth's surface. This led to irreparable damage on habitats and species (US EIA, 2017), thus hindering the ability of the earth to continue to absorb excessive levels of CO_2. Hence environmental sustainability is a significant necessity in ensuring that human activities sustains human life and not threatens it through abuse and degradation of the earth.

Social Sustainability

The extensive spread of globalization has also lead to increase in the amount of supply chain for many organisations, it has evoked the issue of moral quandary where they are engaging directly or indirectly (through suppliers) employees to manufacture their products, at very poor wages (Conway, 2018). The quandary may deprive people living in poorer countries of meaningful employment without carrying out their tasks for the multinational corporation, therefore, it is good that these jobs are provided. Jayasuriya (2008) acknowledge that there is a demarcation between recruiting people cheaply (that is determinants of reduction in the cost of goods, which is the key factor for recruitment in multinational organisations) and poor working conditions such as underpaid, poor work environment such as unsafe buildings or work stations, unavailability of adequate sanitation, healthcare and even recess during the working hours.

For instance, the incitation for boycott of Primark organization in 2013 through the social media as a result of the collapse of the factory building in Bangladesh that led to the death of more than 300 employees recruited for making clothing for the organization. It was alleged that the building was previously ascertained not to be in good condition to accommodate human beings before the occurrence of the incident, yet the organisations who procure clothing from the factory defer action (The Huffington Post, 2013). This same indifferent attitude is being carried out by Chinese companies operating in Nigeria in which many Nigerians are underpaid and being subjected to terrible inhuman working conditions with impunity, yet Nigerian government is not implementing any legal and punitive actions on these Chinese organisations.

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Osborne (2016) attest that exploitation of employees by their organisations is not restricted to multinational organisations operating overseas supply chains in developing countries alone. Farrell (2016) attest to instances in many developed economies whereby workers were employed on zero hours' contract (i.e. contract that did not specify the period/hours the employee is expected to work) or anticipating an employee to perform his tasks/duties without adequate breaks or recess. This situation usually occurs when the consideration of an organization is primarily for profit making and to minimize cost of operation. Smithers (2007) also ascribe reason for this situation to monopoly of the market by large organisations by forcing smaller organisations out of the market by brandishing their purchasing power through lowering prices of products in order to control the market by eliminating competition, thus choking smaller firms out of the market. Williams (2015) concluded that this exploitation of market power can cause lack of innovation and quality since the large organization has little or no competition. This was the situation with public enterprises in Nigeria such as NITEL, NIPOST, Nigerian Airways etc. that failed to align with global trends and ended up becoming moribund as of today. Cannon (2012) inferred that this transfer of costs and risks to others will bring adverse effect on society (table 1).

Economic Sustainability

Gimenez *et al.* (2012) describes economic sustainability as the ability of an organisation to keep on prevailing on a strong capital base, or for governments to keep on providing the required resources to administer their country efficiently and effectively. Elkington (2004) argues that economic sustainability rates highly long-term financial stability over unstable and unreliable, short-term profits, regardless of how high. Elkington further affirms that the triple-bottom-line model allows large organisations to undertake the role of bringing into existence business plans that produce ability to withstand stress and protracted process. Rodriguez-Fernandez (2016) posits that organization profits will increase when their workers are under paid or receive low remuneration, though in the short term because poor wages may lead to high staff turnover and lack of motivation or poorly motivated staff can subvert those profits in the longer term if workers are not adequately rewarded for their work. Rakotomavo (2012) stated that regardless of organisations' innate mission for short term profits, investors are cautious of risk and lack of conviction; rather, they are more certainly to incentivise organisations by investing in those that successfully manage their risks with the aim of protecting shareholder dividend payments and share price growth, instead of those who do not.

CSR AND THE SIGNIFICANT ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS

A significant emphasis of neo-Keynesian scholars to CSR (contrary to neoliberal view) is the relevance placed on the concerns of various stakeholders over and beyond that of shareowners by organisations in order for CSR to be effective (Broomhill, 2007). Stakeholder theory is derived from the concept developed by Freeman (1984) that organisations is made up of various stakeholders (Table 1) outside of their own shareholders and that they should be managed with those stakeholders. The Australian Corporations and Markets Advisory Committee Discussion Paper on CSR (Australian Government, 2005) classified stakeholder as:

- shareholders, who, different from other stakeholders, have a direct investment interest in the organisation;
- other people with a financial interest in the organisation (financiers, suppliers and other creditors), or those in some other business legal relationship with the organisation (for instance, business partners);
- people who are involved somehow in the organisation's wealth creation (employees and consumers);
- anyone otherwise directly affected by an organisation's conduct (e.g. host communities where the organisation carries out its operations);
- Pressure groups or NGOs, usually distinguished as public interest bodies that adopt or endorse social goals that are in consonant with the activities of the organisations.

Stakeholder is in some cases used by and large to include regulators, the financial markets, the media, governments and the community. Stakeholder theorists assert that the legal privileges that the State provides to organisations (such as limited liability, endless succession etc.) put forward a public interest aspect to the operations of and internal management of organizations. Hence, the organisation required to be managed in furtherance of the larger society (Parkinson 2003). Recently, discourse in stakeholder theory has centred on the nature of the relationship between the organization and the stakeholder, and between the various stakeholders.

Greenwood (2001) examines community as an organisational stakeholder, especially as it affects the nature of interaction between the community and the organization. Setting in motion from a neoliberal point of view, Hemphill (1997) argues that although it is a code of belief that an organisation must exemplify fiscal responsibility. The long-term economic success of contemporary organisation requires a company with vision that acknowledge the significance of stakeholders, especially employees and local communities.

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Knox *et al.* (2005) gave empirical evidence of large number of stakeholders engaged through CSR programs performed by the bigger FTSE companies and how such programs are reported. It is apparent from the hypotheses tested that extraction companies and telecommunication organisations are more proficient at recognising and prioritising their stakeholders, and linking CSR programs to business and social outcomes. Laszlo, Sherman, Whalen and Ellison (2005) argue that stakeholder value hinged on the economic, environmental and social effects a company has on its various constituents is a rapidly growing source of business advantage. Utilising the opportunity of this source involves a change in the mentality of leadership and a disciplined approach to assimilating stakeholder value throughout the business.

Table 1. List of Corporate Stakeholders

Group	Contributions	Relationship	Corporate Obligations
Shareholders	• Financial Capital; • Assumption of top risk band; • Ultimate Management	Primarily legal (Corps Act and Organisational documents) may also be contractual	Dividends and/or increase in capital value consistent with other obligations
Financial Investors	• Financial Capital; • Assumption of risk; • Expertise sometimes	Primarily contractual	Repayment of interest and capital
Directors	• Management Oversight	Legal and Contractual	Compensation
Employees	• Intellectual and physical labour; • Experience initiative commitment continuity	Contractual (individual or collectively)	Fair compensations and conditions; Respect for human rights, safety, employment security consistent with other obligations;
Customers and end Consumers	• Intermediate and ultimate demand for products and services	May be direct and contractual or mediated through retailers, also subject to legal regulation	Duty of care, fair competition and trade practices
Suppliers	• Business inputs;	Primarily contractual	Payment for inputs, fair competition and trade practices
Local Communities in which Company operates	• Local security; • Conducive business environment; • Social, cultural and environmental amenities; • Environmental carrying capacity (biodiversity, land renewable and non-renewable resources, ecosystem services); • Subsidies and other support; • Physical infrastructure	Primarily informal and implicit; Some local regulation	Compliance with laws, taxation, responsible use of environmental carrying capacity and support for community.
State/National Communities in which Company operates	As above, plus • National Security; • Regulation; • License to operate; • Assumption of residual risk in insolvency	Implicit in license to operate; Legal regulation	Compliance with laws, taxation, responsible use of environmental carrying capacity and support for community
Global Community	• International trade; • Environmental carrying capacity (biodiversity, stable climate etc.)	Almost wholly implicit mediated through national governments	Responsible use of greenhouse and other global environmental carrying capacity fair trading conditions

Source: Broomhill (2007)

Triple Bottom Line (TBL) and the Three PS

The Triple Bottom Line (also known as TBL or 3BL) is a method of assessing the economic strength, performance and value of an organisation, and this is determined in three core areas, which are also refer to as the 3Ps (People, Planet and Profit). The 3Ps of the Triple Bottom Line are foremost examined in the perspective of monitoring and managing the organisations toward accomplishing its goals (figure 1).

People

This is the internal and external social impact that an organisation has on people. Gillis (2021) argues that this bottom line will aid in evaluating the organisation's obligation to people. This entails all stakeholders, employees, individuals throughout the supply chain, clients, host community where the organisation operates and future generations. Gillis recognises methods that aids in assessing this bottom line and it includes promoting human rights, volunteering, donating to global poor or hungry, and improving the status of diversity, race and gender equity.

Planet

It refers to the environmental impact that an organisation has on the planet. Gillis (2021) reported that organisations have contributed to poor air quality and pollution, which has led to environmental degradation and worsening climate change. This bottom line will aid in appraising and enhancing organisations' resolve to reducing outcome of their operations that lead to environmental degradation. Steps taken to assess bottom line entails reducing carbon pollution from effluence, greenhouse gases etc. by cutting down on energy consumption, dependence on crude oil, while enhancing waste management effectiveness, reducing wastage in shipment practices and employing morally acceptable means in procuring materials.

Profit

This refers to the financial performance of an organisation. Logsdon & Wood (2002) stated that every business was establish as a profit making venture, at the same time they are also a social creation, hence the society must endure, bear with, and provide assistance to it in order to continue to exist and flourish. Marin and Ruiz (2007) observed that business receives assistance through both social and legal obligations and responsibilities it fulfils. Furthermore, Meehan *et al.* (2006) were of the view that there is a link between moral and legal responsibilities (as shown figure 1) in order for economic or business activities to be acceptable in this bottom line.

Based on available evidence, Gillis (2021) concluded that many businesses use their financial performance to evaluate their performance. Gillis aver that profits incline towards areas of business that generate revenue particularly business decision-making, strategic planning, or performance and cost reduction methods. For any organization to achieve profits in its operation, capital is required. Hawken *et al.* (1999) recognized 4 major types of capital required by an organization for smooth operation and profit making. These include natural capital (resources, living systems, and ecosystem services), manufactured capital (infrastructure, machines, tools, and factories), financial capital (cash, investments, monetary instruments) and human capital (labour, intelligence, culture, organization).

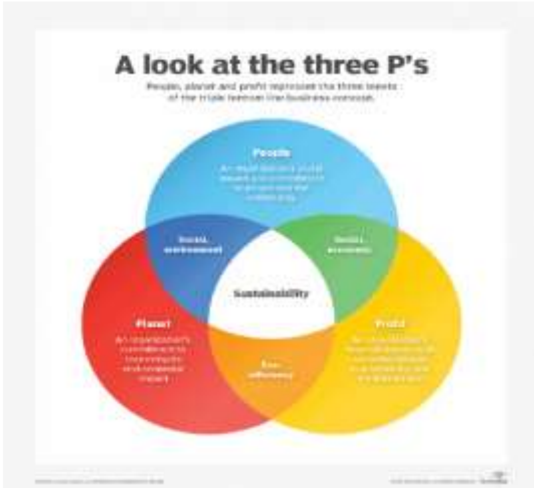

Figure 1. Representation of the three P's of sustainability
Source: Gillis (2021)

Seth's CSR Model

Seth proffered a CSR three parameters model in 1975 to function as an instrument or vehicle to portray the variability of CSR in different countries and situations. The models reveal that different countries and organisations consider CSR differently and consequently recommend various CSR issues to take into account before a decision is made (Kanji & Agrawal, 2016). From Table 2, it can be inferred that CSR implies different things in different countries and entities and is able to be easily modified to respond to changes in situations. Seth's three parameters model consist of social responsiveness, social responsibility and social obligation as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Seth's Three Parameters Model

Models	Description
Social Obligation	Organisations are expected to be socially responsible and increase in size within the established legal impediments or parameters (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2006).
Social Responsibility	Organisations should accomplish beyond the purviews and scope of legal obligations though in agreement with society distinct accepted behaviour, coming up with a leverage by virtue of society expectations from the organisations and organisational expectations from the society (Carroll & Shabana, 2010).
Social Responsiveness	Organisations are expected to be accountable and have effective interaction with stakeholders, incorporating them in decision making (Ackerman & Bauer, 1976).

Source: Caroll & Shabana (2010)

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

Population of the Study

The study population was made up of three categories of people within the three host communities of the Utorogun gas plant based on gender and age group.

- Elderly men/Elders' council. They are referred to as Eghwesha meaning elderly men. They are the highest decision-making organ within the communities.
- Elderly women. They are also represented in the elders_ council, and they are referred to as Eghweya meaning elderly women. They are a powerful group in the communities who also carry out organized protests e.g. 1984 Ogharefe women uprising, 1986 Ekpan women not both in Delta State, and the popular Aba women riot in the nineteen twenties.
- Youth council. These are militant young men and women of age group 15-25 years. They are referred to as Ighele or Emoha. They are powerful militant group which usually carry out organized protest against oil companies operating in their communities.

Also, management staff of Shell Petroleum Development Company and Department of Petroleum Resources of the Ministry of Petroleum Resources specialised civil society organisations constituted the study population.

Sample for the study

Sample for this study were selected from a stratified random sample of the indigenes of the host communities based on age group and gender. At Otor-Udu, six youths, six elderly men and six elderly women were selected. At Iwhrekan, six youths, six elderly men and six women were selected. At Otu-Jeremi, six youths, six elderly men and six elderly women were selected. Also, six respondents were selected each from Shell Petroleum Development Company, Department of Petroleum Resources and specialised civil society organisations these gave a total of 72 respondents, that covered a period of August 2020 to March 2021.

Instrument for Data Collection

The study relied on two data collection instruments namely: in-depth interviews and historical analysis. In-depth interview was employed in sourcing information from the respondents, while secondary data in terms of works of other scholars and official documents were relied on to affirm findings in this study ot to contrast it. Some historical documents were also used in this study to validate the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following findings were made:

Shell and Corporate Social Responsibility at the Utorogun communities

Shell, the operator of the Utorogun gas plant have executed some projects in these communities, however, residents of the communities accused Shell of executing projects that fall below standard and expectation from a company that earn huge foreign exchange from the plant. At Otor-Udu, the study showed that the project executed by Shell is a few blocks of teacher's quarters. At Iwhrekan according to the spokesperson of the *Eghweshas* (elderly men) in an interview, "Shell is yet to fulfill its promise concerning provision of health care facility".

At Otu- Jeremi, the leader of *Ighele or Emoha* (Youth Council), reported that the only project visible executed is a primary health centre building which may be compared to a boy's quarter bungalow that was jointly built by Shell, NNPC, Elf, and Agip. The community representatives have on several occasions taken Shell up on this matter but to no avail. Rather, the representatives are either harassed or arrested in the past by security personnel comprising of soldiers and the mobile police personnel. In an interview with representative of Shell, he remarked that indigenes of the three communities benefited from the gas flared because they utilise it to dry their cassava peelings. Staney (1990) inferred that toxins released during gas flares degrade the geochemical composition of the soil, thereby making the soil sterile; thus, the degradation of the soil induces a deleterious effect on crop yield. Staney views were corroborated by an elderly woman whose cassava farm is some distance away from the site of the gas flare. She contested the assertion of representative of Shell, recounting the poor yield or no yield from her cassava farm due to the heat from the flare, which burns or roast her crops.

Effect of Gas flaring at the site of Utorogun Gas Plant on its host communities

The effect of gas flaring has been alarming and profound on the wellbeing of the residents of the host communities. Travelling through the host communities the atmosphere is saturated with the choking smell of gas. Data obtained from health care facilities patronized by residents of the host communities and borderline communities revealed various kinds of heath diseases and challenges suffered by the people. The elderly men (*Eghweshas)* were found to suffer from memory loss, sexual sterility, partial blindness, and respiratory diseases such as lung diseases and cancer of the lungs, coughing of blood, and difficulty in breathing. Huang (2002) affirms that respiratory diseases include asthma and bronchitis.

The elderly women (*Eghweyas)* also had their share of the devastating effect of gas flaring. Data obtained from health care delivery facilities showed that both the elderly and younger women are mostly diagnosed of miscarriages, birth deformities (which has

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been on the increase), soft tissue cancers, skin diseases, diarrhoea, high blood pressure and malnutrition. Among the youths (*Ighele or Emoha)* and children *(imitete),* health challenges include diarrhoea, coughing up blood, asthma, tumors, urinating of blood, gastrointestinal problems and malnutrition were the common problem among the youths and children. Huang (2002) also identified hearing loss (due to the noise from gas flares that disturbs the ear drum), high incidences of childhood mortality, premature births and skin diseases.

The study also revealed that gas flaring has severe negative consequences on the environment such as pollution of the atmosphere leading to acid rain, stunted crop growth, greenhouse effect, reduction in the life span of their zinc roofing sheets, and pollution of ground water etc. The extremely high levels of carbon dioxide and methane gases that are released to the atmosphere also impact climate patterns beyond the local level. The Secretary of Otor-Udu Development Association describes acid rain as a common feature in the Niger delta region caused by gas flaring, and is taking its toll on the host communities. Acid rain has deprived the people of Otor-Udu clean and pure rainwater that has affected farmers leading stunted growth in crop yield, and leading to rapid corrosion of zinc roofing sheets, which used to last 7-10 years. This has led many home owners to other alternatives for roofing that is more resistant to acid rain, though, expensive.

An executive member of Otor-Ughievwen (corruptly pronounced Otu-Jeremi by the British colonialists) Community Development Association, who have been living in the community for the past 54 years disclosed that there is no difference between day and night for residents living close to the gas flare. He reported that the flame from the gas flaring illuminates the environment, thus, and has left residents of Utorogun communities bereft of the serenity of night's gift of nature.

The flaring of gas has also made negative significant impact on the region's climate. Many of such flares were observed and the heat generated from the flare was intense. Many members of the host communities in an interview lamented concerning constant loud roar emanating from the flaring of gas, which often leads to crack on the walls of buildings housing residents. In its effort to attain zero gas flares target, the Nigerian government formulated policies and memorandum of action in order to achieve this goal, however, like every policy of government in Nigeria, this policy like others before is yet to see the light of the day. The first memorandum of action to end gas flaring by Nigeria was initiated in 1979 with the promulgation of the Associated Gas Re-injection Act (AGRA) of 1979, which compelled oil and gas producing companies in Nigeria to submit their proposal and target for the execution/enforcement of gas re-injection and preliminary programmes.

AGRA prohibit and declare gas flaring illegal in Nigeria, nevertheless, the Act exempt multinational oil companies and grant them permission to continue gas flaring provided they utilised 75% of the gas produced (Shell Sustainability Report, 2016). The basis or justification for which Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) was authorised to continue to flare gas by the Minister of Petroleum was not disclosed to the public. A member of Iwhrekan community pressed charges against SPDC and Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation on the consequences of gas flaring, which violate their right to life freedom, as enshrined in Section 33(1), 34(1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. However, the litigation is yet to see the light of the day.

The decision to put an end to gas flare in 1979 fell short of its target, hence 1984 was set as another target to end flaring of gas. Like the 1979 target, the 1984 new target also failed to achieve its goal. Thus, 2004 target was set, which led to the promulgation of the Associated Gas Re-Injected Act (AGRA) 2004, with the intent of putting an end to gas flaring. Yet, this action did not yield the desired goal, hence in 2016, the federal government proposed 2020 as another deadline to end gas flaring in Nigeria, but the people in Utorogun are lethargic about the announcement. This is because the federal government has on many occasions at different times pledged to put an end to gas flaring, yet nothing happened, hence the people of the Utorogun host communities regards this pronouncement by the federal government as another usual rgetoric.

Campbell (2001) reported that the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation incorporated a natural gas company in 1988 to produce and process the natural gas for both domestic and export purposes, however, currently, the NNPC only utilised about 5% of the total natural gas produced in the region, while the remaining 95% are flared. Regulations were put in place to ensure that oil companies harness and process gas by collecting the associated gas and transporting it through a low-pressure pipeline system to a central processing unit/facility adjoining nearby flow station. From here it will be processed into liquefied natural gas (LNG) for both domestic consumption and for exportation purposes. Nevertheless, Nigeria in 2018 adopted the Flare Gas (Prevention of Waste and Pollution) Regulation, which prohibit gas flaring and likewise permits it through a weak legislation that penalises them to pay a meagre fine. Oil companies need permit from the President to flare gas. For those oil companies that produce more than 10,00bpd, are expected to pay a fine of $2 per 1000 standard scf of gas flared, while those that produces less than 1000bpd pays a fine of $0.5 per 1000 scf of gas flared. This legislation according to government was done on purpose to prevent gas flaring

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by multinational oil companies. However, the weak legislation provided a loophole for these multinationals to prefer flaring because the fine itself is an incentive to embrace gas flaring, hence the oil companies keep on flaring gas instead of processing and liquefying it.

CONCLUSION

With regards to Utorogun gas plant and the execution of its corporate social responsibility obligation to the host communities has been very poor. The continual flaring of gas has reversed whatever gains that execution of CSR policy would have recorded. Lack of engagement and involvement of the host communities in the CSR policy and its execution has continued to affect the performance of Shell CSR. Also, Shell CSR did not take into consideration the mitigation of the effect of gas production on environment of its host communities, which majorly accounts for the protest of host communities because the source of their livelihood is being destroyed daily.

Furthermore, the activities of Utorogun gas plant and the implementation of its CSR is not adequately monitored by the statutory agencies of government. The non-compliance of oil and gas companies to legislation and inability of supervising agencies of government to implement flare penalty regime has continued to strengthen disrespect to rule of law by the oil and gas companies. In the same vein, the Flare Gas (Prevention of Waste and Pollution) Regulations (2018) and Associated Gas Re Injection Act (AGRA) 2004 failed to put to end gas flaring, provide the needed support to end, but allow weak sanctions that is cheaper and comfortable to multinational oil and gas companies compared to ending gas flaring. Finally, CSR is the least funded of all the activities of multinational oil and gas companies, hence there is recurrent conflict between the company and its host companies.

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