Corporate Social Responsibility and Public Image of Hi-Quality Bakery in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine the corporate social responsibility and public image of Hi-Quality Bakery in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State. To carry out this study, four research questions were raised from four objectives designed to examine ways in which corporate social responsibility can enhance public image. Stakeholder theory was employed as the theoretical framework. The theory, also known as the perception theory, was also found relevant to this study. The study applied a mixed methodology, survey method of research was employed and 140 respondents consisting of the inhabitants of Calabar were selected. The questionnaire data were analysed using simple percentage statistical formula Findings revealed that 90 respondents, representing 64.3% disagreed that Hi-quality bakery publicises its corporate social responsibility project. Another also revealed that 100 respondents, representing 71.5% disagreed that Hi-quality bakery image is not held in high esteem. Out of 140 respondents, 95 respondents, representing 67.8% agreed that Hi-quality live up to its corporate social responsibility and public image and that Sales discount is an effective strategy to boost sales of product whereas 110 respondents, representing 78.5% agreed to the fact that sales discount is truly an effective strategy to boost sales. It was therefore, recommended that Hi-quality should take corporate social responsibility seriously so that the company’s image will be held in high esteem and that good publicity should be carried out when projects are executed to enable stakeholders to be aware. Conclusively, companies should lay emphasis on quality and improve the welfare of both its workers and the community they operate in.

Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is increasingly an important activity of national and international businesses. As globalisation accelerates and large corporations serve as global providers, these corporations have progressively recognised the benefits of providing Corporate Social Responsibility programmes in their various locations. Corporate Social Responsibility activities are now being undertaken throughout the globe by well-meaning organisations.

Corporate Social Responsibility came into use in the late 1960s and those who believe in the concept see it as the responsibility to plan and manage an organisation’s relationship(s) with all those involved in or affected by its activities. They view Corporate Social Responsibility as an excellent opportunity to establish good-will in the community they operate. They view Corporate Social Responsibility as a social investment and a means of analysing the inter-dependent relationships that exist between businesses and economic systems and the communities within which they are based.

The term Corporate Social Responsibility also known as Social Corporate Responsibility, Social Responsibility, Social Accounting, the Responsibility of Business, Social Involvement and Social Responsiveness are used interchangeably by scholars of management and organisation to refer to the idea that is appropriate and desirable for business in order to consider and work with social values as it pursues its economic goals. Social responsibility is therefore, not only the contributions of organisation towards the economic and social
welfare of the employees but embraces the activities of corporate organisations toward the economic and social wellbeing of the people in their area of operation, or the world at large. At the same time, in pursuing their economic objectives, organisations are obligated to avoid polluting the environment or harming their host communities in anyway.

According to Kotler and Lee (2005) Corporate Social Responsibility is defined as “commitment to improve community well-being through discretionary business practices and contribution of corporate resource”. Whereas, (Baker 2004) refers to Corporate Social Responsibility as “a way companies manage the businesses processes to produce an overall positive impact on society”. It is seen by leadership of companies as more than collection of discrete practices or occasional gesture or initiatives motivated by marketing, public relations or other business benefits.

More so, World Business Council for Sustainable Development sees Corporate Social Responsibility as “a continuing commitment by businesses to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large”.

Corporate Social Responsibility is an integral part of business strategy where by companies act with responsibility towards social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders. As a company image reflects the firm’s relative success in fulfilling the expectations of multiple stakeholders.

Through Corporate Social Responsibility, companies aim to achieve balance of economic, environmental and social imperatives simultaneously, addressing the expectations of shareholders and stakeholders. Over the years, organisations were considered only as profit maximising entities but with changing times and a more aware society, many companies have felt they could strike a chord with their stakeholders through their corporate social responsibility activities. Every well-meaning organisation that is consumer and business-oriented must put host community first in its plan. Corporate Social Responsibility is very important in an organisation to the extent that some scholars have described it as inevitable and suicidal for any organisation to ignore it. Many organisations have collapsed simply because they neglected their host communities. Corporate Social Responsibility has its own fair share of criticism. Critics reckon that corporate social responsibility is founded on selfishness.

Epstein as cited by Perrini, Pogutz and Tencati (2006) sees Corporate Social Responsibility as a process, a method of decision making where corporate managers take account of the total consequences of their decisions in determining company policies and practices. It has to do with structure and government. If all social organisations, irrespective of their sizes have responsibility to their sectors of the society in which they operate knowing that social responsibility does not derive from corporate status per se or from a certain corporate category, it inheres in the functional role and societal impact of a particular institution. Whichever way, corporate social responsibility is embarked upon not only to advertise or put the organisation in public view but it is also to strengthen the relationship and cordiality between the organisation and its numerous public Perini, Pogutz and Tencati (2006).

**Statement of the Problem**

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility can make a positive contribution to the development of society and businesses. However, most business owners do not know what a company public image is and why it is necessary to create and keep a good image for their businesses using Corporate Social Responsibility. A company image is only as good as the public perception of it. It can either boost sales or grind turnout to a halt. It is believed that building a public image is most businesses have neglected what may seem as the means of building a positive and effective public image and as such, this has made the public to have a negative impression about most organisations and businesses. The question now is, how can Corporate Social Responsibility contribute in developing the competitive market place and also improve the image of the organisation? Bearing in mind that Corporate Social Responsibility has been identified as a potential tool for enhancing
A need therefore arises to investigate if Hi-Quality Bakery do carry out their Corporate Social Responsibility functions and if the public has knowledge of its activities.

**Objectives of the Study**

The study seeks to

1. To ascertain whether Hi-Quality Bakery has been able to live up to its Corporate Social Responsibility and Public Image through quality products.
2. To find out various strategies used by Hi-Quality Bakery to build her Public Image.
3. To investigate if the challenges of Hi-Quality Bakery affect their Public Image.
4. To ascertain if the public relations officer of Hi-Quality bakery publicise the corporate social responsibility project executed by the company in order to have a positive public image.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the researcher:

1. What extent do Hi-Quality Bakery live to its Corporate Social Responsibility and Public Image through her quality products?
2. What is the strategy used by Hi-Quality Bakery in building its Public Image?
3. What are the challenges of Hi-Quality Bakery in the building of Public Image?
4. What extent do the public relations officers of Hi-Quality bakery publicise the corporate social responsibility project executed by the company in order to have a positive public image?

**Literature Review**

**Review of Concepts**

**The Concept/ Meaning and Definition of Corporate Social Responsibility**

The term Corporate Social Responsibility also known as Social Corporate Responsibility, Social Responsibility, Social Accounting, the Responsibility of Business, Social Involvement and Social Responsiveness are used interchangeably by scholars of management and organisation to refer to the idea that is appropriate and desirable for business to consider, and work with social values as it pursues its economic goals.

According to Natufe (2001), the concept of corporate responsibility or corporate social responsibility has acquired broad support in various international fora. While there is no universally accepted definition of the concept, there is however a consensus that it implies a demonstration of certain responsible behaviour on the part of governments and the business sector towards society and the environment. He adds that, three important international institutions have underlined the need for governments and companies to adhere to the principles of corporate social responsibility.

The World Bank in Ugwunwanyi and Ekene (2016), defines Corporate Social Responsibility as the commitment of organisation to contribute to sustainable economic development by working with employees, the local community and the society at large to improve their lives in ways that are good for business and for development.

Social responsibility is therefore, not only the contributions of organisation towards the economic and social welfare of the employees but embraces the activities of corporate organisations toward the economic and social wellbeing of the people in their area of operation, or the world at large. At the same time, in pursuing their economic objectives, Organisations are obligated to avoid polluting the environment or harming their host communities in anyway.

**Understanding the Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility**

The concept of corporate Social Responsibility has its beginning in the United States of America. It can be attributed to philanthropists and fraternities during the nineteenth century in America. Both the ‘humanitarian’ ethics and precepts of Christianity reminded men of their mutual ties and obligations to their fellow men. The individual revolution brought changes which challenged men to apply values in new social contexts, but it failed to destroy the source which fed them. American businessmen fully shared the social concerns and pre-occupations of their fellow citizens.
From nineteenth century to date, Corporate Social Responsibility has evolved and there are many definitions of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Due to the fact that there is no universally accepted one. In view of this many definitions of corporate social responsibility, the term will be conceptually reviewed in this study.

Globally, organisations are concerned with value re-investment to the society in appreciation of the contributions of the society to their growth, sustenance and survival. Hence attention is further directed to the potential consumers, as well as non-consumers of corporate offers, as marketing concept philosophies are integrated into societal marketing concept as a means of achieving desired level of social responsibility. Given this as the thrust of operations, corporate attention is increasingly being given to issues like equal employment opportunity, thus it is easier for corporation to be re-oriented to corporate social responsibility philosophies (Agbonifoh and Ndu, 2014).

Corporate social responsibility according to Holmes and (Watt 2002) is the continuing commitment by businesses to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce, and their family as well as the local community and the society at large. It is anchored on the philosophy that businesses as natural or artificial persons should take that which are considered in deed to be in the interest and benefit of a large number of people hence having respect for the fundamental rights of the publics. (Agbonifoh and Ndu, 2014).

According to Sanusi (2008) Corporate Social Responsibility generally refers to “a collection of policies and practices linked to relationship with key stakeholders, value, compliance with legal requirements, and respect for people, communities and the environment and the commitment of business to contribute to sustainable development”.

Crowther and Aras (2008) state that corporate social responsibility is a concept, which has become dominant in business reporting. Every corporation has a policy concerning corporate social responsibility and produces a report annually detailing its activities.

In the words of Weirich and Koontz (2001), “the missions of business firms in the early 1900’s were exclusively economical. Today partly owing to interdependencies of the many groups in our society, the social involvement of business has increased. There is indeed a question as to what the social responsibility of business really is. Moreover, the question of social responsibility originally associated with business, is now being posed with increasing frequency in regard to governments, universities, non-profit foundations, charitable organisations and even churches.

More so, one early definition of the concept from the 1950’s when the modern era of social responsibility began, is “the obligation of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of objectives and values of our society” Carroll (1999).

In the 1960’s, when literature on the topic expanded, one major contribution to the conceptualisation of the subject was “the idea that social responsibilities to society extend beyond these obligations” Carroll (1999).

During the 1970’s when definition of the word proliferated, one author wrote that the “meaning of social responsibility for businessmen must finally be sought in the actual policies with which they were associated” Carroll (1999).

Another definition from the 1980’s state that “the social responsibility of business is to tame the dragon, that is to turn a social problem into economic opportunity and economic benefits, into productive capacity, into human competence into well-paid jobs and into wealth” Carroll (1999, p.186).

Mohan (2003), state that, corporate social responsibility is a concept whereby organisations consider the interest of the society by taking responsibility for the impact of their activities on consumers, employees, shareholders, communities and the environment in all aspects of their operations. The 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 at large.
Corporate social responsibility is seen to integrate social and environmental aspects into corporate planning, measuring and controlling of processes and to define a long term strategy, which minimise the risk linked to uncertainty.

Ajala (2001) defines corporate social responsibility as “the responsibility to plan and manage organisation’s relationships with those involved in or affected by its activities”. Ajala believes that Corporate Social Responsibility is all that public relations need to make impact in the community as a natural part of successful business practice.

Corporate Social Responsibility is a relatively new concept in the business world and its advocate and those who oppose it have variously defined it. The argument against it is that businesses cannot be “responsible”, only people can have responsibilities. They see Corporate Social Responsibility as a loss of accountability to shareholders and warn that companies should stick to their business, which is business itself. To this group of individuals, business is socially responsible in its money making function.

In other words, Corporate Social Responsibility can be defined as an overall relationship of the corporation with all its stakeholders. Elements of social responsibility include investment in community outreach, employee relations, creation and maintenance of employment, environmental responsibility, human rights and financial performance. It is about producing and delivering socially and environmentally responsible products and services in an environmentally and socially responsible manner.

**Public Image**

The term public image is defined as the overall impression that an organisation presents to the public. In marketing or public relations, it is called corporate image according to Brown and Cox (1997); Grunig, (1993). Public image is the evaluation of organisations messages. It is drawn from the way an organisation projects itself toward the various publics. Image is based on both word and deed; on the verbal, visual and behavioural messages, both planned and unplanned, that comes from an organisation and leaves an impression because not all publics receive the same messages or process the messages the same way. Image can be consistent, it can vary from one public to another or from one time to another.

Dutton and Dukerich (1991) argued that organisational image is the way organisation members believe and others’ view the organisation (although Dutton et al 1994,
appropriately relabelled this particular definition of image construed external image). Whetten, Lewis, and Mischel (1992) took some issue with this definition and argued instead for defining image as the way “organisational elites” would like outsiders to see the organisation. This orientation highlights top management concern with projecting image of the organisation that is based on identity. Such a “projected image could be a bonafide attempt to represent essential features of organisational identity to others. It could also take the form of the projection of a desired future image Gioia and Thomas (1996) that communicates to insiders and outsiders a vision to be achieved.

Bernstein (1992) opined that an image is the construction of public impressions created to appeal to an audience. All these views, however, take image to be essentially an internal conception that is, perception held or communicated by insiders. While Berg (1985) took a decidedly more external approach by focusing on perceptions held by outsiders. He defined image as the public perception or impression of an organisation, usually associated with a given action (which we term an external transient impression). This definition is related to Fombrun’s (1996) definition as the collective judgements (by outsiders) of an organisation’s action and achievements. However, image is also influenced by everyday interactions between organisational members and audience (example the doctor treating a patient, the clerk helping a customer, the consultant offering advice to a client).

Furthermore, the image formed by a particular group within the external can be affected by the intentions and influence of a wide range of actors including other groups Dowling (1993).

**Issues in Corporate Social Responsibilities**

**Defending Public Image**

According to Adeyanju (2012), if companies behave improperly, they can be got at through the court of international public opinion. The first Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives were a response to public pressure and media exposure of poor company behaviour. Corporate Social Responsibility was supposed to show that companies were capable of cleaning up their act. Prof. Michael porter of the Harvard business school argues that, Corporate Social Responsibility is all an defensive effort, a Public Relations games in which companies primarily react to deal with the critics and the pressure from activists.

**Attracting Investors**

Companies that proactively engage with sustainable development agenda and its advocate in the investment world should generate support, interest and understanding among investors. This will ultimately ascribe a premium to share price. Corporate Social
Responsibility makes companies attractive to both mainstream investors and to the fast growing ethical-investment sector. Many investors now believe that social and environment risk management improve a company’s market value in the long term Adeyanju (2012).

Permission to Operate

Corporate Social Responsibility has, of the late become a vital component in companies’ effort to gain approval for projects carrying significant political and social risks Adeyanju (2012).

Lobbying against regulations

One of the key functions of Corporate Social Responsibility is to enable further deregulations by pointing to the involvement of business in ethical and sustainable activities and to indicate that multi-stakeholders’ dialogue with civil society obviates the need for building regulation. (David Miller, Sterling Media Research institute). “I believe that companies’ voluntary measures can help improve private-sector behaviour. But voluntary activity is no substitute for regulation and there is evidence that companies that espouse voluntary approaches to meeting environmental standards are also involved in resisting external regulation, especially by government” Adeyanju (2012).

Global View of Corporate Social Responsibility

If Corporate Social Responsibility is to have potential as a way to address social and environmental challenges, it must be supported by public that holds companies accountable. There must be enough motivation and momentum in the field to keep the social responsibility of corporations a priority. Recently, there have been significant conversations that have laid a foundation for the standards and measures of Corporate Social Responsibility.

One such venue is the Geneva-based world business council for sustainable development, which consists of some 180 leading international companies from more than 30 countries and 20 major industrial sector-including such brands as AOL, Time Warner, Bayer, BP, Coca-Cola, Dow chemical and Shell, that share a commitment to sustainable development through economic growth, ecological balance and social progress.

The Corporate Social Responsibility model is perhaps more developed among western corporations than elsewhere, but the concept would predict, irreversibly extending itself to other regions. The website of Corporate Social Responsibility Europe, a network of Corporate Social Responsibility professionals working to shape the business and political agenda on sustainability and competitiveness, contains link to some 200 business-related organisations around the world that seek to motivate and assist companies to manage their businesses in a socially responsible manner and become participants in building a fair and sustainable society.

There is at least one such business-driven collaborative organization on each continent, including such groups as Association for Sustainable and Responsible Investment in Asia, The Aspen Institute Business and Society program in the United States of America and Ethos institute-companies and social responsibility in Brazil. In the Middle East, the Dubai Ethics Resource Centre focuses on integrity standards, and the Institute for International Research recently held their Middle East Corporate Social Responsibility Summit, featuring sessions on such topics as integrating Corporate Social Responsibility with the business strategy to increase company value and the effect of Corporate Social Responsibility on employee retention.

The UN Global Compact, a voluntary corporate citizenship initiative, includes some 2900 participants from 90 countries that pledge to observe universal principles in the area of human right, labour, the environment and anti-corruption. The Global Reporting Initiative, formed in 1997 and based in Amsterdam, promotes the use of sustainability guidelines developed by some 300 organisations from 39 countries including businesses, labour groups, governments, civil society organisations and regional and national Corporate Social Responsibility alliances. The goal is that “reporting on economic, environmental and social performance by all organisations is as routine and comparable as financial reporting”. The guidelines are now used for reporting by
one thousand organisations world-wide. KPMG’s 2005 reviews of the top 250 companies in the fortune 500 learned that 52 per cent publish reports on Corporate Social Responsibility.

Many companies, governments and NGOs believe that it is necessary to move beyond reporting guidelines and adopt a universally recognised set of specific standards. To achieve the global standards, the international organisation for standardisation (ISO), a Geneva-based network of the national standards institutes’ 157 countries and the world’s largest developer of standards for products, services, processes, materials and systems, has begun work on what will be the first global standards in this field. In assuming this task, the ISO observed that “the need for organisations in both public and private sectors to behave in a socially responsible way is becoming a generalised requirement of society”.

**Corporate Social Responsibility and Company Image**

A company’s image reflects the firm’s relative success in fulfilling the expectation of multiple stakeholders. Likewise also, the most obvious link of Corporate Social Responsibility to overall corporate performance is through reputation.

Ogedengbe (2007) refers to corporate social responsibility as the welfarist activities of an organization that caters for the wellbeing of the area the organization operates from. It is the activity carried out by the organization to improve on the conditions of the community in its areas of operation. Such activities might be in the construction of roads, buildings hospitals, provisions of markets and pipe borne water among others.

In their research on image building and corporate strategy, (Fombrun and Shanley 1990) argued that favourable reputation may enable firms charge premium prices, enhance their access to capital market and attract better investors. Empirical evidence in their study suggests that the greater a firm’s contribution to social welfare, the better its reputation. Being a pro-social means and having a powerful marketing tool that can build and shape a company’s reputation status, makes a difference in the market and gives the company a competitive edge. In a modern business environment, firms that last for years are those that manage their key relationship well and focus on their reputation. Protecting your company through the image of care and compassion to society is strategy that can be highly rewarding. However, only a consistent contribution to a cause can build a brand image and equity. As such, corporate philanthropy should be strategic.

A firm which is socially responsible acknowledges what exists and operates in a shared environment characterized by a mutual impact of a firm’s relationship on a broad variety of stakeholders, who are affected by and can eventually affect the achievement of an organization’s objectives. Thus management of stakeholders groups that is understanding the type of support needed from each group, as well as learning their expectations of business and what they are willing to pay for having their expectations met.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), a relatively new concept in the business world has been variously defined by those who believe in the concept and those who do not. Those who believe in the concept see it as a responsibility to plan and manage an organization’s relationship with all those involved in or affected by its activities. They view Corporate Social Responsibility as a social investment. They classify socially responsible companies as those that refrain from taking actions that might be perceived by the public as insensitive or callous (Ajala, 2001).

Lawal (1993) noted that a classical discussion of social responsibility is that obligation of the business to pursue these policies, make decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of objectives and values of society.

Portway, (1995) maintains that it is unarguable that a citizen does not have responsibility towards his society nor has anyone denied the fact that the responsibility must be exercised for the wellbeing and improvement of the society. It is also applicable to organisation because no organisation operates in a vacuum. Whether privately owned or publicly controlled, every organisation is dependent on effective relationship with a wide range of groups that
have the capacity, individually and collectively to influence the success or spoil its endeavour.

Also, Portway (1995) sees Corporate Social Responsibility as “the process by which a company manages its relationship, its constituencies in today’s era of sophistication. At least in the business world, consumers are wiser, environmental issues are becoming more controversial, firms that are not responsible are viewed as riskier investment”. People might not buy shares of companies that extract all the good things from their immediate communities but give little or nothing back to those communities.

Most scholars on social responsibility see the concept as the deposition of an organisation to exhibit “missionary” rather than “mercenary” attitude towards the society.

Davis (1973) posits that Corporate Social Responsibility is the process of business structure and performance to the growing and ever changing requirements of the society. This in effect means that the activities of companies must be conducted in such a manner as to bring about a constructive and productive response to growing public insistence that business must take on more social responsibility.

The issues that represent a company’s corporate social responsibility focus vary by business size, sector, and even by geographical location which in its broadest sense typify issues related to business ethics, community investment, corporate citizenship, corporate accountability, corporate governance, human rights, market place and workplace ethics (Wilcox, Ault and Agee 1992).

Furthermore Black in Ajala (2001) suggests four categories of Corporate Social Responsibility as Enterprise, Education, Arts and Culture and Entertainment. Also, Seitel in Ajala (2001) provides what he calls a partial list of social responsibility categories to include: being responsible, Product lines, Marketing practices, Employee services, Philanthropy, Environmental activities and Employees safety and health.

**Arguments for and against CSR**

Ever since the debate over Corporate Social Responsibility began, supporters and detractors have been articulating the arguments for the idea of Corporate Social Responsibility and the argument against the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility. These arguments have been discussed extensively by scholars of Corporate Social Responsibility in their various publications but for this research a brief recapitulation of them makes sense as it will lead up to presenting the “business case”. Embedded in the arguments both for and against Corporate Social Responsibility are points which have been made by scholars, perhaps on a piecemeal basis, supporting the business case.

The case against the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility typically begins with the classical economic argument articulated most forcefully by Friedman (1962). Friedman (1962) held that management has one responsibility and that is to maximize the profits of its owners or shareholders. Friedman (1962) argued that social issues are not the concern of business people and that these problems should be resolved by the unfettered workings of the free market system. Further, this view holds that, if the free market cannot solve the social problems, it falls not upon business, but upon government and legislation to do the job.

A second objection to Corporate Social Responsibility has been that business is not equipped to handle social activities. This position holds that managers are oriented towards finance and operations and do not have the necessary expertise (social skills), to make socially oriented decisions Davis (1973).

A third objection to Corporate Social Responsibility is that it dilutes businesses’ primary purpose. The objection here is that to adopt Corporate Social Responsibility would put business into fields of endeavour that are unrelated to their “proper aim” Hayek (1969).

A fourth argument against Corporate Social Responsibility is that business already has enough power, and so why should we place in its hands the opportunity to wield additional power, such as social power Davis (1873)?

A fifth argument is that by pursuing Corporate Social Responsibility, businesses will make itself less competitive globally. It should be noted that the arguments presented here were introduced decades ago, though some still hold them, and that the positions to the concept
Corporate Social Responsibility applies when the idea was once more narrowly conceived.

Arguments in favour of Corporate Social Responsibility typically begin with the belief that it is in business long-term self-interest-enlightened-self-interest-to be socially responsible. This view holds that, if business is to have a healthy climate in which to function in the future, it must take actions now that will ensure its long-term viability.

A second argument in favour of Corporate Social Responsibility is that it will ward off government regulation; this is a very practical reason, and it is based on the idea that future government intervention can be forestalled to the extent that business policies itself with self-disciplined standards and fulfils society’s expectations of it.

Two additional arguments in favour of Corporate Social Responsibility include “business has the resource” and ‘let business try’. These two views maintain that, because business has reservoirs of management talent, functional expertise and capital, and because so many others have tried and failed to solve social problems, business should be given the chance Davis (1973). Another justification for Corporate Social Responsibility holds that pro-acting is better than reacting. This basically means that pro-acting is less costly than simply reacting to social problems once they have surfaced Carroll and Buchholtz (2009).

Finally, it has been argued that business should engage in Corporate Social Responsibility because the public strongly support it. Today the public believe that, in addition to its pursuits of profits, business should be responsible to their workers, communities and stakeholders, even if making thing better for them requires companies to sacrifice some profits Bernstein (2000). Many of these arguments for and against Corporate Social Responsibility have been around for decades. They certainly present the legitimate perspective that there are indeed, two sides of the argument with respect to almost any concept.

**Review of Studies**

Several studies have been carried out on Corporate Social Responsibility but notably a few within Nigeria context. In Nigeria, the available evidence on the kind of impact Corporate Social Responsibility can have on public image was found in a study conducted by Adeyanju (2012) which is a study on the assessment of the impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Nigeria society: The Examples of Banking and Communication Industries. The study found out that Corporate Social Responsibility improves the way of living a healthy life in the community. A company has to give back to the society in which it operates, clean up all forms of pollution it has caused during operations and also provide infrastructural facilities to the society as a way of giving back and developing the society. A company cannot progress positively in a retrogressing society.

The findings of the study are enumerated below:

- Corporate social responsibility is not a new subject, neither is it strange to the telecommunication industry and the banking industry.
- Profit objective is the major and primary objective of every firm, but no responsible firm will neglect the all-important corporate social responsibility objective
- There is a well formulated Corporate Social Responsibility policy in virtually all the firms in the banking and the telecommunication sector and which is strictly adhered to. This policy is also made to comply with the directions of regulatory authorities and also government policies.
- Being involved in socially responsible act add to the goodwill of the company thereby increasing their financial worth eventually, boost the image of a company, giving them an edge over other companies through increasing patronage afforded socially responsible firms.
- Social responsibility has a great impact on the society by adding to the infrastructures and development of the society
- One of the fine points of the exercise is the apparent disposition of the institutions covered by the research, to virtually all areas of human endeavour. That is the reason why some of them responded to appeals such as sponsoring of literary activities and public lectures. However, the banking industry and the telecommunication would need to synergise with a view to pooling resources to contain some capital-
intensive projects like road building, school blocks in order to break more grounds in corporate social responsibility planning and delivery.

- It can further be seen that one of the goals of corporate social responsibility is the creation of public good. In that regard, operators have not taken it as a challenge to make meaningful impact in areas where they possess superior expertise, rather, expenses have been committed to many sectors which thinned out and rubbed off the message they were to carry.

- Members of the industries have also taken lightly the need to institute a reliable data bank for corporate social responsibility. One would have expected all to respond to questionnaires sent for this survey and in record time too. This would have afforded the catching of almost every expenditure as it is likely those who failed to respond have undertaken corporate social responsibility activities during the period.

- It is trite that as you lay your bed, so shall you lie on it. If you sow little, there is every livelihood to reap so. Therefore, for a business perceived as being environment-friendly, greater mutual understanding is bound to evolve between it and its publics. The Nigerian banking and the telecommunication industries would have to intensify its corporate social responsibility efforts to disabuse the minds of those who perceived it as being interested in protecting personal gains at the expense of public good.

- As service sectors, the industries is hampered by the lack of product touch and feeling. Luckily, Corporate Social Responsibility has become a tool by which such service can be projected with human face. The industries should seize that opportunity with open hands.

- With global down turn in economies, climatic changes, deluge of natural disasters, changing technologies approaches to production and resultant high cost of food, goods and services, there is bound to be further pressure on Corporate Social Responsibility expectations, which ought to be elevated to policy issues through the setting aside of budgetary provisions in annual expenditure profiles.

Kan (n.d) and Frankental (2001) explore the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility qualitatively and find that Corporate Social Responsibility improves organisational performance and corporate image in the long-run and that Corporate Social Responsibility can be branded legitimately as an invention of Public Relations except the lack of clear definition and other paradoxes are addressed. Carroll and Shabana (2010) review “business case” for Corporate Social Responsibility qualitatively and find out that business case is concerned with the question; what do the business community and organisations get out of Corporate Social Responsibility?

Odewayo, Odeweyi, and Saiuyigbe (2014) in a study on impact of corporate social responsibility on profitability of corporate organisations established the fact that corporate organisations need to meet the demands and expectations of other stakeholders apart from owners of the company. The management of organisations need to respond to the external environment’s demand in order to achieve sustainable business success. The implication is that corporate organisations need support of society in order for them to grow and prosper. Likewise, society needs organisations product that is goods and services they produce and also need social amenities from corporate organisations. On the basis of the findings of this research work, it can be concluded that organisations recognise the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility and they are doing their obligations to the stakeholders, both internal and external as well as society at large.

A study by Utting and Ives (2006) examines the evolution and the state of Corporate Social Responsibility in the oil industry, focusing on initiatives and institutions related to environmental management, climate change, human rights, community development and revenue transparency. The study identified some certain regulatory approaches and political development that might enhance the contribution of oil companies to social and sustainable development. Forzley (2003) explores the role of media on Corporate Social Responsibility and social development and finds that the media and other stakeholders pressurise the adoption of Corporate Social Responsibility by firms, which can also be attributed to globalisation.
Hashimu and Ango (2012) in a study of Multinational Companies Corporate Social Responsibility Performance in Lagos State Nigeria: A Quantitative Analysis observed that there is a significant positive relationship between the financial performance of firms’ and the level of corporate social responsibility disclosure. Moreover, a significant positive association was observed between the size of audit firms and the level of corporate social responsibility disclosures among selected listed firms. However, a significant but negative relationship was observed between firms’ financial leverage and the level of environmental disclosures among the selected firms. The paper also observed that there are no existing environmental reporting standards as far as environmental disclosure is concerned in the country. Moreover, there are no mandatory requirements for companies to undergo environmental audit. The paper consequently concludes that given the historical foundation of environmental regulation in Nigeria, it is understandable that sustainable businesspractice is relatively new in terms of enforceable regulatory principles.

Egbe and Paki (2011) examine the place of Corporate Social Responsibility in the Niger Delta using Donalson’s Moral Minimums for Multinationals (MMM), which provides ethical basis. The study finds that Corporate Social Responsibility undertaken by the oil companies in the Niger Delta are inadequate and not making the desired impact on their host communities. In a similar study by (Aghalino 2004), two divergent perceptions are identified; oil firms feel they have done enough to the Niger Delta communities while the communities are saying is a crumb from the master’s table. The study of Tuodolo (2009) looks at the efficacy of Public Relations machinery on shelf’s Corporate Social Responsibility programmes and the paper argues that neither the issues nor corporations have changed but public relations strategies are at work.

Stakeholder Theory

Freedman defined stakeholder as any group or individual who can affect or be affected by the actions of a business.

Freeman (1984), the original proposer of the stakeholder theory recognises it as an important element of corporate social responsibility, a concept which recognises the responsibilities of corporations in the world today, whether be it economic, legal, ethical or even philanthropic. Nowadays, some of the world’s largest corporations claim to have Corporate Social Responsibility at the centre of their corporate strategy, while there are many genuine cases of companies with a “Conscience”, many others exploit Corporate Social Responsibility as a good means of public relations to improve their public image and reputation but ultimately fail to put their words into action.

Stakeholder theory states that all stakeholders must be considered in the decision-making process of the organisation. The theory states that there are three reasons why this should happen:

- It is the morally and ethically correct way to behave
- Doing so actually also benefits the shareholders
- It reflects what actually happens in the organisation.

Stakeholder theory suggests that investing time and other resources in addressing stakeholder’s interest is a justifiable managerial activity Freeman, in O’ Riordan and Fairbrass (2006). In this way stakeholders dialogue stand in contrast with the past explicit profit-oriented focus held by business, which was the focus of previous, strategic, planning approaches Crane and Matten in O’ Riordan and Fairbrass (2006). Who are the stakeholders surrounding the company?

The stakeholders include:

- Customers
- Employees
- Suppliers
- Creditors
- Competitors
- Communities
- Businesses around the location

Theoretical Framework

Stakeholder theory and the Perception Theory are found germane in constructing the structure of this research because their details are relatively significant to bordering Corporate Social Responsibility.
Once a discrete set of stakeholders surrounding an enterprise has been located, stakeholder ethics may begin. The purpose of the organisation, underneath this theory, is to maximize profit on a collective bottom line, with profit defined not as money but as human welfare. The collective bottom line is the summed effect of a company’s actions on all stakeholders. Company managers primarily change, not only to represent the interest of shareholders (the owner of the company) but with more social task of coordinating the interest of all stakeholders, balancing them in the case of conflict and maximising the sum benefits over the medium and long term.

Managers, in other words, spend part of their day to explain that the current plan will boost profits. They spend other part of the day, however talking with other stakeholders about their interest: they ask for input from local environmentalist about how pollution could be limited, they seek advice from consumers about how product safety could be improved and so on. At every turn stakeholders are treated to some extent like shareholders, as people whose interest needs to be served and whose voices carry real force.

In many cases transparency is an important value for those promoting stakeholder ethics. The reason is simple: if you are going to let every stakeholder actively participate in a corporation’s decision making, then those stakeholders need to have a good idea about what is going on? What is certain is that stakeholder theory obligates managers to appeal to all sides and balance everyone’s interest and welfare in the name of maximising benefits across the spectrum of those whose lives are touched by the business.

Relating the stakeholder theory to this study, the theory aims at revealing if Hi- Quality Bakery Company does execute corporate social responsibility projects that are beneficial to the public not just her shareholders. In order to encourage the public commitment to the organisation, the organisation needs to address the public expectation. When these expectations are met, the public will have a positive perception or image about the organisation and be committed to the organisations objective.

The Perception Theory

The perception theory developed from the writings of Berelson and Streiner (1994) posits that the perception theory is based on the assumption that mass communicators want to pay attention to their messages, learn the contents of the messages, and make appropriate changes in attitudes or beliefs, or produce the desired behavioural responses. The perception theory tells us that the process of interpreting messages is complex and that these goals may be difficult to achieve.

Berelson and Streiner (1994) further state that perception is a complex process by which individual select, organise, and interpret sensory stimulation into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world. Bennett, Hohman and Prakash (1989) states that perception is notably active, it involved learning, updating perspective, and interacting with the observed. Amould, Price and Zinkham (2004) however, express that perception is the process of giving meaning to sensory stimuli. People act and react on the basis of their perceptions, i.e the way they sense and interpret the world around them. Consumers’ perceptions are fundamental to understanding acquisition, consumption and disposal of goods and services.

This theory is made of four major components; selective perception, selective exposure, selective attention, and selective retention.

Selective Exposure: This refers to the tendency for individuals to expose themselves to those communications that are in agreement with their existing attitudes and to avoid those that are not. The notion of selective exposure follows nicely from Festinger’s theory of cognitive dissonance which suggests that one way to reduce dissonance after making a decision is to seek out information that is consonant with decision Festinger (1957).

Folarin (2002) on his part observes that it is only natural for people to seek out information that caters to their own interests, confirms their beliefs, and boosts their own ego, while avoiding those that are contrary to their own predispositions and attacks their self-image.

Selective Attention: This is the tendency for individuals to pay attention to those parts of a message that are consonant with strongly held
attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours and to avoid those parts of a message that go against strongly held attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours Anaeto, Osibajo and Onafeso, (2008).

Selective Perception: This term is applied to the tendency for people’s perception to be influenced by wants, needs, attitudes, and other psychological factors. Selective perception plays an important role in communication of any sort. It means that different people can react to the same message in very different ways. No communicator can assume that a message will have the intended meaning for all receivers or even that it will have the same meaning for all receivers. This complicates our models, our models of mass communication. Perhaps mass communication is not just a matter of hitting a target with an arrow, as some models suggest. The message can reach the receiver (hit target) and still fail to accomplish its purpose because it is subject to the interpretation of the receiver Anaeto, Osibajo, and Onafeso (2008).

Selective Retention: this refers to the tendency for the recall of information to be influenced by wants, needs, attitudes, and other psychological factors (Anaeto, Osibajo, and Onafeso, 2008). Folarin (2002) describes it as accurately remembering messages that are favourable to our self-image than messages that are unfavourable. The saliency of the message (relevance to our needs); the method of transmission and the interests and beliefs of the receiver are also known to affect attention rate. In the context of this study, the perception theory and its four components provide a frame for understanding how recipients of Corporate Social Responsibility efforts perceive and potentially react to those efforts. In other words, it seeks to know how the public sees the brand Hi-Quality and all her development and services. Do the public think that Hi-quality is carrying out her corporate social responsibility as promised?

Methodology

Research Design

Popoola, (2012) defined research design as a plan of action or specification for collecting data necessary and suitable to provide answers to research questions and for testing hypothesis. The research design selected for this study was the survey design. It is an efficient way of gathering data to help address a research question. As Nachmiyas and Nwachmias (1976, p. 101) have observed, survey method has certain advantages. Survey method of investigation probes the subjects in their natural setting. The cost is reasonable and data can be collected with relative ease.

A total of 150 copies of questionnaire were adopted for this study and with the help of a researcher assistant, these copies of questionnaire were administered to the targeted audience by hand. Some of the respondents completed the questionnaire and returned 140 copies of questionnaire to the researcher. The researcher also conducted interview to give credence to the result of the study.

Results and Discussions

Table 1. Respondents Opinion on to what extent do Hi-Quality Bakery live up to her Corporate Social Responsibility and public image through its quality products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>No. of Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreed</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreed</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field work 2017

According to Table 1, it shows that Hi-Quality Bakery live up to her Corporate Social Responsibility and public image through its quality products because analysis from the above table indicates that 90 respondents representing (64.3%) agreed Hi-Quality Bakery that live up to her Corporate Social Responsibility and public image through its quality products.
Table 2. Distribution of respondents on if the public Image of Hi-Quality Bakery is held in high esteem by members of the Society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreed</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreed</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>71.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>140</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field work 2017

On Table 2, 100 respondents representing (71.5%) disagreed that the public image of Hi-Quality Bakery is not held in high esteem by members of the society. This means that Hi-Quality Bakery is held in high esteem by members of the society going by the high percentage of respondents who disagreed that Hi-Quality Bakery is not held in high esteem by members of the society.

Table 3. Respondents Opinion on to what extent do the public relations officer of Hi-Quality Bakery publicise their Corporate Social Responsibility project in order to have a positive public image

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreed</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreed</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>140</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field work 2017

According to Table 3, indicates that 95 respondents, representing (67.9%) disagreed that the public relations officer of Hi-Quality Bakery publicised the Corporate Social Responsibility project executed by Hi-Quality Company in resuscitating her image.

Table 4. Respondents Opinion on if the challenges faced by Hi-Quality Bakery affect their public image and sales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreed</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>78.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreed</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>390</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field work 2017

Data presented on Table 4, shows that 110 respondents with (78.5%) agreed that the challenges faced by Hi-Quality Bakery affects their public image and sales.

Answers to Research Question 1:

In order to answer research question 1: What extent do Hi-Quality live to its corporate social responsibility and public image through her quality products?

According to Table 1, it shows that Hi-Quality Bakery live up to her Corporate Social Responsibility and public image through its quality products because analysis from the above table indicates that 90 respondents representing (64.3%) agreed Hi-Quality Bakery that live up to her Corporate Social Responsibility and public image through its quality products.

Answer to the research question 2:

According to research question 2: What is the strategy used by Hi-quality bakery in building its public image?

On Table 2, 100 respondents representing (71.5%) disagreed that the public image of Hi-Quality Bakery is not held in high esteem by members of the society. This means that Hi-Quality Bakery is held in high esteem by members of the society going by the high percentage of respondents who disagreed that Hi-Quality Bakery is not held in high esteem by members of the society.

Answer to the research question 3:

To answer research question 3: What are the challenges of Hi-quality bakery in the building of its public image?

According to Table 3, indicates that 95 respondents, representing (67.9%) disagreed that the public relations officer of Hi-Quality Bakery publicised the Corporate Social
Responsibility project executed by Hi-Quality Company in resuscitating her image.

**Answer to research question 4:**

What extent do the public relation officer of Hi-Quality bakery publicise the corporate social responsibility project executed by the company in order to have a positive public image?

Data presented on Table 4, shows that 110 respondents with (78.5%) agreed that the challenges faced by Hi-Quality Bakery affects their public image and sales.

**Discussion of Findings**

From the statistical analysis and findings, it is revealed that there is need for companies to create value by carrying out projects that can touch lives and build a positive public image. This is in line with the views of Kotler and Lee (2005), who pointed out that “Corporate Social Responsibility should be a commitment to improve community well-being through discretionary business practices and contribution of corporate resource”. Publicity should be an effective tool for companies in order to boost the image of the organisation in the eyes of the right thinking members of the society. Bernstein cited in Abratt (1989, p.69) pointed out that image is not what the company believes it to be but the feelings and belief about the company that exist in the minds of its audience. Hi-quality Bakery Company should see Corporate Social Responsibility as mandatory as it entails giving back to the society as an avenue of appreciating their cooperation so far. This is similar to the view of Freeman, (1984), who has pointed out that Corporate Social Responsibility is considered as corporate citizenship, which essentially means that a company should be a good neighbour within its host community. Because of their negligence to carrying out their corporate social responsibility, the company is not held in high esteem.

Government policies and guidelines should stipulate that all companies should contribute to the growth of the society by giving back to the society.

**Conclusion**

Based on the findings from this study, it can be concluded that every well-meaning organisation that is a consumer and business oriented must put their host community first in its plans. Corporate social responsibility is very important in an organisation to the extent that some scholars have described it as inevitable and suicidal for any organisation to overlook. Many organisations have collapsed simply because they neglected their host communities though some corporate social responsibility project has its own fair share of criticism. Critics reckon that corporate social responsibility is founded on selfish reason of competing tirelessly to gain much and give back little but then it won’t discourage Hi-Quality from providing welfare packages for her workers, sales discount for her customers purposefully ignoring publicity with the belief that good products don’t have to sell itself.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations will be beneficial:

a. That the need for corporate social responsibility should be included in government policies regarding private owned companies to ensure that they contribute to salvage the needs of the country.

b. That companies should conduct a research or study on the area which they are situated to unravel the need(s) of the community in order to achieve satisfaction and not execute any project without due investigation.

c. Other companies should lay emphasis on quality and improve on the welfare of both its workers and the community they operate in.

d. Hi-Quality should take corporate social responsibility seriously so that the company’s image will be held in high esteem.

e. That profit should not be a yard stick before a corporate social responsibility is embarked on.

f. Good publicity should be carryout when a tangible project is executed to enable stakeholders to be aware of it.

**References**

Journal of Marketing Management, 5 (1), 63-76.


