

## EFFECT OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY ON INTERNALLY DISPLACE PERSONS WITH DISABILITY IN NORTH EAST NIGERIA

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Corporate Social Responsibility becoming a more integrated part of business functions, it is important for companies to evaluate the effect they have on the reactions they create in society. Not all CSR activities have tangible returns for companies that partake in them, but for more companies to engage in CSR activities it is important for them to see the benefit. The study investigated the Impact of environmental responsibility on Internally Displaced Persons with disability in North-East, Nigeria. The researcher adopted the cross sectional research design and structured questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The simple random sampling technique was adopted in the study. Data analysis was committed to descriptive statistics of mean and percentages as well as correlation and regression analysis. The results showed that Environmental responsibility does have positive impact on internally displaced elderly persons in North East, Nigeria. The study concludes that the responsibility of helping and assisting the internally displaced rests on the national authorities is a core concept reflected in guiding principles on internal displacement, which set forth the rights of IDPs and the duties of the CSR towards them, and also is a central tenet guiding international and regional approaches to internal displacement. It was recommended that organizations should get their major stakeholders involved when they are planning some CSR programmes for their specific locality, as any CSR activity that does not impact positively on the people that it was carried out for, will not be appreciated.*

**Keywords:** *Corporate social responsibility, environmental responsibility, internally displaced persons, Disability, North-East Nigeria.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Business organizations operate as a sub-system within the larger system which is the society. The unique development of modern business is its affiliation with pluralistic society. A society comprising of a variety of organizations like labour unions, shareholders, consumers, government at various levels, other businesses, voluntary organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

According to Oluwole and Eme (2017) the humanitarian crisis resulting from activities of insurgents in the North East of the country is showing no sign of abating, going by reports from different agencies in and outside of the country such as (Amnesty International, 2015, International Organization for Migration, 2015 & Eme & Ugwu, 2016). Apart from concerns about the escalating number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), the poor living conditions in the IDPs camps is alarming and calls for more commitment from all concerned. The growing number of IDPs from the North East is as much a threat as the insurgency itself.

Over the years, organizations operate in a peaceful environment in order to achieve the objective of making profit and satisfying the needs and wants of the society. However, in most of these environments where they operate they are faced with the challenges of conflicts that can hamper their operations such that can lead to the closure of the business if not prevented. Like in the case of south-south, where oil companies face a lot of conflict or challenges with the members of the society where they operate. Why the companies have put in all their best through corporate social responsibility to better the life of the members of the society by providing social amenities, the society has seen these oil companies are not doing enough.

With Corporate Social Responsibility becoming a more integrated part of business functions, it is important for companies to evaluate the effect they have on the reactions they create in society. Not all CSR activities have tangible returns for companies that partake in them, but for more companies to engage in CSR activities it is important for them to see the benefit. The factors used in this research have been adopted as measures of CSR in the North east, Nigeria placed in context with the most internally displaced persons and evaluate these activities when making decisions. If there is no relationship between the independent variables of this research and the corporate reputation, then it can be concluded that the market is not at the point to where it is evaluating CSR actions as an indicator for corporate reputation decisions (Yudina, 2018).

Also in business context, CSR has emerged as a form of sustainability governance with advantages to the economic, environment and social progress. Successful stake holders know that their long-term success is based on continued good relations with a wide range of individuals, groups and institutions in the society. Smart firms know that business can't succeed in societies that are failing, whether this is due to social or environmental challenges, or governance problems.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Concept of Environmental Responsibility

Environmental responsibility is the duty that a company has to operate in a way that protects the environment: Many institutional investors evaluate a company's environmental responsibility before investing in its stock. Respect the environment, making rational use of natural resources and taking steps to prevent pollution from the different processes involved in our industrial operations. Promote the sustainable use of raw materials and natural resources.

Lohman and Steinholtz (2016) view the CSR concept as a combination of three separate agendas, namely Corporate Sustainability, Accountability and Governance. Corporate Sustainability derives from the United Nation meeting in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and the Agenda 21. This refers to how we address and balance the social, economic and environmental areas in the world so that our long term survival is not threatened. Corporate Accountability focuses on the credibility of the organization and is used in situations where discussions are held about the ability of the organization to manage. Corporate governance is used in the discussion about how an organization is being run. It deals with transparency and in the long run trustworthiness.

Mathison (2016). defined it as the obligation of business men 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 the society. A number of studies have been carried out on CSR since the idea was floated in the twentieth century. For, example, a Business week/Harris poll (2015) revealed that U.S. top-level corporate executives (69% of those polled) and MBA students (89%) believed that corporations should be more involved in solving crucial problems. Also in a study of 107 Europeans corporations, majorly of the chief executives cadre surveyed agreed that addressing social issues, such as substance abuse, health care and education, was needed (Mathison, 2016). According to Mathison, (2016). Business in any society needs to take responsibility, for every decision that is made, every action that is taken, must be viewed in the light of that kind of responsibility. Social responsibility requires business organizations to balance the benefits to be gained against the costs of achieving those benefits. There is the general belief that both business and society gain when firms actively strive to be socially responsible. While business organizations gain in enhanced reputation, society gains from the social projects executed by the business organization.

### **Concept of Internally Displaced Persons**

According to Olawale (2016) Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria suffer disproportionately from different problems such as malnutrition, sickness, insecurity in the camps, lack of access to education, idles among others. The vulnerability of displaced persons is a major reason why sustainable strategies for rehabilitation must be considered and implemented at the shortest delay possible. There are a lot of challenges inhibiting effective rehabilitation of IDPs in Nigeria.

One of the challenges inhibiting the rehabilitation of internally displaced persons is insufficient understanding of the rights of IDPs as set out in the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the Kampala Convention. These rights include the right to life, freedom of movement, association, dignity of human person, personal liberty, right to private and family life etc. IDPs usually suffer the worst violation of their fundamental human right (Alobo & Obaji, 2016).

According to Theresa (2015) Internal displacement refers to the voluntary or forced movement, evacuation or relocation of persons or groups of persons within internally recognized State borders. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) on the other hand means persons or a group of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or place or habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflicts, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights, natural or human made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized States border. With the growing numbers of IDPs at an alarming rate, their plights have not been adequately addressed by the government and the international community has not done much due to the fact that such responsibility lies with the affected states government as the situation is seen as an internal affair of the State concerned (Theresa, 2015).

### **Internally Displaced Persons with Disabilities**

People with disabilities are often excluded from early warning systems and evacuations. This may prevent them from fleeing in a safe and timely manner and lead to higher death rates. After Cyclone Amphan struck Bangladesh in May 2020, for example, 71 per cent of people with significant hearing difficulties said they could not access early warning systems.

Those who do manage to escape often confront physical obstacles, as well as a dearth of information. This may slow their arrival to a safe place and their access to humanitarian assistance, while increasing their risk of further injury and trauma. Displacement often exacerbates the barriers people with disabilities face in accessing decent housing, livelihoods, healthcare, and education and exposes them to new risks.

**Housing:** Evacuation centres, camp facilities and other temporary shelters are often inaccessible to people who are blind or partially sighted and people with physical disabilities. Shortages of accessible shelter may push IDPs with disabilities into more unstable and precarious living situations. It can cause them to miss out on vital aid and relief services, which are often provided at evacuation centres or camps.

**Livelihoods:** Higher levels of unemployment, discrimination, and lack of access to quality education makes it harder for people with disabilities to find decent work during their displacement.

**Health:** Displacement often disrupts access to healthcare for people with disabilities, hindering their ability to get vital medication, assistive devices, and rehabilitation and psychosocial services. Lack of timely medical treatment, unstable living conditions and poor nutrition during their displacement can lead to deteriorating health and new disabilities.

**Education:** Children with disabilities are among the most marginalized people in disaster settings, facing significant disruptions to their education. Temporary schools may not be accessible during their displacement, and teachers may lack the training to know how to include them in alternative schooling arrangements. Financial barriers may also prevent them from going to school. A study following the 2015 earthquake in Nepal found that many children with new disabilities were unable to attend school while their parents struggled to restore their homes and livelihoods, and cover the medical costs associated with those disabilities. Children with disabilities who do not have access to adequate education during their displacement often end up encountering various disadvantages. These may undermine their ability to find future employment.

### **Internal Displacement and its Consequences**

For the purposes of the Guiding Principles, the term “internal displacement” describes situations in which individuals and groups are (a) forced or obliged to leave and remain away from their homes, but (b) remain within the borders of their own countries (Bichta, (2016). The second element distinguishes them from refugees, who are also involuntarily displaced but across internationally recognized state borders. Internal displacement occurs typically in response to armed conflict, persecution, situations of widespread violence, natural and human made disasters

and, more recently, large-scale development projects. However, both the scale of the problem and the nature of the response have become far more significant in the last two decades. The effect of internal displacement on IDPs themselves, as well as on the local authorities and communities that host them, can be devastating Carroll & Shabana, 2010).

While the act of displacement itself often may violate the human rights of those affected, the subsequent loss of access to homes, lands, livelihoods, personal documentation, family members, and social networks can negatively affect the ability of IDPs to assert and enjoy an entire range of fundamental rights. Most obvious, IDPs immediately become dependent on others for basic needs such as shelter, food and water. At the same time, their vulnerability may be increased by barriers to accessing health care, education, employment, economic activities, and electoral politics in their areas of displacement (Freeman et al., 2016).

Moreover, the longer displacement continues, the greater is the risk that traditional family and social structures break down, leaving IDPs dependent on outside aid and vulnerable to economic and sexual exploitation. Such dependency, in turn, reduces the chances of durable solutions and sustainable reintegration into society once political and security conditions have changed to enable such solutions to take place.

## **Theoretical Review**

### **Ethical Theory**

Ethics are codes of values and principles that govern the action of a person, or a group of people regarding what is right versus what is wrong (Levine, 2016; Sexty, 2016). Therefore, ethics set standards as to what is good or bad in organizational conduct and decision making (Sexty, 2016). It deals with internal values that are a part of corporate culture and shapes decisions concerning social responsibility with respect to the external environment. The terms ethics and values are not interchangeable (Mitchell, 2015). Whereas ethics is concerned with how a moral person should behave; values are the inner judgments that determine how a person actually behaves.

Values concern ethics when they pertain to beliefs about what is right and wrong. In the business setting, being ethical means applying principles of honesty and fairness to relationships with coworkers and customers (Daft, 2015). Business or corporate ethics is a form of applied ethics or professional ethics that examines ethical principles, and moral or ethical problems that arise in a business environment (Stanwick & Stanwick, 2019).

Meta-ethics does not address how we ought to behave; rather, meta-ethics is related more to the study of ethical theory itself. Here the interest is in evaluating moral and ethical theories and systems. For example, moral relativism is a meta-ethical theory because it interprets discussions around ethics; a question asked within moral relativism is “is ethics culturally relative?” Evans and Macmillan (2019) define meta-ethics as “theories of ethics concerned with the moral concepts, theories, and the meaning of moral language. Pollock (2017) further defines meta-ethics as “a discipline that investigates the meaning of ethical systems and whether they are relative or are universal, and are self-constructed or are independent of human creation.” Applied ethics describes how we apply normative theories to specific issues, usually related to work or

belonging to an organization; for example, policies and procedures of organizations or ethical codes of outlaw bikers versus ethical codes of police officers. Evans and Macmillan (2019) define applied ethics as “theories of ethics concerned with the application of normative ethics to particular ethical issues.

Apparently, in the late 1970s, the business ethics movements were raising concern about ethical values and principles. Some academic experts on the subject such as Frederick (2016) sought to explain such normative ethics behind the CSR rationale. Carroll (2015) attempted to synthesise the fundamental principle of social responsibility. He explained the rationale behind social responsibility initiatives and went on to describe the corporate responses to social issues. Carroll (2015) implied that businesses had a commitment towards society. He intimated that businesses were obliged to engage in economic, legal, ethical and discretionary (philanthropic) activities.

### METHODOLOGY

The study adopted cross-sectional design. The design is believed to be most suitable since there are no real experiments carried out with human beings who are the study subjects in this case. The design suitability is also seen in the fact that it involved taking a sample of elements from a population of interest which is measured at a single point in time. The survey instruments such as questionnaire were designed in a way that meaningful results could be achieved. The population of this study comprised 3600 internally displaced persons from all the states in Northeast of Nigeria. The sample size was determined using taro Yamane formula; the sample was calculated to be 600 samples. The participating individuals were selected from each state using simple random sampling. The questionnaire was divided into 2 major sections. Section A sought information on the demography of respondents. Section B elicited information relevant for answering the single research questions posed in the study. Copies of the structured questionnaire were administered to the respondents by the researcher. The reliability of the instrument was determined through test-retest method and data obtained were correlated using Regression Analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. A value of 0.9788 was obtained which is an indication of sufficient reliability

### DATA ANALYSIS

**Table 1: Impact of environmental responsibility on internally displaced persons with disabilities in North East, Nigeria**

1.	Environmental responsibility has positive impact on internally displaced persons with disabilities in North East, Nigeria.	360	100	100	30	10	600
2.	Environmental responsibility is a source of encouragement to the IDPs with disabilities the selected camps in the North-east geopolitical zone of Nigeria.	250	200	112	27	11	600
<b>Total</b>		910(75.7%)		269(22.3%)		21(3.5%)	1200

**Source: Field Survey, 2021.**

Table 1 shows that 910(75.7%) indicated agreement 269(22.3%) indicated disagreement while 32(3.5%) indicated undecided. This shows that Environmental responsibility has positive impact on internally displaced persons in North East, Nigeria.

**Test of hypothesis**

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Environmental responsibility does not have positive impact on internally displaced persons with disabilities in North East, Nigeria.

**Table 2: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.414 <sup>a</sup>	.171	.169	12.87689

**a. Predictors: (Constant), Environmental responsibility**

The model summary indicated the presence of a positive correlation (R=0.414) between the independent variable and the dependent variable. Further, the R-squared value of 0.171 indicated that the independent variable accounted for 17.1% of the total variance. Therefore the researcher observed that the independent variables and the dependent variable were mutually exclusive. The analysis of variance yielded the results presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	12997.497	1	12997.497	78.386	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	62843.640	379	165.814		
	Total	75841.137	380			

**a. Dependent Variable: internally displaced persons with disabilities in North East, Nigeria****b. Predictors: (Constant), Environmental responsibility**

The study established that the F-ratio (F=78.386, p=0.000) was statistically significant at p<0.05 level of significance. This shows that Environmental responsibility has a significant effect on internally displaced persons with disabilities in North East, Nigeria. The model's coefficient values from the regression are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	12.155	1.723		7.055	.000
	Environmental responsibility	5.475E-6	.000	.414	8.854	.000

**a. Dependent Variable: internally displaced persons with disabilities in North East, Nigeria**

Table 4 shows that “Environmental responsibility” regressed on “internally displaced persons with disabilities in North East, Nigeria”. Environmental responsibility has significant effects on internally displaced persons with disabilities in North East, Nigeria. The null hypothesis is

hereby rejected;  $p < 0.05$ . The analysis result further indicates that Environmental responsibility, which yielded a Beta ( $\beta$ ) of 5.475E-6, t-value of 8.854, was deemed to be statistically significant since the obtained p-value (0.000) is less than 0.05 level of significance. The study therefore accepts the alternative hypothesis which states that, “Environmental responsibility does have positive impact on internally displaced persons with disabilities in North East, Nigeria.”

## CONCLUSION

Today, stakeholders are calling on organizations to be more involved in ensuring beneficial activities to the society by fulfilling their societal expectations as they affect the various stakeholders of the organizations, since an interaction between business and the society is a mutual relationship in which one depends on the other for its wellbeing. The way the society sees business organizations in relation to her involvement in some actions that benefit the general society is therefore very important today. CSR involvement can no longer be swept under the carpet anymore.

That is, the IDPs are faced by “the politics of policy application.” The government pays little or no attention to this group of people and their plight. Measures taken to address the deplorable conditions in which they live are very, very inadequate, if any. The social unrest, violence, and terrorism are caused by corrupt turgid political practices and mindless approach to politics. Since the IDPs are within the country, the government should - by international law and established principles.

That the responsibility of helping and assisting the internally displaced rests on the national authorities is a core concept reflected in guiding principles on internal displacement, which set forth the rights of IDPs and the duties of the CSR towards them, and also is a central tenet guiding international and regional approaches to internal displacement.

The IDPs are often reduced to helpless victims in a formulation of policies and academic discourses, but my research shows that they also exercise agency within the limits of their circumstances. Their self-organizing has been of high importance for their lives in the camp. They attract little or no attention and are, most of the times, seen as a valueless segment of the society, and within the camp people struggle with issues of self-respect, linked to their traditional gender roles.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the researcher recommended thus: Arising from the foregoing, we recommend that:

- i. Organizations should also ensure that they communicate to their major stakeholders of their CSR involvement in order to make the society know that they really care about the welfare of the internally displaced persons.
- ii. In addition, organizations should get their major stakeholders involved when they are planning some CSR programmes for their specific locality, as any CSR activity that does not impact positively on the people that it was carried out for, will not be appreciated.



- iii. Organizations should ensure that they make corporate social responsibility a major part of their corporate strategy in order to gain competitive advantage over their rivals by gaining the confidence of their stakeholders who can directly or indirectly influence their continued corporate existence and survival.

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