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CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY OF FOOD PROCESSING COMPANIES IN RIVERS STATE AND HOST COMMUNITIES

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Abstract

This study examined corporate environmental responsibility of food processing companies in Rivers State to host communities. The study was guided by four research objectives and questions. This study is a qualitative study based on phenomenology research design. The population of the study consists of 150 respondents, out of which 75 respondents were sampled through quota sampling technique and were used for the study. The researcher used interview schedule to carry out an in-depth interview of face-to-face interaction with the respondents. Findings reveal that companies attitudes toward corporate environmental responsibility is low, they adopts dialogue strategy to interface with host communities but community representatives are not usually inclusive body; companies provide inadequate compensation packages that are not committed to poverty alleviation to community members; and that companies' level of compliance to environmental responsibility component of corporate social responsibility is low due to their preference of bribing the community leader to avoid confrontation by community members. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended that companies should improve on their attitude toward corporate environmental responsibility because they are supposed to be good neighbor to their host communities while community members should be accommodative in their agitations; dialogue as strategy for interface with host communities should be inclusive not selective and community members should be objective in their demands; compensations to host communities should be sustainable package that will improve on the socio-economic life of the people and that companies should consciously comply to agreement and community members also should respect agreement and not making excess demands that are not part of agreed status quo.

Keywords: Environment, Responsibility, Environmental Impacts, Environmental Responsibility, Corporate Environmental Responsibility.

1.1. Introduction

Production processes of food processing companies in Rivers State are surrounded by different production activities that are not environmentally friendly, these unfriendly practices affect the host communities directly and indirectly. Environmental pollutions which range from effluent discharge, improper waste

disposal, air and noise pollution from companies' power generating plants, and so on, on daily basis affect the health and well-being of the people living within the communities where these companies operate and do their business. Okorie and Ikwuegbu (2018) observed that companies doing business in communities are supposed to be environmentally responsible to the health and well-being of their host communities for long run prosperity of the business, being profit conscious without minding the social and environmental effects of their business activities will in one way or the other affect the prosperity of the company in the long-run.

Confrontations and conflicts between companies and the host communities that sometimes lead to temporary closure of companies due to blockages usually mounted by the angry community members are commonly associated with the grievance relating to demand for compensations on the environmental impacts of companies' production processes on wellness and well-being of the host communities by community members. Even though the fundamental objectives of any business organization such as food processing companies is to make profits, it is obligatory to them to also take good care of the surroundings where they do their business in order to maintain reputation and remain in business in the long run. Corporate environmental responsibility is a vital aspect of corporate social responsibility that embodies health, livelihood and well-being of people living within and around communities where corporation do their business.

Although the primary purpose of corporation is cost minimization and profit maximization, corporations should ensure that their pursuit for profit does not endanger the lives of others, either in the future generation or in the present generation. Ethically corporations are obliged to carry out certain level of corporate social responsibility to host communities. Windsor (2006) defended the idea that there are three main moral and political perspectives on corporate social responsibility, which are ethical, economic and corporate citizenship. Ethical perspective of corporate social responsibility according to Freeman (2001) emphasises on the ideal role of the company within society and toward its different stakeholder while the economic perspective maintains that the firm must first maximise the value creation for its shareholders, and only subsequently, may be accountable to society. Based on the ethical perspective of corporate social responsibility, it is imperative that companies in their attempt to minimise cost and maximise profit and also maintain their company image for sustainability are supposed to carry out their operational activities in an environmentally friendly manner that are ethically oriented as proffered by theory of utilitarianism. In utilitarianism, 'good' is defined as the existence of pleasure and the absence of pain, and this is called utility. An action that maximises utility is one that maximises total benefits while reducing negative consequences for the largest number of people. Therefore companies are supposed to build on this theory when carrying out their operational activities within the host communities. The establishments of companies in communities are supposed to bring happiness and pleasure to the host communities not pain and displeasure. Companies through their operational activities should better the lives of their host communities than contributing negatively to the welfare, wellness and well-being of their host communities. Companies should rather take cognisance of the environmental impacts of their actions on the immediate environment in which they operate. Chit Juan in Contreras (2004, p.14) observed that:

the commitment of a company to social responsibilities is a major driving force. Establishing a corporate culture that espouses values and programs that go beyond the norms of business inculcates trust and pride in one's organisation, which in turn propels it to greater heights. Companies, which are driven by absolute commitment to its targeted publics including the communities they serve, are truly that worth emulating. The environment of people is their life sustaining. (Chit Juan in Contreras, 2004, p.14)

In Rivers state, there exist numerous food processing companies such as Rivers State Vegetable Oil Company (RIVOC), Rivers Biscuit Company, Dulfil Prima Foods Plc (producers of indomie noddle), Pure Flower Mills Ltd (producers of pure flower, pure semolina, pasta and mini mini chin chin and mini noddles), International Breweries, Portharcourt Flower Mills, Nigerian Bottling Company (Cocacola), and so on. These companies in the course of their production activities pollute the environment of their host communities with different pollutants which ranges from carbondioxide from their power generating plant, discharge of effluent into the water bodies that serve both domestic and livelihood purposes to the host communities that depend on the water resources to feed their families, and so on. They degrade the environment and expose people in the host communities to hazards that directly and indirectly affect their health, well-being and means of livelihood. Also most of these companies depend upon power generating machines as main source of power for their operation, these power generating machines emits carbon into the atmosphere and pollute the environment with smoke. Ethical and friendly business operations rest on the theory of utilitarianism. Pains suffered by host communities due to various degrees of pollution, health and livelihood related consequences of companies action on their environment are as a result of companies been blinded by the profit motive to engage in unethical practices prompted the researcher to carry out this research to examine the level to which food processing companies operating in rivers state have been responding to environmental impacts of their actions to their host communities.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

In Rivers State, companies and host communities are always in logger head due to demand by community members for the proper implementation of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that are tagged to the corporate social responsibility plan of the company towards their host community. Many of these as it relates to the environment are usually neglected or over looked by the companies, at the expense of health, well-being and livelihood of the host community members.

Health of the people is being endangered by the air pollution that emanates from the machines, vehicles and equipment used by food processing companies for their operations, Majority of these companies discharge effluents directly into rivers that serve as source of livelihood to the community members such as the fishermen and other sea food gatherers. Fishes, periwinkles, crabs and other sea food that many of the community members depend on to feed their families have disappear from the river due to contamination of the river with the companies' effluent. Also, stench from the effluent discharges cause lots of discomfort and related health implications.

However, health, well-being and livelihood of host communities are supposed to be the paramount concern of companies as part of companies' corporate social responsibility. Since corporate social responsibility entails strategies corporations conduct their business in a way that is ethically and environmentally friendly, but in reality, the ethics are set aside for profit. Thus, the notion of ethics as it relates to the operation of food processing companies in Rivers State and the health, well-being and livelihood of host communities is the problem of this study.

1.3 . Purpose and objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the level of corporate environmental responsibility of food processing companies in Rivers State and host communities. The objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine companies' attitude toward the plight of their host communities on the environmental impact of their production processes.
2. Identify companies' strategies of interfacing with host communities towards implementation of corporate environmental responsibility.

3. Examine the level of companies' commitment to alleviation of status of those community members whose sources of livelihood have been destroyed by the operation activities.
4. Examine the extent to which companies comply with agreement signed on the issues concerning environmental responsibility.

1.4. Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. How is companies' attitude toward the plight of the host communities on the environmental impact of their production processes?
2. What are companies' strategies of interfacing with host communities towards implementation of corporate environmental responsibility?
3. What are the levels of company's commitment to alleviation of status of those community members whose sources of livelihood have been destroyed by the operation activities?
4. To what extent do companies comply with agreement signed on the issues concerning environmental responsibility?

2.0 Literature Review

2.1. Theory of Utilitarianism

This study is anchored on theory of utilitarianism. Theory of Utilitarianism is traced to the work of Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832). Utilitarianism otherwise known as greatest happiness principle stated that a moral action is one that increases the total utility in the world. This implies that an action is moral when it increases the amount of happiness in the world and this will allow actions to be ranked by morality. Also, an action that makes one person happy is moral but when same action makes many people happy, it is more moral. However, every entity's interests should be considered equally when making the decision, and this includes those of other species since they also are capable of suffering. Companies carry out their businesses to make profit which will give them happiness, but if their operational activities do not translate to happiness to their host community, the issue of moral action (ethics) is being bridged. Utilitarianism according to Robert (2002) is a normative ethical theory that places the locus of right and wrong solely on the outcomes (consequences) of choosing one action over other actions; it moves beyond the scope of one's own interests and takes into account the interests of others.

The relevance of this theory to the study is the theorist argument that business entity such as food processing companies in Rivers State are supposed to carry out their operational activities in friendly environmental ways so as not inflict pain of their host communities. Thus, companies should ensure that they engage only in ethical principles that are geared towards producing the best benefit to the host community as opposed to harming the community in some ways. However, if companies accept to adopt the utilitarian approach to the issue of corporate environmental responsibility and host communities, then the issue of constant disagreement between hosts communities that sometimes lead to temporary/ permanent closure of companies in Rivers State will reduced. The closure of a company for a day amounts to a relative impact on productivity and profit which is the main reason for the company to exist. It also exposes company's weakness to their competitors.

2.2. Concept of Corporate Environmental Responsibility

Corporate environmental responsibility (CER) can be defined as company's pro-active efforts or the commitment of companies to the reduction of the environmental impact usually created by operational activities. This corroborates with the view of Mikler in Okorie and Ikwegbu (2018) view that companies

need to carry out their activities in a socially and environmentally beneficial manner, and to produce socially and environmentally responsible products and services. According to Sindhi and Kumar (2012), corporate environmentalism manifests either as part of corporate social responsibility (CSR) or safety, health and environment (SHE) project of an organisation. In support of this Jamison, Reynolds, Holroyd, Veldman and Tremblett, (2005) defined corporate environmental responsibility as a process in which company takes into account environmental commitment, embarrases sustainability and maintain a net impact on environmental and society. Owing to these definitions, health and well-beings of external stakeholder in business operating areas such as community environment and the life of the members should be a thing of priority to companies because corporate environmental responsibility (CER) entails a company's efforts to pro-actively manage its impact on the natural environment, companies should not only be internally responsible but also externally (community) and environmentally responsible. According to Baughn (2007), corporate environmental responsibility is known as the environmental perspective of corporate social responsibility while Gunningham (2009) defined as practices that benefit the environment (or mitigate the adverse impact of business on the environment) that go beyond that which companies are legally obliged to do. To Lyon and Maxwell (2008), corporate environmental responsibility is environmentally friendly actions not required by law, but also referred to as going beyond compliance, the private provision of public goods, or voluntarily internalizing externalities. In view of this, Kusku, (2007) described corporate environmental responsibility as precautions and policies organisations adopt to reduce and prevent hazards to environment along with stakeholder participation to induce transparency. In support of this, Hansen and Mowen (2007) asserted that it makes a lot of sense for companies to be environmentally responsible because of its multifarious tangible and intangible benefits and that with this realisation and growing awareness, most polluting companies have also initiated environmentally responsible programmes.

2.3. Food Processing Companies and the Environment of Host Communities

Food processing companies in Rivers state are companies that deal with processing and packaging of noodles, cooking vegetable oil, fruit and vegetables, grains and beverages production, and so on. Their production processes include processing of raw material used for their product, refinement, preservation, storage, handling, packaging, bottling and canning. These companies generate different volumes of waste during their production processes and these wastes are in most cases emitted into the environment resulting to pollutant of different forms. Industrial waste water generated by this companies are discharged into water ways that serve as domestic source of water to some of the inhabitants of the host communities to these companies. The waste water in most cases pollute the rivers and kill off fishes, crabs, shrimps, crayfish, periwinkles, lobsters, and son on, that the community members depend on as their sources of livelihood. Health of the people is also at risk due to contaminants that usually build up in the polluted areas. Many of the inhabitants suffer from different water borne and air borne diseases due to the pollution emanating from the waste generated from companies' production processes. Chukwu (2009) observed that the processing companies are a part of our environment and are often major generators of wastes, and that industrial waste is a major source of environmental pollution that affects the geology, soil and ecology of an area. The food companies should be aware of the contents of the wastes they generate with the view to making them environment friendly. Chukwu (2009) asserted that the existing environment in which food processing companies operate is the only environment we have and shared by both consumers, operators and the host communities, there is the need therefore, to ensure the preservation of the environment in a natural and ecologically balanced state for the use of all, and this must and should be made to be the motivating factor during the design, construction and operation of all industrial enterprises.

3.0. Methodology

This study is a qualitative study and the research design adopted for this study is phenomenology. Phenomenology addresses questions about common human experiences; it is a way of describing something that exists as an integral part of the world in which we are living. A phenomenological study according to Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2006), is designed to describe and interpret an experience by determining the meaning of the experience as perceived by the people who have participated in it. The researcher adopted this design because of the need to actually address the concept of environmental responsibility as a requisite function of corporate organization. Astalin (2013) observed that sometimes it happens that our lack of understanding of existence of phenomena maybe because the phenomenon has not been overtly described and explained or our understanding of the impact it makes may be unclear.

The population of the study consists of 150 respondents, which include 50 staff of 5 food processing companies in Rivers State which are Rivers State Vegetable Oil Company (RIVOC), Nigerian Bottling Company; makers of Coca Cola, Dufil Prima Foods Plc (producers of indomie noddle), Pure Flower Mills Ltd (producers of pure flower, pure semolina, pasta and mini mini chin chin and mini noddles) and PABOD Breweries (makers of grand lager, hero lager and grand malt) and 100 residents of six host communities in which the companies operate their businesses, which are Oginigba, Azubie, Rainbow town, Elekahia, Nkpogu and Choba. 75 respondents were sampled through quota sampling technique and were used for the study. Quota sampling technique was used to select 70 respondents for the study. Quota sampling was used to select respondents with the characteristics in which the research is interested in. Since the research focus on the issue of corporation/community relationship, the researcher used quota sampling technique to purposively sample only those companies' staffs and community members who are supposed to represent the two groups on the issue of corporate environmental responsibility and it was not necessary to collect data from everyone in a company or community in order to get valid findings.

The instrument used for collection of data for this study was interview schedule. The researcher carried out an in-depth interview by face-to-face interaction with the respondents. Research ethics was also applied during the interview to protect the well-being of research participants. Thus the researcher ensured commitment to the autonomy of research participants, and the dignity of all research participants were respected. Data generated from the interview was reported by coding the interview questions into themes and contents and interpreting thereafter.

4.0 Result and Findings

4.1: Presentation of Result

The reported coded interview response based on four themes and contents are presented in tables 4.1- 4.8 as follows;

THEME ONE: ATTITUDE

Table 4.1: Companies' attitude toward the plight of their host communities on the environmental impact of their production processes.

Companies	Description	Remark
RIVOC	Effluent are treated before they discharging into canal that lead to river connecting our host community	Respond Appropriately
Dufil Prima Foods	Regular clean-up exercise is usually being carried out by our waste management sector on choba river to checkmate the occurrence of any after effect of our waste on the health of our host community	Respond Appropriately

Pure Flower Mills	Companies on regular basis carry out sensitization and health education programmes on their operation activities in relation to environmental impacts	Respond Appropriately
PABOD Breweries	Proper monitoring is usually conducted by the waste unit to evaluate the nature of waste before it is discharged to the canals and rivers	Respond Appropriately
Nigerian Bottling Company (Coca Cola)	Both liquid and solid wastes are not disposed around the community	Respond Appropriately

Table 4.1 shows that the companies attest that they respond appropriately to the practice of corporate environmental responsibility towards their host communities, they were of the view that any effluent they discharged into water ways of their host community is usually treated to avoid any environmental pollution effect on the lives of the community members; that in the event of any noticeable pollutant, they respond promptly. They also carry out regular clean up exercise, health talk shows, sensitization programmes to acquaint their host communities of the modalities of their operational activities and the environment.

Table 4.2: Companies' attitude toward the plight of their host communities on the environmental impact of their production processes.

Communities	Description	Remark
Choba	Companies pollute our river on daily basis with their effluent and they have not been responding to community members' outcry as a result of the effects of the discharged effluent on health.	Low Response
Oginigba,	Despite community members constant pleas to companies on the effects of their pollutants on the host community, companies heavy machines continually generate fumes and causes air pollution, and also effluent are being discharged daily to canals and rivers that the community members use for domestic purpose	Low Response
Azubie,	Despite community members constant pleas to companies on the effects of their pollutants on the host community, companies heavy machines continually generate fumes and causes air pollution, and also effluent are being discharged daily to canals and rivers that the community members use for domestic purpose	Low Response
Rainbow town,	Despite community members constant pleas on companies to the effects of their pollutants on the host community, companies heavy machines continually generate fumes and causes air pollution, and also effluent are being discharged daily to canals and rivers that the community members use for domestic purpose	Low Response
Elekahia	Companies heavy machines continually generate fumes and causes air pollution, and discharge of gaseous and liquid waste that emit foul smell around the community and endangers resident's well-being	Low Response
Nkpogu	Despite community members constant pleas to companies on the effects of their pollutants on the host community, Companies heavy machines continually generate fumes and causes air pollution, and discharge of gaseous and liquid waste that emit foul smell around the community and endangers residents well-being	Low Response

Table 4.2 shows that community member responses negate the response of the companies' in the area of commitment. The responses from the community members reveal that companies' attitude to environmental responsibility towards their host communities' is low. They do not respond appropriately to community members when they call their attention to the ways they pollute their environment through emission of effluent which is very dangerous to their health and livelihood; that despite their constant plead to companies the effects of their pollutants on the host community, companies heavy machines continually generate fumes and causes air pollution, companies' still discharge gaseous and liquid waste that emit foul smell around the community and endangers residents health and well-being.

THEME TWO: STRATEGIES

Table 4.3: Companies' strategies of interfacing with host communities towards implementation of corporate environmental responsibility

Companies	Description	Remark
RIVOC	The use of dialogue with confronting parties (youth leader), community development committees (CDCs), town hall meetings with clan representatives	Dialogue
Dufil Prima Foods	Community Development Committees (CDCs), town hall meetings with clan representatives	Dialogue
Pure Flower Mills	The use of dialogue, community development committees, town hall meetings	Dialogue
PABOD Breweries	The use of dialogue, community development committees (CDCs), town hall meetings with clan representatives	Dialogue
Nigerian Bottling Company (Coca Cola)	The use of dialogue, community development committees (CDCs), town hall meetings with clan representatives	Dialogue

Table 4.3 reveals that companies adopt dialogue as strategies to interface with their host community in discussing environmental impacts of their operational activities on the health and well-being of their host communities. They do this by dialoging with community representatives such as the youth leaders, community development committees (CDCs) and town hall meetings with clan representatives.

Table 4.4: Companies' strategies of interfacing with host communities towards implementation of corporate environmental responsibility

Communities	Description	Remark
Choba	Meetings with community heads which include chiefs, CDCs chairmen and youth leaders	Don't dialogue rather they bribe the leaders
Oginigba,	Meetings with community heads which include chiefs, CDCs chairmen and youth leaders	Don't dialogue rather they bribe the leaders
Azubie,	Meetings with community heads which include chiefs, CDCs chairmen and youth leaders	Don't dialogue rather they bribe the leaders
Rainbow town,	Meetings with community heads which include chiefs and CDCs chairmen	Don't dialogue rather they bribe the leaders
Elekahia	Meetings with community heads which include chiefs and CDCs chairmen	Don't dialogue rather they bribe the leaders
Nkpogu	Meetings with community heads which include chiefs, CDCs chairmen and youth leaders	Don't dialogue rather they bribe the leaders

Table 4.4 reveals that companies do interface with host communities with the agenda of discussing issues that concern the environmental impact of their operational activities of their host communities but the meeting is usually between the company representatives and the community leaders who they bribe with monetary gifts, award of contracts, sometimes employment quota to seal off their mouth and not to agitate for company environmental responsibility towards the host communities.

THEME THREE: COMMITMENT

Table 4.5: Level of companies' commitment to alleviation of status of those community members whose sources of livelihood have been destroyed by the companies' operation activities

Companies	Description	Remark
RIVOC	Community members whose livelihood activities are affected by environmental impacts of companies activities are being compensated	Highly committed
Dufil Prima Foods	Vocational skills acquisition training programme are organized to give community members whose sources of livelihood have being affected alternative source of livelihood.	Highly committed
Pure Flower Mills	In other t carter for the health of community members, companies' carry out regular health check on community members	Highly committed
PABOD Breweries	Drugs and equipment are usually being donated yearly to primary health centers by companies to host communities	Highly committed
Nigerian Bottling Company (Coca Cola)	Those with requisite skills that are displaced of their means of livelihood by company environmental impacts are compensated with employment by companies	Highly committed

Table 4.5 reveals that companies are committed to the alleviation of status of those community members whose sources of livelihood have been destroyed by the companies' operation activities. Respondents from the companies were of the view that companies provide compensation packages to community members whose livelihood is affected by the environmental impacts of companies' operational activities; they also provide vocational skills training, health check, provision of drugs and equipment to community primary health centers and employment opportunities to qualified community members

Table 4.6: Level of companies' commitment to alleviation of status of those community members whose sources of livelihood have been destroyed by the operation activities

Communities	Description	Remark
Choba	Community members whose livelihood activities are affected by environmental impacts of companies' activities are not adequately compensated	Low commitment
Oginigba,	Companies organize vocational skills acquisition training programme for community members whose livelihood activities have been negatively impacted on but these vocational skills are not usually backed up with start-up packages to boost the beneficiaries	Low commitment
Azubie,	Companies' sometimes float health check programme in their host communities but not based on the health issues related to their environmental impacts. They hardly carry out health related programmes.	Low commitment
Rainbow town	Drugs and equipment are not donated to primary health centers by companies to host communities	Low commitment
Elekahia	Those with requisite skills, that are dispossessed of their means of livelihood by company environmental impacts are not adequately compensated with employment by companies	Low commitment
Nkpogu	Those with requisite skills, that are displaced of their means of livelihood by company environmental impacts are sometimes compensate with employment by companies	Low commitment

Table 4.6 reveals that community members were of the view that companies were not really showing adequate commitment to alleviation of status of those community members whose sources of livelihood have been destroyed by the operation activities because:

1. they are not adequately compensated;
2. companies organise vocational skills acquisition training but these vocational skills are not usually backed up with start-up packages to boost the beneficiaries;
3. companies' sometimes float health check programme but not based on the health issues related to their environmental impacts hardly carry out health related programmes; and

4. those with requisite skills, that are displaced of their means of livelihood by company environmental impacts are not adequately compensated with employment.

THEME FOUR: COMPLIANCE

Table 4.7: Companies' level of compliance with agreement signed on the issues concerning environmental responsibility

Company	Description	Remark
RIVOC	In response to the principle of polluter pay, companies have been complying with agreement signed on the issues concerning environmental responsibility with host communities.	Adequate Compliance
Dufil Prima Foods	In response to the principle of polluter pay, companies have been complying with agreement signed on the issues concerning environmental responsibility with host communities	Adequate Compliance
Pure Flower Mills	In response to the principle of polluter pay, companies have been complying with agreement signed on the issues concerning environmental responsibility with host communities	Adequate Compliance
PABOD Breweries	In response to the principle of polluter pay, companies have been complying with agreement signed on the issues concerning environmental responsibility with host communities	Adequate Compliance
Coca Cola	In response to the principle of polluter pay, companies have been complying with agreement signed on the issues concerning environmental responsibility with host communities	Adequate Compliance

Table 4.7 reveals that respondents from the companies were of the view that their companies do adequately comply with agreement signed on the issues concerning environmental responsibility due to their understanding of the principle of polluter pay principle.

Table 4.8: Communities' level of compliance with agreement signed on the issues concerning environmental responsibility

Communities	Description	Remark
Choba	Companies do not adequately comply with agreement signed on issues concerning environmental responsibilities	Inadequate Compliance
Oginigba,	Despite the series of complains to companies concerning their non-compliance with the agreements reached, company don't comply in response to community demands	Inadequate Compliance
Azubie,	Despite the series of complains to companies concerning their environmental impacts on livelihood of host community members, companies do not adequately comply with community demands	Inadequate Compliance
Rainbow town,	Companies do not adequately comply with agreement signed on issues concerning environmental responsibilities	Inadequate Compliance
Elekahia	companies do not comply with the agreements reached on environmental impacts of their operational activities, company don't complies with community demands	Inadequate Compliance
Nkpogu	companies rather bribe community leaders than comply with the agreements reached	Inadequate Compliance

Table 4.8 reveals that respondents form communities were of the opinion that companies have not been complying with agreement signed on the issues concerning environmental responsibility. That rather than comply with the details of the agreement, they do bribe the community leader to avoid confrontation with community members.

4.2: Discussion of Findings

Findings shows that companies attitudes toward corporate environmental responsibility is low, although they respond to certain level which does not actually have positive impact on the plight of the people because there still sufficient visible evidence of their polluting actions on the environment of the host communities. These visible evidences have been the contending issues that lead to confrontations and blockages of company gates by angry community members which is not really good for company image and sustainability. The main motive for business is for profit making and an hour lost in production process of a company due to blockage by angry community members will reflect in the productivity and profit of the company. Nwosu in Ezebuenyi, Edegoh, and Samson (2105) observed that corporate social responsibility demands that social institutions identify with the problems and achievements of the

communities in which they operate, work with other members of the community to achieve set objectives, which are in the overall interest of the community and all its members. However, for companies to build successful image and sustain their business it require strict commitment to ethical imperative and social responsibility. In view of this Nwodu (2007) asserted that practically, it is the responsibility of a corporate organisation to carry out infrastructural development of host communities as a way of compensating them for the damage caused it by the organisation's activities. Environment of host communities is where companies conduct their activities and set it goals toward profit making and sustenance. Company corporate social responsibility should be geared towards ensuring that companies will, attitude and perception are environmentally friendly, and that mutual beneficial acceptable relationship should be maintained by company and their host community. This is in support of Okoroafor (2008) view that the basic aim of maintenance of beneficial acceptable relationship among companies and host community is to generate goodwill among specific individuals or generate the goodwill of people, who are essential to the general well-being and profitability of an organization.

The finding reveals that companies adopt dialogue strategy to interface with host communities when discussing issues that concern the environmental impact of their operational activities on host communities but the meeting is usually between the company representatives and the community leaders who they bribe with monetary gifts, award of contracts, sometimes employment quota to seal off their mouth and not to agitate for company environmental responsibility towards the host communities. This has been the practice that actually denies the host communities of benefiting properly from the supposed environmental responsibility package of companies operating in their communities. Holme and Watts (2000) asserted that company's engagement with stakeholders is the essence of CSR, that without relationships with the internal and external constituents, companies will find it difficult to grasp the fluctuating nature of the values, attitudes, and behavior of their stakeholders and respond accordingly. Therefore discussions on corporate environmental responsibilities between host communities and companies should be inclusive. This is in support of Young in Andriof, Waddock, Husted and Rahman (2003) view that the identification and inclusion of stakeholders in the dialogue is of crucial importance. They further observed that If important stakeholders are excluded from the decision-making process, the relevance of and anticipated benefits from the dialogue will be limited. As a participatory ideal, the stakeholder dialogue should include the important groups and individuals who affect and/or are affected by the decision on the issue in question. However, the issue of bribing community leaders/representatives at the expense of community well-being will be a thing of the past if all stakeholders are involved in the dialogue.

Findings reveal that companies provide compensation packages to community members but were not really committed to poverty alleviation due to their unfriendly attitude. Some companies have unfriendly attitude towards their host communities to the extent of throwing away all written requests from the host communities into the trash can. This action contributes to the largely unmet host communities' developmental needs. Matunhu (2011) observed that the success and sustainability of Africa's development programmes will depend on how businesses attend to social responsibility such as voluntary philanthropic. Voluntary philanthropic according to Matunhu (2011) is that type of social responsibility which centers on business contribution of financial and human resources to the community and society to improve quality of life and welfare in the society. Poverty reduction component of corporate environmental responsibility is vital for peaceful coexistence between companies and their host community

Companies' level of compliance to environmental responsibility component of corporate social responsibility is low due to their preference of bribing the community leader to avoid confrontation by community members. This is in support of Chit Juan in Contreras (2004) observation that the commitment of a company to social responsibilities is a major driving force that the establishment of a corporate culture

that espouses values and programs that go beyond the norms of business inculcates trust and pride in one's organisation, and will in turn propel company to greater heights.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, corporate environmental responsibility of food processing companies in Rivers State have not been impacting positively on the environment and well-being of host communities because companies provide compensation packages to community members which do not translate to poverty alleviation. Companies' preference of dialoguing and bribing of community leaders to reduce cost of their corporate environmental responsibility is the major reason why confrontation and blockages of company gates by affected communities are still in existence in many communities that are hosting companies in Rivers State. However, evaluation of performance by any company is based on the triple Ps of people, planet and profit. A company only is adjudged to be performing well if it focuses on the development of the community and adherence to fair labor practices; on the impact on the environment and what is being done to integrate sustainable environmental practices; and economic value created by the organization after deducting the cost of all inputs, including the cost of the capital (Papadopoulos, 2017).

5.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. Companies should improve on their attitude toward corporate environmental responsibility because they are supposed to be good neighbors to their host communities who are affected by their presence while community members should be accommodative in their agitations
2. Companies adopting dialogue as strategy for interface with host communities should be inclusive not selective and community members should be objective in their demands
3. Compensations to host communities should be sustainable packages that will improve on the socio-economic life of the people whose means of livelihood have been negatively affected. Community members should use whatever package given to them sustainably.
4. Companies should consciously comply with agreements made and community members should also respect agreements and not resort to excessive demands that are not part of agreed status quo

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