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**Corporate Social Responsibility on Organizational Performance: A Case Study of
Nestle Nigeria**

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I am grateful to God for helping me this far, super grateful to my supervisor, Ing. Irena Jindrichovska, Csc for her guidance and supervision.

DECLARATION

I declare that I have worked on my dissertation titled "Corporate social responsibility on organizational performance [A case study of Nestle Nigeria)" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the dissertation. As the author of the master's project, I declare that this work does not break any copyrights.

In Prague on 1st March 2024

ABSTRACT

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has garnered considerable attention in the contemporary business environment. The key objectives of this study is to examine the impact of Nestle Nigeria's CSR initiatives on its financial performance and profitability, to assess the influence of CSR on Nestle Nigeria's reputation and brand image, and how this impacts consumer behavior and loyalty and to analyze the unique challenges and opportunities that Nestle Nigeria faces in implementing CSR. The study utilised the Saunders Research Onion methodology framework to investigate CSR within the organisation case study. The study employed a quantitative methodology; where data were collected through surveys and analysed using numerical methods to identify trends and overarching patterns in organisational corporate social responsibility. A survey questionnaire was utilised to gather responses from a substantial sample of employees at Nestle Nigeria through online means, with the objective of generating numerical statistics data. The results was then analysed using quantitative methods of analysis to examine the relationship between CSR and organisational performance. The method of analysis employed in this study supports the quantitative goals. It facilitates data examination through the use of charts generated from the survey data. The study revealed that a significant majority of respondents (59.65%) expressed a strong agreement that Nestle Nigeria's CSR activities had a beneficial impact on the company's financial growth and indicates a direct relationship between CSR and financial success. The study also revealed that CSR has a role in developing a favourable business image and cultivating trust among stakeholders consumers. Finally, the study indicated that the difficulties in implementing CSR might arise from variations in culture and regulations, ethical quandaries, and disagreements among stakeholders.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has garnered considerable attention in the contemporary business environment. According to Agnieszka (2021), the concept of CSR embodies a company's dedication to ethical and responsible conduct that beyond mere profit generating, encompassing the welfare of both society and the environment. In a period marked by heightened recognition of ecological and societal concerns, CSR has emerged as a pivotal factor for organisations on a global scale. This chapter provides an introduction to the notion of CSR and emphasises its considerable importance. It also outlines the research difficulties, aims, and guiding questions that will be addressed in this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

CSR is fundamentally rooted in a company's acknowledgement of its societal obligations and its dedication to engaging in actions that yield advantages not solely for its shareholders, but also for a wider array of stakeholders (Flagel, 2020). The stakeholders involved in this context are comprised of employees, customers, suppliers, local communities, and the environment (Briscese, Feltovich, & Slonim, 2021). The concept of CSR aims to achieve equilibrium among economic, social, and environmental factors, also known as the triple bottom line. The aforementioned notion transcends conventional business objectives centred on maximising profits, and instead attempts to generate enduring value for all parties involved (Brennan, 2018). CSR initiatives can be observed in diverse manifestations, encompassing acts of philanthropy, the adoption of sustainable business practises, the practise of ethical sourcing, efforts towards environmental protection, and active engagement with local communities (CFI Team, 2022). The implementation of such initiatives can be either voluntary or enforced by legislation and standards, contingent upon the specific region and industry under consideration (Collier, 2018). Furthermore, it is important to note that CSR practises might vary among different organisations, since they are influenced by their own beliefs, goals, and priorities.

Over the past few decades, there has been a discernible shift in the business environment, characterised by an increased focus on CSR. There are multiple elements that contribute to the increasing importance of CSR for organisations. To begin with, contemporary customers have a growing sense of conscientiousness and are inclined to endorse businesses that

demonstrate alignment with their beliefs and concerns (Capaldi, 2017). Consumers have a preference for engaging with businesses that exhibit a dedication to sustainability, ethical practises, and social responsibility. Consequently, CSR has emerged as a strategy employed by firms to effectively engage and maintain a loyal client base. Numerous nations have enacted legislation and established standards pertaining to CSR. The aforementioned steps are designed with the objective of promoting responsible and transparent operations inside firms (Flagel, 2020). Noncompliance with the aforementioned regulations may lead to legal ramifications, monetary fines, and reputational harm to an organisation. In addition, a robust CSR plan has the potential to enhance an organization's reputation and brand perception. Organisations that actively engage in social and environmental initiatives frequently benefit from a favourable public image, leading to heightened levels of consumer confidence and allegiance (Fernando, 2022). Similarly, within the context of the competitive employment market, individuals are progressively inclined towards organisations that prioritise CSR. The implementation of a robust CSR programme has the potential to augment an organization's capacity to attract and retain highly skilled individuals, since it corresponds with the principles and ambitions of prospective employees (Amodu, 2017; Collier, 2018). The emphasis on CSR encompasses not solely immediate benefits, but also the establishment of an organization's enduring viability. According to Hill (2011), corporations can effectively manage risks, enhance operational efficiencies, and maintain their relevance in a dynamic global landscape by actively addressing environmental and social concerns.

CSR has transitioned from being an optional component of corporate strategy to a fundamental aspect that exerts a substantial impact on organisational success (Heyward, 2020). In the contemporary business environment, the degree to which an organisation actively participates in CSR endeavours can significantly impact its overall performance, public perception, and enduring viability. Primarily, CSR serves to augment an organization's reputation and brand image (Iyiola-Omisore, 2020). Companies that engage in CSR initiatives exhibit a dedication to upholding ethical standards and demonstrating responsible behaviour. According to Fernando (2022), the cultivation of trust and goodwill among consumers, investors, and the general public has the potential to enhance brand equity and attract a larger customer base. The perception of a brand in a positive light has a direct influence on the performance of an organisation, resulting in the expansion of its market share and the rise of its revenue. In addition, CSR activities have the potential to foster innovation and enhance operational efficiency inside an organisation. According to Fanti and

Buccella (2018), projects that prioritise sustainability frequently result in potential for cost savings, enhanced resource management, and the development of innovative products. Consequently, this leads to increased profitability and enhanced competitiveness, thereby bolstering the financial performance of an organisation. Moreover, the influence of CSR on organisational success extends to employee engagement and talent acquisition, among other areas. According to Eze and Bello (2016), the implementation of a robust CSR programme can serve as a means to attract highly skilled and sought-after professionals. This is due to the growing trend of individuals seeking employment opportunities with organisations that demonstrate a strong alignment with their personal values and ethical principles. Employees that are actively involved and driven by a sense of purpose have a tendency to exhibit higher levels of productivity and creativity, hence resulting in enhanced overall performance. CSR is also effective in the mitigation of risks and vulnerabilities. Companies can mitigate potential legal, regulatory, and reputational risks by taking proactive measures to address environmental and social concerns (Hill, 2011; Closs, Speier, & Meacham, 2019). In contemporary society, characterised by the rapid dissemination of bad information via social media platforms and news channels, the imperative of averting scandals and crises has utmost significance in order to sustain a robust performance.

Critiques of CSR are centred on certain crucial aspects. According to Afsharipour and Shruti (2013), critics contend that CSR may be motivated by business motives, whereby companies prioritise improving their reputation and financial performance rather than wholeheartedly dedicating themselves to social or environmental endeavours. It has been suggested that the allocation of resources towards CSR initiatives should be more effectively utilised for essential company operations. Furthermore, a prevalent issue known as "greenwashing" arises when firms engage in the practise of making exaggerated or deceptive assertions regarding their environmental initiatives, with the intention of projecting a greater level of social responsibility than they actually possess (Flagel, 2020). The absence of uniform regulation gives rise to disparities in corporate approaches to CSR, perhaps resulting in perfunctory and symbolic actions that yield limited substantive consequences. The occurrence of ethical quandaries emerges when CSR endeavours clash with profit-oriented goals, hence raising apprehensions regarding the potential prioritisation of financial gains over societal obligations (Amaechi, 2016).

Moreover, there is a contention that companies need not to bear the responsibility of tackling social and environmental concerns, positing that such matters should be entrusted to

governmental bodies and non-profit entities (Collier, 2018). Critics argue that CSR might potentially contribute to the widening of societal inequalities. This is due to the fact that corporations with larger financial resources are more capable of addressing social issues, but smaller enterprises or those operating in less lucrative industries may lack the same capacity (Chaudhury, Das, & Sahoo, 2012). Finally, CSR may face criticism for its tendency to prioritise short-term gains, leading firms to overlook long-term structural problems and potentially neglecting prospects for sustainable societal transformation. Notwithstanding these criticisms, numerous organisations persevere in adopting CSR as a means to incorporate social and environmental considerations into their business plans and bolster their reputations. Meanwhile, the ongoing discourse over the harmonisation of profit-driven objectives with authentic social and environmental commitments endures.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

CSR is a complex and multidimensional topic that has attracted considerable attention and generated much discussion within academic and corporate communities. Although CSR offers a multitude of potential advantages to both organisations and society, it is not devoid of obstacles and concerns. One of the foremost obstacles encountered within the realm of CSR is the absence of universally accepted definitions and standardised approaches. CSR exhibits significant variation between organisations, with its understanding and implementation being subject to the influence of cultural, legislative, and industry-specific factors (Flagel, 2020). The presence of diversity within the field of CSR can result in the occurrence of confusion and inconsistency in both the implementation and measurement of CSR practises. Furthermore, the implementation of CSR projects typically necessitates substantial financial and human resources. Organisations may encounter challenges in ascertaining the optimal allocation of resources, particularly when reconciling CSR initiatives with profit growth (Briscese et al., 2021). The issue of resource allocation can have a significant impact on the overall functioning of an organisation. While corporate social responsibility (CSR) has the potential to bolster a company's standing, it also presents the possibility of reputational harm should an organisation fall short in fulfilling its CSR obligations. The image and performance of an organisation can be significantly impacted by high-profile instances of CSR failures, leading to enduring negative consequences (Briscese et al., 2021). Meeting CSR standards and legal requirements can pose significant challenges. Non-adherence to regulations and guidelines may result in legal ramifications and monetary sanctions, so potentially impacting an organization's fiscal viability.

Nestle Nigeria, as a subsidiary of the prominent multinational food and beverage corporation, operates under a distinctive corporate context. The Nigerian climate presents unique issues and opportunities pertaining to CSR. There are other justifications that underscore the necessity of conducting a case study in Nestle Nigeria. To begin with, the cultural variety and socio-economic challenges in Nigeria give rise to distinct corporate social responsibility (CSR) concerns. It is vital to comprehend the manner in which Nestle Nigeria tackles these concerns and the subsequent effects on the operation of the organisation. Nigeria, akin to numerous nations, confronts environmental challenges encompassing waste management, water scarcity, and deforestation (Amodu, 2017). Exploring the manner in which Nestle Nigeria addresses these difficulties and the resulting ramifications for the company's performance are crucial facets to examine. In a similar vein, it is worth noting that Nigerian customers and stakeholders may possess distinct and specific expectations with regards to CSR, as highlighted by Amaechi (2016). An essential study question pertains to the evaluation of the extent to which Nestle Nigeria conforms to these expectations and the subsequent impact of this alignment on its performance. Nestle Nigeria adheres to the regulatory framework of Nigeria, which encompasses specific CSR obligations. It is vital to comprehend the manner in which the organisation effectively manages these regulations and the subsequent implications on its operational and performance aspects.

1.3 Research Objectives

The aim of this study is to examine the role of corporate social responsibility on organisational performance in Nestle Nigeria. For the purpose of this study, the following key objectives have been formulated to guide this project.

1. To examine the impact of Nestle Nigeria's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives on its financial performance and profitability.
2. To assess the influence of CSR on Nestle Nigeria's reputation and brand image, and how this impacts consumer behavior and loyalty.
3. To analyze the unique challenges and opportunities that Nestle Nigeria faces in implementing CSR.

1.4 Research Questions

The following are the research questions to guide this study. They include:

1. What is the impact of Nestle Nigeria's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives on its financial performance and profitability?
2. How does CSR influence Nestle Nigeria's reputation and brand image, and what is the impact on consumer behavior and loyalty?
3. What are the unique challenges and opportunities that Nestle Nigeria faces in implementing CSR?

1.5 Significance of the Study

According to Capaldi (2017), corporations that choose to implement corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives may experience a range of benefits and advantages. These include heightened employee loyalty, improved access to markets and enhanced legitimacy, reduced litigation risks, enhanced product and service quality, bolstered public image and reputation, increased brand value, reduced stock volatility, avoidance of state regulation, and heightened customer loyalty. Corporations that embrace corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities can derive several benefits and advantages. The significance of providing a thorough rationale for undertaking this research endeavour cannot be overstated. The undertaken efforts are expected to provide valuable assistance to the pertinent stakeholders. The stakeholders encompass the diverse parties with vested interests in a certain subject topic.

The research conducted by Flegg (2021) will provide valuable insights and benefits to both the local community and the broader society. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives have been found to have a positive impact on the community by generating employment opportunities and enhancing the overall standard of living. Moreover, these initiatives have the potential to influence and modify the behavioural patterns of community members. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) not only enhances the operational capabilities of a building, but also contributes to the creation of economic value and employment prospects within the surrounding community. The study will also provide value to organisations by facilitating the cultivation of positive relationships and community support, optimising financial gains, promoting organisational expansion, attaining a competitive advantage, and augmenting their corporate reputation. The research will also hold importance for the broader public and the environment, namely in terms of ecological equilibrium, waste management, and the preservation of a pristine and sustainable

environment. The tool acts as a foundational resource for academics seeking to conduct investigations in this particular field.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Some terms that are central to this research study context, to which clarification need be made to enhance better appreciation of the study and avoid confusion and misconception, have been included and explained as the following:

CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate – A member of a large company

Corporation – A term used to describe a large business, company or organization or group of organisations that is recognized by law as a single unit e.g multinational corporation.

Sustainability: Sustainability refers to the ability to maintain or support a process continuously over time.

Responsibility – Has to do with a duty to help or take care of something or someone.

Ethical Code/Standard – This is connected with morally correct or acceptable beliefs and principles about what is right and wrong. The outlined behaviour expected of business corporations/enterprises

1.7 Organization of the Project

Using Nestle Nigeria as a case study, the thesis is divided into five main chapters that methodically examine the connection between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and organisational success.

An overview of corporate social responsibility (CSR), its importance in the modern business environment, and the necessity of examining its effects in the context of Nestle Nigeria are given in Chapter one. It provides an overview of the study's methodology, scope, and research aims.

Chapter two explores the wide body of research on corporate social responsibility (CSR), looking at numerous theories and concepts pertaining to CSR, moral issues, environmental sustainability, and social involvement. It also summarises relevant research on how corporate social responsibility affects organisational effectiveness.

The third chapter covers research methodology, outlining the selected course of action as well as data gathering and analytic strategies. Limitations and ethical issues are also covered.

The thesis's core is presented in Chapter 4, which includes a thorough case study of Nestle Nigeria. The influence of the company's CSR initiatives on financial performance, reputation, brand image, and consumer behaviour are examined, along with the conclusions derived from these programmes.

In Chapter Five, the results are presented and discussed in relation to the goals of the research and the literature. Conclusions are drawn, and implications for Nestle Nigeria and the CSR industry as a whole are examined.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Debates surrounding Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) have endured over an extended period of time. The ongoing discourse is around the question of whether a business should be primarily perceived as an economic system with diverse stakeholders, including employees, customers, the community, and the environment, or as a socioeconomic system with a multitude of stakeholders. This section provides a comprehensive and critical analysis of the scholarly discourse surrounding corporate social responsibility. This study aims to analyse the concept of CSR and its implications for business performance and sustainability. It will explore the advantages that CSR can offer to businesses, as well as the potential consequences of failing to fulfil CSR obligations towards stakeholders and shareholders. Additionally, the ethical considerations surrounding CSR practises within Nigerian businesses will be examined. Alam and Islam (2021) posited in their scholarly work that two distinct perspectives prevailed in the discourse. There exists a dichotomy between the classical or strictly economic perspective and the socio-economic perspective.

2.1 Conceptual Review: Corporate Social Responsibility

The primary emphasis of corporate social responsibility lies in the examination of an organization's activities and their consequences on the surrounding society (Famularo, 2023). Despite sharing many similarities, many bodies have created unique definitions. According to Gulema and Roba (2021), corporate social responsibility refers to the systematic management approach employed by firms to ensure that their internal operations provide a favourable impact on society. Lee (2020) defines corporate social responsibility as the enduring dedication exhibited by businesses to uphold ethical standards, foster economic development, and improve the well-being of their employees, their families, the surrounding community, and society as a whole. The objective of corporate social responsibility is to cultivate the competencies essential for the establishment of sustainable livelihoods. The organisation demonstrates a commitment to upholding cultural diversity while actively seeking out commercial prospects that contribute to the enhancement of the skills and capacities of both its citizens and the government. Mitra (2021).

In 2010, the European Commission provided a definition of CSR as the voluntary actions undertaken by companies to enhance the well-being of society and the environment. The deliberate integration of social and environmental concerns into corporate activities and involvement with stakeholders. According to Renneboog (2018), CSR can be understood as a type of corporate self-regulation that is integrated into a company's operational framework. This concept incorporates various dimensions such as corporate conscience, corporate citizenship, responsible business practises, Sustainable Responsible Business (SRB), and corporate social performance. An alternative approach to accentuating CSR involves the implementation of an integrated and self-regulatory mechanism that oversees and guarantees business adherence to legal regulations, ethical standards, and international agreements.

According to the definition provided by Rank and Contreras (2021), CSR refers to the social obligation of a firm. The fundamental basis of an organisation lies in its commitment to the welfare of all stakeholders, extending beyond the interests of its proprietors. CSR extends beyond the realm of morals. Integrity, justice, and respect serve as foundational principles. According to Sameer (2021), it is argued that a company that adheres to legal requirements cannot be held accountable. The social duties of a firm extend beyond the obligations imposed by law. According to Zhu (2021), a corporation can be considered socially responsible when it strives for financial success within the boundaries set by regulations. Additionally, he held the belief that corporations own a singular social obligation, namely, to allocate their resources and partake in endeavours that result in profit maximisation while adhering to legal frameworks. Grubor et al. (2020). It is recommended to undertake an analysis of social responsibility within the context of business, considering the macro, corporate, and individual dimensions. The macro level of analysis focuses on the examination of corporate behaviour, impact, and influence at the national and worldwide levels.

The notion of CSR has been given further interpretations by a number of different academic underpinnings. This theory incorporates the Resource-Based View (RBV) paradigm into its framework. According to Mishra and Yadav 2021, the RBV viewpoint has the proposition that CSR initiatives may be seen as strategic resources that contribute to the competitive advantage and long-term success of a company. There have been a number of writers that have investigated this viewpoint, providing insights into the manner in which CSR may be analysed within the RBV framework. According to Arda et al. (2023), the RBV shows that businesses might acquire a competitive edge by acquiring and using resources that are valued, scarce, and difficult to copy. By applying this concept to CSR, writers such as Djalilov

(2022) suggest that socially responsible activities, such as programmes that engage the community or efforts that promote environmental sustainability, may be useful resources. Enhanced reputation, increased customer loyalty, and improved stakeholder relationships are all potential outcomes that might result from the proper utilisation of these resources. An additional point that Gulema and Roba (2021) emphasises is that in order for CSR to be a source of sustained competitive advantage, it must fulfil the requirements of being valued, rare, imperfectly imitable, and non-substitutable. According to Ismail et al.'s research from 2020, this suggests that not all CSR activities automatically result in a competitive advantage. Rather, the success of these projects is contingent on their distinctiveness and strategic deployment. As an additional point of interest, writers such as Harjoto et al. (2022) include the idea of shared value into the RBV approach. By implementing effective corporate social responsibility programmes, they contend that businesses may simultaneously generate economic value and social benefit. Companies have the ability to produce beneficial outcomes for both themselves and society when they match their social and commercial objectives, which reinforces the concept that CSR may be a strategic resource (Da Silva & Bitencourt 2018).

In spite of the fact that the RBV viewpoint on CSR provides a number of insightful observations, a number of counterarguments and objections have been presented. The RBV viewpoint has been criticised by a number of individuals, notably Sodhi (2015), who suggest that it may not adequately reflect the dynamic and ever-changing character of CSR. According to their argument, certain corporate social responsibility efforts could be beneficial in the short term, but they might not necessarily lead to a sustainable competitive advantage in the long run. The premise of imperfect imitation that is made by RBV is called into question by Beamish and Chakravarty (2021). According to Kofford, Clark, and Christensen (2020), it is possible for competitors to imitate corporate social responsibility initiatives over time, which would reduce the distinctiveness of the company and lessen its advantage over its rivals. Therefore, the RBV assumption that CSR resources are intrinsically difficult to reproduce is called into question by this. In response to the RBV argument, Freeman et al. (2021) put up the Stakeholder Theory as an alternative framework. They contend that stakeholders have an impact on businesses, which in turn shapes the corporate social responsibility actions of such businesses. While Resource-Based View (RBV) places an emphasis on internal resources, Stakeholder Theory places more of an emphasis on the external elements that impact the corporate social responsibility decisions of a company.

There are opponents who believe that the RBV paradigm may neglect the ethical aspects of CSR, such as Gibson et al (2021). They underline the fact that not all socially responsible initiatives necessarily translate into strategic resources, and that ethical concerns ought to play a substantial part in evaluating the validity of corporate social responsibility operations (Gabler, Itani, and Agnihotri 2023).

It is possible for businesses to perceive social responsibility as a potential source of competitive advantage by using the RBV viewpoint on CSR, which gives a strategic lens. A better knowledge of how CSR efforts may be utilised strategically has been contributed to by the works of writers such as Barney and Porter. Nevertheless, counterarguments highlight the necessity of a comprehensive approach, taking into consideration the dynamic nature of CSR, the impact of stakeholders, and the ethical components. Recognising the multidimensional nature of corporate social responsibility and the ramifications it has for both individuals and organisations is of the utmost importance as the discussion on CSR continues.

2.2 Concept of Sustainability

The term "sustainable" initially emerged within a historical context primarily driven by individuals with environmental concerns, and the prevailing body of literature and assessment methods predominantly reflect this particular emphasis (Bosselmann, 2010). However, there is a growing recognition that in order to achieve sustainability, it is imperative to tackle social justice concerns. The presence of social justice is a prerequisite for the establishment and sustainability of enduring institutions and communities. According to Benson and Kundis (2014), achieving true sustainability necessitates the presence of compassionate concern towards the entire living community. An institution of higher education that prioritises sustainability should provide students with instruction on the underlying factors contributing to contemporary injustices and motivate them to actively pursue justice and compassion. This should be done in conjunction with the study of the root causes of environmental degradation and the adoption of ecologically sustainable practises (Bosselmann, 2010; Benson &Kundis, 2014).

The concept of "sustainability" is becoming increasingly common in current discourse, and it captures an idea that is both nuanced and diverse. The phrase can be understood in a number of different ways and for a number of different reasons. Some of these meanings and definitions include environmental, economic, social, cultural, corporate, global, and human aspects. There is a connection between the phrase and these meanings and definitions. The

meanings and definitions that are offered here shed light on the intricate connections that have an effect on the world in which we live. According to Norstrom et al.'s 2020 research, the major focus of environmental sustainability is on the administration of natural resources and ecosystems in a responsible manner. One of its components is the promise that human activities do not exceed the capacity of the Earth to renew itself (Oláh et al., 2020). Other components include the reduction of ecological harm, the promotion of biodiversity, and the guarantee that biodiversity may be preserved. Taking this into consideration, the significance of achieving a delicate equilibrium between the development of mankind and the protection of the natural environment is brought into closer focus.

The notion of economic sustainability takes into account the viability of economic systems throughout the course of a long period of time without having any negative impacts (Scoones, et al (2020)). Utilising resources in a strategic manner, maintaining the stability of the financial system, and ensuring that money is distributed fairly are all necessary components. Regarding economic strategies, this point of view highlights the significance of economic strategies that strike a balance between social and environmental responsibility and profitability (Oláh et al 2020). This is an important point of view because it highlights the relevance of economic strategies. According to Camilleri (2017), it is feasible to achieve social sustainability by constructing societies that are egalitarian, that satisfy fundamental human needs, that appreciate variation, and that promote social justice. There are also societies that value diversity. There are components that pertain to human rights, the well-being of communities, and social harmony that are included in this. According to Amodu (2017), the objective of social sustainability is to create societies in which individuals have access to education, healthcare, and opportunity, hence establishing a sense of belonging and shared responsibility among the members of the society. As stated by Benson and Kundis (2014), the major focus of cultural sustainability programmes is on the preservation and observance of a diverse array of cultural expressions, traditions, and legacies. In the framework of sustainable development, the paper not only acknowledges the significance of cultural identity, but it also advocates the implementation of policies that would safeguard indigenous ways of knowing, languages, and traditions. The connectivity of culture with other aspects of sustainability is acknowledged by this component when the process is being carried out (Shrivastava, 2015).

According to Shrivastava (2015), the concept of corporate sustainability refers to the practice of businesses incorporating social and environmental concerns into their operations when

doing their business. Ethical business practices, prudent management of supply chains, and active involvement in the community are all included. The significance of companies having a positive influence on both society and the environment is emphasised by this point of view (Hill, 2011). Furthermore, when it comes to sustainability, the international element addresses problems that extend beyond the borders of individual nations, such as the deterioration of biodiversity, climate change, and inequality on a global scale (El Namar et al., 2022). It brings to light the importance of global cooperation and combined efforts in order to address issues that are shared by people all over the world. A common responsibility for the well-being of the globe as a whole is encouraged via the implementation of global sustainability initiatives, which include agreements, rules, and joint efforts (Battisti, Nirino, Leonidou & Thrassou 2022).

Personal sustainability refers to the decisions and actions that individuals make regarding their lifestyles that are in line with the overarching objectives of sustainability (Battisti, Nirino, Leonidou & Thrassou 2022). The reduction of individual carbon footprints, the practice of mindful consumerism, and participation in community initiatives are all examples of activities that fall under this category (Gabler, Itani & Agnihotri 2023). The concept of individual sustainability places a focus on the significance of each person in the process of creating a more sustainable world by encouraging activities that are ecologically conscious and ethical decision-making strategies (Khanra et al., 2023). Sustainability necessitates the implementation of a comprehensive and coordinated strategy for addressing the myriad of problems that are impacting our environment. The ideas and definitions shed light on the interrelationships that exist between environmental, economic, social, cultural, corporate, global, and individual aspects. To achieve sustainability, there must be collaboration amongst a wide variety of sectors, companies, and communities, all of which are committed to protecting the planet for the benefit of both the current generation and the generations to come.

Numerous scholarly investigations have been undertaken to examine and establish a comprehensive understanding of the concept of sustainability. Certain individuals' understandings of the aforementioned expression were limited in scope, but others exhibited an awareness that comprehending it necessitates considering a diverse array of interconnected elements that collectively establish the essence of sustainability. The literature on operations management sometimes focuses solely on the ecological aspects of sustainability, neglecting its social implications (Closs, Speier & Meacham, 2019). Carter and Rogers (2018)

conducted a comprehensive investigation on sustainability, encompassing economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Additionally, they included business-related factors such as risk management, transparency, strategy, and culture. The research findings revealed multiple meanings of sustainability, as explored by the authors in their study.

According to the 1992 publication titled "Business and Sustainable Development: A Global Guide," sustainability in the context of a business enterprise refers to the adoption of business strategies and activities that effectively address the current needs of the enterprise and its stakeholders, while simultaneously safeguarding, preserving, and augmenting the human and natural resources that will be required in the future. In contrast, Shrivastava (2015) posits that sustainability presents the potential to mitigate long-term risks associated with resource depletion, fluctuations in energy prices, product liability, pollution, and waste management. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the definition of sustainability put forward by the Brundtland World Commission report is widely recognised as the most prominent. The definition provided for the term is "Development that fulfils the demands of the current generation while ensuring the capacity of future generations to fulfil their own needs is not compromised." The definitions in question are susceptible to potential misinterpretation due to their expansive nature. To effectively monitor progress towards achieving sustainability objectives, it is imperative to redefine the concept of sustainability in a manner that is both exact and measurable (Hill, 2011).

2.3 Concept of Business Sustainability and Performance

Business sustainability refers to the strategic management approach employed by businesses to effectively address and mitigate their impact on the economy, society, and environment (Mahajan & Bose, 2018). The triple bottom line method is a commonly used term in academic discourse. The U.N. Global Compact, which was initiated by Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in 1999, stands as the most extensive corporate sustainability project worldwide. According to Mahajan and Bose (2018), the objective of the group is to encourage global firms to synchronise their strategies and operations with universally recognised principles pertaining to human rights, labour, environment, and anti-corruption. Additionally, the organisation aims to implement measures that contribute to societal objectives. The voluntary initiative mostly relies on the dedication of the CEO. The United Nations Global Compact initiated the Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME) programme in 2007. The Principles for Responsible Management

Education (PRME). According to Mahajan and Bose (2018), it is recommended that management colleges incorporate the following six recommendations into their curriculum in order to cultivate managers who possess a comprehensive understanding of economic matters and are equipped to address social and environmental difficulties. The genesis of this concept can be attributed to the critique directed towards prior management programmes, which were found to generate managers lacking a dedication to the principles of sustainability. Despite the fact that there has been an enhanced comprehension of sustainable development among commercial entities over the last two decades, there persist concerns and reservations pertaining to its attainment (Porter, 2018).

Organisations can maintain their commitment to crucial business interests, such as efficiency and shareholder value, by setting business sustainability objectives and targets. The concept of business sustainability has been embraced by various business movements, such as Kaizen, which seeks to minimise waste in manufacturing and corporate operations (Fritsch & Wyrwich, 2019). The primary goals of this continuous improvement technique are to enhance production and elevate the quality of output. The integration of sustainability principles in supply chain management enhances the resilience of these systems by optimising operational efficiency and reducing expenses. Lutkevich and Wigmore (2022) assert that the recognition of social, environmental, and economic sustainability as the three pillars is imperative. Within the realm of business, these metrics are occasionally denoted as the triple bottom line. The conventional understanding of the bottom line, which assesses the impact of all actions on short-term earnings, deviates from this perspective.

2.4 Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Business Performance

The dedication to corporate social responsibility has a significant impact on an organization's success, manifesting itself through various avenues. According to Tonin and Vlassopoulos (2015), this phenomenon has a role in enhancing the financial performance of the organisation, hence increasing the likelihood of rapid expansion and maximising market income. If a firm demonstrates a strong commitment to CSR and actively endeavours to meet the needs and expectations of its stakeholders, it is quite likely that the company will achieve a competitive advantage over its industry rivals. The expansion of multinational corporations' commercial activities to encompass CSR has led to a notable increase in the occurrence of issues and initiatives pertaining to CSR in recent decades (Cassar and Meier 2018). The prioritisation of social responsibility has the potential to generate customer attraction, leading

to a substantial increase in sales for businesses. Individuals who possess awareness of the concept of CSR are likely to exhibit a greater inclination to support the enterprise, thereby contributing to the organization's optimal performance. According to a study conducted by Corporation, it has been found that the reputation of an organisation significantly impacts 89 percent of consumer purchasing decisions (Getachew, 2014). CSR also confers advantages upon organisations by facilitating the recruitment of highly qualified staff. Individuals seeking employment are drawn to companies based on their reputation and the positive associations linked to their socially responsible behaviour (Parast, 2021).

Furthermore, the implementation of corporate social responsibility initiatives has been found to positively impact various aspects of organisational performance, including financial outcomes, overall organisational performance, employee dedication, business reputation, and brand uniqueness. The aforementioned characteristics, as identified by Al-ma'ani et al. (2019), serve as criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of CSR initiatives. These factors can be employed as metrics to assess the success or failure of CSR efforts. A meta-analysis was conducted, yielding the finding that the practise of social responsibility generally leads to enhanced financial performance for companies.

In the study conducted by Al-ma'ani et al. (2019), it was emphasised that the financial performance of an organisation is closely tied to the satisfaction of different stakeholder groups. Hence, it may be contended that the association between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the financial performance of companies in developing economies, exemplified by the context of Nigeria, is contingent upon stakeholders' perspectives on CSR initiatives and their subsequent responses to those perceptions. Furthermore, a study conducted by Ling (2019) highlights the significance of an organization's social responsibility initiatives in relation to employee perceptions and their subsequent loyalty towards the business. Elsafty and Tahon (2020) suggest that organisations that are regarded to possess a robust social responsibility image tend to exhibit enhanced capacity in attracting high-quality job seekers, fostering staff retention, and sustaining positive employee morale. Consequently, this will facilitate employees in effectively striving for optimal performance.

Despite the fact that corporate social responsibility (CSR) is frequently praised for the potential beneficial influence it may have on society and the environment, there is a viewpoint that doubts the profitability of CSR for the success of businesses. When it comes to the perceived loss of profitability that comes with incorporating sustainability into company

processes, there are a number of issues and concerns that arise. Several authors (Hristov et al., 2022) contend that the adoption of environmentally responsible business practices may result in substantial initial expenses for companies. In the near term, investments in environmentally friendly technology, ethical sourcing, and employee welfare programmes may put a burden on the available amount of financial resources. There is a possibility that the immediate financial cost may overshadow the possible long-term rewards that are connected with a better brand reputation, increased consumer loyalty, and risk reduction (Le, 1523).

According to Kuzey et al. (2023), businesses that sell their products or services in price-sensitive marketplaces may encounter difficulties when attempting to implement sustainable practices. Pricing that is less competitive may be the consequence of higher expenses connected with ethical sourcing or manufacturing practices that are more ecologically friendly (Velte, 2022). In sectors where customers place a higher value on cheap costs than on sustainability, businesses that implement corporate social responsibility programmes may find themselves at a competitive disadvantage in price-driven markets. Kim and Keane (2023) contend that the desire for environmentally friendly items is probably not as prevalent as it is commonly believed to be. It is possible that the perceived value of sustainability will not convert into improved sales in areas where it is more important for customers to prioritise price or convenience. According to Kim and Keane (2023), this restricted demand may compromise the economic feasibility of sustainability initiatives, particularly in industries where customers do not perceive environmentally friendly options to be a key component of their purchasing decisions.

It is also possible that enterprises who operate in places with environmental restrictions that are not as stringent may view sustainability efforts as an additional burden. The absence of a fair playing field on a global scale might provide difficulties for businesses that are seeking to adhere to high standards of corporate social responsibility. The competitive landscape may dissuade firms from investing in sustainability owing to worries about a lack of reciprocity in regulatory settings (Hsu & Chen 2023). This is because of the absence of reciprocity in regulatory environments. Managing the sustainability of each individual component may be a challenging endeavour for companies that have supply chains that are both complicated and global in scope. The implementation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) throughout the whole supply chain may result in increased costs and logistical issues (Bachal, 2023). According to Hsu and Chen (2023), firms who are trying to strike a compromise between

ethical considerations and profitability may be discouraged by the challenge of monitoring and enforcing sustainability standards across a varied range of suppliers. Companies that are traded publicly are frequently susceptible to the short-term emphasis of investors who place significant importance on quarterly returns. It is possible that firms will be dissuaded from making long-term investments in sustainability if they are primarily focused on immediate financial performance (Bachal, 2023). This is because the advantages of such investments may not be immediately reflected in stock prices. The incorporation of corporate social responsibility into company plans may be hampered by this short-term focus.

The apparent hurdles to the profitability of corporate social responsibility (CSR) cannot be overlooked, despite the fact that CSR is being promoted as a way to generate beneficial societal and environmental consequences. Enterprises are confronted with immediate expenditures, the possibility of competitive disadvantages, and worries over the limited demand from consumers for environmentally friendly products. Furthermore, the broad adoption of CSR activities may be hampered by the differences in the global economy as well as the hurdles posed by regulatory authorities. Managing the complexities of supply networks and counteracting the short-term orientation of investors are two additional challenges that add another dimension to the profitability conundrum. Having said that, it is of the utmost importance to emphasise that this study should not disregard the possible long-term advantages and intangible qualities that are connected with corporate social responsibility (CSR). These include better brand reputation, consumer loyalty, and risk reduction. Finding a way to strike a balance between profitability and sustainability calls for a complex strategy that takes into consideration the dynamics of the sector, the tastes of consumers, and the regulatory landscapes of the world. While organisations continue to struggle with these difficulties, it is necessary to have an ongoing discourse and come up with new solutions in order to cultivate a corporate environment in which profitability and sustainability are complementary to one another.

2.5 Benefits of CSR on Performance and Sustainability of Businesses

CSR is a managerial framework that entails altering the dynamic between businesses, society, and the natural environment. This facilitates organisations in attaining a multitude of advantages. One crucial determinant of achieving success is the strategic implementation of CSR as proposed by Porter (2018). The subject of benefits for the corporation becomes increasingly significant with the strategic application of CSR. Nevertheless, evaluating the

economic consequences of CSR initiatives presents challenges and is a subject of debate in both practical and academic spheres (Fritsch & Wyrwich, 2019). CSR necessitates a substantial commitment in terms of personal, financial, and intangible resources, with the expectation that such efforts will yield benefits from the company's perspective (Porter, 2018; Fritsch and Wyrwich, 2019). The advantages derived from the adoption of CSR initiatives may not necessarily be quantifiable in terms of financial metrics or may pose challenges in doing so. Analyzing the idea of CSR, it is possible to identify some benefits possible from this activity:

1. Improving organizational governance: According to Odetayo, Adeyemi, and Sajuyigbe (2014), organisations that establish and publicly declare their dedication to CSR, encompassing the articulation and implementation of their aspirations and goals, are perceived as possessing greater credibility. The direction and purpose of the firm can be ascertained by examining the goals and visions that have been formally endorsed. CSR is believed to facilitate the growth of enterprises by fostering a sense of unity among staff members, including employees and managers. This unity is achieved by the adoption of ecologically sustainable production methods, the pursuit of shared goals and values, and the implementation of transparent business practises. Furthermore, CSR is widely seen as a mechanism that fosters unity among employees (Eruemegbe, 2015).

2. Improving image and reputation: An enhancement in corporate reputation among stakeholders is a frequently seen advantage resulting from the implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by enterprises (Mahmood & Bashir, 2020). Due to their significant contribution to the economy, corporations are progressively garnering heightened public scrutiny. Non-financial factors, including a company's integrity, ethics, reputation, and image, are assuming a progressively significant part in assessing the worth of an organisation. Businesses that exhibit a dedication to social responsibility and operate within an informed environment tend to receive a greater degree of respect and admiration from the broader public (Mahmood & Bashir, 2020). Moreover, the proprietors and their respective households are granted an elevated social standing within the societal hierarchy.

3. Enhances customer loyalty: Businesses are facing significant competitive pressure due to the constant expansion of supply in the market. Martos, Cortés, and Jiménez (2019) conducted a study which revealed that potential clients had a high level of knowledge and exhibit discerning behaviour. Prior to making a purchase, individuals engage in a thorough

evaluation of all the available alternatives. Hence, it is imperative for firms to prioritise the maintenance of ties with their existing clients (Martos et al., 2019). As previously mentioned, clients with elevated expectations can serve as the driving force for the development of novel products and services. Acquiring new consumers incurs significantly higher costs for a corporation compared to retaining existing clients, underscoring the critical importance of persuading individuals to make purchases of the firm's products and services. Furthermore, it has been shown that clients who are content with a business are inclined to engage in word-of-mouth promotion, so influencing potential customers to make purchases (Getachew, 2014).

2.6 Cost of Corporate Social Responsibility

The implementation of CSR incurs considerable costs in the immediate term, notwithstanding the fact that it yields several enduring advantages. The implementation of CSR by firms is anticipated to lead to a rise in expenditures and a decrease in performance due to the necessity for managers to establish novel accounting and monitoring mechanisms, engage with stakeholders, and consider a wide array of objectives (Cassar and Meier, 2018). Companies who choose to embrace CSR are strongly motivated to advocate for the implementation of similar practises among their competitors. The imposition of such restrictions on competition within the economy has the effect of diminishing overall economic prosperity, hence leading to a decline in the general welfare of individuals. Furthermore, allocating financial resources towards CSR initiatives results in a decrease in the amount of cash available for allocation towards alternative areas of potential. When faced with the decision between pursuing a prospective opportunity and prioritising CSR, it is possible that allocating resources towards CSR initiatives may result in short-term financial inefficiencies (Tonin and Vlassopoulos 2015). The initial financial investments allocated towards CSR projects, which are not anticipated to provide immediate financial gains. This encompasses the technological and infrastructural components necessary to implement a corporate social responsibility initiative. The long-term costs that arise as a result of adopting CSR. Ongoing expenses that will require financial coverage in the future include the fees related to attending training sessions, hiring CSR professionals, or becoming a member of organisations that prioritise CSR (Gneezy, et al., 2010). The CSR strategy should not be perceived or treated as a simplistic solution, as it is not designed to provide immediate remedies. There exist both advantages and disadvantages associated with the adoption of CSR practises. To effectively implement CSR, firms must demonstrate a substantial level of

dedication and retain a long-term commitment towards effecting enduring and sustainable transformations within their organisational culture, principles, and practises. CSR initiatives typically commence with substantial financial commitments. However, as organisations expand their scope of operations, the integration of CSR becomes imperative for achieving a successful triple bottom line. Consequently, CSR programmes transition from being optional to becoming indispensable (Bertrand et al., 2020).

The cost associated with implementing corporate social responsibility initiatives can provide a significant obstacle, even for bigger enterprises. According to Bertrand, Bombardini, Fisman, and Trebbi (2020), there exists a segment of individuals who hold the viewpoint that corporate social responsibility is merely an ineffectual endeavour. CSR is perceived as being in direct conflict with the notion that a company's management has a fiduciary obligation solely to its shareholders. The rationale behind executives' obligation to shareholders is rooted in the objective of profit maximisation. According to Gneezy, Nelson, and Brown (2010), it is a rational expectation for a manager to foresee the possibility of losing his position and being succeeded by an individual whose primary focus is on maximising profits, should he opt to prioritise societal benefits over profit generation. Milton Friedman, the esteemed laureate of the Nobel Prize in Economics, espoused the notion that businesses should prioritise profit maximisation as their primary social responsibility. This profound concept served as the impetus for his seminal article, with the title: "The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits." Moreover, global firms often partake in the technique of greenwashing. The term in question pertains to corporate behaviours that create the perception of environmental responsibility, yet do not indicate any substantive alteration in the firm's operational practises (Tonin and Vlassopoulos 2015). An illustration can be seen in the practise of branding a product as "All Natural," even when the production process remains unchanged. Certain dry cleaning companies use the term "Organic" to describe their cleaning techniques, which may have resemblance to the concept of "organic food." However, it is important to note that this terminology does not possess any specific connotation. Certain clients may exhibit a positive response towards such comments, while others may express scepticism over the potential greenwashing practises employed by organisations (Cassar& Meier, 2018).

2.7 Theoretical Framework

Stakeholder Theory

The Stakeholder Theory places significant focus on the interconnectedness of many entities associated with a business, including but not limited to consumers, suppliers, employees, investors, and communities. According to Freeman (2014), the notion posits that a corporation ought to provide advantages to all stakeholders, rather than solely prioritising its shareholders or proprietors. The idea in question was postulated by Edward Freeman. Freeman's theory posits that the true measure of a company's success resides in its ability to meet the needs and expectations of all its stakeholders, rather than solely focusing on those who stand to gain financially from its shares. The term "stakeholder" is commonly employed to denote persons or groups who are impacted by or possess an interest in, or function within, a certain project, programme, or portfolio. According to the Association for Project Management (APM) in 2022, Within the framework of the stakeholders theory, the term "stakeholders" encompasses individuals or groups who have the capacity to exhibit interest in and/or be impacted by the strategies and activities of an organisation (Freeman, 2014). This paper presents a theoretical framework for organisational management and corporate ethics, focusing on the examination of ethics and values within the context of business management. This pertains to the management and oversight of an organization's operations, wherein managers strive to meet the needs of all stakeholders involved in the organisation. It is imperative to acknowledge that corporate governance should not be conflated with corporate management (Zahra, 2011).

The theory of stakeholders has had a profound impact on global company operations. In contemporary times, enterprises have integrated corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies into their operational frameworks. In Nigeria, the Dangote Group was recognised as the top company in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by Public Relations experts in Lagos State. This recognition was based on the company's commendable efforts to assist the vulnerable population during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic (Olatunji, 2020). The business has been widely recognised as the leading organisation in the country for its expertise in constructing infrastructure. The firm undertook the construction of a concrete road in the Apapa axis as part of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative. Additionally, it also completed the construction of a 40 km road from Kaaba to Lokoja, aiming to improve the quality of life for the local population (Dangote, 2020). In addition, the

Dangote Group has spearheaded the initiative to raise a substantial amount of N43 billion from private sector entities. This financial support aims to assist the Federal and state governments in mitigating the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The funds would be utilised for the construction of isolation centres, procurement of testing kits, and acquisition of other medical supplies (Olatunji, 2020). The significance of the stakeholders thesis in present-day corporate operations cannot be overstated. There is a growing trend among businesses to adopt sustainable practises, which has conferred upon them a distinct competitive advantage vis-à-vis their rivals.

The Stakeholder Theory, as explained by Edward Freeman, highlights the interwoven relationships among different entities involved in a firm. Upon closer inspection, there are theoretical and practical issues that deserve discussion. The Stakeholder Theory's focus on fulfilling the wants and expectations of all stakeholders may propose an idealistic vision that is difficult to execute in practical business situations (Kortetmäki, Heikkinen & Jokine 2023). Managing the many interests and expectations of stakeholders, including as consumers, workers, investors, and communities, may be intrinsically contradictory. Emphasising one stakeholder group above others in practice may unintentionally cause unhappiness among the others, leading to a complex situation of conflicting expectations (Menghwar, Freeman & Nair 2023). The Stakeholder Theory encounters difficulties in offering precise instructions on how to assess and rank various stakeholders' interests (Kim, Chun & Wang 2021). The idea proposes a general responsibility to all stakeholders but lacks a systematic framework for decision-making in cases of conflicting stakeholder interests. The absence of detailed details might lead to uncertainty for managers dealing with intricate business scenarios involving conflicting interests (Shah & Guild 2022).

Another critique involves the vagueness of the word "stakeholder." Freeman describes stakeholders as anyone affected by or having a stake in a project, programme, or portfolio. This wide classification might include several players with different levels of influence and importance (Dmytriyev, Freeman & Hörisch 2021). The ambiguity in defining stakeholders raises concerns regarding the feasibility of adopting the theory, particularly in intricate organisational frameworks with several stakeholders (Kortetmäki, Heikkinen & Jokine 2023). The Stakeholder Theory's emphasis on firms prioritising social well-being may be viewed as unduly utopian in contexts where profit maximisation is the prevailing paradigm (Foss et al., 2022). Businesses in highly competitive marketplaces may struggle to align economic interests with the extensive commitments suggested by the idea. The conflict between

profitability and stakeholder satisfaction might impede the broad acceptance of stakeholder-focused strategies (Painter et al., 2021). Using the Stakeholder Theory in CSR projects also prompts concerns. The theory promotes enterprises to assess the influence of their activities on the wider society. However, the implementation of these principles into concrete CSR initiatives might differ significantly (Kim et al., 2021; Stoelhorst & Vishwanathan 2024). The Dangote Group's CSR activities during the COVID-19 epidemic, as an example, demonstrate the purposeful use of CSR for reputation management rather than a sincere dedication to the well-being of all stakeholders (Shah & Guild 2022). This prompts inquiries about the genuineness and honesty of corporate social responsibility programmes, which might result in allegations of greenwashing. The Stakeholder Theory's assertion that implementing sustainable practices offers a unique competitive edge may oversimplify the intricate dynamics of many businesses and marketplaces (Kim et al., 2021). Consumers in different industries may prioritise sustainability, economic efficiency, or innovation. The theory's assumption that all stakeholders uniformly prioritise sustainable practices may not be valid in various business environments.

Ultimately, the Stakeholder Theory offers a helpful viewpoint on corporate interactions that extends beyond shareholders, but it encounters significant obstacles in its real-world implementation. Translating a broad and idealistic vision into real management choices may be challenging, particularly when dealing with opposing stakeholder interests. The theory's lack of clarity, especially in defining and prioritising stakeholders, creates obstacles for its successful application. Businesses must adopt a sophisticated and context-specific strategy to effectively manage the complexities of stakeholder interactions in the changing environment of corporate responsibility.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The Saunders Research Onion framework will provide guidance on the methodologies employed to investigate CSR within the organisation. This approach offers a methodical and well-structured framework for academic inquiry, thereby creating opportunities for further exploration. This study will utilise the Research Onion framework developed by Saunders et al. (2018) to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role of CSR in the organisation. This methodology utilises a unique research philosophy, approach, strategy, techniques/procedures, and data collection methodologies. The utilisation of the research onion framework holds significant importance for this study as it promotes a comprehensive approach to considering various techniques and elucidates the researcher's responsibility in making critical decisions regarding the study's design and methodology (Walliman and Walliman, 2011). The findings will contribute to the enhancement of the understanding regarding the role of corporate social responsibility within the dynamic organisation

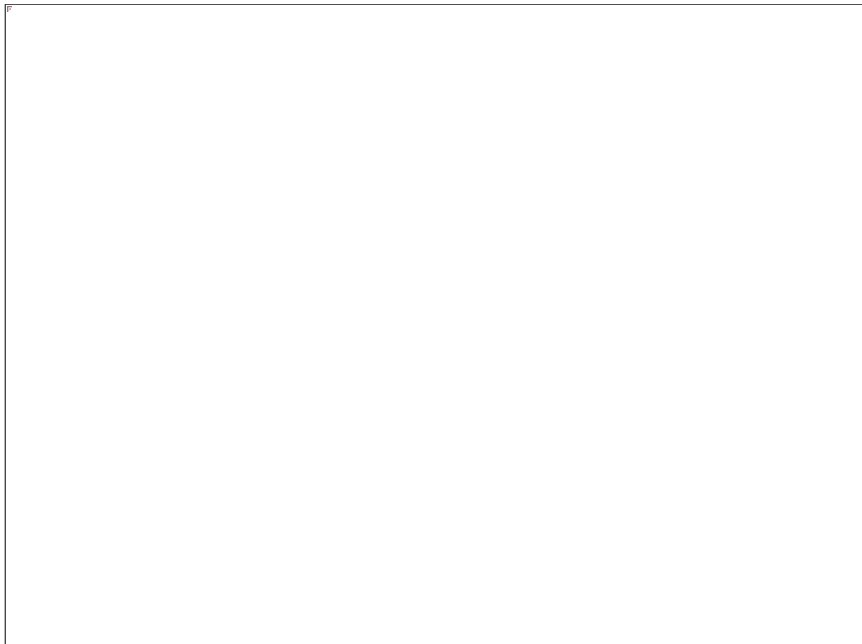


Figure 1: Research Onion, Saunders et al., (2018).

3.1 Research Philosophy

The problem-solving nature inherent in pragmatism renders it highly compatible with the examination of corporate social responsibility (CSR) within Nestle, Nigeria. Pragmatists prioritise the acquisition of knowledge through practical experience and its subsequent application in real-world problem-solving scenarios (Saunders et al., 2018; Aikin, 2018). The adopted framework in this study allows for a quantitative approach to examining CSR, as outlined by Martela (2015). This approach incorporates both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The organisation is faced with distinct challenges, including seasonal employment patterns, fluctuating consumer expectations, and a diverse workforce (Lohse, 2017). These factors warrant the adoption of a pragmatic approach. Researchers can employ various methods to gain insights into an organization's corporate social responsibility (CSR) practises within the dynamic field of study. These methods encompass surveys, interviews, and observations (Cresswell, 2014). Utilising triangulation of data ensures a more comprehensive understanding of the subject under study.

The study's focus on perception, trends, and challenges aligns with the pragmatist worldview. It is feasible to gain further insights into employees' perspectives, identify emerging trends in organisational motivation strategies, and comprehend the challenges faced by businesses through the utilisation of diverse research methodologies (Neuman, 2020). The pragmatic aspect of pragmatism enhances the applicability of research findings to real-world decision-making (Walliman&Walliman, 2011). Nestle Nigeria can leverage the insights from this study to enhance organisational trust, customer loyalty, and productivity. This can be achieved by devising and implementing comprehensive corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives that address specific concerns and capitalise on emerging societal trends. Although pragmatism philosophy possesses several strengths, it is not without its limitations. These include an insufficient theoretical basis, an excessive focus on utility, and a failure to incorporate significant insights that are not readily quantifiable or observable, such as subjective experiences and intricate social dynamics (Creswell and Cresswell, 2018).

3.2 Research Approach

The research employed an abductive approach in its investigation. When engaging in research, the utilisation of an abductive technique involves the integration of inductive and deductive reasoning. This approach assists the researcher in uncovering innovative ideas and developing hypotheses while considering existing theories and empirical evidence (Middleton, 2022). The process begins with the collection of data, wherein abductive reasoning is employed to gain a deeper understanding of a phenomenon. This approach facilitates the establishment of a comprehensive framework for comprehending the phenomenon and enables the formulation of a novel or modified theory. Subsequently, this theory can be subjected to further testing using additional information (Nwana, 2018). The abductive technique is considered ideal for conducting research on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) within an organisation due to its inherent malleability and adaptability (John, 2019).

The ability to forecast corporate social responsibility (CSR) in business organisations is challenging due to the dynamic and intricate nature of the industry. The abductive method enables researchers to leverage prior studies and the existing literature on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), while remaining attentive to emerging advancements in the field (Aikin, 2018). This approach facilitates the analysis of a diverse range of data sources, such as employee surveys, interviews with industry experts, and workplace observations. It enables the gathering of multiple perspectives and the clarification of the underlying mechanisms that support corporate social responsibility (CSR) within this particular context. Furthermore, the study's credibility is enhanced by the utilisation of the abductive method, which considers the dynamic nature of the business sector (Kabir, 2016). Researchers can employ the abductive method to adapt their strategies and hypotheses in accordance with changes in instructional requirements and the composition of the workforce. Due to its inherent adaptability, the findings of this study will remain valid and useful, regardless of any changes that may occur within the organisation.

3.3 Research Strategy

A semi-structured questionnaire was administered to collect data for this study. The selection of this method was made in order to effectively gather quantitative data from a representative sample of employees at Nestle Nigeria. Surveys are a valuable tool for examining individuals' perceptions of corporate social responsibility (CSR) within their organisation, owing to the benefits of standardisation, comparability, and statistical analysis. Due to its extensive scope and ability to gather data from diverse organisations across various roles and hierarchies, the survey methodology is highly suitable for examining the research topic of corporate social responsibility (CSR) within an organisation. The study conducted by Fellow and Liu (2015) offers a systematic approach for collecting data on employees' perspectives regarding prevailing trends, challenges, and potential advancements in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

The chosen research method offers advantages in terms of cost and time efficiency (McCombes, 2022; Fellow & Liu, 2015). Surveys have the ability to efficiently reach a large number of individuals within a relatively brief timeframe, facilitating the collection of substantial volumes of data. In addition, the questionnaire's standardised format ensures consistency in responses, thereby enhancing the reliability of the collected data (Morris, 2016). Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that the survey research strategy does possess certain limitations. Hence, the dependability of the data is compromised due to the potential presence of response bias, wherein respondents may provide socially desirable answers or choose to omit certain undesirable questions. According to John (2019), surveys often employ closed-ended questions that limit the opportunity for detailed explanations, potentially resulting in a limited representation of employees' experiences.

3.4 Research Method Choice

The present study employed a quantitative methodology. The decision was made in order to leverage the advantages of both approaches and conduct a comprehensive examination of the impact of corporate social responsibility on organisational performance. The rationale for employing this approach is supported by the diverse research inquiries and objectives of the study. These include gaining insights into the perspectives of workers regarding corporate social responsibility (CSR), identifying emerging trends, and examining the challenges encountered by businesses. The research is enhanced by employing a mixed-methods approach to effectively address the diverse range of issues at hand (Morris, 2016).

Quantitative data collected through surveys can be analysed using numerical methods to identify trends and overarching patterns in organisational corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Neuman, 2020). However, the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires in the surveys will offer a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena by illuminating the experiences and challenges faced by employees (Martela, 2015).

The research strategy employed in this study combines the principles of pragmatism philosophy and the abductive approach, thereby enhancing its effectiveness. Furthermore, the utilisation of a mixed-methods approach further bolsters the study's methodology. The pragmatic approach, which prioritises taking action and resolving issues, aligns well with the versatile nature of the mixed-methods approach for tackling complex research inquiries (Binder, 2018; Cresswell, 2014). The abductive approach enables the integration of current ideas with new empirical discoveries by combining qualitative and quantitative data, thereby facilitating both inductive and deductive thinking. The overall validity and reliability of the research are enhanced through the utilisation of a mixed-methods strategy, which enables the triangulation of data from multiple sources. The validation and support of qualitative data can be achieved through the integration of quantitative data, while the explanation and contextualization of statistical results can be enhanced with the inclusion of qualitative data (Middleton, 2022). By incorporating these three perspectives, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the factors that motivate organisational CSR initiatives in Nestle Nigeria.

3.5 Research Time Horizon

The present study employs a cross-sectional methodology for data collection. Data are gathered at a singular time point from a sample that is intended to accurately represent the target population (McCombes, 2022; Neuman, 2020) in a cross-sectional research design. A cross-sectional time frame was employed in this study to examine the correlation between CSR and performance. By employing a cross-sectional methodology, the researcher can promptly gauge the level of corporate social responsibility (CSR) within the organisation. This approach also allows for a comprehensive evaluation of the present situation and future prospects (Martela, 2015). As a result, it is possible to identify the immediate factors that influence corporate social responsibility (CSR) and gain valuable insights into current workforce experiences (Morris, 2016).

The cross-sectional study is a cost-effective and time-efficient research method due to its ability to collect data at a specific point in time. This makes it a favourable option for

addressing research inquiries within limited timeframes and budgets (Middleton, 2022; Saunders et al., 2018). The research findings can provide decision-makers and planners within organisations with valuable insights into the current state of the organization's corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Nevertheless, cross-sectional designs lack the ability to capture temporal changes, making it challenging to observe the evolution of phenomena over time or monitor long-term trends in employees' perceptions of corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Saunders et al., 2018). It is plausible that the findings are limited to the specific period during which they were collected (Nwanna, 2018), and may not be indicative of broader patterns or extended trends.

3.6 Research Techniques and Procedures

3.6.1 Data Collection Methods

A survey questionnaire will be utilised to gather responses from a substantial sample of employees at Nestle Nigeria through online means, with the objective of generating numerical statistics. In order to assess employees' perspectives on motivation, progress, and challenges, the survey will incorporate a combination of open-ended and closed-ended questions, along with Likert scale assessments. The integration of both types of data enhances the overall validity and reliability of the study (Debois, 2021). In order to collect quantitative data, the researcher administered a semi-structured questionnaire to a randomly selected sample of managers, supervisors, and human resources professionals. The aim is to thoroughly explore the motives, experiences, and viewpoints regarding Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) within the institution through the following responses.

3.6.2 Sampling Strategy

The study will employ a stratified random sampling technique to ensure that the participants selected represent a diverse range of positions, departments, and regions within the organisation. The utilisation of this sampling technique enhances the external validity and generalizability of the study, as it allows for a more comprehensive representation of the organization's workforce (Basu, 2019). The recruitment of participants with a wide range of experience relevant to the topic of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Nestle, Nigeria will be conducted using purposive sampling. The sample size for this study consists of 60 participants who will be asked to respond to the survey questions.

3.6.3 Method of Data Analysis

The results will be analysed using quantitative methods of analysis to examine the relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and organisational performance. The method of analysis employed in this study supports the quantitative goals. It facilitates data examination through the use of charts generated from the survey data (Andrich, 2018). To gain a comprehensive understanding of the role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in organisations, a quantitative data analysis will be employed to identify and elucidate recurring themes and patterns derived from a survey (Feigl, 2021).

Materials

The measurement of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Nestle Nigeria will be conducted through a survey that includes questions pertaining to the impact of CSR on organisational performance and the various factors that influence productivity. The formulation of precise and relevant questions will be undertaken in order to enhance the quality of the responses (Andrich, 2018). The closed-ended questions will be structured to provide a framework for gathering information on specific topics such as corporate social responsibility (CSR), experiences with CSR programmes, and challenges faced by employees in the sector. The utilisation of structured materials for data collection enhances the consistency of the study and ensures the comprehensiveness of the dataset.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

When considering the factors that drive employee motivation within an organisation, it is imperative to take ethical considerations into account. A set of ethical principles will be adhered to in order to safeguard the well-being and confidentiality of all parties involved. Participants will provide their consent after receiving a comprehensive explanation of the study's objectives, methodologies, and potential risks (Pimple, 2014). The confidentiality of all information provided by participants will be maintained in strict accordance with the guidelines outlined by Fellow and Liu (2015). Participants will not be required to provide any personal identifying information as a result of this. Appropriate measures will be implemented to ensure the security and protection of all collected data. Access to the information will be limited to the researcher and their supervisor exclusively. Surveys that may contain potentially harmful information will be treated with utmost caution, as emphasised by Beauchamp and Childress (2019).

It is imperative for researchers to effectively communicate their findings in an honest and ethical manner, ensuring that objectivity and transparency are upheld throughout the duration of the project (Silverman, 2021). To demonstrate our unwavering dedication to conducting research with utmost ethical standards, we will diligently seek ethics approval from the esteemed university's ethical committee. All participants will be afforded respectful treatment and provided with the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any point without incurring any adverse repercussions (Resnik, 2015; World Medical Association, 2013). The purpose of this research is to make a responsible and ethical contribution to the knowledge of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Nestle Nigeria. This will be achieved by strictly adhering to ethical standards that prioritise research integrity and the well-being of the individuals participating in the study.

3.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter delved into the various methodologies employed for data collection and drawing conclusions on corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Nestle Nigeria. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative methodologies for data collection. The data collection period will utilise a cross-sectional time frame. The selection of participants in this study involved a combination of random and purposeful sampling techniques. The qualitative data was analysed utilising thematic analysis. During the course of the study, the principles of informed consent, confidentiality, and data protection were all adhered to. The comprehensive research plan aims to provide insights into the complex issue of corporate social responsibility (CSR) within the dynamic business sector.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to present and summarize the empirical findings of the data collected from the participants through the questionnaire administration. In this chapter, a research sampling was carried out and data preparation processes. The data obtained by the researcher was then analysed and illustrated through tables and simple percentage.

4.1 Data Preparation

Since the sample size desired (n) is one hundred and twenty-three (65) respondents, it entails that a total number of 65 questionnaires was administered to the selected sample to a target group in Nestle Nigeria that engage in corporate social responsibility. Out of a total of 65 questionnaires, 8 were either incomplete or invalidated. However, data presentation and analysis is made in tabular form and frequency of responses calculated in percentages.

All bio data of respondents are shown below:

4.2 Bio Data of Respondents

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	Responds	Percentage (%)
20 – 29	11	19
30 – 39	24	42
40 and above	22	39
Total	57	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 1 shows that 42% represents 201 respondents that are between 20 and 29, 32% represents 60 respondents that are between 30 and 39, while 26% represents 43 respondents between 40 and above.

Table 2: Education Qualification Distribution by Respondents

Gender	Responds	Percentage (%)
SSCE	8	14
NCE/OND	24	42
HND/B.Sc.	25	44
M.Sc. and above	-	-
Total	57	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 2 shows that 14% represents 8 respondents that have obtained SSCE, 42% represents 24 respondents with NCE/OND certification, 44% represents 25 respondents with HND/B.Sc. and there were no responses for participants with M.Sc. and above qualifications.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Work Experience

Gender	Responds	Percentage (%)
1-3yrs	23	28
4-7yrs	13	30
8-11yrs	15	26
Above 11yrs	6	
Total	57	100%

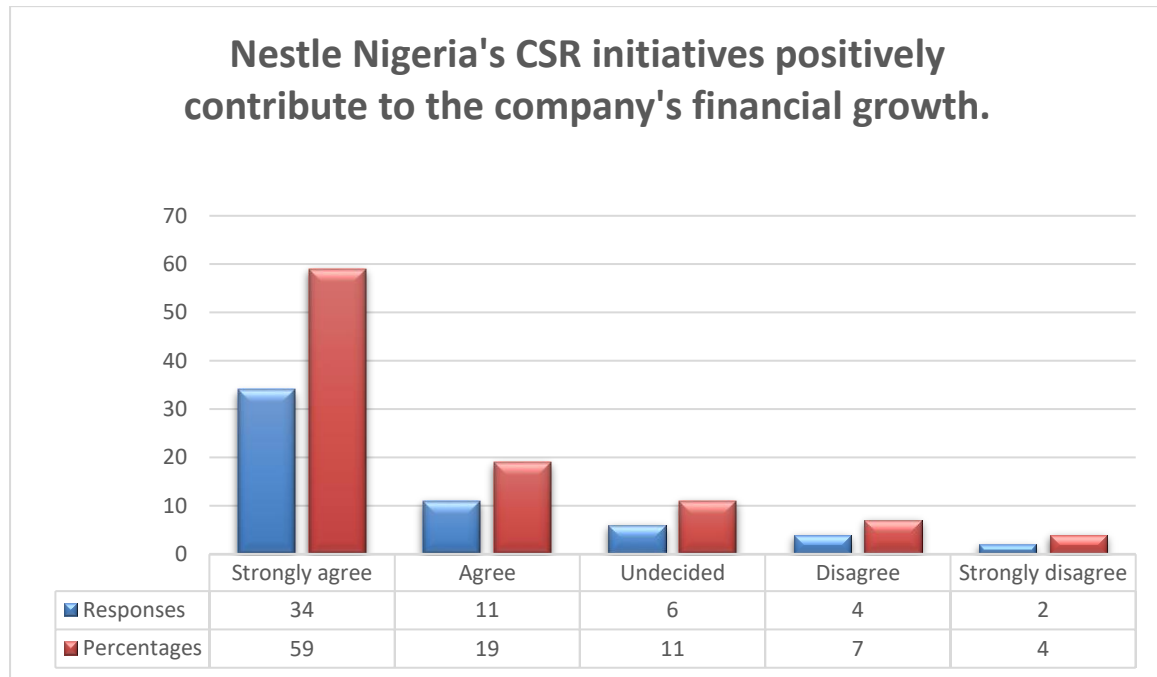
Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 3 indicates 28% that represents 133 respondents has 1-3 years work experience, 30% represent 143 respondents, 26% represent 125 respondents with 8-11 work experience, and 16% of the respondents 77, has work experience above 11 years.

Tables Based on Research Questions

Research Question one: What is the impact of Nestle’s CSR initiatives on Financial Performance and profitability?

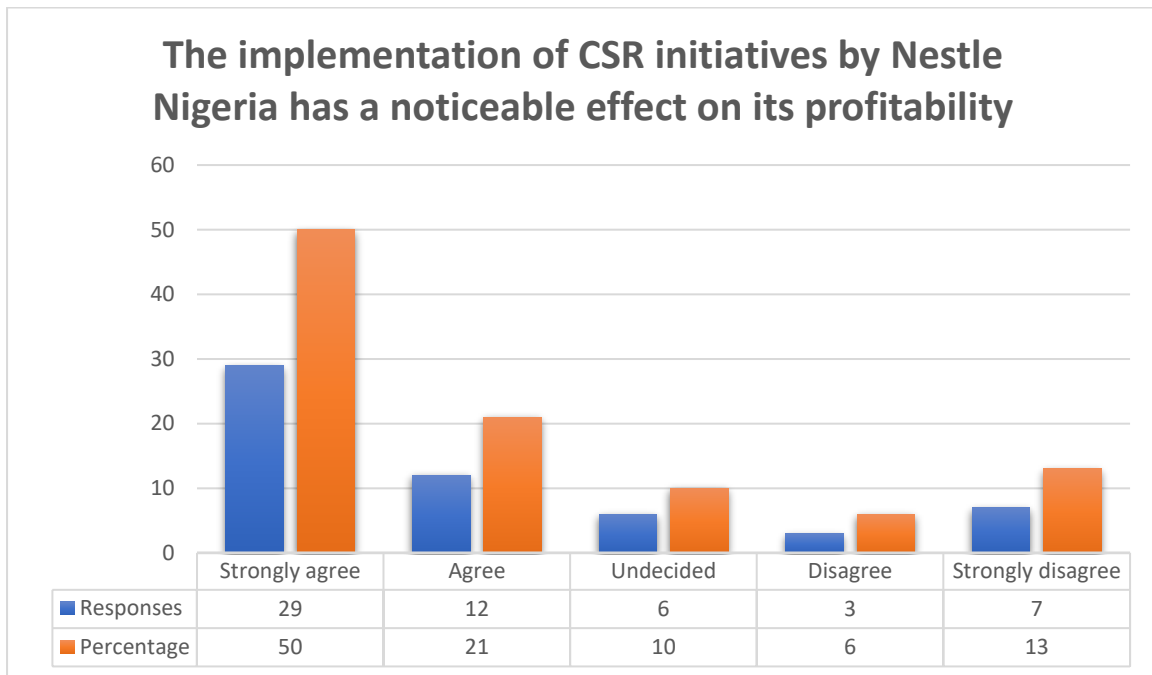
Figure 2: Nestle Nigeria's CSR initiatives positively contribute to the company's financial growth.



Source: Survey, 2024

Figure 4 clearly indicated that 34 participants or 59% of the total sample strongly agreed that Nestle Nigeria's CSR initiatives positively contribute to the company's financial growth while 19% (11 respondents) agreed, 11% (6 respondents) were undecided, 7% (4 respondents) disagreed and 4% (2 respondents) strongly disagreed. Analysis shows that ‘strongly agree’ gained the highest response, indicating that Nestle Nigeria's CSR initiatives positively contribute to the company's financial growth.

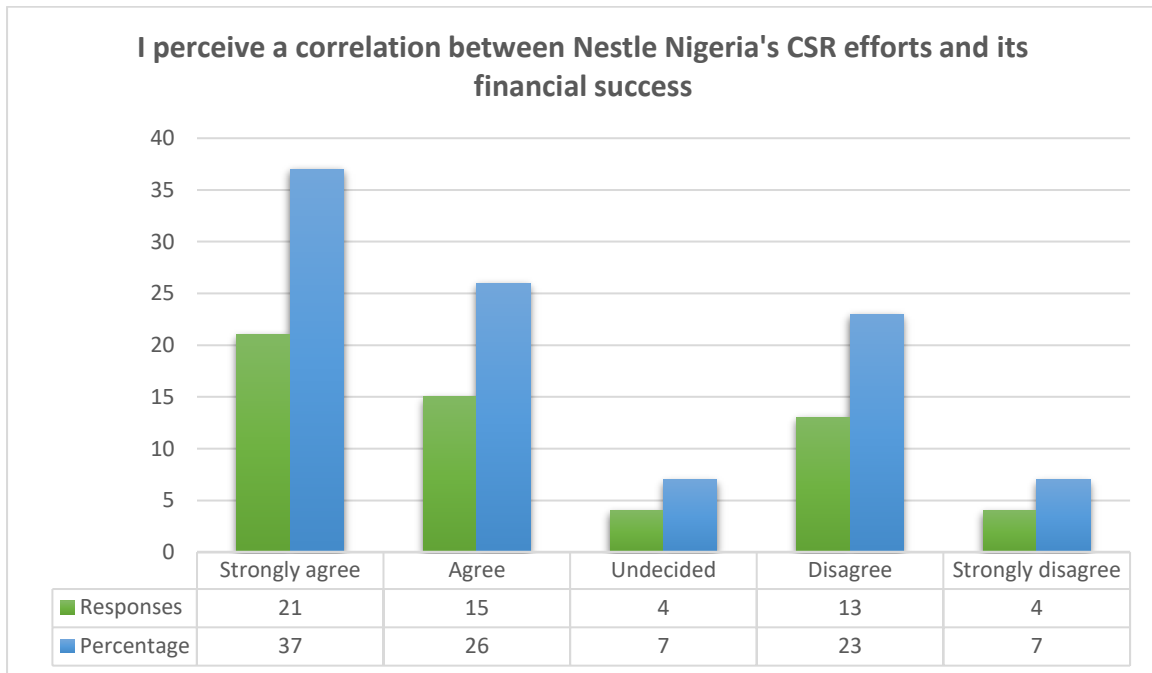
Figure 3: The implementation of CSR initiatives by Nestle Nigeria has a noticeable effect on its profitability



Source: Survey, 2024

Figure 5 shows that 50% (29 responses) strongly agreed that the implementation of CSR initiatives by Nestle Nigeria has a noticeable effect on its profitability., 21% (12 respondents) agreed, 10% (6 responses) were undecided, 6% (3 respondents) disagreed while 13% (7 respondents) strongly disagreed. Analysis shows that ‘strongly agree’ was the highest response, suggesting that the implementation of CSR initiatives by Nestle Nigeria has a noticeable effect on its profitability.

Figure 4: I perceive a correlation between Nestle Nigeria's CSR efforts and its financial success

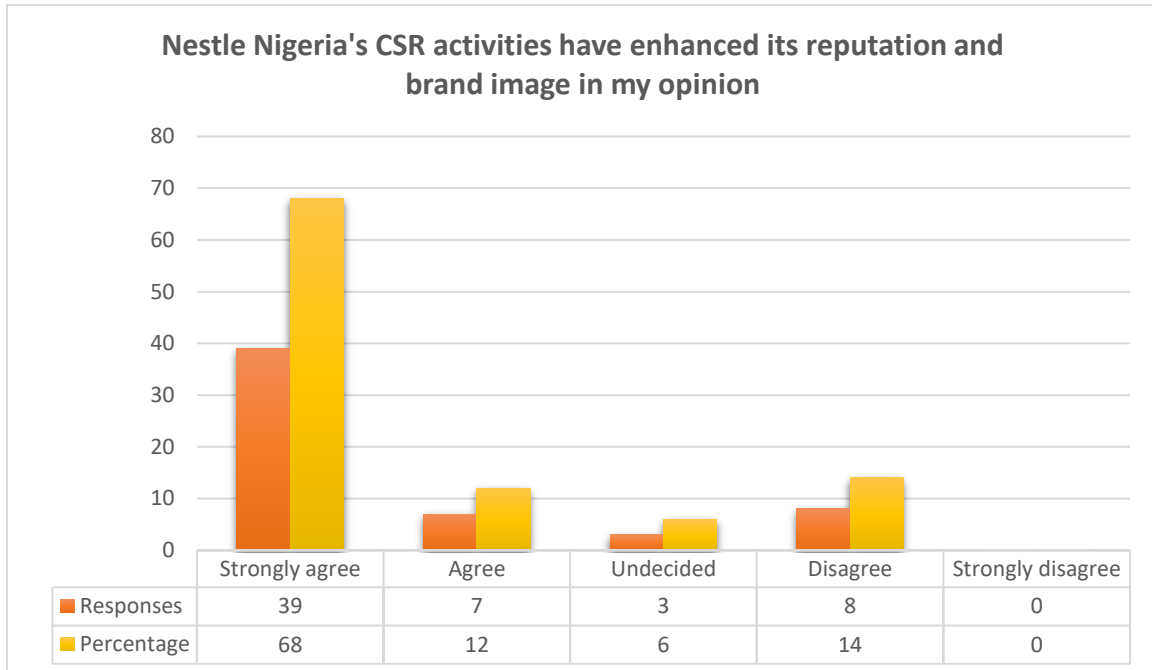


Source: Survey, 2024

Figure 6 shows that 21 respondents (37% of respondents) strongly agreed to perceive a correlation between Nestle Nigeria's CSR efforts and its financial success.; 15 respondents (26%) agreed, 4 respondents (7%) were undecided, 23 respondents (23%) disagreed while 4 respondents (7%) strongly disagreed, suggesting a correlation between Nestle Nigeria's CSR efforts and its financial success.

Research Question Two: How does CSR influence Nestle’s Reputation, Brand Image, and Consumer Behaviour?

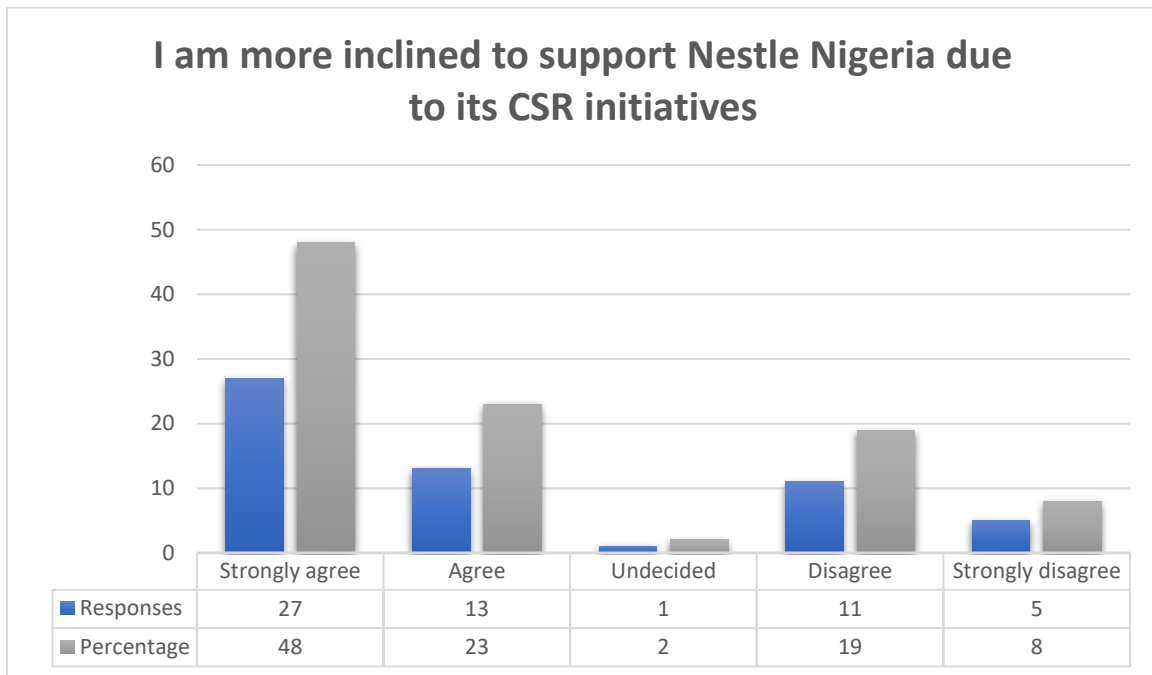
Figure 5: Nestle Nigeria's CSR activities have enhanced its reputation and brand image in my opinion



Source: Survey, 2024.

Figure 7 shows that 39 respondents (68%) strongly agreed that Nestle Nigeria's CSR activities have enhanced its reputation and brand image; 7 respondents (12%) agreed, 3 respondents (6%) were undecided, 8 respondents (14%) disagreed while none strongly disagreed with the statement. This suggests that Nestle Nigeria's CSR activities have enhanced its reputation and brand image in my opinion.

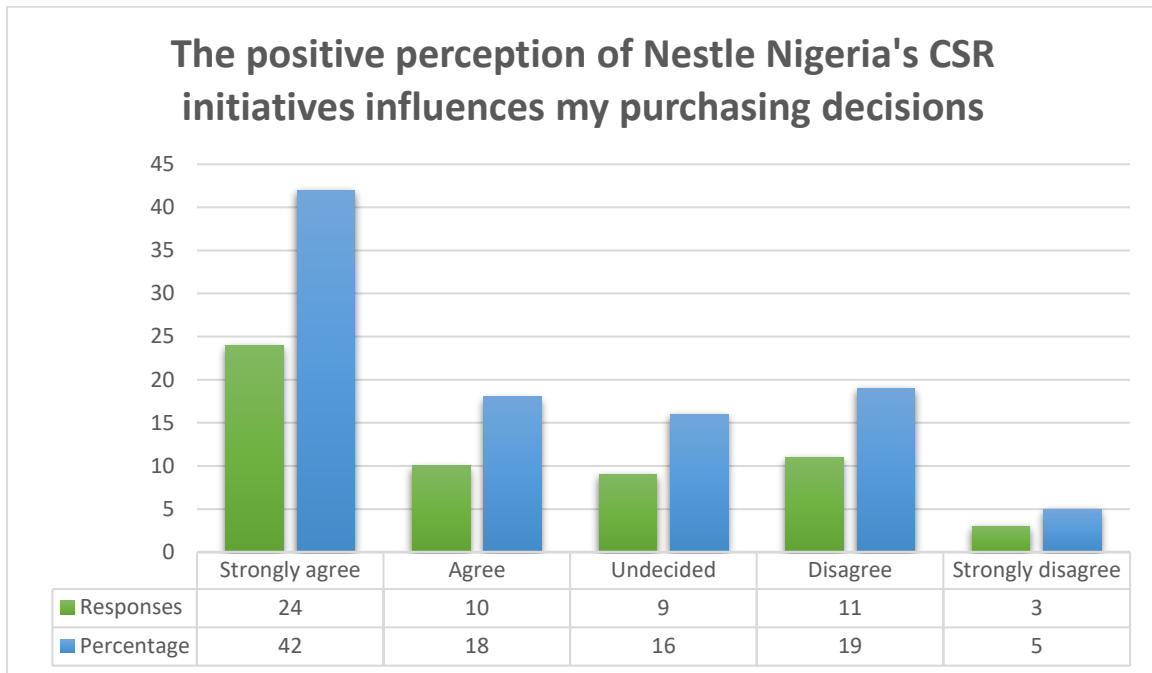
Figure 6: I am more inclined to support Nestle Nigeria due to its CSR initiatives



Source: Survey, 2024

The above figure in shows that 27 respondents (48%) strongly agreed to be more inclined to support Nestle Nigeria due to its CSR initiatives; 13 respondents (23%) agreed, 1 respondent or 2% were undecided, 11 respondents (19%) disagreed while 5 (8%) strongly disagreed, indicating more inclination to support Nestle Nigeria due to its CSR initiatives

Figure 7: The positive perception of Nestle Nigeria's CSR initiatives influences my purchasing decisions

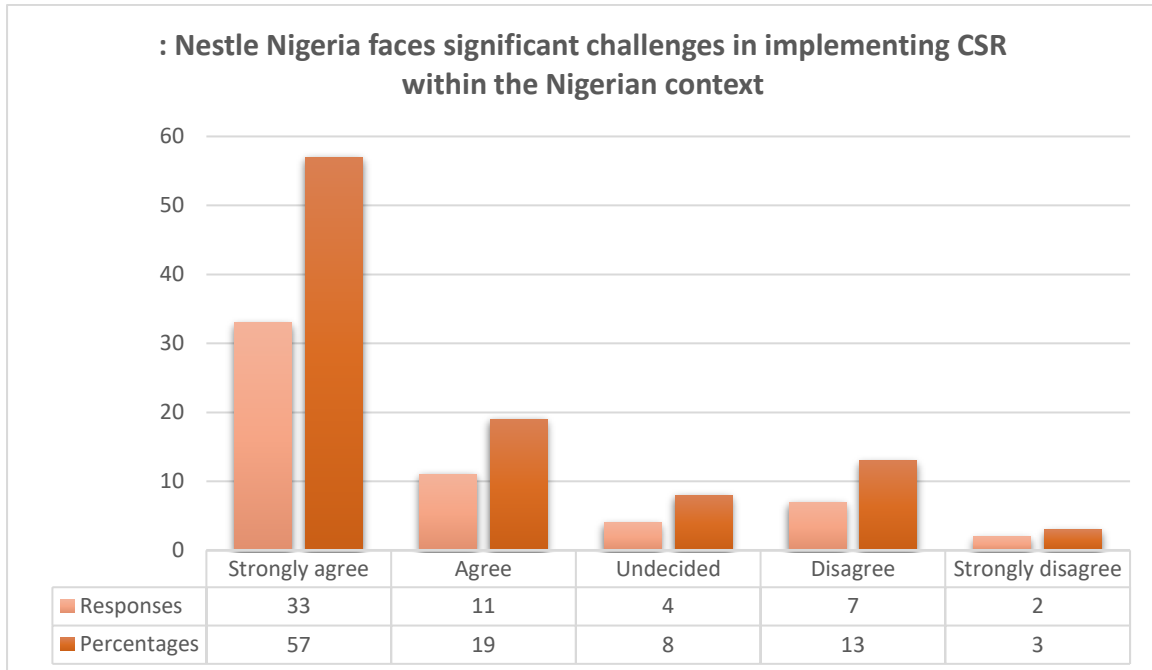


Source: Survey, 2024

The above figure shows that 24 respondents (42%) strongly agreed that the positive perception of Nestle Nigeria's CSR initiatives influences their purchasing decisions; 10 respondents (18%) agreed, 9 respondents or 16% were undecided, 11 respondents (19%) disagreed while 3 (5%) strongly disagreed with the statement. Over half of respondents therefore considered the positive perception of Nestle Nigeria's CSR initiatives to influence their purchasing decisions

Research Question three: What are the challenges and opportunities in implementing CSR in Nestle’s Nigeria?

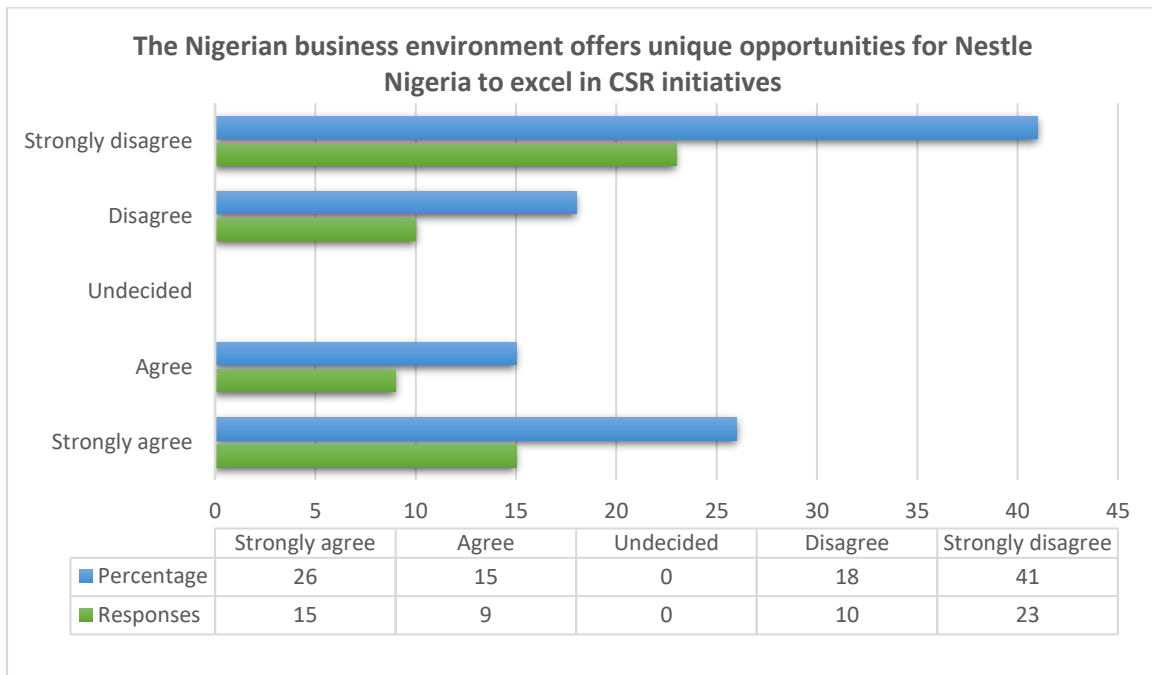
Figure8: Nestle Nigeria faces significant challenges in implementing CSR within the Nigerian context



Source: Survey, 2024

From the above figure, 33 respondents (57%) agreed that Nestle Nigeria faces significant challenges in implementing CSR within the Nigerian context, 11 respondents (19%) agreed, 4 respondents (8%) were undecided, 7 respondents (13%) disagreed while 2 respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

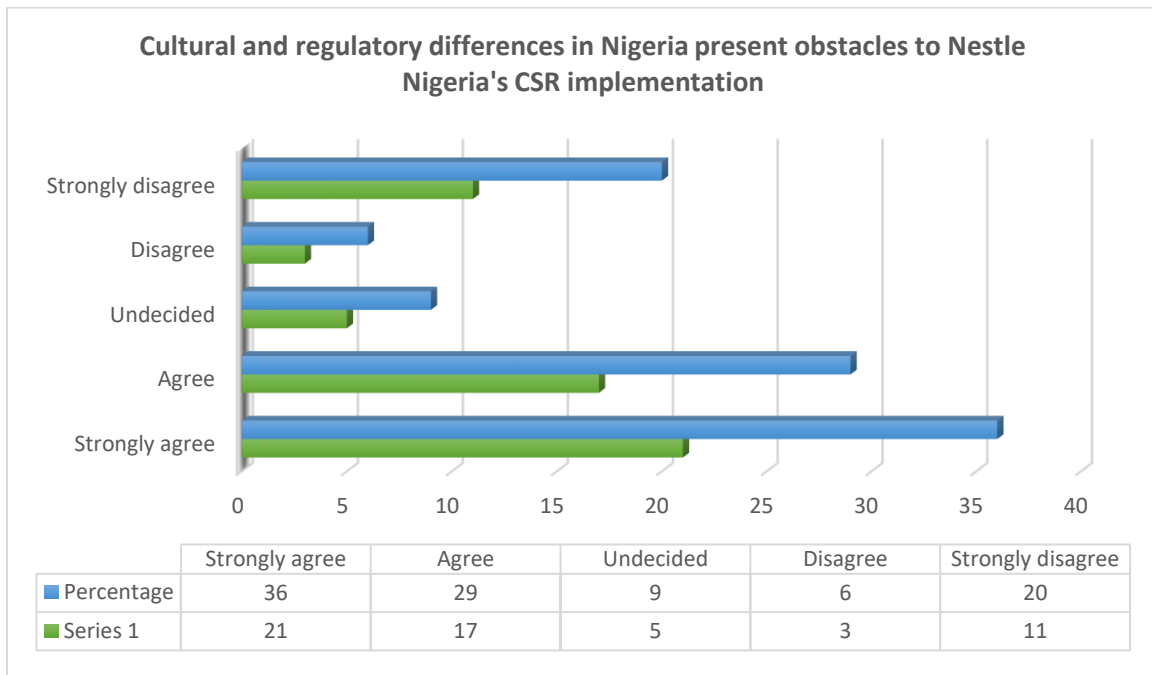
Figure 9: The Nigerian business environment offers unique opportunities for Nestle Nigeria to excel in CSR initiatives



Source: Survey, 2024

From the above figure, shows that 15 respondents (26%) strongly agreed that the Nigerian business environment offers unique opportunities for Nestle Nigeria to excel in CSR initiatives., 9 respondents (15%) agreed, none of the respondents were undecided, while 10 respondents (18%) disagreed, and 23 respondents (41%) strongly disagreed with the statement. Under half supported the statement, indicating that the Nigerian business environment offers unique opportunities for Nestle Nigeria to excel in CSR initiatives.

Figure 10: Cultural and regulatory differences in Nigeria present obstacles to Nestle Nigeria's CSR implementation



Source: Survey, 2024

From the above figure, shows that 21 respondents (36%) strongly agreed that cultural and regulatory differences in Nigeria present obstacles to Nestle Nigeria's CSR implementation, 17 respondents (29%) agreed, 5 respondents (9%) were undecided, 3 respondents (6%) disagreed while 11 participants of the respondent (20%) strongly disagree with the statement. A large majority therefore believe that ultural and regulatory differences in Nigeria present obstacles to Nestle Nigeria's CSR implementation.

4.3 Discussion of findings

The data research reveals insights into several facets of Nestle Nigeria's corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, encompassing their influence on financial performance, reputation, brand image, customer behaviour, as well as the obstacles and prospects associated with implementing CSR within the Nigerian setting. The researcher thoroughly examines each study issue in this debate, establishing links with current literature to offer a full comprehension of the findings. The study suggests that Nestle Nigeria's corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts have a favourable impact on the company's financial performance. The study revealed that a significant majority of respondents (59.65%) expressed a strong agreement that Nestle Nigeria's corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities had a beneficial impact on the company's financial growth. This is consistent with

the existing research that indicates a direct relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and financial success (Akinbola, Solomon, and Ibidunni, 2018; Ling, 2019). Companies that participate in corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives are often seen positively by stakeholders, resulting in heightened customer loyalty, greater brand reputation, and subsequently, improved financial outcomes (Hang et al., 2022). Similarly, a substantial proportion (50.88%) expressed strong agreement with the discernible impact of CSR activities on Nestle Nigeria's profitability. This aligns with research that highlights the favourable influence of corporate social responsibility (CSR) on a company's financial performance, ascribed to enhanced stakeholder connections and risk mitigation (Lee, 2020; Hang and Sarfraz, et al., 2022). Once again, the participants had differing opinions on the existence of a connection between corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives and financial prosperity. Nevertheless, the prevailing positive tendency (36.84%) indicates a possible correlation. Prior research provides evidence that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) may have a favourable impact on financial performance by attracting investments and improving shareholder value (Al-maani et al., 2019; Lee, 2020).

Table 7 research indicates that Nestle Nigeria's corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives have positively impacted its reputation, customer behaviour, and brand image. 68.42% of respondents strongly agreed that Nestle Nigeria's corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives significantly improved its reputation and brand image. This is consistent with studies that suggests that business Social Responsibility (CSR) has a role in developing a favourable business image and cultivating trust among stakeholders (Allam and Islam, 2021; Lee, 2020). Furthermore, a significant proportion of the participants (47.37%) expressed a strong inclination to support Nestle Nigeria as a result of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts. This statement aligns with the existing literature that emphasises the favourable impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) on customer behaviour (Famularo, 2023). It suggests that consumers tend to favour businesses that demonstrate a commitment to social responsibility, as evidenced by studies conducted by Fritsch and Wyrwich in (2019), and Tonin and Vlassopoulos in (2015). According to the survey, 36.84% of respondents strongly agreed that their purchase decisions are influenced by the good perception of Nestle Nigeria's corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes. This discovery is consistent with research that suggests customers take into account a company's corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives when deciding what to buy (Mahmood and Bashir, 2020; Sameer, 2021).

Nevertheless, there are both obstacles and prospects in the implementation of CSR in Nigeria. A clear majority (57.89%) concurred that Nestle Nigeria has substantial obstacles in executing corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives in Nigeria. The literature indicates that the difficulties in implementing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) might arise from variations in culture and regulations, ethical quandaries, and disagreements among stakeholders (Fritsch and Wyrwich 2019). Moreover, the Nigerian economic landscape has distinctive prospects for Nestle Nigeria to thrive in corporate social responsibility endeavours (Gulema and Roba 2021). Although a notable proportion (26.32%) expressed strong agreement with the distinctive potential for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the Nigerian corporate climate, a considerable percentage (40.35%) strongly disagreed. This duality reflects the intricacy of managing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in many company settings, as indicated in previous studies (Odetayo et al., 2014; Mitra, 2021). 36.84% of respondents strongly agreed that cultural and legislative variations provide significant barriers to the implementation of corporate social responsibility (CSR). This aligns with the existing research that highlights the significance of comprehending the specific circumstances within a certain locality when it comes to corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies (Martos-Pedrero et al., 2019; Jiménez-Castillo, 2019). The findings indicate that Nestle Nigeria's CSR activities are usually seen positively, which suggests that there may be advantages in terms of financial performance, reputation, and customer behaviour (Famularo, 2023). Nevertheless, the difficulties underlined emphasise the significance of CSR methods that are tailored to the unique circumstances. Subsequent investigations might delve deeper into these processes and assess the enduring viability of such endeavours.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

At the initial phase of this study, the aim was to analyse the effects of Nestle Nigeria's CSR initiatives on its financial performance and profitability. Additionally, the study sought to evaluate the influence of CSR on Nestle Nigeria's reputation and brand image, and how this in turn affects consumer behaviour and loyalty. Lastly, the study aimed to examine the specific challenges and opportunities that Nestle Nigeria encounters in implementing CSR. Therefore, the research offers valuable understanding of Nestle Nigeria's CSR endeavours and their impact on the company's financial results, reputation, and customer conduct inside Nigeria. The results indicate favourable perceptions of Nestle Nigeria's CSR initiatives, along with previous research that highlights the beneficial influence of CSR on many dimensions of corporate achievement. The study demonstrates a direct and favourable relationship between CSR and financial expansion, profitability, and brand reputation. The respondents strongly agreed on the good impact of CSR on Nestle Nigeria's performance. However, the research also revealed difficulties related to the implementation of CSR in the Nigerian corporate landscape.

The positive association between CSR and financial performance is consistent with existing research. This research highlights that stakeholders generally have a positive perception of firms that engage in CSR activities, which in turn leads to higher customer loyalty and improved financial results. The study emphasises the favourable influence of CSR on the profitability of Nestle Nigeria. This underscores the notion that implementing good CSR policies may result in better relationships with stakeholders and improved risk management. The favourable impact of business CSR on reputation and brand image is in line with the wider recognition that CSR aids in establishing a positive business reputation and effectively addressing greenwashing concerns, hence creating trust among stakeholders.

Consumer behaviour, a pivotal element in the research, demonstrates the respondents' propensity to endorse Nestle Nigeria based on its CSR endeavours. This discovery aligns with the research that highlights the favourable impact of CSR on consumer behaviour, where customers tend to favour socially responsible firms. Although the report recognises the favourable attitudes, it also recognises the difficulties in implementing CSR in the Nigerian setting. Obstacles including as cultural and legal variations, ethical issues, and stakeholder disputes were found, emphasising the necessity for CSR initiatives that are tailored to the unique situation.

Nestle Nigeria's CSR programmes seem to have a beneficial influence on the company's financial performance, reputation, and customer behaviour. Nevertheless, the research highlights the need of acknowledging and tackling obstacles linked to the implementation of CSR in Nigeria's varied and intricate economic landscape. The findings indicate potential areas for further investigation to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of CSR in certain circumstances and evaluate the enduring viability of these endeavours. In summary, this study adds to the existing information about the impact of CSR on the performance of companies. It offers significant insights that are relevant for both academic research and practical applications in this sector.

5.2 Recommendations

In order to strengthen Nestle Nigeria's CSR influence, it is essential to customise tactics to local subtleties, improve open and clear communication with stakeholders, include sustainability throughout the whole value chain, and allocate resources towards comprehensive effect assessment. The recommendations are in line with the study's results and seek to enhance Nestle's excellent reputation and make a significant contribution to social well-being in the Nigerian business environment.

1. Tailor CSR Strategies to Local Contexts

Nestle Nigeria need to modify its CSR strategy to conform with the distinct cultural, regulatory, and socio-economic aspects of the Nigerian corporate milieu. The study revealed that disparities in culture and regulations present obstacles to the implementation of corporate social responsibility (CSR). In order to tackle this issue, Nestle Nigeria should do comprehensive market research and engage in stakeholder discussions to acquire a deep comprehension of local tastes, beliefs, and expectations. Nestle can improve the efficacy and acceptance of its CSR programmes by customising them to align with the unique demands of the Nigerian populace. Customising CSR initiatives to local settings is essential for establishing genuine and significant relationships with stakeholders. This showcases Nestle's dedication to comprehending and tackling the distinct obstacles and prospects that exist in the Nigerian market. Nestle may enhance community participation and gain greater support from customers and regulators by integrating local opinions into its CSR programmes.

2. Strengthen Stakeholder Engagement and Communication

Nestle Nigeria should improve its communication channels and proactively involve stakeholders to promote transparency and raise knowledge about its corporate social responsibility efforts. The study revealed a favourable opinion of CSR programmes, but good

communication has the potential to enhance these positive benefits even more. Nestle may enhance confidence and credibility among stakeholders by implementing several communication channels, including social media, community forums, and collaborations with local organisations. Clear and efficient communication is crucial for expressing the significance and objectives of CSR efforts. Nestle can effectively manage expectations, resolve concerns, and highlight the concrete advantages of its CSR programmes by ensuring that stakeholders are well-informed. Consequently, this can enhance connections with both the nearby community and regulatory entities, so fostering enduring favourable opinions and backing for Nestle's corporate social responsibility initiatives.

3. Integrate Sustainable Practices Across the Value Chain

Nestle Nigeria need to incorporate sustainability throughout its whole value chain, including the procurement of raw materials, production, and distribution. The study emphasised the favourable influence of CSR on both financial performance and reputation. Additionally, adopting a comprehensive strategy to sustainability can amplify these results. Incorporating environmentally friendly procedures, minimising waste, and guaranteeing ethical procurement of ingredients can not only be in line with CSR objectives but also lead to enduring environmental and social advantages. Incorporating sustainability across the whole value chain demonstrates a dedication to ethical business principles. It is in line with worldwide patterns that prioritise environmental awareness and ethical corporate practices. Nestle may enhance its image as a socially responsible and ecologically sensitive corporation by implementing sustainable practices. This will attract environmentally conscious consumers and perhaps reduce the risks connected with environmental issues.

4. Invest in CSR Impact Measurement and Reporting

Nestle Nigeria need to allocate resources towards implementing rigorous measurement and reporting systems in order to thoroughly evaluate the overall effects of its corporate social responsibility endeavours. Nestle can effectively monitor the success of its CSR initiatives by implementing key performance indicators (KPIs) that focus on financial measures, societal impact, and stakeholder satisfaction. Consistently sharing these measurements with both internal and external parties will not only showcase responsibility but also offer important observations for ongoing development. Measurement and reporting are essential for comprehending the tangible results of CSR initiatives in the real world. Nestle can demonstrate its dedication to social responsibility by measuring the impact and presenting

concrete outcomes. Transparent reporting enhances Nestle's reputation, fosters confidence, and allows the company to make well-informed modifications to its CSR strategy using real performance data.

These suggestions focus on the main discoveries from the study and provide Nestle Nigeria with practical solutions to enhance the effectiveness of its CSR operations. Nestle can strengthen its positive image and make a significant contribution to Nigeria's socio-economic landscape by customising plans to local conditions, improving interaction with stakeholders, incorporating sustainable practices, and allocating resources to monitor effect.

5.3 Implications for the Study

The results of this study on Nestle Nigeria's CSR activities have important implications for both academics and the business sector, providing insight into the complex connection between CSR practices and organisational performance in Nigeria.

1. Academic Contributions

This study adds to the current knowledge base in the topic of CSR, specifically within the commercial environment of Nigeria. This research enhances the comprehension of how the dynamics of CSR affect financial performance, reputation, and consumer behaviour in a developing country. The comprehensive examination of the difficulties and advantages of adopting CSR in Nigeria enhances the scholarly discussion, providing useful perspectives for scholars interested in the convergence of CSR and varied corporate contexts.

2. Practical Implications for Businesses

The report offers practical insights for organisations operating in Nigeria on how to build and implement effective CSR programmes. The suggestion to customise CSR programmes to fit local contexts emphasises the significance of cultural sensitivity and adherence to regulations. These findings have important practical consequences for multinational firms such as Nestle. They highlight the necessity of adopting a flexible strategy that takes into account the varied socio-economic conditions of the Nigerian market. Moreover, the prioritisation of stakeholder participation and honest communication underscores the importance of establishing trust and credibility, which are essential components for long-term success in the local economic landscape.

3. Strategic Considerations for Nestle Nigeria

The study has several ramifications for Nestle Nigeria. The suggestion to incorporate sustainable practices across the value chain is in line with worldwide patterns in corporate

accountability and sustainability. This strategic decision not only conforms to changing customer demands but also establishes Nestle as a conscientious business entity. Nestle's strategic decision-making relies heavily on the need for effective measuring and reporting procedures that provide significant results. Consistently evaluating the effects of CSR programmes enables the organisation to refine plans, adapt to evolving trends, and demonstrate its dedication to transparency and responsibility.

4. Societal Impact

At a societal level, the study indicates that effective CSR programmes may have a favourable impact on consumer behaviour, bolster business reputation, and contribute to the broader socio-economic advancement of Nigeria. Nestle's dedication to tackling local obstacles and capitalising on distinctive prospects might result in a more durable and mutually advantageous rapport with the communities it serves. The societal effect goes beyond the achievement of company success, as it is in line with greater objectives of social responsibility and ethical business practices.

5.4 Limitations of the Research

Although this research on Nestle Nigeria's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives has produced some intriguing insights, it is essential to point out certain critical limitations in order to keep a balanced perspective on the scope of the research and the significance of its findings. The first and most important factor that might potentially introduce sampling bias is the fact that the research relied on a specific sample of respondents, which could have been chosen from particular demographics or industries. There is a possibility that the findings might not accurately reflect all of the many perspectives that are held by the Nigerian population as a whole. It is possible that subsequent research might be beneficial if they utilised a sample that was both more extensive and diverse in order to increase the applicability of the findings.

A instantaneous portrayal of the impact that Nestle Nigeria's corporate social responsibility (CSR) has at a particular point in time is provided by the cross-sectional research technique. Because of this limitation, it is more difficult to determine the existence of cause-and-effect relationships or to assess the long-term durability of the positive perspectives that have been noticed. It would be possible to have a more thorough and dynamic understanding of CSR results by carrying out a longitudinal research study to investigate changes that have occurred over time. In addition, the reliance on self-reported data from participants creates the

possibility of social desirability bias, which occurs when respondents provide responses that are in accordance with the norms that they believe to be prevalent in society. It is possible that the presence of this bias will have an effect on the accuracy of feedback about Nestle Nigeria's corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, which may result in an over emphasis on positive viewpoints.

There is a lack of a full evaluation of exogenous factors in this study. These variables include economic instability and global events, both of which have the potential to influence how the results interpret. The effectiveness of corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes may be impacted by unanticipated events or developments in the business environment; however, this study did not take into consideration all of these factors. In addition, the fact that the research was conducted just on Nestle Nigeria limits the extent to which the findings may be applied to other commercial enterprises or industries. When it comes to integrating CSR principles, different industries may face different challenges and have different opportunities. When further investigations are conducted, it is possible that they will include a wider variety of businesses in order to take into account industry-specific information.

In conclusion, the research emphasises the relevance of cultural differences in the implementation of corporate social responsibility. It is possible that a more comprehensive understanding might be achieved by a more in-depth research of cultural nuances and the impact that these nuances have on how CSR is perceived. In addition to the fact that cultural factors have a significant impact on the expectations of stakeholders, doing a more in-depth inquiry may also yield additional relevant information. Recognising these limitations not only makes the study more understandable but also provides a path for future research endeavours to follow. Future research attempts should focus on overcoming these constraints in order to improve our understanding of the dynamics of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the Nigerian business context. This may be accomplished by employing a greater variety of samples, applying longitudinal designs, and taking into consideration a wider range of external factors.

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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTRATION

Instruction: Please complete the questionnaire by ticking the appropriate option for each question.

Section A: Personal Data

1. Age Grade

- (a) Below 20 years
- (b) 21-30 years
- (c) 31-40 years
- (d) 41-50 years

- (e) 50 and above

2. Education Qualification

- (a) West African Senior School Certificate Examination & National Examination Council
- (b) Ordinary National Diploma, Higher National Diploma & Bachelor of Sciences
- (c) Postgraduate Diploma / Masters & Doctorates
- (d) Others, specify: [_____]

3. Working Experience

- (a) 1-3 years
- (b) 4-7 years
- (c) 8-11 years
- (d) Above 11 years

DISCLAIMER

Each question in this survey has been carefully crafted with the participants in mind and reviewed by a supervisor to ensure that none of them are offensive or indirectly cajole participation. The respondent's confidentiality and identity has be respected, and their personality and reputation will not be affected in any way. It has been deemed necessary for participants NOT to include their names, ethnic groupings, units, or any other personal information. Therefore, if any aspect of this survey seems uncomfortable, kindly discontinue.

Thank you.

CONTACTDETAILS

Research Question 1: Impact of CSR on Financial Performance

	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. Nestle Nigeria's CSR initiatives positively contribute to the company's financial growth.					
2. The implementation of CSR initiatives by Nestle Nigeria has a noticeable effect on its profitability.					
3. I perceive a correlation between Nestle Nigeria's CSR efforts and its financial success.					

Research Question 2: Influence of CSR on Reputation, Brand Image, and Consumer Behaviour

	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. Nestle Nigeria's CSR activities have enhanced its reputation and brand image in my opinion.					
2. I am more inclined to support Nestle Nigeria due to its CSR initiatives.					
3. The positive perception of Nestle Nigeria's CSR initiatives influences my purchasing decisions.					

Research Question 3: Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing CSR in Nigeria

	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. Nestle Nigeria faces significant challenges in implementing CSR within the Nigerian context.					
2. The Nigerian business environment offers unique opportunities for Nestle Nigeria to excel in CSR initiatives.					
3. Cultural and regulatory differences in Nigeria present obstacles to Nestle Nigeria's CSR implementation.					

Each abbreviated response (e.g., SD for Strongly Disagree, D for Disagree, N for Neutral, A for Agree, SA for Strongly Agree), are allocated for respondents to select their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement by marking the corresponding cell.