

FIRMS' SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY BEHAVIOUR PATTERN AND CLIMATE OF THE HOST COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT IN THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN PORT HARCOURT: A STUDY IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract:

This study examined the relationship between firms' corporate social responsibility behaviour pattern and the climate of the host community environment. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey and collected data from a cross-section of 50 high class hotels operating in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The research data were analysed using descriptive statistics for the demographics and study variables, and Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient (rs) for the bivariate analysis. The study found that companies that exhibit proactive social responsibility behaviour enjoy conducive business climate in their host community environment more than those with reactive behaviour pattern. However, those with resistant behaviour toward social responsibility operate in very unconducive climate in the host community environment. The study therefore concluded that the conducive climate in the host community environment is a function of the firm's proactive social responsibility consciousness to the host community. The study recommends that companies should be proactive and consultative in their social responsibility focus and should also adopt the public private partnership (PPP) initiating in the provision of societies social need for harmonious host environment.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility, Behaviour Patterns, Climate of Host Community Environment, Proactive Behaviour, Reactive Behaviour, Resistant Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

The sustainable development in the business sector has been a topical issue both to business operators and scholars. This attraction has become necessary because of the intricacies beclouding business survival mostly for businesses operating in high volatile environment (Post, Lawrence, & Weber, 1999). Considering the volatility of the business environment, which Ottih (2003) has described as been in a state of flux, the issue of the host community environment has become a "Bullwack" to most businesses. This emerging environment constitutes a critical challenge to business operators, particularly bringing much to bear on the corporate social responsibility question.

Relating to the foregoing, a large body of related literature strongly holds that the volatility of the host community environment arising from excessive demands for social infrastructure has become an issue in modern day business management. This tends to be so because of the failure of government to provide their social responsibility to the

citizenry (Jaja, 2004; Hamilton & Obereh, 2006; Jardin, 2010). It is held by this view that the failure of government to make life better particularly for the generality of the mass has made the host community redirect their focus to the "government they can see," the nearest business enterprises (Ottih, 2003; Jones 2011; Chikwe, 2013). This theory of the *defacto* government appears to be quite potent when viewed in the reality of the lack and pauperisation charactering most communities, and the aggressive tendency of these communities to businesses operating on their land.

However, related to the theory of the "*defacto*" government and transfer of aggression, is the view that the trajectory to peaceful host community environment rests on such stakes as the government, host community leadership and companies, which in their respective concerns are perceived to have failed. This mutual failure has resulted to threat to peaceful hosting of the corporation, rather in place is, mutual mistrust and distrust making it difficult to manage the host community business environment (Jaja, 2004; Jardin, 2010; Perkins, Radelet, Snodgrass, Gills & Roemer, 2001).

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In the literature, an aspect that appears lacking, which is a void on the knowledge of social responsibility and host community environment, is the influence of the corporate social responsibility behaviour patterns on the climate of the host community environment. Yet, it appears that the pattern of such corporate behaviour which is a demonstration of their attitude towards the plight of their host is also the most important recipe in managing the Nigerian business environment for sustainable development. Therefore, as a departure from previous studies, this paper empirically examined the influence of the corporate social responsibility behaviour patterns on the climate of the host community environment.

The problem we addressed in this paper is critically associated with the survival of the modern day business operating in less developed societies, therefore presenting themselves conspicuously and more susceptible to shifting expectations from government to business. For instance, Jardan (2010) quoted Mrs. William Mkpa, a community leader in Ibeno, Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria, who angrily described the ugly experience of the people of Ibeno, as; "Oil companies do not value our lives, they want us all to die. In the past two years, we have experienced ten oil spills and fishermen can no longer sustain their families, it is not tolerable". The manifestation of intolerance has spread to other host communities of businesses other than oil companies. Such phenomena as; attack of companies workers, stealing of company property, disruption of operation leading to loss of man hours, kidnapping, and hiring of armed security personnel are really worrisome.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility

The baseline theoretical domains upon which corporate social responsibility is drawn are the business population ecology, resource dependency, resource embeddedness, and resource based theories. These theoretical bases found expression in the argument of the accounting standards steering committee (1975) corporate report, cited in Asechemie (1996) that, "economic entities compete for resources of manpower, management and agricultural skills, materials and energy, and they utilise community owned assets and facilities, they have a responsibility for the present and future livelihoods of employees and other stakes, and because of the interdependence of all social groups they are involved in the maintenance of standards of life and the creation of wealth for and on behalf of the community". However drawing from this and the polarity in the views of scholars on the socio-economic relevance and or irrelevance of corporate social responsibilities, many definitions of the

construct have been advanced. For instance, Pearce and Robinson (2005) contended that 'the issues are numerous, complex and contingent on specific situations, thus, rigid rules of business conduct cannot deal with them. Each firm, regardless of size, must decide how to meet its perceived social responsibility. Also, Amaechi, Adi, Ogbechie and Amaco (2006) defined corporate social responsibility as the tendency that companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with stakeholders on voluntary basis. Nwachukwu (2007) viewed the construct as the intelligent and objective concern for the welfare of society which restrains individual and corporate behaviour from ultimately destructive activities no matter how immediately profitable, and which leads in the direction of positive contributions to human betterment.

With the growing consciousness of rights and privileges in our everyday life, corporate social responsibility is increasingly viewed as a philosophy, an act of reciprocity, a way of life, a commitment to ethical orientation, an act of philanthropy, a way of demonstrating gratitude (Asechemie, 1996; Natufe, 2001; Branco, 2007; Amaechi *et al.* 2006). For instance, Natufe (2001) argued that corporate social responsibility is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethnically and contribute to economic, development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large.

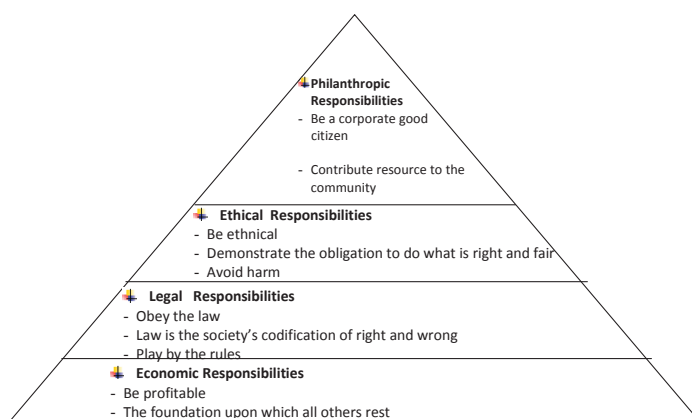
The Nature of Corporate Social Responsibility

The nature of corporate social responsibility is most frequently viewed with respect to the perception of scholars. These are: as an act of philanthropy, a natural complex ecological mutual dependency process, an ethical responsibility etc. Pearce and Robinson (2005) identified the various stakeholders and the nature of their claims on the firms as follows: stockholders—participation in distribution of profit, additional stock offerings and such additional rights as established in the contract with the corporation; creditors—legal proportion of interest payments due to return of principal from investment, security of pledged assets and relative priority in event of liquidation; employees—economic, social and psychological satisfaction in the workplace, freedom from arbitrary and capricious behaviour on the part of the officials of the company, share in fringe benefits, freedom to join union and participate in collective bargaining; customer – value for money for all service and product offered with suitable warranties, safety of use with adequate technical instruction for use; suppliers - continuing source of business, adherence to trade credit obligations and timely payment for all purchases; government—good corporate citizenship with regards to duties and obligations;

unions – recognition as the negotiating agent for employees with all right and privileges; competitors-observation of the norms for competitive conduct established by society and the industry, and business sportsmanship on the part of rival; local community-provision of regular employment, fair play, reasonable portion of purchases made in the local community, interest in and support local government, support for cultural and charitable projects and provision of social health facilities and ecological friendly operations. This set of stakeholder groups vary slightly from one industry to another, therefore, Pearce and Robinson (2005) argued that companies need to identify and isolate groups of stakeholders peculiar to their interest and initiate actions that will satisfy their demands.

Relating to the argument above, Pearce and Robinson (2005) further contended that the most crucial issue faced by management when defining company mission are those relating to social responsibility, the outside stakeholders will often demand that the inside stakeholders claim should subordinate theirs since the outside stakeholders represent the wider society. They claim that issues such as pollution, disposal of solid wastes, conservation of national resources etc should take precedence in decision making. However, a broad spectrum of social responsibility continuum identifies five categories of domains within which corporate social responsibility can be demonstrated. These represent economic, legal, ethical, ecological, and discretion responsibilities (Carroll, 1991; Pearce & Robinson 2005; Branco 2007). Although Carroll's (1991) pyramid of corporate social responsibility excludes ecological remediation, it is clear that his ethical responsibility model is all embrative.

Fig. 1: Carroll's Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility



Source: Adopted from Carroll (1991)

Corporate social Responsibility Behaviour Patterns

The behaviour patterns of the firms responsibility to their stakes particularly the host community has become an area of concern in modern day business operations. This is so because the behaviour pattern demonstrated by the firm may either reveal the obstinate attitude of the firm or a pro-social responsibility culture toward its social responsibility (Jaja 2004; Omofonwom & Osa-Edoh 2008; Chikwe 2013; Igwe, 2011) in Onuoha and Obugi (2012). From a socio-behavioural point of view, it is argued in Haralambos and Heald (2006) that behaviour is rooted in attitude, attitude rooted in ideology and philosophy, therefore the overt behaviour patterns of firms in the social responsibility have their roots in the corporate ideology and philosophy. The firm's ideology and philosophy are forbearance of their overt behaviour patterns.

However, a closer and critical review of these patterns revealed three behaviour typologies. There are: the reactive social responsibility behaviour, the proactive social responsibility behaviour and the resistant social responsibility behaviour (Eketu, 2012; Hamilton & Oboreh, 2006; Ottih, 2003). The reactive social responsibility behaviour pattern represents an after-thought behaviour, particularly, when the non-responsiveness has generated some actions or comments from the host community. In a sense, such firms' reactions tend to address an apparent or overt problem demands from the host community. The proactive response behaviour represents the demonstration of the firm's foresight with respect to its social ideology within the framework of Corrol's (1991) social responsibility pyramid and Pearce and Robinson's (2005) social responsibility continuum. In this behaviour model, the social need of the host community is perceived, and provided before it becomes a source of pressure arising from host community demand. In the third category, which is the resistant behaviour pattern, the firm is seen as neither proactive nor reactive, but rather resistance to the social demands of the host community. The general view of those who argue from ethical perspective is that such behaviour option is that resistance behaviour alternative to corporate social responsibility is not only a demonstration of corporate cruelty to their host, but also a negation to ecological mutual existence and support (Kazmi, 2008; David, 2005; Hill & Jones, 2004; Post *et al.*, 1999) and contempt to the business legitimacy principle, which is the view that a company must comply with the law and conform to the expectations of its stakeholders in order to be a corporate citizen in good standing.

The Climate of Host Community Environment

Businesses operate within the cluster of factors that are not part of what they are, but which really impinge on their operations, directly or indirectly. These factors constitute the environment of business. On this, Kazmi (2008) argued that the environment of any organisation is the aggregate of all conditions, events and influences that surround and affect it. This implies that the environment is a crucial factor to every business and its understanding is important since the environment influences an organisation in multitudinous ways. The categorisation of the environmental sectors consisting of: economic, international, market, political/regulatory, social-cultural, supplier and technological (Kazmi, 2008).

However, going by the definition of the business environment given by Kazmi (2008), the host community by its current influence has largely constitutes a very critical environmental factor to business operations. The emergence of this factor particularly in the less developed parts of the world arises from the failure of government to fulfill the reason for their being. Coupled with rising growth in environmental protection activism, the host communities now have a new consciousness of carrying their destinies on their hands, and directing the way it should go. The aftermath of this consciousness by the host community is the numerous demands, litigations, peaceful and violent demonstration etc. Considering this development, the concept of the climate is used to represent the general host community characteristics and the prevailing attitude as it affects business operations (Kazmi, 2008; Urieto 1999).

The climate of the host community environment may be an opportunity or a threat, implying that it is either conducive or unconducive for operations. The perceive consequences of the host community climate as an environment of business has attracted several scholarly arguments particularly in Jaja's (2004) the trajectory threat to security model, and Hamilton and Oberh's (2006) social responsibility and business performance model. As used in the paper, the climate of the host community environment is the extent to which the firms' relationship with the host community is favourable for business operations or otherwise. Thus, a business host community environment may be favourable or unfavourable.

Sustainable Development, Corporate Social Responsibility Behaviour and the Climate of Host Community Environment

Sustainable development has becomes a buzzwords in modern day environmental management. With the

implications of the social-organisational baseline theories, business organisations have adopted the concept in the pursuit of the teleology of their being, particularly their long-run survival within the context of limited resource and almost threat ridden environment (Haralambos & Heald, 2006; Eketu, 2010; Perkins *et al.*, 2001). Sustainable development represents the process which emerges from the ideology that continual survival of organisations depends on the conscious harmony between the resource-embedded environment and the business with organisation having the tendency to renew or replace resources to reduce the impact of resource depletion.

With the foregoing in mind, the practice of corporate social responsibility squarely fits into the argument that corporate social responsibility is the corporate act of giving back to the immediate and wider community in which organisations carry out their businesses manner that is meaningful and valuable and relevant to their community (Jones, 2011). Corporate social responsibility challenges businesses to be accountable for the consequence of their actions affecting the stakeholders as they pursue traditional economic goals. In strict terms, Post *et al.* (1999) argued, with a sustainable development consciousness that, corporate social responsibility means that a corporation should be held accountable for any of its actions that affect people, their communities, and their environment.

Correspondingly, the host community as an environment of the firm appears to have assumed the role of the 'constable in prosecuting' the desired accountability. Therefore the climate of the host community may depend on behaviour pattern of the firm in sustainable development attempts through its corporate social responsibility behaviour. Considering this, our contention is this model is drawn from the hypothesized relationship between corporate social responsibility behaviour pattern and the climate of host community environment as determinant of continued survival of the firm with respect to sustainable development.

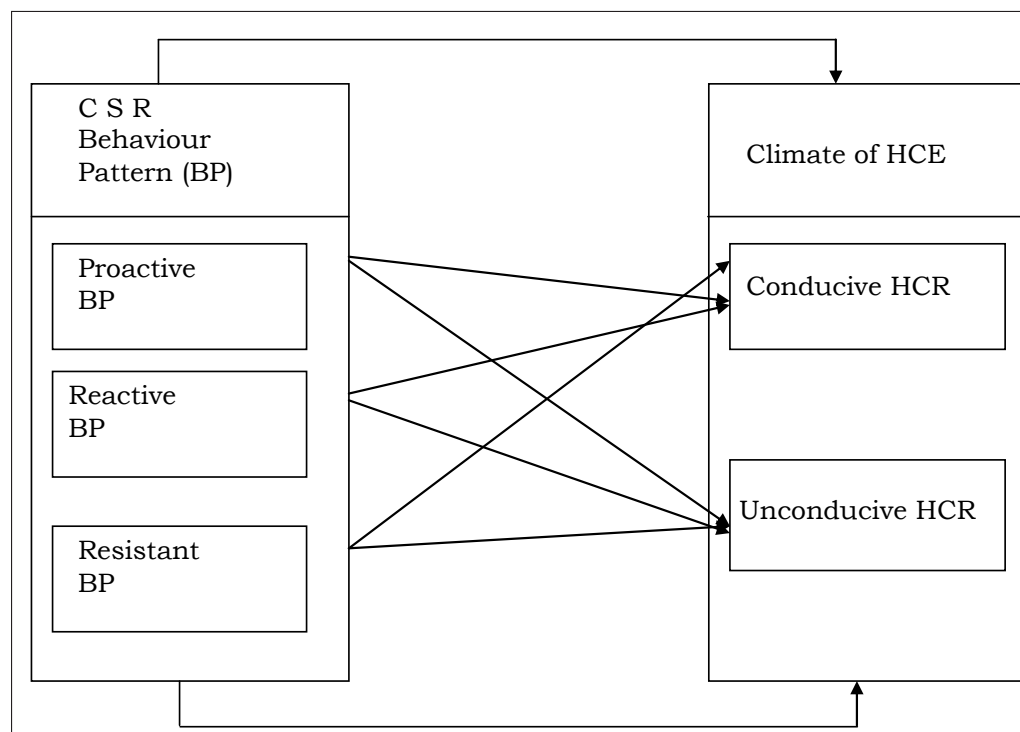
HYPOTHESES

From the foregoing, the following hypotheses were formulated as shown in Fig. 2.

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between proactive behaviour and conducive climate of host community environment.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between proactive behaviour and conducive climate of host community environment.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between reactive behaviour and conducive climate of host community environment.

Fig. 2: Conceptual Framework of CSR PB and CHE

Source: Authors' Conceptualisation

Ho4: There is no significant relationship between reactive behaviour and unconductive climate of host community environment.

Ho5: There is no significant relationship between resistant behaviour and conducive climate of host community environment.

Ho6: There is no significant relationship between resistant behaviour and unconductive climate of host community environment.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This correlational study examined the association between corporate social responsibility behaviour pattern and the climate of the host community environment. The study adopts the organisation as its unit of analysis. The research data were collected from a sample of 63 hotels selected from a population of 109 hotels. The sample size was determined from Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table (Saratakos, 2005) also adopted in Asawo (2009) and Ahiauzu and Asawo (2010). The simple random sampling method was used to select the 63 sample elements.

The content scope of the study covers theories on corporate social responsible and business environment. The survey scope covers Port Harcourt metropolis. The respondents of this study were the business managers who represent

the sample frame. Since the study has organisation as the unit of analysis, the business managers were thoughtfully considered to speak on behalf of their organisation.

The study ultimately involved 50 hotels after the data cleaning of questionnaires retrieved. Corporate social responsibility behaviour of the firm has reactive, proactive and resistance behaviour as its dimensions are measured with 12 item instrument at 4 items for each dimension.

The climate of the host community environment has conducive climate and unconductive climate as measured with 10 item instrument at 5-items for each measure. Generally, a Likert scale, ranging from (1) not at all to (5) strongly agree, was used to identify the strength of respondents opinion on the scaled items. The validity and reliability of the instrument was achieved using researchers' surrogate and Cronbach Alpha test, respectively, where 6 researchers in the relevant subject area were involved in validating the instrument. The Cronbach Alpha Test provided a minimum Alpha figure of 0.80 in all the dimensions and measures involved. The acceptability of our Alpha Coefficient was based on Nunnally (1978) and Asawo's (2009) recommended benchmark of 0.70.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The primary analysis of data involved the use of descriptive statistics particularly percentage for the demographics

and mean for the study variables. For instance 60% of respondents show that they have been in operation for at least 5 years; 46% have at least 3 branches; and 78% have at least 60 suites including swimming pool, conference hall, Internet services, sports facilities etc.

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of Study Variables

Dimension and Measures	N	Mean	Std Deviation
Reactive Behaviours	50	4.497	.300
Proactive Behaviours	50	4.058	.498
Resistant Behaviours	50	3.260	.9274
Conductive Climate	50	4.811	.203
Unconductive Climate	50	2.61	.812

Source: SPSS Output on Univariate Analysis

The univariate analysis shown on Table 1 revealed that reactive behaviour has a mean (x) of 4.478; proactive behaviour has a mean (x) of 4.058; resistant behaviour scored a mean (x) 3.260; conducive climate scored a mean (x) of 4.811; and unconductive climate score a mean (x) of 2.610. This implies that the hotels are dominantly reactive active in their social behaviour patterns, while the climate of host community environment is largely conducive.

Table 2: Corporate Social Responsibility Focus of Hotels

Focus	Frequency	Percentage%
Electricity	30	60
Road Maintenance	18	36
Sanitation Support	26	52
Schools Scholarship	10	20
Employment	44	88
Health Facilities/Programme	21	42
Gifts During Festivals	30.5	61

Use of Hotel Facilities	20	40
Others	36.5	53

Source: SPSS Output on CSR Focus

On the focus of corporate social responsibility of the respondents, employment of host community members score 86%, gifts during festivals is 61%, other supports 53%, sanitary support 52%, health facilities and programmes 42%, use of hotel facilities 40%, road maintenance 36% and schools scholarship 20%.

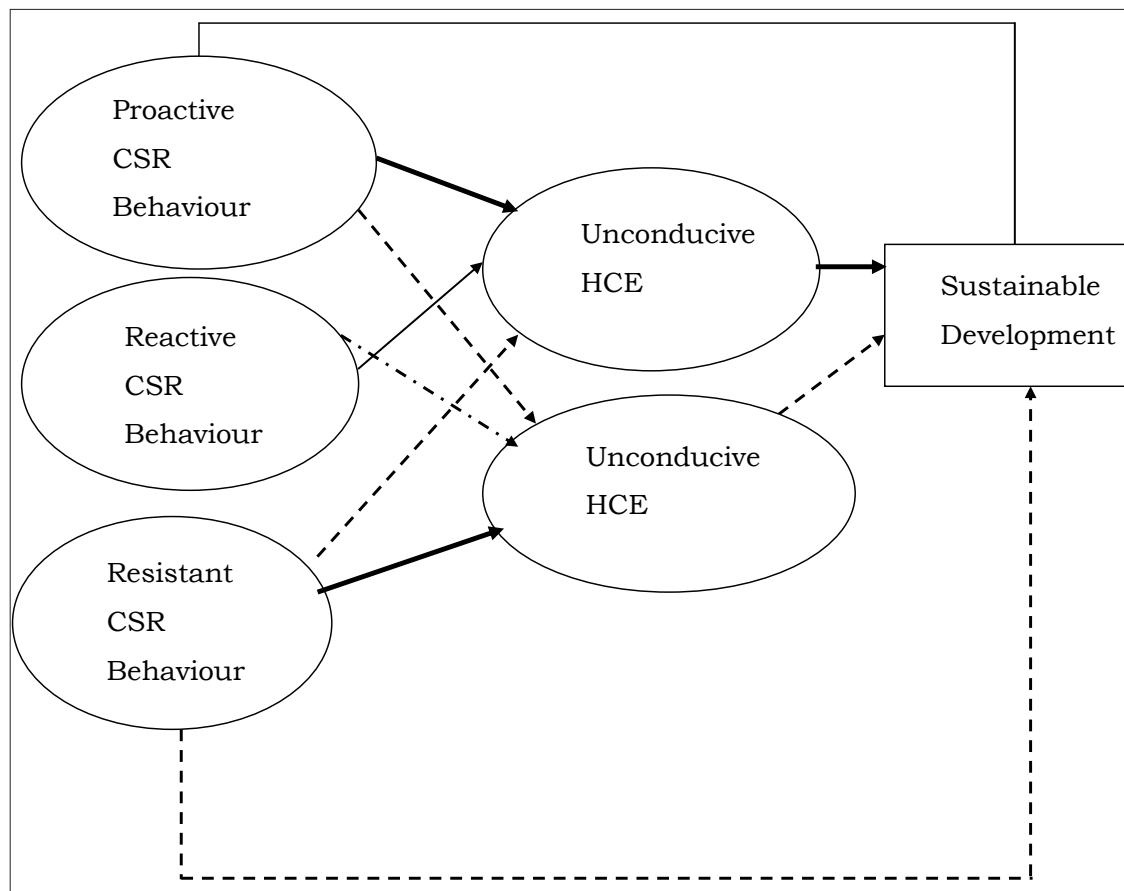
The result of the test of the hypotheses in the bivariate analysis is shown in Table 3. Reactive and proactive behaviour are significantly associated with conducive host community environment, with proactive behaviour having a highest correlation coefficient.

Hypotheses 1, 2 and 6 were rejected because their r values are $>.20$ as prescribed by Kerlinger and Lee (2000) as the minimum benchmark for accepting null hypotheses. However, hypotheses 3, 4 and 5 were accepted because the r values felt short of Kerlinger and Lee's (2000) benchmark. This means that proactive social responsibility behaviour is positively associated with conducive climate of host community environment. Also, reactive social responsibility behaviour pattern is positively associated with conducive social responsibility behaviour. However, resistant social responsibility behaviour is positively associated with unconductive climate of the host community environment. Conversely, proactive and reactive social responsibility behaviour patterns are negatively associated with conducive climate of the host community environment. The result also shows that resistant social responsibility behaviour is negatively associated with conducive climate of the community environment.

This study ultimately concerned how businesses can create favourable host community environment conducive for the operations. The circumstance examined a common characteristic of firms operating in developing countries in Africa and Asia. Thus, the significance of this is not only

Table 3: Spearman's rank Correlation Coefficient

		React B	React B	Resist B	Conductive	Unconductive
Preactive Behaviour	Spearman C.	1			.418**	-.201
	Sig (2 tailed)				.006	.015
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Proactive Behaviour	Spearman C.		1	1	.933	-.180
	Sig (2 tailed)				.000	.0211
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Resistant Behaviour	Spearman C.			1	-.210	.884
	Sig (2 tailed)				.019	.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50

Fig. 3: The Implication of CSR Behaviour Pattern on Climate of HCE

applicable to Nigeria, but also to countries in Africa and Asia.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study was intended to examine the relationship between firms social responsibility behaviour pattern and the climate of their host community environment. The study found the hotels that largely exhibit proactive behaviour and to a less extent those that show reactive social response behaviour enjoy conducive climate in the host community environment. These findings found support in the argument of Chikwe (2013) and Post *et al.* (1999) that proactiveness in social responsibility provision breeds environmental friendliness as the firm is assimilated into the institutional membership of the host environment. This is so because it has the crises preventive implication that may lead to unwarranted and avoidable losses. Although, reactive social responsibility behaviour has a positive association with conducive climate of the host community environment, the association is weak because most of the time the community has reacted aggressively in their demand for social need before the firm reacts. This may be a just a curative sometimes after

the harm. Jones (2012) argues that, it is costlier to react in such situation because of the double cost involved.

The study also found that the environment tends to be unconductive where firms show resistant social responsibility behaviour. This is so because the inability of the government to meet its social obligations for the welfare of the citizens redirected the demand of such needs to the firms. Concerning this, Kazmi (2008) argued that corporate social responsibility is at the core of strategy implementation since and disturbance in the host community environment causes serious impediment on the success of business strategy. This is because resistance to social demand by host community triggers all sorts of aggression which in most cases involves immeasurable losses (Jones 2012).

Drawing from the foregoing, the paper concludes that firms with proactive social responsibility behaviour elicit friendly and reciprocal gesture from the host community environment. This is true because in one of the firms studied, the community vigilante volunteered and prevented robbers from attacking the firm even when they were not invited. The study also concluded that the unconductive climate of host community environment is resultant from resistant social responsibility behaviour of the firm. The

unconduciveness arises from the host communities feelings of neglect, exploitation, greed, ecological degradation and pollution; which spark off violence, stealing and discord in host community relations. This found support in Jaja's (2004) threat to the trajectory of security between firms and their host communities.

This study recommended that firms should, besides being proactive, be consultative in the social responsibility behaviour to meet host community needs within their economic capacity. Also, firms should adopt the public private partnership initiation (PPP) in some mega projects as a means of getting integrated in their host environment.

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