Emerging Opportunities for NGO-Business Partnerships: Creating Business Partnerships for Igbo Women Forum in Nigeria

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There is a growing recognition that no single sector can address the scale of sustainability challenge the world faces, making the value of cross-sector collaboration inevitable. On this premise, this thesis aimed to find out if there are companies and businesses in Nigeria with whom Igbo Women Forum could form partnership and to explore what the organization could do in order to be fit for such collaboration. By using the case study method of qualitative research and through the SWOT Analysis of Igbo Women’s Forum, the researcher had been able to identify three companies with whom Igbo Women Forum could partner with, and their responses had provided a general overview into what Businesses would expect from a potential NGO partner. Furthermore, the study recommended practical suggestions on how Igbo Women Forum and other NGOs can be fit for business partnership and overcome tensions that invariably lie beneath the surface of successful collaborations.

The study highlighted the key drivers bringing NGOs and Businesses together and how this relationship can provide companies with new challenges, fresh ideas, added credibility and better reach into communities, customers and government. Finally the study also revealed the various forms which partnership can take and the values which successful collaboration can bring.

Three case companies were interviewed in the study, and they related how they had all experienced significant economic value creation as a result of their collaborations with non-profit organizations. And how the skills, resources and capacities of these non-profits had enhanced their competitiveness and increase their market share. The basis for these partnerships were critically examined and thoroughly analyzed in the light of how Igbo women forum can enter and benefit from similar kind of successful collaborations.

This thesis had revealed that the need for socio-economic development and the changing societal interests, environmental pressures and community demands are the key factors driving NGO and business partnerships. And the study also showed that a cross-sector partnership is sustained when it is built on trust, transparency, openness and honesty.

**Keywords:** Corporate Social Responsibility, Partnerships, Organizational Trust.
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1. Background

With the potentials for the private sector to solve many of the world's toughest problems, we still realize, that in spite of their great innovations and proven expertise, companies do not always redefine productivity in the value chain, neither do they singularly reconceived products and markets, nor even build their enabling environment alone. (Porter 2004, 75), quite very often, they need collaborations with local partners in their operating environment to fill in relationships, knowledge, and resource gaps. (Porter 2012, 53)

In recent years, a new form of establishing and advancing this level of partnership has emerged, and it is referred to as Business-NGO collaborations, (Werther & Chandler 2010, 46), the value of this sort of relationship goes beyond the traditional form of corporate philanthropy. It is built on an increasing focus on the possibilities of strategic relationship, yielding a mutually benefitting alliance, while combining social, environmental and economic value creation. (Lin-Hi Nick 2008, 32)

The increasing search for new resources and more effective organizational approaches is bringing NGOs and corporations together (Hopkins 2008, 65). “These alliances are also emerging as businesses increasingly reexamine their traditional philanthropic practices and seek new strategies of engagement with their local communities that will have greater corporate relevance and higher social impact”. (Lorenzen 2012, 4)

1.1 Structure of study

The primary objective of this study is to analyze how to find business partners for Igbo Women Forum in Nigeria and to investigate how this partnership can be sustained. Therefore, this study begins by examining the different drivers for creating Business-NGO partnership. And in doing this, the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility was studied as a primary factor driving partnership between businesses and NGOs. With respect to this, CSR is defined and its importance and drivers are covered as they relate to the context of developing countries.

Next, Resource dependence theory is studied, and its principles and assumptions are analyzed together with its connection with partnership building. Resource dependence theory is necessary as the resources within a company’s host communities are fundamental to the success of its operations. This is placed after the section on Corporate Social Responsibility as it is the second most important theoretical area of this study. Then, the concept of organizational trusts is studied. What it means, why it matters, how it can be built and sustained and how it impacts on how NGO and businesses can form an enduring relationship were also analyzed. After the main theories are discussed, Igbo Women Forum is then empirically examined using SWOT method of analysis.
situation of Igbo Women Forum, in order to understand better the context of the study and its relevance to the purpose of the study. The study then moves on to discuss the methods of research and analysis used. Interview and Case study method of Qualitative research are used in this study as research and analysis methods respectively, and the concept of these research methods have been discussed thoroughly.

In section that follows, the analysis of the research are presented, and the analysis of the data gathered from the interview are also presented with their connection with the theoretical study. Then, the data are analyzed and discussed, based on patterns established within the answers of the respondents, then conclusions and recommendations are then later proposed based on the information retrieved from the interviewees and the theoretical studies made, and how these information might impact the current operations of Igbo Women Forum as she re-strategies in order to be fit for partnership.

Figure 1: Scope of Study.
The objective of this thesis is to investigate if there are possible business partners for Igbo Women Forum in her operating environment and the various ways by which the partnership can be developed and sustained within her host community.

The study will be organized to investigate to what extent partnership between businesses in Nigeria and NGOs can exist, what factors may drive the partnership, how strategic the relationship can be, and to find out what reasons could possibly help the partnership to endure.

Theoretically, the thesis will relate how the concept of Resource Dependence theory affects the notion of CSR and the effect of organizational trust in managing sustainable partnership, all these analysis combined with empirical study will help to thoroughly investigate the research questions and provide insight and practical recommendation that might help Igbo Women’s Forum to access local partnership and be fit for collaboration with local businesses.

Figure 2: Purpose of the Study
1.3 Objectives of Studies and Tasks

To be able to reach the objectives of the study, the following tasks have to be accomplished;

- Empirical Study of Igbo Women Forum - With the aid of the SWOT Analysis.
- Survey of Case Companies.

1.4 Survey of the Case Companies

The case companies’ survey will be primarily centered around three significant questions. Which are;

- What are businesses looking for in an NGO partner?
- How can businesses contribute to a sustainable working environment through external cooperation with forces in their operating environment?
- How can NGOs and Businesses build an enduring relationship?

All these inquiries constitute the research questions, which will form the concrete path through which the survey will be conducted.
The thesis had been divided into six different sections. The first part has an introduction. These sections include: the objectives of the study, the research approach, the objectives of studies and tasks, and the purpose of the study.

The second part is the, theoretical background, which frames the general idea of the researcher’s theoretical competence, centered around the subjects of Corporate Social Responsibility, Resource dependence theory, and the influence of organizational trust on forging sustainable NGO-Business partnership.

The third part relates to the methodology of the study which describes how the data have been collected and the kind of method which had been used in the process of the research. This section also explains the instrument used to determine the reliability and validity of the study. The next part is the empirical study which examines the SWOT analysis and the current situation of Igbo Women Forum. This part also focuses on how theoretical framework relates with the current situation of Igbo Women’s Forum.

The final part of the research is the conclusion; which includes the general findings and recommendations that will be proposed to Igbo Women Forum in order to increase her chances for partnership and makes her better fit for the relationship.

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1.5 Theoretical approach
In this thesis, the theoretical background was divided into three parts which are Corporate Social Responsibility, Resource Dependence Theory and Organizational trust.

In the first part of the theory, the researcher will be studying theories that are based on the general idea of CSR and the various forms of it, He will also be analyzing why companies get involved in it, and will analyze How innovative CSR initiatives can be undertaken, the challenges businesses face in working with NGOs on implementing CSR initiative will also be examined, as well as How businesses and NGOs can mutually benefit from CSR partnerships and How CSR partnerships can help enhance the prospect of Global Development goals.

The second part of the theory will discuss the assumptions that constitute Resource Dependence Theory and How the theory influences the external control of a business and the broad-based assumptions of the theory on how partnership can be developed and sustained. And finally The third section will discuss the concept of Organizational Trust, its barriers and challenges and how trust can be built in a cross-sector alliance and the roles each partner can play in sustaining enduring trust.

The theories will be approached based on theoretical learning which will be designed at providing answers to the research questions and at addressing the key issues. Therefore, three main books have been selected to be studied for the research as well as other materials, and each of the books will provide an overall view to addressing the answers to each of the research questions.
2. Theoretical background

2.1 Corporate Social Responsibility

2.1.1 Defining CSR

There is no universal definition of corporate social responsibility. However, According to Geoffrey Chandler (2001), CSR is defined as “transparent business practices that are based on ethical values, compliance with legal requirements, and respect for people, communities, and the environment, which is more often conducted as series of voluntary activities undertaken by a company to operate in an economic, social and environmentally sustainable manner”.

As to the approach to implementing CSR, some researchers established that CSR can either be seen as a form of corporate self-regulation integrated into a business model which constitutes an integral part of the business strategy and corporate identity, (Werther and Chandler 2010), or it can be used as a defensive policy, being adopted by companies particularly targeted by activism. But yet, the basis for conducting responsible CSR practices often lies on a moral argument, a rational argument, or an economic argument. (Amato et. al. 2009).

In the context of developing countries, the approach to Corporate Social responsibility is often
defined by the visions which were officially established in 2000 into the Millennium Development Goals—‘a world with less poverty, hunger and disease, greater survival prospects or mothers and their infants, better educated children, equal opportunities for women, and a healthier environment’ and a world in which developed and developing countries worked in partnership for the betterment of all. (UN 2006; 3) But Unfortunately, these ambitious objectives outlined by the international community still remained far from being met in many emerging economies and developing countries today. (Werther & Chandler 2010)

2.1.2 Drivers for CSR in developing countries

Today, more and more companies are realizing that for them to stay productive, competitive, and relevant in a rapidly changing business world, they have to become more socially responsible in order to catch up with the ever evolving business world. (Werther & Chandler 2010). In the last decade, the world has increasingly seen globalization erasing national borders, and technologies speeding up time and masking distances (Hopkins 2008, 45). Confronted with this development in the corporate environment, companies yearn to increase their abilities and facilitate a better coordination and managements of their profits and risks, in order to protect the reputation of their brands and maintain the credibility of their images. (Porter 2004) Hence, because of globalization, there is also fierce competition for skilled employees, investors, and consumer loyalty. Therefore, “how a company relates with its workers, its host communities, and the marketplace can greatly contribute to the sustainability of its business success within its operating environment”. (US-AID 2002, 4)

Often times, How CSR is approached in the context of both the developed and developing world differs in their “physical manifestation”, and the drivers in this differences is how “CSR is conceived, incentivized, and practiced in emerging economies”. (Visser 2006, 480). Since Nigeria is a developing country in the global economic order, this study will be examining the approach to CSR in the context of emerging and developing economies. These approaches will be highlighted on the perspectives of ten drivers which were outlined by Wayne Visser (2006) on how CSR is conducted and perceived in developing countries.

2.1.2.1 Cultural Tradition

In the developing countries, there is a general perception that CSR is a Western invention, leaving most indigenous companies inactive players on the CSR ecosystem, (Werther & Chandler 2010). However, with the pace of globalization, a holistic approach to socially responsible business practices has been defined.

Making it possible for both indigenous and Multinational firms operating in developing countries to find their CSR activities drawing its roots strongly deep-rooted in; indigenous cultural traditions of philanthropy, the need for business ethics, and community embeddedness (Visser 2006).
Drawing on history, some of the cultural traditions driving CSR activities can be traced back to ancient times, and as far back as thousands of years, when mainstream and indigenous religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity condemned illegal business practices as unethical, urging their devotees and faithful to renounce any tendencies of illegalities in businesses in order that they maintain a good standing with their deities. And weaving these doctrines as a core ideology of their religious theologies. (Clifford 2008)

In a similar context, the Hindu statesman and philosopher who wrote a classic treaty on polity stated that the devotees of Hinduism must extol business practices that are based on moral principles and it should be strongly advocated and preached among the faithful. Within the framework of practices which are outlined in the philosophy of their religious creed. (Clifford 2008, 43). However, built in the Hindu theology is the tradition of self help, philanthropy, assistance to the orphans, solidarity with the disabled and the support for mutual aid societies and civil organizations advocating for caring, nourishing and advancing the betterment of human welfare.

Logsdon et al.’s (2006) also took us back in time, reminding us that ‘varied traditions of community self-help and solidarity stretch back to the values of the pre-Hispanic cultures, and included the mutual aid societies, trade unions and professional associations that emerged in the 19th and early 20th centuries’, (Werther and Chandler 2010), and this truth is consistent with the fact that CSR is not new in Mexico, as opposed to a former believe that CSR is brought to Mexico by US firms operating in the local communities. (Hopkins 2008)

In examining the modern applications of CSR and the practices of its physical manifestation, Vives (2006) carried out a survey of over 1,300 small and medium-sized enterprises in Latin America, and He finds out that the religious beliefs of people’s of this region and their spiritual philosophy are one of the major motivations for CSR.

Similarly, Gordson (2004) showed how Buddhist traditions, beliefs and practices in Asia are strongly connected with the manifestations of their CSR activities. In Nigeria (Amaechi 2006) stated that socio-cultural influences- which often affects one’s emotions, opinions, or behaviors like communalism, ethnic religious beliefs, and charitable traditions played a vital role in the local implementation of socially responsible business practices in the country.

Visser (2005) also suggested that the value-based traditional philosophy of African humanism (ubuntu)- which focuses on people’s allegiances and relations with each other is what constructs much of the modern, inclusive and broad-based approaches to CSR on the continent of Africa. Ubuntu is a classical African philosophy or worldview which is built on five characteristics: “extroverted communities, socialization of prosperity, redemption, deference to hierarchy and humanism”. (Melo 2013, 43)
These ideologies defines how people treat strangers and members of their community, it also impacts on how they deal with the planet, and how they manage people with “errant, deviant and unruly” behaviors of the community. (Desmond 1999)

2.1.2.2 Political Reform

CSR in developing countries cannot be separated from the waves of the socio-political reform process flourishing in the regions, and which often drives business behavior towards encompassing both social and ethical issues. De Oliveira (2006) argues that the political and social and economic reform process in Latin America which focuses on the advancement of democracy, liberalization, free trade, and privatization since the 1980s, have shifted the role of businesses towards taking greater responsibility for social and environmental issues.

In South Africa, the political transition towards more democratic governance and the institutionalization of various civil society organizations have helped to address some of the injustices of the past. Like apartheid and ethnic marginalization, and which have perhaps being funded through companies’ CSR budget. However, the need to practice improved corporate governance, have included collective business action for social improvement, black economic empowerment, broad-based socio-economic development, transparent preferential procurement, and labor law legislative reform in South Africa between 1994 and 2004 which all had a direct bearing on CSR. (Republic of South Africa 2004)

Likewise, more recently, the goal towards EU membership has acted as a primary factor for many companies in Central and Eastern European countries to focus on sustainable CSR practices, as this represents a major requirement towards their EU membership ratification of the final accession treaty and generally acknowledged to represent good practice amongst existing member states in the EU (European Parliament 2012).

2.1.2.3 Socio-economic Priorities

There is a strong argument that CSR in developing countries is most directly affected by the socio-economic environment in which firms operate and the underlying development priorities this brings. (Porter 2004)

For example in Nigeria, It is argued that CSR is often designed at addressing the socio-economic development challenges of the country, which includes” poverty alleviation, healthcare provision, infrastructure development, education, and improvement in literacy population” (UNESCO 2002). Although this might stand in sharp contrast to many Western CSR priorities which focuses on consumer protection, fair trade, green marketing, climate change concerns, and other socially responsible investments (Visser 2006). But However, as diverged as CSR priorities may seem to be from country to country, It is perhaps productive to customize CSR strategies to respond to prevailing social and environmental problems as
opposed to an exportation of practices which might often prove counter-productive and perhaps have little effect on the ailing circumstances of the local population. Hence locally developed CSR approaches addressing core socio-economic priorities should be a top preference for developing CSR in developing countries. (Samuelson 2009).

Michael Spicer, a former senior executive in a mining conglomerate argued that when CSR is shaped by the socio-economic priorities of a country or region, it is simply a good business approach, and He furthermore, suggested that firms operating in developing countries should be actively involved in shaping the socio-economic and political landscape of their host countries in order to create an operating environment which is conducive for their businesses (Middleton, 2005). A socially and morally responsible case in point in this scenario is the response to the socio-economic challenge of HIV/AIDS in Johannesburg (Brennan and Baines, 2006).

Several studies had also established that humans are using natural resources at a rate which might perhaps jeopardize the livelihoods of future generations and if this trend continues, the essentials needs which are necessary for the welfare of future generations will be threatened and vulnerable to disappearance (Hopkins 2008). Hence, sustainability demands that society designs activities which will meet human needs and still preserve the life support systems of the planet, which then includes, sustainable waste recycling, utilization of renewable energy, and sustainable material supplies, Hence, the approach to understanding the existence of problems, identifying their origins and solving them is critical to the business case for CSR. However it remains in the domain of businesses to consider the issues of sustainable development in all of their practices which are associated with the production, use, and management of resource (United Nations, 1987).

2.1.2.4 Governance Gaps

Leadership is increasingly being demonstrated by corporations in regions where government legislations and regulatory initiatives are inadequate in effectively capturing all the issues that should be addressed by CSR. Hence, CSR can offer the flexibility and incentive for firms to act in advance of regulations, or in areas where regulations seem unlikely. (Hawken and Lovins 1999)

This had made CSR to be perceived as a way to fill ‘governance gaps’ which had been abandoned by weak, corrupt, or under-resourced governments that fail to adequately provide various social amenities such as (housing, roads, electricity, health care, education, etc.). (UNDP 2006)

This had been seen as a responsibly sustainable approach towards supporting the development of countries with weak institutions and poor governance. Therefore when development efforts are undertaken by the private sectors be it businesses or other organizations in the civil society, more good will be achieved as the priority shifts away from the complexities of political interest to the need to achieve societal good.
Hence, as the government of many developing countries fall short of delivering good governance to their masses and woefully fail to improve their citizen’s living conditions, advocates of CSR and bottom of the pyramid strategies had argued that companies can step in to assume their roles in a responsible manner. (Visser 2006)

Such proponents of CSR, had seen this development as a civil ‘alternative to government’ (Werther and Chandler 2010) and which is ‘frequently advocated as a peaceful means of fling gaps in governance that have arisen as a result of liberal economic globalization, proliferation of free trade, open markets, privatization and deregulation . (Porter 2004). In 2000, A survey which was conducted by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD 2000) aptly illustrated this perspective stating that: “when asked how CSR should be defined, The majority of Ghanaians simply stressed that ‘building local capacity’ and ‘filling in when government falls short’.

Jeremy Moon (2002) argued that this development constitutes a part of a broader political shift towards ‘new governance’ approaches, whereby governments seek to share responsibilities with external parties in a bid to developing new modes of delivering the dividends of democracy to the people, whether as a result of overload, fewer availability of national resources, or of a view that they do not have a monopoly of solutions for addressing the broader societal problems. And this often comes by in the form of social partnerships with non-profit and for-profit, this is sometimes termed as a form of ‘civic republicanism’ mode. (Moon 2002)

In addition to participating in governance as an alternative to solving the wider societal problems either through privatization or welfare reform, Matten and Crane (2005) also suggested that companies can enter “the arena of citizenship where government has not as yet administered citizenship rights”. For example, they can step in to improve citizens’ working conditions, they can facilitate civil dialogue to define, set and administer standards for living wages, and even institute schemes for financing children’s education in the absence of legislation requiring this.

As good as this approach may seem to have been, It also attracts a diverse range of opposing views from a number of critics. Hamann et al. (2005) argued that CSR is an inadequate response to these governance gaps and that more proactive involvement towards moving local governance towards accountability, transparency, checks and balances and broad-based economic inclusiveness is more necessary. Blowfield and Frynas (2005) also questioned If CSR should really be a vehicle gearing towards better national regulation in developing countries or a permanent project designed to overcome the weaknesses of weak institutions and reform their welfare mechanisms, that is, addressing the limitations of the nation-state in regulating a global economy?.
Serious concerns were also raised about the dependencies and confusion this governance gap might attempt to create, especially in places where communities now become reliant for their social services on companies whose primary accountability is to their shareholders. (Werther and Chandler 2010). This had resulted in multinationals completely moving elsewhere if their position dictates so, and there is also the issue of perceived complicity between governments and companies in defining the roles, limitations and responsibilities of each party, as Shell experienced in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria (Amaechi, 2006).

2.1.2.5 Crisis Response

A wide range of crises which are peculiar to developing countries often have the effect of catalyzing CSR responses. (Porter 2004) These crises often come in different modes be it economic, social, environmental, health-related, or industrial. For example, Newell (2005) notes that the economic crisis in Argentina between 2001 and 2002 triggered a major turning point in CSR approaches, triggering nation-wide debates about the role of business in poverty alleviation. Others see climate change and HIV/AIDS (Dunfee, 2006) as crises that are shaping CSR approaches in developing countries.

Disasters which often requires quick responses and immediate impact are also eliciting CSR responses, and especially of the philanthropic kind. For example, the corporate responses to the 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake tsunami in Asia is a classic case in point as corporate donations became heavily relied upon for relief and humanitarian assistance (Fernando, 2007).

In other cases, it could be industrial accidents which may create pressure for CSR. Examples include the allegations and controversies surrounding the Union Carbide’s response to the 1984 Bhopal gas disaster in India (Shrivastava, 1995) and Shell’s position to the hanging of human rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight associates in Nigeria in 1995 (Wheeler et al., 1996).

2.1.2.6 Market Access

A sharp contrast to socio-economic priorities driver is to see these unfilled human needs as an untapped market. (Hopkins 2008). This notion underlies the evolution of the ever increasing literature and research on the on ‘bottom of the pyramid’ strategies, which refer to business models which focuses on turning the four billion poor people in the world into consumers (Prahalad and Hammond, 2002). And as we have previously observed, this straying of business into the development arena is not without its critics or problems, as many advocates of fair business practices had equally stated that ethical concerns are often ignored by MNCs operating in the regions of the developing countries, which often amount to massive environmental degradation, inhumane exploitation of resources, several human right abuse cases and many more (Hardcourt, 2004).
CSR had also been identified as the key driver for the initiative of companies in developing countries who are aspiring to access entrance into the international marketplace of the developed world. For example, It was identified by Mashow (2006) that competitive advantage in the global markets stands as one of the key factors for CSR involvement in Central and Eastern Europe and Asia. On the other hand, a recent survey conducted by Visser (2006) on CSR reporting among the top companies in Latin America found that businesses that have opened up international market were almost five times more likely to engage in CSR than companies that sell products regionally or locally.

This is especially more important as an increasing number of companies from developing countries are going global and aspiring to comply with international stock market listing requirements and can begin trading on the foreign exchange market, which often times includes various forms of financial and non-financial reporting and CSR compliance standards (Visser, 2005a).

This is highlighted in Jeremy Moon (2005) study of seven countries in Asia, which found that there is a strong relationship between the desire to go global, either in terms of international sales or foreign ownership, and compliance with CSR reporting. CSR is also sometimes approached on the basis of forging partnership with the aim of creating and developing new and viable markets (Hopkins 2008).

A case in point is the Partnership agreement between AED/Mark and Exxon Mobil which was forged on the basis of developing a feasible market for the sales of insecticide-treated mosquito nets in Africa, while also ensuring that they enhance the chances of pregnant women’s access to these nets, through the delivery of targeted subsidy programmes (Diara et al., 2004). A Similar partnership approach was adopted by ABB in 2004 to deliver a rural electrification project in Tanzania (Egels 2005).

2.1.2.7 International Standardization

Citizens in many countries are increasingly making it clear that corporations should meet the same high standards of social and environmental care defined by international laws, regardless of where they operate. Therefore, in the CSR context, firms are increasingly responding to local concerns in building a sense of community and shared approach to common problems (Anderson, 2006).

Despite the controversies surrounding the CSR mandate of the Western world on the global South, there is ample evidences these codes and standards imposed on global firms are still the key driver for CSR in developing countries (Werhter and Chandler 2010). Recent surveys of CSR practices in emerging markets had indicated a growing adoption rates of ISO 14001 and the Global Reporting Initiative’s Sustainability Reporting Guidelines from firms operating in the developing countries. (Baskin 2006)
According to Doland and Opondo (2005), CSR Codes are often times adopted as a standardization requirement to sectors in which developing countries have a comparative advantage, such as in cotton, cocoa and textiles productions (Kaufman et al., 2004), as well as to addressing social issues which are more prevalent in developing countries, such as child labor, child trafficking, women and gender equality (Prieto-Carron, 2004).

Also, as a result of International regulations regarding cross-border trade, and the economic globalization of supply chains, multinational firms tends to be responding more swiftly to issues related to their CSR performances, (Werther and Chandler 2010). With most associated with human resource management practices, environmental protection, human health and workplace safety measures, among other things. Hence, we see CSR shaping how businesses perceive and respond to labor conditions, local communities and economies, and actively taking proactive steps to ensure that businesses are involved in the maintenance and building of public good. And this had proven to be particularly true in the case of export-oriented firms in emerging economies (Matten and Crane 2005).

Various supranational institutions which includes governments and intergovernmental bodies, such as the UN, the European Union, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Economic Co-operation organization and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have as well developed various compacts, directives, agreements, legislative acts, declarations, treaties, policies, guidelines, principles and other instruments that provide companies of different sizes and across all sectors with norms that are deemed as acceptable behavior and ethical business practices. (Kimmo 2004) Therefore, business approaches to CSR have been found to be strongly influenced by these instruments which in effect solve local issues related to human rights, the environment and anti-corruption (Schuman 1948).

2.1.2.8 Investment Incentives

It is unarguable that offshore corporate investments from multinational companies into emerging markets is strongly linked to a support for the social welfare conditions of the developing countries (Gabriel, 1972), and this often takes place in the form of foreign direct investment which of recent had laid the foundation for an unprecedented expansion of international production by transnational corporations. This form of investment is referred to as socially responsible Investment and it is increasingly becoming a major driver for CSR in developing countries. As one indicator of this, IMF (1999) noted that “this investment have an estimated $3.4 trillion in about 449,000 foreign affiliates throughout the world, and The value of sales by these foreign affiliates has increased more rapidly than that of foreign trade (world exports), reaching an estimated $9.5 billion”.

In some developing countries, the trend in Socially responsible investment (SRI) is well documented. Like in South Africa (AICC, 2002) which had introduced more than 20 SRI funds
nationally with the aim of tracking companies’ social, ethical, and environmental performance (Visser, 2005a) and strongly ensuring that companies are not driven by just profits alone, but by future returns which are dependent on how the investment decisions responsibly impact on the society. According to a research by UNISA- The Centre for Corporate Citizenship in South Africa (2009), the size of the South African SRI market in 2001 stood at 1.55% of the total investment market. While in May 2004, the Johannesburg Securities Exchange launched its own tradable SRI Index, an unusual development in an emerging economy and making it the first of its kind in an emerging market (Sonnenberg et al., 2004). However, a similar initiative had recently been emulated in Brazil.

In reports which provide a comprehensive overview of SRI published by the International Finance Corporation (2003), It examines how the flow of private capital to socially and environmentally sustainable business activity in the developing world is being driven by an attention to global sustainability issues. The SRI sustainability report also showed how corporate behavior towards SRI activities is been largely influenced by government actions and the work of advocacy group. Furthermore, Goyal (2004) argued that CSR may serve as a drive for emerging economies seeking to assess the opportunities for foreign direct investment into their economy.

2.1.2.9 Stakeholder Activism

When there is a lack of governmental regulations over the social, ethical, and environmental performances of companies in developing countries, advocacy and activism by stakeholder groups tends to be the major driver for obligatory CSR activities. (Porter 2004).

Lund-Thomsen (2004), described this development as the result of chaotic response which often occurs between local companies and their host communities over the need to restrict the effect of social and environmental hazards on the local populace, which are often ignored as a result of limited government oversight and inadequate monitoring of business activities. (p.107).

A large body of reports highlighting serious abuses and high-profile breaches of corporate ethics resulting in damage to employees, shareholders, communities or the environment—as well as share price—have contributed to heightened public mistrust of corporations. (Porter). In most cases, A CSR approach often seems to be the only feasible and practical option which can help to improve corporate governance, increase transparency, enhance accountability and facilitate corporate adherence to internationally defined ethical standards. (Stat Oil, 2009).

According to Jenkins (2005), In developing countries, there are three major stakeholder groups which represent the most powerful voices for activism and social advocacy, and, they include; trade unions, international NGOs and business associations.
These three groups often combine their synergies, pull their resources together with their expertise and also intensify their cooperation with local NGOs to provide a cluster of support for facilitating effective activism aimed at obligating companies to conduct socially responsible businesses. Often times, they might not always be well organized and orderly coordinated, but they still represent a strong voice for CSR and make effective local impact in their group action towards effecting a change. (Werther and Chandler 2010). Of major importance for their work is the coverage of the media in publicizing their wide range of activities from writing letters, rallies, street marches, strikes, sit-ins, and hunger strikes to organized form of boycotts (Vivarta and Canela, 2006).

In developing countries, there are various forms in which Stakeholder activism are often being conducted. According to Newell (2001), these forms can include; civil regulation, litigation against companies, and international legal instruments. The most commonly adopted form of them all is civil regulation which Bendell and Murphy (1999) describes as “pressures exerted by processes in civil society to persuade, or even compel organisations to act differently in relation to social and environmental concerns”. They further stated that this is done so that Companies won’t be just ‘morally and legally acceptable, but also popularly acceptable’ (Fombrun 1997). And this popular acceptability is often referred to as the issuance of social license and which can indirectly be prescribed through mechanisms offered in the law and the economy, making them adhere by certain behaviors and which often times supersede those required by the state. In effect, they are constantly being mandated by their host communities to meet peculiar local demands which may be unpopular but will result in social good and enable them operate in a business-friendly environment.

Several examples of civil regulation abound in developing countries, In Nigeria, they are constantly being demonstrated through community groups pressuring companies to uphold the constitutional rights of citizens, especially more vital when those rights have been breached through working hours, employee wages, deteriorating working conditions and others. Judicial cases between 1994 and 2004 (Amaechi 2006) suggest that, despite the lack of capacity and resources by the locals to facilitate effective activism, civil regulation tends to be an effective strategy, and doing this had also inspired CSR activities.

Businesses are as well recognizing that an effective CSR performance can reduce the risk of disruptions, minimize exposure to litigations, generate new opportunities, drive innovations, enhance brand image and heighten company’s reputation, while still improving efficiency. (Nat Cap Solutions 2012)

2.1.2.10 Supply Chain

Amongst small and medium sized companies in developing countries, another critical driver for their CSR approach are requirements which are being imposed on them by the multinationals
connected to their supply chains. Blowfield (2003, 2004) stated that this trend was encouraged through various ethical trading initiatives (Blowfield, 2003, 2004), which resulted in the growth of fair trade auditing and labelling schemes for agricultural products sourced in developing countries (Dolan and Opondo, 2005). Accusations of demeaning labor conditions and several human right abuses in several high profile multinational supply chains in the manufacturing sectors became a significant factor for increased attention to CSR requirements (Amaechi 2006).

In responding to these cases of abuses and infringement on employee rights, certifiable standards like SA 8000 had been developed, becoming one of the world’s first auditable social certification standards for decent workplaces and across all industrial sectors (Social Accountability Initiative 2008) which has now become internationally adopted as a mechanism to screen SMEs for multinationals in selecting their suppliers in developing countries (Kolk 2002) Other changes have included sector-based initiatives which had enhanced the sustainability of forestry and Agricultural fishing practices across sub-Saharan west African countries.
2.2 Resource Dependence Theory

2.2.1 Resource Dependence Theory definition

Two assumptions underlies the studies constituting the resource dependence theory. Firstly, that organizations are assumed to be comprised of internal and external forces and secondly, that the environment where an organization operates is assumed to contain scarce and valued resources essential to the organization’s survival (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978).

Basically, Resource dependence theory (RDT) is the study of how the external resources of organizations affect the behavior of the organization. Resource dependence theory is perhaps an highly comprehensive theory in the scope of its approach to organizations, as it combines the capacity of power within an organization with a theory of how the organization seek to manage its environments. This theory has an expansive influence across a number of social science fields spreading from management and sociology to education, health care, public policy, and other cognate. (Davis and Cobb 2010)

The theory proposes that actors lacking the essential resources in their business environment will seek to establish relationships with others in order to obtain the needed resources.(Hillman, Withers and Collins 2009). Organizations will also attempt to adjust their dependence relationships by minimizing their own dependence or by increasing other organizations’ dependence on them. Within this perspective, organizations are perceived as coalitions alerting their structure and patterns of behavior to acquire and maintain the external resources needed (Ulrich and Barney, 1984).

Hence, the basic argument of resource dependence theory can be summarized as follows; Organizations depend on critical and important resources. These resources ultimately originate from other organizations in its environment. The environment, to a considerable extent, contains other organizations which influence its actions and decisions through the power of their resource capability. Hence, the resources one organization needs are thus often in the hand of other organizations, making these resources a basis of power. Hence, strongly linking environment, organizations, organizational decisions and actions.
2.2.2 Dependence through partnerships

There have been various descriptions attempting to define a partnership especially in the context of corporate-NGO relationship. But the general consensus in many literatures is that partnership is generally the connection of two sectors which combines different resources to achieve a common goal (Googins and Rochlin, 2000). However, Jamali & Keshishian (2009: 279) define partnerships as: “a sort of collaboration between two or more parties aimed at pursuing common goals, while leveraging joint resources and capitalizing on the respective competences and strengths of both partners.”

Stanley C. Gault further defined Partnership as a joint agreement between two or more parties in which all participants involved agree to work together and create relationship with the aim of “achieving a common purpose and undertake a specific task with a defined mission while sharing risks, responsibilities, resources, competencies and benefits”. (Gault 2011)

2.2.3 Types of partnerships

Partnerships between corporations and NGOs may vary a lot depending on their underlying rationale, and as with any other organizational forms, they are often dynamic and may progressively evolve with time (Austin, 2007).
In the academic world, there is not a definite consensus about the different forms of it. Some researcher mentions three different types of partnerships, from philanthropic to integrative (Austin, 2000). While Googins and Rochlin also uses three different types but does not include the philanthropic partnership in their research (Googins and Rochlin, 2000) and others take four different types of partnerships into account (Neergaard, Jensen and Pedersen, 2009). Below is an explanation of the four different types of partnerships which might exist in the context of corporate-NGO partnerships.

2.2.3.1 Philanthropic partnerships

Classifying philanthropic partnerships as a form of partnership relationship has raised considerable number of questions in the academic community (Googins and Rochlin, 2000), In the context of developing countries, Philanthropy is always often involved when NGOs are reaching out to businesses for partnership, and therefore It has become the first stage from where the partnership can develop into more advanced forms of collaboration (Austin, 2007)

In a philanthropic partnership the corporation donates money, products or services to the partnering NGO. This is a one-way exchange of resources from the company to the NGO and the interaction between the parties is limited (Neergaard, Jensen and Pedersen, 2009).

Such low-level engagement relationships are the most common, and even though the size of denotations may not insignificant, it is generally not critical to either party (Austin 2007). It has only a peripheral connection to the company’s business and its strategic value can at most be defined as modest (Jamali and Keshishian, 2009).

2.2.3.2 Partnerships of reciprocal exchange

This kind of partnership is transactional in nature, and It is usually formed when there is an explicit or implicit contract that partners have agreed on as a means for exchanging of goods or services (Googins and Rochlin 2000). This kind of partnership is the sort which accommodates relationships associated with marketing or promotional activities between a company and an NGO. In essence, making it possible for companies to use the NGO’s logo in their marketing activities in reciprocal exchange of donations. This result of this alliance is ultimately measured by the sales volume around this time period (Jensen and Pedersen, 2009). This kind of partnership is perhaps characterized with stronger and active partnership engagement, with a value flow that is more reciprocal in its approach. (Austin, 2000)

2.2.3.3 Independent value creation partnerships

In this partnership, each partner has individual goals, and these goals are often times achieved by working together to generate the desired value and which often requires a lot bigger effort from the parties involved than the other two previous partnership types (Googins and Rochlin, 2000).
One way this could be done is by donating the company’s employees’ working hours to the NGO, and thereby gaining more motivated employees and improving the image of the company. Another way is to work with an NGO in order to ensure that the suppliers of the company fulfill the code of conduct demanded by the company; such a partnership contributes to the fulfillment of each partner’s individual goals, but with different kinds of results (Jensen and Pedersen, 2009).

2.2.3.4 Strategic Partnership

Lorenzen (2012) mentioned that in the cross-sector alliance theory, this partnership stage is also defined as “the integrative stage” (Austin, 2000) or “symbiotic value creation relationships” (Googins and Rochlin, 2000). Whereas a philanthropic partnership is considered the first stage of cross-sector collaboration, a strategic partnership is considered the most advanced and most facetted form of corporate-NGO collaboration and thus the one with the highest potential for mutual value creation (Austin, 2000, Neergaard, Jensen and Pedersen, 2009).

Strategic partnership creates a much more reliant and dependant relationship between the parties involved, in which values are created through a mutual exchange of ideas, resources and efforts (Googins and Rochlin 2000).

In this case, the criteria for success may often be overlapping and protruding, making strategic relationship a very complex one and heavily subjected to extensive negotiation. (Neergaard, Jensen and Pedersen 2009). However, the partnership is defined with activities with the organizations’ overall strategy and mutually evolving personal interactions (Austin, 2010). The partnership cases investigated in this thesis belong to the strategic partnership definition.

2.3 Organizational Trust

2.3.1 Defining Trust

According to Merriam Webster dictionary “Trust is the assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something”. Trust is fundamental to any organization—especially a successful one. According to Dietz and Gillespie (2013) without trust, life for any organization becomes much more difficult. Everything it says or does will be called into question. People will be suspicious of its motives. Affecting its performance and impacting on the degree of its transparency with other organizations, an organization divorced of trust will find its partners concealing vital information from it and affecting the smooth running of their relationship. Hence, Dietz and Gillespie (2013) further added that trust is not a soft issue as the lack of it can strongly damage the smooth functioning of an organization that depends on the resources in its external environment in order to operate successfully, Therefore trust is a hard issue. It is a legitimate and significant asset, an economic driver, a performance enhancer; It fundamentally underpins an organization’s license to operate.
2.3.2 Organizational Trust

Varied definitions of trust have been proposed in different organizational behavior literatures, but in general, they all refer to similar, hypothetical characteristics of how humans behave within an organization. Hence, Three descriptions of trust have been proposed: “The belief in the integrity, character, and ability of a leader (Wagnalls 1985). “Reciprocal faith in one’s intentions and behaviors. (Kinicki 1998) “A confidant reliance on the integrity, honesty, or justice of another.” (Dirks and Ferrin 2002, 628).

A culture of Integrity, character, ability, faith, reliability, honesty, and justice are strong and resourceful standards to build in the modern workplace. Yet, it is these high standards that create a culture of organizational trust. The term organizational trust can be used in several ways. One form of trust is best described by (Solomon and Florres, 2003) as inter-organizational trust, or the trust between two organizations. Hence, building and maintaining a culture of trustworthiness and inculcating it as an integral part of an organizational conduct is a formidable challenge.

On the other hand, getting it wrong can negatively impact stakeholders’ confidence, including that of employees, and also undermine the reputation of the organization. Hence according to Greenberg and Baron (2003), Understanding and managing trust - how it is built, maintained and sustained - are critical competencies for any organization, and particularly for those that values their ethical principles and take commitments and confidence seriously. Therefore if an organization desired to be considered as one that takes ethics seriously, it will need to be trustworthy and to nurture trustworthiness in its business dealings. With these and the principles of ethical values, the organization can sustain its business relationship.

2.3.3 Building trust in NGO

To build sustainable trust, NGOs are encouraged to adopt codes of conduct on two counts. On the first count, this can serve as a necessary defense against criticisms implying that NGOs are secretive, not transparent about sources of funds, have less than rigorous management procedures and practices and that there is a lack of democratic processes within its governance structure. On a more positive side, when NGOs establish high standards of ethical behavior both in corporate governance and financial transparency, then these codes of conduct would serve as the pillar sustaining this strongly installed values and giving the NGOs greater credibility and authority in their activities.

Hence, These Codes of Conduct, like most professional codes, is a voluntary one. Which includes ten principal points of fundamental principle which all NGOs should abide by in their approach to humanitarian missions. And according to IFRC (2012), these conducts are;

- Ensuring that humanitarian imperative comes first
- Ensuring that missions are carried out regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipient
• Ensuring that resources are not being used to further a particular political or religious interest.
• Ensuring that they do not act as instruments of government foreign policy.
• Respecting local culture and customs and abiding by their norms.
• Building response on local capacities.
• Involving programme beneficiaries in the management of resources.
• Humanitarian support should be shaped to reduce future vulnerabilities while meeting current basic needs.
• Maintaining high level of accountability.
• In their information, publicity and advertising activities, recognizing disaster victims as dignified human beings, not hopeless objects.

These codes are self-policing, they are neither imposed nor enforced by any authority, as there are yet no legally binding interventions which possess the mandate to sanction or enforced them on NGOs. Hence, The Code of Conduct is a private mechanism which NGOs adopt to monitor its own standards, access their performance and evaluate the outcome of their activities.

2.3.4 Origins and model of trust

Trusts take its root from the eleventh century British Crusade, when the English knights left their manors and estates in the care of trusted friends for safekeeping while themselves away on crusade. (Fidelity Corporate Services 1994) And Since then, It has been used throughout history especially for estate planning and asset protection. On this account, Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) suggests that three major factors determine the composition of organizational trust and they include: The characteristics of the trustor, The characteristics of the trustee, and the perceived risk. The potential confidence of the trustor and the traits of trustworthiness that the trustee possesses often influence the current level of trust. The characteristics of the trustor are therefore presented as the ability of the trustor to trust. Therefore, as these abilities vary from person to person, some individuals appear to be more trusting than others and this is demonstrated in their level of cooperation, confidence and their degree of predictability. (Bateson and Gambetta 1988).

2.3.5 Barriers to Building a culture of organizational Trust

Fundamental to the perceptions of disappointment and breaches of trust is the behavior of an organization’s employees, policies, and practices may largely contribute to the perceptions of trust in a relationship. According to The Trusted Leader, Galford and Seibold (2002) listed several factors that could be responsible for hindering the culture of trusts in an organization These factors include:

• Employees with personal agendas and needs for promotion, power, and recognition which do not align with the organization’s strategies.
• Employees with volatile personalities that reflect a need for vengeance.
• Employees who intentionally clutter communication channels.
- Employees who are incompetent or perceive their co-workers or management to be incompetent.
- An organizational environment with a history of underperformance, complex situations, numerous reorganizations, or management changes.
- Organizations with inflexible or inconsistent organizational policies and standards. (Starnes et. al., 2005).

However, only with strong leadership could an organization be able to overcome these barriers and make amendments to their established practices in order that they can re-develop the culture of organizational trust.

2.3.6 Assessing organizational Trust

Occasionally, leaders should assess and review the current level of trust within their organization and beginning with the top-tier of the organizational hierarchy - the leadership. This made Kouzes and Posner (2010) outline four questions which leaders could use to examine the traits and level of trustworthiness in them. As a leader: “Is my behavior predictable or erratic? Do I communicate clearly or carelessly? Do I treat promises seriously or lightly? Am I forthright or dishonest?”.

On the other hand, the level of employees’ trust can be measured with the following questions: This measurement were created by Gabarro and Athos (1976), Do my employees often manifest a quality of high integrity?, Do my employees often treat me in a consistent and predictable fashion? Do I often trust that my employees’ motives and intentions are good?, Do my employees often treat me fairly? Are my employees always open and upfront to me?.

2.3.7 Leading a culture of organizational Trust

A high culture of trust is essential for adapting to the sea of change which an organization occasionally experience in its business operations, and especially more so when these changes are vital to how the organization improves in its dealings with clients and other external parties. Den Hartog (2003) recommended ten helpful suggestions which leaders may find useful in developing and maintaining a culture of sustainable and authentic trust:

- Practice humane leadership.
- Ensure employees know you are aware of, sensitive to, and understanding of their individual feelings, thoughts, and experiences.
- Assure them promises will be kept, confidences maintained, and sensitive information handled judiciously.
- Be a paragon of trustworthiness.
- Be honest by saying what will be done, act with integrity by doing what was said will be done, and be credible by following through with commitments.
• Be willing to acknowledge, accept responsibility for, and repair perceived breaches or betrayals of trust with employees.
• Develop, communicate, and apply organizational vision, mission, and values statements to ensure compatible beliefs and a shared focus on the work at hand.
• Incorporate trust objectives into the organizational strategic plan. Determine if organizational policies, procedures, and rules are applied consistently and equitably, and send the message that employees can be trusted. (Starnes, Truhon, McCarthy 2005).

Dr. W. Edwards Deming - The Famous American statistician and author suggested in his book titled *Quality, Productivity, and Competitive Position* (1982) that organizational forms which requires a hierarchy of signatures often times creates a signal of distrust. He then recommended that an open-door and open-book policy approach should be adapted to Unclog organizational communication channels, as this will facilitate a user-friendly atmosphere within the working environment, while establishing a culture of openness and confidence of trust.

Edwards further explained that faith and confidence must be demonstrated in employees’ abilities to deliver, and this can be done when employers reduce supervision and close monitoring of their employees, but rather implement “organizational structures which encourages delegation of authority, responsibility, and teamwork”.

Edwards Deming concluded with the suggestion that companies should endeavor to Sponsor high profile workshops on organizational trust. As this would better support employees’ perception, understanding and capacity to trust building, helping them to understand the different types of trust, learn how to build authentic trusting relationships, identify perceptions of broken trust, and learn how to take corrective actions. And to develop a collective organizational identity of trust, employees can be encouraged to work together more often as a team and learn from the disposition of each other, and whenever problems develop, the investigation should be primarily geared at problem solving and what actually went wrong and why, not on who was responsible.

3 Research approach

3.1 Research approach in brief

Qualitative research is the method used in this study and it had been regarded as the form of research concerned with developing explanations for social phenomena. However, the aim of this form of research is to help the researcher understand the world in which we live and why things are the way they are. It is fundamentally concerned with the social aspects of our world and seeks to answer questions about:” Why people behave the way they do, How opinions and attitudes are formed, How people are affected by the events that go on around them, How and why cultures have developed in the way they have The.” (Lyons and Doueck, 2009)
Another author McMillan and Schumacher (1993, p. 479) defined qualitative research as, “an inductive process involved with the organization of data into categories and identification of patterns (relationships) among those categories.” This definition thus implies that data and meaning emerge “organically” from the research context.

Hence, Qualitative research is primarily concerned with understanding and drawing upon the opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals producing subjective data, while using it to describe the social phenomenon as they occur naturally.

Under qualitative research, the manipulation of data is practically impossible as with experimental quantitative research. Qualitative data are collected through direct encounters with individuals, through one to one interviews or group interviews or by observation. Data collection is often time consuming and painstaking (Holliday 2007).

Qualitative research method often involves intensive and rigorous time consuming process of data collection requiring the use of small samples. In qualitative research approach, sampling seeks to demonstrate representativeness of findings through random selection of subjects. The approach to qualitative sampling techniques usually involves seeking information from specific groups and subgroups in the population. The Criteria used to measure reliability and validity of data differs from those used in quantitative research. (Denzin and Lincoln 2011)

Virtually all qualitative research is done in “natural” settings, leaving no possibilities for variables to be manipulated. While several qualitative research strategies and subspecialties may exist, they are often based on a number of common reference points, such as Working Design, Working Hypotheses, Data Collection, Data Analysis and Interpretation. (Wiersma 1995, P.211-212)

There are basically two perspectives for designing a Qualitative Study; the first one is the Funnel Approach. In the working design phase of a funnel approach, the researcher has a very general research question or hypothesis which is used to select the initial research site, subjects and data to be collected. Based on the results generated from the earlier initiative, the research question or hypothesis becomes the main focus. This process is repeated until data collection, analysis, and interpretation focuses exclusively on the phenomena being studied and until it produces “solid” conclusions.

The second approach to designing a qualitative study is the Modified Analytic Induction Approach: According to Wiersma, (1995, p. 219) in using this approach, the researcher will often begin with an outline of specific research question(s); identifying virtually all instances (or cases) of the phenomenon under investigation; and thoroughly investigating each case one after the other, then employing an iterative process to revise the research question and further explain the phenomenon until he or she arrives at a suitable comprehensive, descriptively rich narrative. According to Pascale ( 2010) “Researchers using analytic induction pursue three fundamental questions: Under what contexts do patterns arise? Under what contexts do the exceptions to the pattern arise? What significance do these patterns and exceptions hold?"
This approach is evidently a subjective process, but if it is built with substantial information, the readers will reckon with the credibility of the argument.

One way of establishing the trustworthiness of a qualitative study is to first of all triangulate the data analysis and conclusions, then verify the subjects’ perceptions in a systematic manner and then finally establish the chain of evidence for the project’s data. (Gall, Borg, and Gall, 1996).

Triangulation in social science is also known as cross examination and it is defined as “the use of multiple data collection devices, sources, analysts, etc. to establish the validity of findings” (Liying, 2005).

In order to establish reliability for qualitative data it is recommended that the researcher use multiple observers and “run” inter-rater reliability coefficients if ratings had been used (inter rater reliability coefficients is a statistical term denoting the degree by which judges agree among themselves based on homogeneity and consensus). Then the researcher will Establish fully developed procedures for resolving disagreements among rating coefficients by ensuring that the Document which present factual findings are consistent with those of other investigators conducting similar research, then the researcher will Combine these strategies to strengthen reliability arguments.

3.1.1 Data Collection in Qualitative Research

According to Creswell (1994, p.12), There are six design strategies for qualitative research data collection, and they include Case Study, Focus Groups, Ethnography, Phenomenology, Grounded Theory, and Historical Research.

3.1.1.1 Case Study

According to Gary thomas (2011), A case study research method is the type that involves descriptive or explanatory analysis either of, a single person, a program, policies, periods, decisions, an event, a process, an institution, an organization, a social group or a phenomenon. It is basically an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life context, and in a case study, researchers collect data about participants using participant and direct observations, interviews, protocols, tests, examinations of records, and collections of writing samples. (CSU 2013).

3.1.1.2 Ethnographic method

This method of qualitative research is often conducted in “social settings and ordinary activities” of its participants, so that the researcher can impose a minimal amount of their own bias on the data (John, 2000). It is deeply rooted in anthropology, allowing the researcher to generate understandings of culture through representations of real life perspective. Thus, in an ethnographic method of research, The researcher is typically an observer or a participant observer.
3.1.1.3 Phenomenology

Paul Leedy explained that “the researcher develops an understanding of a subject’s or “reality” based on how they are perceived from a person’s point-of-view”. (Leedy, 1997, p. 161). Hence, this research approach based on an individual’s or group’s perception of reality and the central structure of the person’s experience and its intentionality and how he or she constructs it. These realities may be expressed as an event, program, relationship, emotion, etc. Phenomenology is rooted in philosophy.

3.1.1.4 Grounded Theory

According to Strauss and Corbin (1994), Grounded theory is rooted in sociology, and Unlike other traditional forms of social science research which often requires that the researcher starts with an hypothesis, Grounded theory method usually have its own start with data collection and the generation of theory from the data, the theory is not a descriptive method but a method that has the goal of generating concepts with the use of empirical research. (Allan 2003, p. 9)

![Figure 7: Process involved in Grounded Theory.](Source: Resource papers in action research by Bob Dick.)

3.1.1.5 Focus Groups

According to Nachmais and Chave Frankfort (2998), Focus groups methods often involves a group of people whose views, perceptions, opinions, believes and attitudes are asked about a subject matter. The research method is often interactive in nature, which may sometimes involve panels, facilitated by a moderator, allowing the researcher to study the interviewees in a more natural conversational setting. (Harding and Jamie 2013).
3.1.1.6 Historical Research

According to Martha Howell and Walter Prevenier, (2001). Historical approach to research is “The process of learning and understanding the background and growth of a chosen field of study or profession, which offers insight into organizational culture, current trends, and future possibilities”, and this approach to research often relies on “records, diaries, oral histories, photographs, and other artifacts to describe, analyze, and explain past events”. (Wiersma 1995).

3.2 Methodology of the study

This research is a qualitative research and the case study method approach had been employed. And three companies had been chosen as the case companies; Whiterock Educational Services Limited, Triple A Ventures and New City Property Development Nigeria Limited. While an Empirical analysis was employed in studying Igbo Women Forum. The analysis was done by the use of SWOT Analysis.

3.2.1 Case Study of the Companies

3.2.1.1 Sample techniques

To obtain an accurate result in this study, the researcher selected the case companies (interviewees) based on representativeness of a typical case. The sample technique used by the researcher is called the purposive sampling. “Purposive sampling is one of the most common sampling strategies, whereby participants are preselected according to relevant criteria to a particular research question”. (Newman and Benz 1998). In deciding the respondents, The criteria the researcher used in deciding the participants was to ensure that the participants are businesses who should be represented in three different sectors of the economy and whose business activities are essential to women’s needs and their welfare in the society;
Hence, the researcher chose businesses from Educational Sector (Knowledge base), Manufacturing, and Construction Industry (Housing). An important consideration in deciding which company to approach is whether there are people available who will allow the researcher to collect data about their company.

3.2.1.2 Data collection method

Telephone Interviews were used by the researcher to collect primary data. The secondary sources of data reviewed by the researcher were in a form of published thesis, electronic publications, books, scientific articles and journals.

The interviewees were Whiterock Educational Services represented by Mr. Simon Peter; NewCity Properties and Developments Nigeria Limited represented by Mr. Kunle Afolayan and Triple A Ventures represented by Mrs. Elizabeth Olaogun.

The researcher found it useful to communicate the interview questions ahead of time to the respondents, along with a general introductory letter about the study. This method was suggested by Lisa Burke & Monica Miller in their Volume 2 Article titled Phone Interviewing as a Means of Data Collection: Lessons Learned and Practical Recommendations published in 2001. Lisa and Burke mentioned that in Telephone interviewing giving the interviewees the questions ahead of time will give them time to reflect and think about their responses, and the researcher actually observed that this convenience yielded more thick, rich, productive and descriptive data from the participants.

The interview was conducted at a pre-arranged convenient time which the participants themselves had chosen and the conversation was recorded using Skype video. The researcher found participants more responsive to setting up interview appointments via the phone, compared to email. At the beginning of the discussion, the participants were informed that the conversation is being recorded for data-recording accuracy. And the researcher ensured that the interview's style was friendly, courteous, conversational, and unbiased.

During the Interviews, the researcher listened carefully, paid close attention to the respondents, and avoiding any attempt to cause disturbances or interruptions to their responses. Therefore, assuming the role of just a reporter, ensuring that the interview was kept on focus and the information retrieved was not tampered with. During the phone interview, the researcher endeavored to get the interviewees to talk as much as possible. While he probed vague and general answers with auxiliary questions in order to clarify certain aspects of the response. The question was designed in a way that made provisions for both open and close-ended response, ensuring that the potential of each interview session was fully maximized.
3.2.1.3 Data analysis

The researcher used the interpretative method of data analysis, and does this by following a 5-step process of data analysis suggested by Learning Store Incorporation in their (2003) online article titled *designing qualitative data analysis*.

The first step the book suggested was Getting to know the data, The second step was focusing on the analysis, the third step was categorizing the information, the fourth step was identifying patterns and connections within the categories and the final step is the interpretation of the data.

![Figure 9: Step-by-Step process of Data Analysis](source: Learning Store Incorporation (2003))

In getting to get to know the data, the researcher listened to the recorded interviews on numerous occasions, comparing it with the note which He had taken during the interview. Then next He organized the data by question and topic, which enabled Him to look across all respondents and their answers in order to identify consistencies and differences. Then He gathered all the data from each question together, and then following the third step, He identified the themes and patterns and organize them into coherent categories which summarizes and brings meaning to the text. The researcher does this by reading and re-reading the text to identify coherent categories. The fourth step involves identifying patterns and connections within and between the categories, He did this by organizing the data into categories question by question and case by case, by carefully observing and noticing patterns and connections both within and between the categories and then He begin to access the similarities of different themes and highlight the difference in the subtle variations. The final step is the stage of interpretation, which involves bringing it all together,
3.2.1.4 Reliability and Validity of the research

Reliability and validity are crucial aspects of research practice as they define the extent to which a concept or its conclusion is well-founded and how it accurately corresponds to logic and the real world. (Chisnall 1997, 34)

The term reliability refers to the degree to which a scale produces consistent results if repeated measurements are made. ‘Systematic sources of error do not have an adverse impact on reliability because they affect the measurement in a consistent way and do not lead to inconsistency’ (Malhotra 2010, 318).

McDaniel and Gates (2004, 200) said ‘reliability it is the degree to which measures are free from random error and, therefore, provide consistent data.’ The less error there is the more reliable the observation is, and so a measurement that is free of error is a correct measure. Test- retest, the use of equivalent forms, and internal consistency are three widely use ways of access reliability.

According to Malhotra (2010) The validity of a scale may be defined as the extent to which differences in observed scale scores reflect true differences among on the characteristics being measured, rather than systematic or random error. Thus, a measuring device is valid only if differences in scores reflect true differences on the characteristics being measured rather than systematic or random error (Malhotra 2010, 320). In simple word, Mc Daniel and gates define; validity as the issue addressing whether what the researcher was trying to measure was actually measured.

Margaret Myers (2000) therefore asserted that “Validity in qualitative research is the degree to which the data is plausible, credible and reliable, and can be defended when challenged”. And while validity in quantitative research can be more definite, in qualitative research it is often subjected to being debatable and often vulnerable to controversies.

Maxwell (1992) Pointed out that validity in qualitative research can be of three types namely; Descriptive Validity, Interpretive Validity and Theoretical.

Maxwell continued stating that the descriptive form of validity is the degree to which what was observed and heard was reported as what actually happened either in behaviors, events, objects, settings and other circumstances. While the interpretive validity is the accuracy of what happened in the minds of the subjects is interpreted based on what the researcher could decipher and understand. Then finally the theoretical validity is the extent of how the theoretical explanations developed are in compatibility with the data and the degree to which its reliability can be defended. (Maxwell 1992)

Hence, to ensure the validity of this research, the researcher gave special consideration to ensuring that he had little or no influence on the responses of the interviewee and also making sure that the question He used was logically and theoretically linked with the key research questions.
For the primary data, the researcher avoided interfering with the responses of the interviewees, letting their responses flow naturally, putting them at ease, and ensuring that communication devices have been well tested before hand to prevent any altercations. For the secondary data, the research chose current materials that are up-to-date with the subject matter and used books from authors who are renowned in their field of study.

The questions were developed into three sections, first part was about the general information on corporate social responsibility and the companies CSR approaches, second part about the basis for creating a business and NGO partnership and the final part about the role trust plays in partnership development and sustainability. To ensure high-level reliability of this research, the researcher gathered all his information directly from high-ranking staff member of the companies whom accepted request for interview, all the three persons interviewed were the Managing Directors of the company, therefore it can rightly be said that their views represents the true position of their companies on the matter. The author also believed that the same or the highly similar results would be obtained if the same research method applied in order to measure the same research.

3.2.2 Empirical study of Igbo Women Forum

3.2.2.1 Background of Igbo Women Forum and SWOT analysis

Igbo Women Forum was founded in 2012 in Helsinki Finland, as a non-profit making organization, with the aim of empowering indigenous Nigerian women and supporting their needs and basic human rights. The main objective of the organization is to pursue activities centered on advocacy around women’s interests and rights when government resist to implement such significant changes. The objective of the organization’s activities is to address some of the problems faced by marginalized ethnic women and their children in the key areas of education, health, economic empowerment and self reliance. Their work is a multi-sectoral development work, continuously creating and expanding opportunities for women in their communities in various areas such as politics, education, social, health, sport, career development and et. al. While each of their activities has its own focal area, they also employ an integrated approach to interrelatedness of programs. Igbo Women Forum ensures that Capacity development and advocacy are integral parts of its programs. The organization’s target communities are displaced and disadvantaged persons, fundamentally women, supporting their capacity to provide for their families and in ensuring the well-being of their children (Igbo Women website 2013).

Igbo Women Forum has an office in Espoo, But their projects are based in the outskirt of Lagos City and Other rural areas in the South Western Part of Nigeria. They are recently working on extending the outreach of their activities to other cities in the country once the resources required for such project are available (Igbo Women website 2013).
In an empirical research, knowledge is gained by means of direct and indirect observation or experience. (Goodwin 2005, 4). Therefore, in order to have deeper insight about Igbo Women’s forum and the core of its operations and activities, the researcher will be developing a SWOT analysis for the current of the organization. According to Wikipedia definition of SWOT analysis, “A SWOT Analysis is a structured planning method used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats involved in a project or in a business venture “.

Hence, In this analysis, The strengths and the weaknesses of Igbo Women Forum would be presented as the internal factors while the opportunities and threats as the external factors. The objective is to outline the strengths, reveal the weaknesses, explore opportunities and define the threats for Igbo Women Forum.

**Figure 10: Description of SWOT Analysis**
Source: Jason Kingsley’s Master’s International Project. (March 2012)
**STRENGTHS**

- **Igbo Women Forum** enjoy trust amongst the locals. Because they have local, cultural and political knowledge and awareness of local economic conditions and the cultural sensitivities of humanitarian circumstances. Therefore, with fewer operating costs, they can be innovative, flexible and still be productive. They are committed to poor and marginalized groups.

- They are good at networking and can mobilize resources and expertise. Their research and advocacy work for issues have few political constraints. They have expertise for influencing public opinion and impacting the decisions of policy-makers.

- *They* possess specialized knowledge about trade issues, markets and contacts in their field.

- Being a foreign established NGO, they have access to make use of a wide range of expertise and skills both from within and outside the country, especially consultation with fn in the development field.

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**WEAKNESSES**

- Being a newly established organization, they have limited experience and resources. They can miss the big picture on some subjects and may not fully understand how to address issues of primary priorities, and making it harder to link with business or government partners who might require experience and history of business activities. This factor may also affect their financial sustainability.

- They have limited implementation capacity as a result of their few resources. They also struggle with managing special interests with organizational interests. They suffer from inconsistent revenue flows from donations.

- Igbo Women Forum has a small staff

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**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Businesses entering emerging market can make use of their contacts and connections for market research. They have the capacity to implement some training and encourage participatory development. They can contribute their experience in integrating health and education initiatives in development programmes.

- With their local influence and capacity, they can be a suitable partner to agencies and governments aiming to mobilize public opinion on trade issues where they have common interests. Using their voice and mandate to address the social dimension of the societal issues, which may complement institutional activities on issues like census activities and other matters, and also make them effective partners for trade

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**THREATS**

- Their international links may easily expose them to being attracted to the elites of the society, therefore having fewer chances to connect poor people in the community.

- They may miss promising prospects for trade development partnership with local companies because of their focus on the marginalized.

- Operating in a depressed region put them at the risk of deteriorating health condition and expose them to the various natural hazards in the communities due to the poor state of public infrastructures.
programmes that address broader issues such as the environment, women, technology and others.

- With their international exposure, they can help women entrepreneurs access foreign market outside their communities and can contribute to their export expertise in adding value, improving quality and finding new export markets. They can also act as clearing-houses for trade information.

- Other NGOs from the region with a similar mission are willing to support and create synergy with Igbo Women Forum with their local influence and international exposure.

**Figure 11: SWOT Analysis of Igbo Women Forum**

The figure above 9 shows that the strength of Igbo Women’s Forum is her founding location, professional personnel and a strong working relationship within her host communities. Therefore, it can be said that these advantages may help the company attract business partners. However, there are so many adjustments which are still needed to be made

### 3.2.2.2 General information about the interviewee

The general information part includes the basic profile of respondent companies such as business type, short history of the company, business strategy and personnel strength. All this information are very important in order that Igbo Women Forum understand the full background of the case companies used in the study.

### 3.2.2.3 The company profile

Whiterock educational Services is one of Nigeria’s leading international student recruitment agencies, with over 8 year of operations in the region. They trace their root to the beginning of the year 2000 when Nigerians began to embrace the prospect of international education, triggering an increased opportunity for parents to send their children offshore to access greater opportunities for foreign education. However, Whiterock’s main business area is to provide advisory services and consultancies to prospective students aspiring foreign education, they also assist the applicants in managing their applications and recruiting only carefully selected eligible students for their partner institutions abroad. They have a diverse and highly skilled workforce, consisting of approximately 15 workers at their head office in Lagos and over 50 staffs at different regional offices across the country. They focus on recruiting only students who are academically sound and financially eligible to access the prospect of foreign education.
New City property and Development Nigeria Limited is one of the leading companies in charge of property development projects in Lagos and Abuja cities of Nigeria. The company is owned by a joint conglomerate of two other companies operating in the oil and gas industry. Their services include property development and construction services, customer company acquisition, and rendering consulting services to customers on profitable sites for investment purposes. The company purchases, sells and leases commercial premises and office properties that meet their customers’ location, quality and profit expectations in a profitable and competitive manner. They are also involved in developing and marketing new businesses and commercial premises ideas, as well as quality- and cost-controlled properties, facilities and services. They have been in business for over a decade and has built a reputation based on their attention to changing trends and robust commercial facility operations via Research and Development projects.

Triple P ventures is a fashion design company that offers custom made garments designed for women, children and babies, Triple P Ventures had been in the custom tailor business for two decades, and they have had the luxury of servicing clients from all over Lagos, Nigeria. Their customers range from pre-school children to business leaders and professionals to civil servants. Their service is basically to construct a tailor made-to-measure garment which had been ordered by a client. Their service model begins by allowing the taking the customer’s measurements. Then they let the customer choose a suitable base pattern from the thousands of models in their catalogues. This base pattern is then used as the design model for the customer’s order. Triple P ventures have a total of about 18 permanent staffs, 15 contract workers- all of which are marketers and 9 apprenticeship workers.

Figure 12: The Interviewee Cluster
All the staff interviewees with whom the researcher interviewed were the managing directors of the firms, and this showed that their responses and views could be taken as the absolute position of the company on the matter, Hence Igbo Women Forum can rely on this as the examine the outcome of the research.

Figure 12: Interview participants

3.2.2.4 Sector

The researcher carefully selected companies who render services in the Housing, Educational and Clothing Industries. The reason for this is because; these three areas which the companies offer services attempts to define the absolute minimum resources necessary for long-term physical well-being. Therefore, the researcher decided to take up interview with just any company who might be conducting their businesses in any of these industries, as their services are fundamental to the key areas with which Igbo Women Forum intend to focus on in their business activities.

However, in deciding on which particular company to be interviewed, the researcher sent out email requests to about 15 companies operating in Lagos, but only three companies responded to the emails and showed interest to participate in the research.

3.3 Analyses of Responses to Interview Questions

3.3.1 Description of CSR Strategy in the companies

All of the interviewees mentioned that their principal approach to CSR is driven by the need to improve the socio-economic conditions in which their firms operate, For instance, they all stated that the environment in which they operate largely suffers from poor state of infrastructure, with cities cut off from each other due to unassailable transportation networks. Therefore they have participated in construction projects which are aimed at improving the conditions of these infrastructures.

Recognising the need of meeting specific socio-economic requirements with regards to CSR, the companies stated that they usually targets one or more of the following levels in their CSR Projects:
Whiterock Educational Services and NewCity Property Development Nigeria Limited stated that over a period of ten years they have invested in 12 and 8 transport infrastructural development projects respectively, and these projects have included the building of roads, tunnels, sidewalks, canals, pedestrian walkways and pedestrian bridges, and all these supports have been rendered in the form of financial assistance been given to Local government councils commissioning those projects.

Furthermore, all of the three companies stated that they had all supported water management infrastructural projects. As water scarcity affects about 30% of the entire population of the country (United Nations Report 2007). For instance, From 2006 till 2011, Triple P ventures recalled supporting 10 Irrigation and drainage systems projects in 7 streets in their municipality. They have also been involved in major flood control systems projects, they have built dikes, levees, and constructed major pumping stations and floodgates. In the past five years Whiterock Educational Services had been involved in supporting drinking water supply projects, they have donated pipes, storage reservoirs, pumps, valves, filtration, treatment equipments and meters to their communities, and they have also constructed buildings and structures to house equipments used for the collection, treatment and distribution of drinking water. While, New City Property Development with some 15 other companies operating in the community have supported the building of a 2km long canal which connected a river and a lake helping in the easy conveyance of goods and the transportation of people.

All these showed that Businesses will be more inclined at forming partnership with Igbo Women Forum, provided that the partnership will achieve the objective of filling in “Governance gaps”. that is; stepping into areas where government had failed to act. Normally, the development and commissioning of infrastructural projects are the primary responsibility of the government (public sector), but when they couldn’t meet up with these mandates, the private sectors are expected to step in, and this will serve a dual purpose of improving the efficiency of their business activities and impacting the overall wellbeing of the community.

This type of infrastructural development activities had also proven to be bringing more and more NGOs and businesses together, stimulating the philanthropic nature of partnership, making it possible for NGOs to seek financial donations from Businesses. To expedite this kind of relationship, Trust had to be established between both parties, As NGOs must convince businesses that the donations they need will be responsibly utilized for intended purpose, and this can be ascertained if NGOs present their accounting and financial reports to the businesses, which would clearly show how funds received in the past had been used, and an indicator of the good health of the organization.

3.3.2 How CSR Strategy of the companies contribute to increasing success in business

All the companies interviewed mentioned that their investment into public infrastructural projects had greatly impacted on the success of their companies, they all related that it had increased the productivity of their firms, enhanced the overall efficiencies of their business activities, and had greatly increased their firm’s competitiveness.
For instance, NewCity Property Development mentioned that having a well-established infrastructure networks have increased the value of their real estate properties. They stated that the values of their properties have increased overnight by up to 50% from 2002 to 2007, especially in areas which previously had poor road networks, poor drainage systems and irregular constant power supply. They also related that property prices in high-end residential areas would be less likely to experience a steep rise without the announcement of a major infrastructure project, and the reason is simple because those high-end segment needed well functioning public transport facility basically as they are often populated by pensioners, and could not have attracted clients with the deteriorating condition of its state. Furthermore, other companies have stated that accesses to their services have become much easier when road networks to their locations become easily accessible.

Whiterock Educational Services and Triple A Ventures also mentioned that the improvements in road networks and transport infrastructures had made their services more easily accessible to customers than before, with customers now being able to locate and find them, It had put them ahead of their rivals who do not enjoy such luxury, thereby making them reach a larger customer base than before, and more significantly, the improvement on those road networks had made their services and premises more suitable for people with vision impairments to access them and find their business location a preferred choice, therefore improving the images of their businesses.

NGOs can explore this opportunity by designing programs which will directly increase market access for local business partners, increase their internal efficiencies, facilitate their growths and open up new markets for them. One example in this case, may be delivering campaign and marketing projects which will be coordinated and thoughtfully designed to achieve the dual aim of accomplishing the core objectives of the NGO missions, while also building strong customer relationships and maximizing sales for the business partner.

This type of partnership can be built on the premise of independent value creation, whereby each partner has individual goals, and these goals will be aimed to be achieved by working together to generate the desired value which often require a lot bigger effort, requiring that personnells from each side work more closely and cooperatively together during the period of the projects for achieving for the fulfillment of each partner’s individual goals.

3.3.3 Would they allow external parties to participate in the defining of their CSR Strategies and to what extent?

The three companies mentioned that all of the projects which they have supported in the past, had all been commissioned by external parties, therefore their approach to CSR is strongly built on their collaboration and support with external parties.
The three companies stated that all these external parties can constitute any government agencies, other SMEs and any non-profit organizations operating in the community, so far as their activities are focused on the preservation of the environment, community building and human capacity building works. Then Triple A ventures also added that projects affecting “handicapped persons, addressing gender issues and the protection of minority rights” would also merit their support. But only Whiterock Educational services stated that one of their top priorities is to also provide supports for infrastructural projects which might be undertaken by an educational institution locally operating in the region. Such as a universities or some other academic and research institutions.

This showed that businesses cannot build their enabling environment alone, and That for shared value to be created, they have to acknowledge that the competitiveness and health of the communities around them are mutually dependent on their involvement with it, and recognizing this and capitalizing on these connections between societal and economic progress will unleash the next wave of global growth and to redefine capitalism.

3.3.4 Conditions required to forge effective collaboration with non-governmental organizations?

Across board, all the businesses clearly mentioned that the fundamental criteria for their partnership would be based on Shared-values and common interest, For instance, Whiterock Educational Services mentioned that Educational projects which focuses on enhancing the literacy ability of women either through apprenticeship training and other forms of knowledge transfer would be absolutely supported and financed by them.

Triple A Ventures stated that projects that will help to improve their own productivity in the value chain would be strongly supported by them, For instance they mentioned that any projects which will involve may be donating customized designed garments to women, kids and minority group would most probably merit their approval for donation, because they can have the opportunity to use the consumers as their brand ambassadors and thereby serving as a form of promotional activities for their company, while NewCityProperty Development mentioned that any educational project or vocational skill project that will be providing women with skills that are needed to work in the construction industry will be supported by them.

On the other hand, The three businesses also mentioned that any organization which will be fit for partnership or be worthy of their support must have shown past evidences of strict adherence to certain codes of conducts in the projects which they had implemented in the past, and this include; documented evidences of transparency and good management of finances in their previous activities. To build sustainable trust, NGOs are encouraged to adopt codes of conduct on two counts. On the first count, this can serve as a necessary defense against criticisms implying that NGOs are secretive, not transparent about sources of funds, have less than rigorous management procedures and practices and that there is a lack of democratic processes within its governance structure.
On a more positive side, when NGOs establish high standards of ethical behavior both in corporate governance and financial transparency, then these codes of conduct would serve as the pillar sustaining this strongly installed values and giving the NGOs greater credibility and authority in their activities.

This is coherent with the concept of organizational trust which had been analyzed in the theoretical section of the study, whereby NGOS are encouraged to adopt ethical codes of conduct centered around greater transparency about sources and usage of their funds, having flexible and more open approach to management procedures, creating a well defined regulatory mechanisms, creating laws and sound management approaches by which the internal and external structures of the businesses can be directed through the monitoring of the actions of management and directors in order to avoid misdeeds more democratic processes within their governance structure. Hence, when these high standards of ethical behaviors are established both in corporate governance and financial transparency, it will give the NGOs greater credibility and makes it more eligible for partnership.

3.3.5 How partnership can create increased added-value

All the three companies reckoned that they hope more value would be created through closer and increased co-operation with external parties. They all envisioned that any partnership which would be forged with NGOs should primarily be able to drive increased revenues either directly or indirectly in three different areas; By boosting the images of their business, facilitating a more dynamic marketing promotion and increasing productivity through broad-based social acceptance and ongoing approval within the local community and other stakeholders.

This is consistent with the concept of resource dependence theory based on value added strategic partnerships, whose assumptions argues that when businesses increased their cooperation with forces in the local communities, more greater value will be delivered through increased synergies-leveraging of assets (resources, capabilities, and expertise) among the partners for the mutual benefit of both.

3.3.6 Role Trust Plays in Sustaining Business-NGO Partnerships

The three companies mentioned that prospective NGO partners must be able to communicate information clearly and accurately for relationship to be sustainable. For instance, NewCity Property development specifically stated that this trust must reflect in the individual character of the NGOs’ employees, in their consistency of behavior, their competency and manner of communication. Whiterock Educational Services mentioned that trust is very important to any relationship which they will be forging with external parties because when an Organizations is able to build high level of cultural trust, this kind of organization will tend to also be able to produce high-quality projects at lesser cost because they can be driven towards recruiting and retaining highly motivated employees.
"And they will realize that these kinds of employees will be more likely to enjoy their work, taking the time to do their jobs correctly; making the right decisions independently; taking high value risks; improve their innovative capacity; and would be much more willing to embrace the organization's visions, missions, and values; and overall they will be tuned to displaying organizational citizenship behavior”. Therefore they regard trust as fundamental bedrock to the overall success of any relationship which will be created.

Triple A Ventures mentioned that they believed that when trust permeates the core of an organizational activities, It will help to improve the continuity of their relationship with that kind of organization, and more importantly it will enable the organization to receive more resources and supports from them, with the confidence that the resources received would be used for intended purposes, and this obviously require that they be a paragon of trustworthiness. Be honest by clearly stating what will be done, and acting with integrity by doing what was said will be done, and be credible by following through with commitments.
4 Conclusion and recommendations

4.1 Conclusion

As evident in the case studies of the companies and the empirical analyses of Igbo Women Forum, Three companies have been identified whom have all expressed their willingness to partner with Igbo Women Forum once the criteria for the collaboration are fulfilled; one of them is an Educational agency, who renders consulting and advisory services for local Nigerian students accessing study abroad opportunities, , the second is a Fashion design company, who designs custom-made garments for women, babies and their children while the third is a Property development company. At various occasions in the history of their operations, they had all been involved in supporting socially responsible activities locally, although none of these activities have been implemented in conjunction with an NGO partner, but they have been implemented in conjunction with other external parties, like local government councils in the various municipalities where they belong. However, they all expressed their willingness to a mutually benefitting relationship with an NGO and look forward to the potentials of such relationship provided it will be based on shared vision and common interests.

During the period of this research, the researcher observed that Igbo Women Forum need to make series of adjustments in her business activities and to re-strategize its business structure in order to be better fit for partnership. These observations will be made in the recommendation section below. However, from the empirical research conducted, the researcher noted that with the current form of Igbo Women Forum, the organization does not currently have what it takes to emerge as a reliable partner in her environment, but would need to make series adjustments in areas such as staff composition, project implementation goals and many others.

For instance, most of the companies that were interviewed stated to being more interested in supporting NGOs whose activities and projects aimed at developing the state of public infrastructures, and they all outlined similar criteria for any-would-be NGOs that would be aspiring to partner with them. The close similarities in the criteria which these business highlighted was probably due to the common challenges which they are all facing in their operating environment, and for which they need immediate improvements. Therefore, when Igbo Women Forum work towards fulfilling these set of criteria, the organization will be well positioned on the right path towards accessing partnerships opportunities even beyond the case companies surveyed.
4.2 Recommendation and future research

The author of this research recommends a number of improvement for Igbo Women Forum, especially with regards to commissioning, planning and implementing development projects. First of all, all the companies that were interviewed stated that the basis for their involvement in cross-sector collaboration would be centered on shared values and common interest, which will be mutually beneficial for all the parties engaging in the partnership. Hence, all projects which will be commissioned by Igbo Women Forum must always put into consideration the interest of its partner organizations, their economic and social priorities as well as the mandate to serve their own core objectives.

For instance, if the objective of a planned project which will be commissioned by Igbo Women Forum is centered on rural infrastructural development works, the steps towards achieving the objective of the project must put into consideration how women in the community would participate in the implementation of such project. Which includes how they would build capacity for involvement in the project, through development of professional skill set and supporting their resource capabilities at an individual level. In doing this, dual purpose would have been achieved. First, the project will create economic value for the women, while supporting their skills acquisition. The skills which the women would acquire may be short-term vocational skill or some other apprenticeship or trade courses either acquired through formal instruction or practicing, this would enhance their capacity that will allow them to seek for jobs, support their professionalism and adequacy in being better equipped for careers ahead, and also enable them to become more economically productive while at the same time adding value to the overall business activities of their business partners.

As evident in the interviews, all the companies had been involved in sponsoring infrastructural development projects with private participation, as those projects are fundamental to the smooth running of their own business operations, therefore similar kinds of projects which can help to improve the state of infrastructures in the community and enhance general wellbeing of the people while involving women in its implementation could be commissioned by Igbo Women Forum and would most absolutely be financed by the private sector depending on the scale of the project.

In addition, Igbo Women forum need to access the current composition of its workforce, especially in the light of recruiting those employees who have a strong background in infrastructural and community development projects, considering that investments in these projects is crucial for economic development that will have an impact on socioeconomic welfare of both women and men. Therefore, implementing such project would benefit the local population, create an enabling environment for businesses to thrive, drive foreign direct investments and enhance regional competitiveness.
Furthermore, it is recommended that Igbo women forum develop a strong practice of documentation and record keeping, which involves competently documenting records of its business activities, by creating, managing and keeping their records as effective as possible, not allowing any files to be missed, lost or stolen, and creating backups when necessary and ensuring the original state of the document’s accuracy.

These accurate recording practices are fundamental references are vital, for instance when making applications for sponsorship and during auditing. And it will also serve as an important criteria for establishing transparency. This efficient act of documentation also involves the responsible management of accounts and finances. Igbo Women Forum should keep records of receipts, invoices and every type of financial transactions that are related with past activities and other business functions. And they must likewise follow a systematic procedure of financial policy mandated by law to extol the position of trust from would-be project financiers.

In addition, Igbo women Forum must ensure that qualified workforce are recruited having the right professional skill sets, adequate work habits and credible characters. Being that the proficiency and work habit of these employees will determine how the organization will be perceived by external parties and which is often the primary strength driving its core objectives. For instance, the three companies that interviewed and especially Whiterock Educational services outlined series of codes of conducts which NGOs must adhere by in order to be fit for partnership, and the majority of these standards set forth involves how employees of their partner organization can follow rules and abide by strict ethical principles at work. Therefore paying attention to the quality of their workforce is vital to their success.

With regards to future research, there are yet many areas that could certainly be explored. For example, one of the most effective research areas could be how businesses can drive innovation through their alliance with NGOs, this could entail how innovative idea-generation can be facilitated through Business-NGO partnership, that is, how the relationship between NGO and businesses can help in developing proposals for strategic initiatives in innovative technology business solutions which would be useful for problem solving. The researcher feel that this would be a reliable and valuable research area to consider, as it would also investigate how Igbo Women Forum could be able to harness the powers of technology in implementing her development projects, and consider how new technologies can emerge for consumers at the Bottom of the Pyramid markets and how newer business models can be enabled for emerging economies, and the overall role Business-NGO partnership can play in the development of this innovative process.
Furthermore, Igbo Women Forum need to continue to demonstrate evidence of credibility and greater legitimacy in both its activities and within her own organization, and this includes willingness to strictly abide by rules defined in the agreement contract with her partners and persistent enthusiasms towards planning and implementing high quality projects and paying detailed attention to her partner’s needs and core interests.
5 Theoretical linkages

In this research, the first part of the theoretical framework focused on the definitions, drivers and approaches to Corporate Social Responsibility; the second part outlines the assumptions and the basic arguments of resource dependent theories—which broadens understanding on how partnerships can be forged and the various rationale for creating Business-NGO Partnership; the third and final part of the thesis discusses the theories of organizational trust and how it can be developed.

To research this subject, it is expected that the researcher have a strong theoretical knowledge about what Corporate Social Responsibility means and what its key drivers are, especially in the context of a developing country, because that will lead to the overall perspectives on the various kinds of initiatives which can help produce the fundamentals for which a business forges a relationship with an NGO.

Furthermore, when businesses have the idea of how the external resources in their environment affect the success of their ventures, it will have a huge impact on how they engage and depend on these resources, and how they harness the potentials of other organizations in their host community in creating and delivering values for their stakeholders. Finally, the theories of how trust can be built within and outside an organization is essential to sustaining a mutually benefiting relationship, like that of a Business-NGO partnership.

Furthermore, the empirical study which was conducted with the SWOT analysis was used for identifying those areas where Igbo Women Forum is strong, where she is weak, the major opportunities available to her and the major threats confronting her current position. All these analyses brought to light how Igbo Women Forum can leverage on her strong potentials and build on those opportunities in order to forge a successful partnership with local businesses. Hence, the SWOT Analysis can be considered a useful tool for assessing the strategic position of the organization and its environment. As it helps the researcher to know where the organization stands by exploring certain key issues.
6 Discussion

We now live in an ever changing world, where businesses continue to face tough decisions as they challenge competitions from numerous rival companies both from within their host market and internationally. Even more critical, is the challenge confronting enterprises that are doing business in emerging economies like Nigeria. For those companies, bridging the competitive gap is a tough stride, as they need not only to develop the most innovative solutions or create cheaper products with good values, it is often required that they become a strong player in developing their own operating environment in order to keep maintaining consistent social approval within their host community, amongst stakeholders and be successful in running a smooth business.

This social approval often constitutes a broad-based acceptance from civil society organizations to the local population. From country to country the core and basis for this social acceptance differs in content and context, but holistically, social acceptance from local community is fundamentally based on the need to encourage and support a positive impact through various means of socially responsible activities on the environment, consumers, employees, communities, stakeholders and all other members of the public sphere who may also be considered as stakeholders.

The research conducted through the surveys and case studies revealed the enormous potentials for Business-NGO partnership, and It has equally pushed forward the various agenda which might be considered as significant for driving the partnership initiative.

In conclusion, as revealed from the studies, the basis for partnership can be driven by several factors, such as; its drivers, the parties involved and the underlying motivation. But in the context of an NGO-Business partnership operating in a developing country, the key driver towards partnership creation is often based on shared values, common interests and mutual benefits. Whereby businesses are lured into solving social problems while also ensuring that the activities lead to competitive gains. Therefore, Igbo Women Forum must constantly be on the lookout for opportunities and develop and implement projects serving this dual purpose.
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QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is Taiwo Akinremi. I am currently doing a Bachelors’ Degree Programme at Laurea University of Applied Sciences in Finland, and I’m undertaking a research project for the programme, and this research had been commissioned by a Non-Government organization called Igbo Women Forum in Finland. The organization is registered in Helsinki Finland, but conducts her businesses in Lagos Nigeria, Its objective is to support and advocate for the rights of Nigerian women and their children in the society and facilitate their access to power, resources, information, and basic human rights. Igbo Women does this by strengthening institutions that are responsive to and inclusive of women and by helping in creating conditions that allow women to control their own political, economic, and social development.

Hence the aim of this research is to find out if there are businesses in the local community in whom Igbo Women Forum can establish partnership for the better realization of her objectives.

To reach the purpose of the thesis, the researcher had deemed it necessary to use interview for the gathering of his information. Hence, I am kindly requesting that you give me some portion of your time for an interview session with no later than two weeks upon the receipt of this proposal. Below are the excerpts of the interview questions, which would be used for the inquiry.

Section A- About Corporate Social Responsibility

1. Are you familiar with the theme of social responsibility?, and if you do, what does it mean for your company?
2. Could you briefly describe the CSR strategy in your company and its relationship to your main subject of enterprise.
3. How does the CSR of your company contribute to the overall increase of success in your business?
4. How are the principles and goals of CSR reflected in your overall company strategy?

Section B- About resource dependence

5. To what extent do external parties participate in the defining of your company’s CSR strategies?.
6. What approach does your top management take for the setting of your CSR strategy?.
7. Do you think that the actions of those around you can affect your entire business as a whole?.
8. To what extent do you involve people or other organizations who may be affected by the decisions you make influence the implementation of your decisions?
9. Do you view partnership as an important force to your local influence in your community?, and to what extent ?.

10. What is your view about collaborating with an NGO, and if you would you consider that possibility, what conditions must facilitate it?.

Section C - About Organizational Trust

11. What do you think is the relationship between trust and partnership ?.
12. What roles had Trusts played in the past in defining your CSR Strategy?.
13. What role had trust played in the past in your CSR activities and in your partnership with external parties?. 