



## **Corporate Social Responsibility: Benefit(s) to Company and Society Case of Vodafone Ghana Limited**

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### **ABSTRACT**

**This project focuses on exploring the principles of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and its benefits to both companies and society. The case study conducted on Vodafone Ghana provides a practical illustration of the implementation of CSR practices. The primary objective of this study is to review the effect of CSR initiatives on Vodafone Ghana's performance and its contribution to society. The research methodology employed in this study involves analyzing relevant literature, collecting primary data through interviews and surveys, and conducting a comprehensive review of Vodafone Ghana's CSR activities. The findings indicate that Vodafone Ghana's CSR initiatives have positively influenced its reputation, brand image, and customer loyalty. The research findings, the study were that implementing CSR practices can bring about tangible benefits to both companies and society. It enhances a company's competitiveness, strengthens stakeholder relationships, and contributes to sustainable development. Overall, this project highlights the significance of CSR in fostering a positive relationship between companies and society, using Vodafone Ghana as a case study. It offers insights for organizations seeking to leverage CSR practices for sustainable growth and societal well-being.**

**Keywords:** Enveronment, Corporate Responsibililty, Economics, Stakeholders, Sustainability, Positive Publicity.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Globally, the business environment has changed in terms of greater and new demands due to modernisation. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) increases the chances of the survival of an organization by involving society in their operation that directly or indirectly affects citizens in the society (Onyebuchi, & Nwaeke, 2019). The principles of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has emerged rapidly in business organizations (Basuony, Elseidi, & Mohamed, 2014). This concept has emerged as a framework for addressing businesses' roles in society. According to Sokro (2016), corporate social responsibility "implies a corporate entity should be held accountable for any of its actions that affect people, their communities, and the environment". CSR is thus the relationship of businesses with society, while supporting business benefits with societal expectations (Atuguba and Dowuona-Hammond, 2016). According to Junwu et al, (2015), corporate social responsibility is the expectations of society on the economy, laws, ethics and free decision, including economic responsibility, legal liability, ethical responsibility and philanthropy responsibility. Therefore, CSR is the obligation of protecting and improving the public interest that the corporate shall undertake while pursuing a legal economic interest.

Today, corporate social responsibility is a major strategy used as a vital instrument by an organization to enhance its image and encourage stakeholder acceptance (Castka and Balzarora, 2018). According to Ebert & Griffin (2017), corporate social responsibility focuses on organizations trying to balance their commitment to essential stakeholders in their business environment. It allows organizations to take initiatives to meet their business objectives and demands while contributing to improving the welfare of society (Celik, Abdul-Kareem, & Yilmaz, 2019). Corporate social responsibility provides businesses with standards of behaviour to positively impact society and abide by benefits that exclude profit-seeking. According to Celik, et al. (2019), the value of corporate social responsibility to the company and society cannot be overemphasised. Both the company and society benefit when a company links its financial performance to its corporate social responsibility implementation. That is when a company increases their financial performance, it reflects in its programs under corporate social responsibility to be implemented in society. Therefore, the company becomes socially responsible under corporate social responsibility (Porter and Kramer, 2016).

Companies that recognize the value of CSR, formulate policies, practices and strategies to connect their business objectives and their socially responsible activities (Celik, et al., 2019). According to Arnold (2017), the value of corporate social responsibility improves the relationship between companies and societies. The study answered the following research questions:

1. What are the benefits of corporate social responsibility (CSR) to Vodafone Ghana Limited?
2. What are the challenges faced by Vodafone Ghana Limited in implementing its corporate social responsibility (CSR)?
3. What are the benefits of Vodafone Ghana Limited's' corporate social responsibility (CSR) to the society?
4. What are the factors considered by Vodafone Ghana Limited when designing corporate social responsibility (CSR) for the society?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility**

Corporate social responsibility is a product of the post-World War II period. It characterizes the impetus of the changes in social consciousness that came to a crescendo in the 1960s, especially the civil rights, women's, consumer and environmental movements, corporate social responsibility has consequently grown in relevance and stature ever since. Today, corporate social responsibility is a global concept that has progressed from the interplay of thought and practice. Thus, it represents a language and a perspective that is known the world over and has become increasingly vital as stakeholders have communicated that modern businesses are expected to do more than make money and obey the law. Corporate social responsibility as a concept within the field of business administration is a concept that has been developed during the last century. Below are some definitions of corporate social responsibility (1) *Robbins and Coulter (2017) define corporate social responsibility as a business obligation, beyond that required by law and economics, to pursue long-term goals that are good for society.* (2) According to Junwu et al, (2015), corporate social responsibility is the obligation of protecting and improving the public interest that the company shall undertake while pursuing a legal economic interest. (3) *In addition, CSR is defined as a "concept whereby companies integrate*

*social and environmental concerns in their business operations and their interactions with their stakeholders voluntarily” (Growther and Aras, 2018).*

The concept of corporate social responsibility has become pervasive in business circles with its acronym CSR. According to Maria (2019), the term means that a corporation should be accountable to a community, as well as to shareholders, for its actions and operations. When a corporation adopts a corporate social responsibility policy, it aims to demonstrate a goal of upholding ethical benefits, as well as respecting people, communities and the environment. Chang (2017), describes corporate social responsibility as a vital corporate obligation that reflects business responsibility for some of the wider societal good. CSR allows organizations to engage in a social agreement that obligates them to consider social benefits before making a business decision. According to Spring (2017), CSR allows organizations to analyze the interdependent relationships that exist between businesses and economic systems, and the communities within which they are based. According to Balcova (2012), CSR is a concept that takes into consideration the impact of a company's operations on people, the environment and profits. Aside from the traditional view of business to maximise profits, organizations have adopted corporate social responsibility practices that are concerned with economic, environmental, and social performance as opposed to profit maximisation only. Geethamani (2017), related CSR to a self-regulatory mechanism whereby a business monitors and ensures its active compliance with the spirit of the law, ethical standards and national norms. CSR aims at increasing long-term profit through positive public relations, high ethical standards to reduce business and legal risk, and shareholder trust by taking responsibility for corporate actions. CSR are policies or strategies that encourage the organization to make a positive impact on the environment and stakeholders including consumers, employees, investors, communities, and others. Moreover, according to Geethamani (2017), the way corporate social responsibility is understood and implemented differs greatly for each company and country. In addition, corporate social responsibility is a very broad concept that addresses many and various topics such as human rights, corporate governance, health and safety, environmental effects, working conditions and contribution to economic development. The purpose of corporate social responsibility is to drive change towards sustainability. Although some companies may achieve remarkable efforts with unique corporate social responsibility initiatives, it is difficult to be at the forefront of all aspects of corporate social responsibility.

According to Geethamani (2017), CSR is also called corporate conscience or corporate citizenship or responsible business. CSR is about businesses and other organizations going beyond their legal obligations to manage the impact they have on the environment and society. Petra (2012), defined CSR as the configuration of social principles, policies and programs related to the firm's societal relationships. These social principles, policies and programs extend beyond the statutory obligation to comply with legislation. In other words, organizations voluntarily take further steps to improve the quality of life for employees and their families as well as for the local community and society at large. Junwu et al, (2015), defined CSR as the expectations of society on the economy, laws, ethics and free decision, including economic responsibility, legal liability, ethical responsibility and philanthropy responsibility. Again, Kotler (2015) defined CSR as a *commitment to improve community well-being through discretionary business practices and contributions of corporate resources.*

### **Principles of Corporate Social Responsibility:**

Corporate social responsibility in itself a broad concept with varied components, it is, therefore, imperative to identify activities which comprise its principles. According to David and Aras (2018), the principles of corporate social responsibility are based on its sustainability, transparency and accountability. The sustainability principle of CSR is concerned with the effect of the action taken to reflect the future (David and Aras, 2018). This principle implies that society must not use more of its regenerated resources. The accountability principle of CSR is concerned with corporate organizations recognizing the effect of their actions on the external environment and assuming responsibility for their actions (David and Aras, 2018). This principle is very important in developing the appropriate measure of the environment and reporting actions of the firm. The transparency principle of CSR is concerned with the external impact of the actions of the corporate organization (David and Aras, 2018). Transparency is the process of recognition of responsibility on the part of the organization for the external effects of its actions. It is equally part of the process of transferring power to external stakeholders.

### **Types of Corporate Social Responsibility:**

According to Caracol (2011), corporate social responsibility has become a marketing strategy tool used by organizations to obtain a competitive advantage over other competitors. Thus, corporate social responsibility allows organizations to achieve a good public image, a good image among employees, good profits and a return on the investment, which is important for supporting events not directly related to core business. Corporate social responsibility can be of different types based on its benefit to the organization or society.

Below are some types of corporate social responsibility as highlighted by Jayne (2019):

1. **Charity-Based Corporate Social Responsibility:** Companies often engage other organizations as partners for charity. Companies contribute charity to individuals and other organizations to assist them financially to meet their general needs. This is the most preferred type of CSR used by companies.
2. **Community-Based Corporate Social Responsibility:** To safeguard the well-being of society, the company with the help of other organizations, which are usually Non-profit organizations, comes forward with various programs. To enhance the living standard and conditions of the people of society, a company either provides funds or arranges funds from other companies to carry out the planned programs.
3. **Human Resource-Based Corporate Social Responsibility:** Human resource of an organization plays a vital role in its smooth functioning and success. Hence, companies pay close attention to the needs of their human resource to make their lives better. Companies do so in various ways with some companies providing extra leaves to male employees so that they can take better care of their newly born children. In case any employee encounters an accident due to on-job danger, companies offer better medical insurance so that the employee can be healed and cured in the best possible way.
4. **Environment-Based Corporate Social Responsibility:** Through this, a company's attention is on reducing the harmful effects caused on the environment due to its various operations. The company invents such processes at their production level so that it can minimize the production of harmful by-products that cause damage to the environment. It also involves taking preventive measures to avoid causing damage to the

environment. For instance, the use of non-renewable energy as against burning of fossil fuels.

### **Corporate Social Responsibility in Organizations:**

In larger organizations, CSR is owned by shareholders since large organizations face higher scrutiny from the public due to their visibility than small and medium organizations (Husted and Allen, 2016). As a result, CSR policies have to be imbibed in the organizational code of conduct to create a structured approach for employees to adhere to. Compared to a large organization that is open to the public due to their size, small and medium enterprises are normally small and their relationship (business) is usually between managers, suppliers and employees. Government agencies and organizations also engage in CSR in a socially responsible manner. Both public and private organizations engage in CSR with similar policies. Gardner (2016) emphasized that CSR within the public sector has immensely grown over the last few years. This has enhanced the need for greater accountability within the public sector. Crane and Matten (2007) also stated that the government initiates CSR by taking action to promote CSR-related issues for the public. This creates incentives and other benefits for government to employ more businesses to get involved and espouse more socially responsible practices.

### **Corporate Social Responsibility in Society:**

Corporate social responsibility has emerged as a framework for addressing business roles in society. According to Sokro (2016), corporate social responsibility “implies a corporate entity should be held accountable for any of its actions that affect people, their communities, and the environment”. CSR is the relationship of businesses with society, while supporting business benefits with societal expectations (Atuguba and Dowuona-Hammond, 2016). According to Junwu et al, (2015), corporate social responsibility is the expectations of society on the economy, laws, ethics and free decision, including economic responsibility, legal liability, ethical responsibility and philanthropy responsibility. Moreover, corporate social responsibility is a corporate marketing strategy that is influential and drives businesses to act more socially responsible (Green and Peloza, 2011). It can create a satisfied consumer within the society the business operates in.

In a societal setting, corporate social responsibility influences people who are either consumers or potential customers through their perceived value, trust and commitment, resulting in the level of satisfaction and loyalty (Barnett, 2007). According to Paula and Costa (2017), corporate social responsibility influences society at a time when there are demands more from companies to be interested in the development of society than just making a profit from their products. With this, CSR affects consumers’ purchase behaviour such as brand choice, purchase time, quantity, and brand switching. With corporate social responsibilities, companies can develop short-term strategies to address low-level satisfaction with products that are not well received by consumers (Aham, 2008).

According to David and Aras (2008), CSR is the continuous commitment by the organization to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as the local community and society at large.

Through corporate social responsibility, consumers can obtain the necessary information about a product or service and also, the companies rendering the services or selling the

products can assess the experiences consumers have with their products or services. When consumers are exposed to corporate social responsibilities through social engagement, the consumer has already purchased and practised a particular brand so the impact of learning from that purchase is minimal and is easily balanced by a simultaneous and similar competitive offering. According to Gupta (2011), CSR stimulates the customer's preference to buy products or services from a corporate organization that supports society. Corporate social responsibility through societal engagement targets the consumer's attitude. Attitude plays an important role in consumer buying. Attitude is a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favourable and unfavourable manner concerning given stimuli done through CSR policies. Also, CSR influence consumer buying behaviour by targeting consumer satisfaction. Consumer satisfaction is a critical strategic weapon and should be preserved with the same energy and enthusiasm.

### **Advantages of Corporate Social Responsibility:**

CSR enhance the image of the corporate organization. According to Chang (2017), CSR enhances a company's image in terms of goodwill. Thus, customers are always willing to purchase products from a company that has a good image in the market. CSR influences the reputation of the organization in a society as a consistent and trustworthy name. Also, the CSR enhances the attraction towards the corporate organization and retention of employees. According to Catita (2009), employees are attracted to corporate organizations that have strong CSR policies and comply with them responsibly. This ensures the pooling of potential candidates and again, employee turnover is very low. Existing employees, as well as new employees, always expect that the organization has an empathetic approach toward them.

CSR ensures that regulatory authorities become less intimidating. Regulatory authorities often lay more focus on the companies that do not perform corporate social responsibility for scrutiny as compared to the companies that are involved in CSR. The authorities promote CSR for the welfare of the society and environment. They also set guidelines for corporate organizations to follow by complying with the rules of CSR.

Corporate social responsibility attracts more investors from various sources. According to Zhang, J., et al., (2015), investors are most likely to invest in a company, which has a good image in the market. The goodwill of a company is significantly enhanced if it is doing well in corporate social responsibility and makes more people interested in investing in its crucial programs.

### **Challenges of Corporate Social Responsibility:**

Corporate social responsibility practices have spread rapidly across both domestic and multinational firms. Many companies are engaged in corporate social responsibility with the main intention of making a profit out of the concept. According to Jayne (2019), business entities commit to their shareholders, who are hoping to earn from their shares. All these needs can be met only if a company focuses completely on inventing methods by which it can make more and more profits. While companies are using their funds to carry out corporate social reasonability programs for the welfare of society and charity, the reputation of the organization is at stake, if it violates any policy regarding the safety of a product According to Jayne (2019), the company has to comply with the corporate social reasonability policies, then it is supposed to inform customers about all the limitations associated with its products. If there is any CSR

policy violation in their product then it has to be made public. However, if it is not indicated, it can cause a dent on the image of the company.

According to Jayne (2019), CSR leads to customer conviction. This occurs when the customer cannot notice instant results or instant impact on society then they start to feel corporate social responsibility programs as mere publicity stunts. The company needs to have the patience and trust of the customers while the company continues the programs with dedication and conviction.

Also, CSR increases the cost of production. According to Jayne (2019), CSR programs bring extra cost to the company. The increment in cost forces the company to increase the basic price of the product, which is ultimately paid by the customer. This is an extra burden on the company, which is imposed on customers.

### **CSR of Vodafone Ghana**

Vodafone Ghana Limited is an operating company of Vodafone Group Plc, the world's leading mobile telecommunications company, with a significant presence in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia Pacific and the United States. Vodafone Ghana Limited was formerly Ghana Telecom (National Telecommunications Company of Ghana). *According to Wray (2008), the Vodafone Group acquired 70% of the shares of Ghana Telecom in 2008 at a total value of United State Dollars 1.3 billion from Ghana. The remaining 30% share of Ghana Telecom belongs to the Government of Ghana. In 2009, Ghana Telecom and its subsidiary OneTouch were rebranded as Vodafone Ghana. Vodafone Ghana is Ghana's second largest operator behind African communications giant MTN Ghana (Appiah, 2016). According to the latest data by the National Communications Authority (NCA), Vodafone's mobile voice subscriptions decreased from 9,122,403 at the end of December 2019 to 9,075,795 at the end of January 2020. This represents a percentage decrease of 0.51%. Vodafone's market share for December 2019 was 21.93%. Vodafone Ghana as a corporate body, values customers by constantly building key relationships through their corporate social responsibilities to the public and government. The corporate social responsibilities by Vodafone Ghana provides an innovative and responsive service for recognition worldwide. The CSR approach of Vodafone Ghana is to create an awareness for its surrounding environment. This approach helps Vodafone to fulfil stakeholder demands, achieve profit, and remain competitive. The CSR approach of Vodafone Ghana is to reduce the environmental impact on business while meeting the needs of stakeholders by maintaining a successful financial bottom line. The CSR approach of Vodafone Ghana has a positive impact on the wider Ghanaian society. This has resulted in Vodafone Ghana being the most awarded telecom company with close to 70 local and international awards with their CSR Programme.*

One of the most popular CSR approaches by Vodafone Ghana is known as the Vodafone Ghana Foundation, which is a charity arm of Vodafone Ghana. In 2009, Vodafone Ghana Foundation was launched to support sustainable initiatives that drive social change, improve people's lives and solve pressing social needs. The Foundation was set up to help address Ghana's compelling humanitarian needs and improve living conditions. Also, the Foundation provides a formal process for charitable contributions to be made to communities, groups and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Ghana. The Vodafone Ghana Foundation delivers socially relevant and economically impactful investment programmes for the Ghanaian community on a sustainable

basis. Initiatives such as Instant Schools, Healthfest, Healthline TV and Healthline 255 (Ghana's first medical Call Centre) are making a significant impact across the country.

To sustain the Vodafone brand, other CSR approaches like collaborating with the British Council to establish the Vodafone Scholar Project to provide full and partial scholarships to female high school and undergraduate students studying STEM subjects. In 2016, Vodafone made a deal with Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). In the agreement, the company agreed to provide enhanced high-speed internet and Wi-Fi connectivity to all faculties across the University's campuses in Ghana. The benefits of the package and the level of connectivity is unprecedented in KNUST and it confirms what Vodafone Ghana stands for "as a company to empower students and stakeholders with the appropriate technology to make them work faster, smarter and efficiently." These CSR approaches by Vodafone Ghana are key to responding to the social and economic development of Ghanaian society. These CSR approaches by Vodafone Ghana show a deep sense of responsibility and commitment to social development in Ghana.

### **Benefits of Vodafone Ghana's CSR to Society:**

To Vodafone Ghana, their corporate social responsibility approaches are a very important consideration for the company, and it is a way for the company to increase its investment and positive company image (Mullerat, 2010). Through Vodafone's CSR initiatives, the company can improve living standards in Ghana. Vodafone Ghana is actively engaged in CSR activities in an effort to address cultural and social issues, to benefit both in the process (Carrol and Buchholtz, 2008). The corporate social responsibility by Vodafone Ghana improves the company brand and public trust (Amber, 2022). The society spends on the products or services offered by Vodafone Ghana. This is because the CSR approach by Vodafone Ghana has a positive impact on society. The CSR approach by Vodafone Ghana is a way the company gives back to the community to earn the public's trust as a reputable brand. Vodafone Ghana through their Vodafone Foundation promotes quality healthcare for the people in the society (Amber, 2022). Vodafone Ghana donates medical equipment to several hospitals in less privileged societies and also contribute towards the treatment of epidemic diseases. Other health programs initiated through the Vodafone Foundation indirectly improve the health of the public. Furthermore, corporate social responsibility by Vodafone Ghana fosters a sustainable environment. The company through its CSR programmes give back to society and addresses environmental challenges (Amber, 2022). In addition, it improves welfare and also encourages the protection of human rights by providing a safe environment and taking legal action against violations.

### **Benefits of CSR to Vodafone Ghana:**

For organizations to survive in the business environment, they must reconsider their goals and operations that affect the well-being of their immediate operating society or environment (Onyebuchi, & Nwaeke, 2019). This is because new regulation, changes in tastes and preferences of customers, advancement of technology, new products and market competition has present challenges for organizations. The quest to survive as an organization has grown stronger with every organization seeking new strategies to achieve its goals and objectives. Among the strategies adopted by organizations, corporate social responsibility has become a framework for organizations to be alive to their social responsibilities (Aluko, 2014). Vodafone Ghana has a dedicated program whereby CSR projects are implemented in Ghana.



CSR does not just benefit the society, but the company too. According to Mullerat (2010), CSR guarantees profit growth. The publicity a company might gain by being socially responsible and possibly getting covered by the press attracts more customers, invariably leading to profit growth. Some customers prefer to spend more on socially responsible companies, so while it may seem like a lot to invest in charitable ventures, a company's finances can also benefit from corporate social responsibility. Corporate social responsibility attracts and retains employees (Amber, 2022). The current trend of giving back to society makes socially responsible companies more attractive to job seekers. Employees of such organizations may have a sense of pride and fulfilment by being part of a workforce concerned about society. Corporate social responsibility encourages investors (Amber, 2022). Investors and benefactors want to know that their money goes to good causes. They are more likely to invest in a company or body that has supported its community and environmental development. Corporate social responsibility enhances personal and professional growth (Amber, 2022). When organizations put a system that encourages corporate social responsibility, they can encourage their employers to donate, volunteer and contribute to society in whatever capacity they can. Employees tend to be more interested in socially responsible acts personally if they get accustomed to such activities in the workplace.

### **Challenges Faced by Vodafone Ghana in Implementing its CSR:**

For decades now, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is increasingly gaining popularity. Corporate organizations have embraced the concept of CSR and have made significant strides. However, there are still several challenges that need to be addressed. Organizations like Vodafone Ghana are faced with challenges in implementing corporate social responsibility. According to Karmakar (2022), businesses are faced with a lack of a clear framework for implementing and measuring CSR initiatives. Unlike other business activities, telecommunication businesses have no established framework for CSR in Ghana. This means that Vodafone Ghana has to develop their own CSR strategies based on its metrics, time and cost (Karmakar, 2022).

Another challenge with CSR is the lack of transparency and accountability (Karmakar, 2022). Telecommunication businesses like Vodafone Ghana need to be open and honest about their efforts. This means disclosing information about their environmental and social impacts and the steps they take to address any negative impacts. However, Vodafone Ghana may not be transparent about its CSR efforts, which can undermine trust and lead to scepticism about its commitment to social and environmental responsibility.

A third challenge is the difficulty of balancing short-term economic considerations with the need to implement sustainable, long-term CSR initiatives. In today's fast-paced business environment, companies are under constant pressure to generate profits and deliver value to shareholders. As a result, many companies may be hesitant to invest in CSR programs that may not provide an immediate financial return.

### **Factors Considered by Vodafone Ghana When Designing CSR for Society:**

At Vodafone Ghana, CSR is considered a vital management concept which supports the company in realizing the vision and mission of Vodafone Ghana. Through the Vodafone Foundation, which is the conduit for delivering CSR activities in Ghana, numerous projects have

been executed. Caracol (2011), relates the following as some of the factors that negatively affect the corporate social responsibility of an organization:

### **Social Awareness and Education:**

The role among corporate stakeholders is to work collectively to pressure corporations that are changing. Shareholders and investors themselves, through socially responsible investment, are exerting pressure on corporations to behave responsibly. Non-governmental organizations are also taking an increasing role, leveraging the power of the media and the internet to increase their scrutiny and collective activism around corporate behaviour. Through education and dialogue, the development of the community in holding businesses responsible for their actions is growing (Roux. 2017).

### **Motives:**

Sometimes companies claim to promote corporations and are committed to sustainable development but simultaneously engage in harmful business practices. Some corporations start corporate social responsibility programs for the commercial benefit they enjoy through raising their reputation with the public or with the government. Some corporations exist solely to maximize profits and are unable to advance the interests of society as a whole.

### **Ethical Consumerism:**

The rise in popularity of ethical consumerism over the last two decades can be linked to the rise of corporate social responsibility. As the global population increases, so does the pressure on limited natural resources required to meet rising consumer demand (Grace and Cohen, 2015). Industrialization, in many developing countries, is booming because of both technology and globalization. Consumers are becoming more aware of the environmental and social implications of their day-to-day consumer decisions and are therefore beginning to make purchasing decisions related to their environmental and ethical concerns. However, this practice is far from consistent or universal.

### **Stakeholder Priorities:**

Increasingly, corporations are motivated to become more socially responsible because their most important stakeholders expect them to understand and address the social and community issues that are relevant to them. Understanding what course is important to employees is usually the priority because of the many interrelated business benefits that can be derived from increased employee engagement.

### **The Nature of Business:**

Corporation's purpose is to maximize returns to its shareholders, and since only people can have social responsibilities, corporations are only responsible to their shareholders and not to society as a whole (Caracol, 2011). Although they accept that corporations should obey the laws of the countries within which they work, they assert that corporations have no other obligation to society. Some people perceive corporate social responsibility as incongruent with the very nature and purpose of business, and indeed a hindrance to free trade (Caracol, 2011). Those who assert that corporate social responsibility is contrasting with capitalism and are in favour of neoliberalism argue that improvements in health, longevity and/or infant mortality have been created by economic growth attributed to free enterprise.

**Regulation:**

These issues surrounding government regulation pose several problems. Regulation in itself is unable to cover every aspect in detail regarding a corporation's operations. This leads to burdensome legal processes bogged down in interpretations of the law and debatable grey areas (Sacconi 2014).

**Ethics Training:**

The rise of ethics training inside corporations, some of it required by government regulation, is another driver credited with changing the behaviour and culture of corporations. Such trainings aim to help employees make ethical decisions when the answers are unclear. Tullberg (2016), believes that humans are built with the capacity to cheat and manipulate, hence, the need for learning normative benefits and rules in human behaviour.

**Theoretical Review**

Mohammad (2009), describes the main approaches or theories of viewing corporate social responsibility as monetary theories that view the corporation as purely profit-oriented with the main aim of maximizing profit and ethical approaches which emphasize the fact that the corporation has a moral responsibility.

**Monetary Theory of Corporate Social Responsibility:**

This is an approach used by the corporation to reach its main aim of maximizing wealth, which is also considered its responsibility in society. According to Friedman (1970), monetary theories emphasize the point that the only reason the corporation considers stakeholders is for it to maximize profits, however, within the framework of the norms in the country in which they operate. The monetary approach does not necessarily mean that the corporation should not have any responsibility toward stakeholders, but this responsibility should only be active if it leads to creating wealth for the corporation (McWouldiams & Siegel, 2001). Corporations are responsible for their society to the degree that the corporation affects the regime of that society, then the corporation could use this for maximizing profit. In a sense, if the CSR affects the infrastructure of that society for example, then it will benefit the corporation in its overall aim to create wealth. The monetary theory maximizes the profit by reducing the cost of taking responsibility. In other words, the cost should be lower than the profits obtained from it, especially without breaking the legal framework within the society. Therefore, this theory allows corporations to focus on creating an environment for growth for other corporations as well which will benefit the company in the long run.

**Ethical Theory of Corporate Social Responsibility:**

This is an approach of corporate social responsibility where the corporation has a moral responsibility toward its stakeholders. As the total opposite of the more profit-oriented theories, the ethical perspectives toward the concept of corporate social responsibility emphasizes the fact that the corporation should have a responsibility towards its stakeholders, not with the overall aim of making a profit but rather to create a better society. Therefore, the relationship between the corporation and society should be based on the ethical responsibility the corporation has as its overall aim. One of the focuses of the corporation within the ethical perspective is that it should think beyond its profit goal and create an atmosphere where the profit the corporation makes today does not make another corporation worse tomorrow. This means that even though the corporation maximizes the wealth for all its stakeholders by

maximizing its profit, it should not do something that will jeopardize the maximization of profit for future stakeholders. Therefore, from the ethical perspective, the corporation's short-term aim should not contradict the long-term goal of being a part of society, which by maximizing its profit will maximize the profit of the whole society. The corporation is in this case not only working within the legal framework of the society it is active in, but it is also much more by acting as a serious corporation that is a partner to the society.

### **Stakeholder Theory:**

Stakeholders are groups or individuals who can affect or are affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives. These stakeholders include employees, suppliers and customers. The stakeholder theory assumes that values are a part of doing business and that ethics and economics are not mutually exclusive. The stakeholder theory is essentially a normative theory with instrumental and descriptive dimensions. As the core of stakeholder theory, the normative theory is communicated in two main questions, which are "what is the purpose of the firm?" and "what responsibility does management have to stakeholders?". The stakeholder theory holds that managers must develop relationships, inspire stakeholders and create communities where people strive to give their best to make good the firm's promises are fundamental to the stakeholder theory (Freeman et al., 2004). The stakeholder theory of the firm focuses on economic analysis, including agency problems, transaction costs, and property rights. The manager under the stakeholder theory must seek the interest of all the stakeholders including the shareholder.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Based on the case study approach, a descriptive research survey was used for the research design. The descriptive survey produces a good amount of responses from a wide range of people, also helps to simplify large amounts of data sensibly. The descriptive survey allows the study to be presented quantitatively to help reduce lots of data into a simpler summary. The population comprises management and the working staff of Vodafone Ghana Limited's head office at Circle in the Greater Accra Region.

More than 200 people work at the head office of Vodafone Ghana Limited. Due to some limitations facing this study (time constraints and limited monetary resources), the researchers could not consider the entire sampled people from the targeted population. Hence, the researchers adopted the Slovenes formula's table, to calculate a sample size of 133 participants for the study.

## **RESULT PRESENTATION**

The result presented below were obtained from 133 staffs from Vodafone Ghana Limited.

### **Result Presentation**

**Table 4.1: Gender of Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Female</b>	43	32.3	32.3
<b>Male</b>	90	67.7	100.0
<b>Total</b>	133	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.1 presents a descriptive result on the gender of the respondents. The table shows that 32.3% of the respondents were females while 67.7% were males. This result suggested that more males dominated the telecommunication industry.

**Table 4.2: Age of Respondents**

	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative Percent
<b>20 to 30 years</b>	92	69.2	69.2
<b>31 to 40 years</b>	31	23.3	92.5
<b>41 to 50 years</b>	10	7.5	100.0
<b>Total</b>	133	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.2 presents a frequency result on the age of the respondents. The table shows that 69.2% of the respondents were between 20 to 30 years, 23.3% of the respondents were between 31 to 40 years, and 7.5% of the respondents were between 41 to 50 years at Vodafone Ghana Limited.

**Table 4.3: Educational Status of Respondents**

	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative Percent
Degree	43	32.3	32.3
Diploma	75	56.4	88.7
Masters	4	3.0	91.7
SHS	11	8.6	100.0
Total	133	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.3 presents a frequency result on the educational status of the respondents. From the survey, 56.4% of the respondents had a diploma education, 32.3% of the respondents had a degree education, 3% of the respondents had a master's education and 8.6% of the respondents had SHS education.

**Table 4.4: Working Experience of Respondents**

	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 1 year	50	37.6	37.6
2 to 5 years	55	41.4	79
6 to 10 years	26	19.5	98.5
More than 10 years	2	1.5	100.0
Total	51	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.4 presents a frequency result on the working experience of the respondents. From the survey, 41.4% of the respondent had 2 to 5 years of working experience, 19.5% of the respondent had 6 to 10 years of working experience, 37.6% had less than a year of working experience, while 1.5% had more than 10 years of working experience.

**Table 4.5: Benefits of CSR to Vodafone**

Statement	Not At All		Seasonal		Quite Often		Mostly		Always	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%

The company's image has been enhanced in terms of goodwill.	4	3.0%	25	18.8%	22	16.5%	46	34.6%	36	27.1%
The reputation of the company in society is consistent and trustworthy.	0	0%	10	7.5%	28	21.1%	42	31.6%	53	39.8%
More domestic investors are attracted to the company.	8	6.0%	16	12%	19	14.3%	44	33.1%	46	34.6%
The operational activities are of no damage to the people's environment.	13	9.8%	8	6.0%	26	19.6%	40	30.1%	46	34.6%
It enhances and promotes positive publicity about the company.	0	0%	14	10.5%	25	18.8%	55	41.4%	39	29.3%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.5 presents a frequency result on the benefits of CSR to Vodafone Ghana. From the survey, 34.6% of the respondents agreed that the company's image has been enhanced in terms of goodwill and that the company mostly benefits from CSR. 27.1% of the respondents on the other hand stated that the company always benefited from CSR in terms of enhanced image, whereas 16.5% of the respondents argued that the company does not often benefit from CSR regarding enhanced image. The survey indicates that 39.8% of the respondents agreed that CSR always benefited the company in terms of consistency and trustworthiness of the reputation of the company in society. Again, 31.6% of the respondents believed that the company mostly benefited from CSR in terms of reputation. However, 21.1% of the respondents stated that reputation of the company in society is often benefited from CSR engagements. In addition, 34.6% of the respondents stated that domestic investors are always attracted to the company through CSR while 31.1% of respondents emphasized that domestic investors are mostly attracted to the company through CSR. However, 14.3% of the respondents opined that domestic investors are often attracted to the company through CSR. The table also showed that 34.6% of the respondents stated that the company's operational activities from CSR are always of no damage to the people's environment while 30.1% of the respondents emphasized that the company's operational activities from CSR are mostly of no damage to the people's environment. Again, 19.6% of the respondents argued that the company's operational activities from CSR are often of no damage to the people's environment.

Furthermore, 41.4% of the respondents stated that the company's CSR mostly enhances and promotes positive publicity about the company while 29.3% of respondents emphasized that the the company's CSR always enhances and promotes positive publicity about the company. However, 18.8% of the respondents believed that the company's CSR often enhances and promotes positive publicity about the company. The data presented above addresses the benefits of corporate social responsibility (CSR) to Vodafone Ghana and answer objective one of this research study.

According to the results, the company mostly benefits from engaging in CSR. These benefits include enhanced brand image, and positive publicity. Also, the company's reputation is always consistent and trustworthy in the society. The results also show that the company's operational activities from CSR are always of no damage to the people's environment and it also attracts domestic investors to the company.

**Table 4.6: Benefits of CSR to Society**

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Supporting rural communities with building infrastructures	5	3.8%	26	19.5%	29	21.8%	45	33.8%	28	21.1%
Promoting health related programs	0	0%	4	3%	36	27.1%	51	38.3%	42	31.6%
Enhancing customer services about products in the market	1	0.8%	10	7.5%	31	23.3%	53	39.8%	38	28.6%
Supporting traditional festivals	7	5.3%	12	9%	35	26.3%	52	39.7%	27	20.3%
Consistently creating quality and safe products	1	0.8%	8	6%	35	26.3%	57	42.9%	32	24.1%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.6 presents a frequency result on the benefits of Vodafone Ghana's CSR to society. From the survey, 33.8% of the respondents agreed that the company's CSR is done by supporting rural communities with building infrastructures while 21.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that the company's CSR is done by supporting rural communities with building infrastructures. However, 21.8% of the respondents were uncertain that the company's CSR is done by supporting rural communities with building infrastructures. The survey also reveals that 38.3% of the respondents agreed that the company's CSR is done by promoting health related programs while 31.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that the company's CSR is done by promoting health related programs. However, 27.1% of the respondents were uncertain that the company's CSR is done by promoting health related programs. In addition, 39.8% of the respondents agreed that the company's CSR enhance customer services about products in the market while 28.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that the company's CSR enhance customer services about products in the market. However, 23.3% of the respondents were uncertain that the company's CSR enhance customer services about products in the market.

The table further showed that 39.7% of the respondents agreed that the company's CSR is done by supporting traditional festivals while 20.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that the company's CSR is done by supporting traditional festivals. However, 26.3% of the respondents were uncertain that the company's CSR is done by supporting traditional festivals.

Furthermore, 42.9% of the respondents agreed that the company's CSR consistently creates quality and safe products while 24.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that the company's CSR consistently creates quality and safe products. However, 26.3% of the respondents were uncertain that the company's CSR consistently creates quality and safe products. The above data presented on the benefits of Vodafone Ghana's corporate social Responsibility (CSR) to society answers objective two of this research study by suggesting that the company's CSR is done by supporting rural communities with building infrastructures and promoting health related programs. Also, the company's CSR enhances customer services about products in the market, supports traditional festivals and consistently creates quality and safe products.

**Table 4.7: Challenges with C.S.R**

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
There is an increase in the cost of operation with social responsibilities	1	0.8%	8	6%	4	3%	78	58.6%	42	31.6%
It causes a bizarre image on the company	7	5.3%	38	28.6%	22	16.5%	31	23.3%	35	26.3%
The reputation of the company is always at stake	7	5.3%	47	35.3%	14	10.5%	27	20.3%	38	28.6%
It leads to and promotes bad customer conviction	0	0%	42	31.6%	14	10.5%	43	32.3%	34	25.6%
It decreases the company's profits	8	6%	45	33.8%	19	14.3%	31	23.3%	30	22.6%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.7 presents a frequency result on the challenges faced by Vodafone Ghana in implementing its CSR. From the survey, 58.6% of the respondents agreed that the company's CSR increase the cost of operation with social responsibilities while 31.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that the company's CSR increase the cost of operation with social responsibilities. However, 3% of the respondents were uncertain that the company's CSR increase the cost of operation with social responsibilities. Also, 26.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that the company's CSR causes a bizarre image to the company while 23.3% of the respondents agreed that the company's CSR causes a bizarre image to the company. However, 28.6% of the respondents disagreed that the company's CSR causes bizarre image to the company.

The survey reveals that 28.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that the company's reputation is always at stake due to its CSR while 20.3% of the respondents agreed that the company's reputation is always at stake due to its CSR. However, 35.3% of the respondents disagreed that the company's reputation is always at stake due to its CSR.

In addition, 32.3% of the respondents agreed that the company's CSR leads to and promotes bad customer conviction while 25.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that the company's CSR leads to and promotes bad customer conviction. However, 31.6% of the respondents disagreed that the company's CSR leads to and promotes bad customer conviction.

Furthermore, 23.3% of the respondents agreed that the company's CSR decreases the company's profits while 22.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that the company's CSR decreases the company's profits. However, 33.8% of the respondents disagreed that the company's CSR decreases the company's profits.

The above data presented on the challenges faced by Vodafone Ghana in implementing its corporate social responsibility (CSR) answers the objective three of this research study by suggesting that the company's CSR increase the cost of operation with social responsibilities and promotes bad customer conviction. However, the company's CSR does not cause a bizarre



image to the company nor put the company's reputational always at stake. Also, the company's CSR decreases the company's profits.

**Table 4.8: Factors for Developing CSR**

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The customer's social awareness and education on CSR.	0	0%	0	0%	27	20.3%	63	47.4%	43	32.3%
The customer's health and lifestyle	0	0%	6	4.5%	34	25.6%	57	42.9%	36	27.1%
The customer's culture, religion and personality	8	6%	3	3.2%	17	12.8%	61	45.9%	44	33.1%
The willingness of customers to buy the product	0	0%	10	7.5%	29	21.8%	55	41.4%	39	29.3%
The stakeholder's priorities	0	0%	6	4.5%	33	24.8%	50	37.6%	44	33.1%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.8 presents a frequency result on the factors considered by Vodafone Ghana when designing CSR for society. From the survey, 47.4% of the respondents agreed that the customer's social awareness and education on CSR were considered for designing CSR while 32.3% of the respondents agreed that the customer's social awareness and education on CSR were considered for designing CSR. However, 20.3% of the respondents were uncertain that the customer's social awareness and education on CSR were considered for designing CSR.

The survey also reveals that 42.9% of the respondents agreed that the customer's health and lifestyle were considered for designing CSR while 27.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that the customer's health and lifestyle were considered for designing CSR. However, 25.6% of the respondents were uncertain that the customer's health and lifestyle were considered for designing CSR. Also, 45.9% of the respondents agreed that the customer's culture, religion and personality were considered for designing CSR while 33.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that the customer's culture, religion and personality were considered for designing CSR. However, 12.8% of the respondents were uncertain that the customer's culture, religion and personality were considered for designing CSR. The table further showed, 41.1% of the respondents agreed that the willingness of customers to buy the product was considered for designing CSR while 29.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that the willingness of customers to buy the product was considered for designing CSR. However, 21.8% of the respondents were uncertain that the willingness of customers to buy the product was considered for designing CSR.

Furthermore, 37.6% of the respondents agreed that the stakeholder's priorities were considered for designing CSR while 33.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that the stakeholder's priorities were considered for designing CSR. However, 24.8% of the respondents were uncertain that the stakeholder's priorities were considered for designing CSR.

The above data presented on the factors considered by Vodafone Ghana when designing corporate social responsibility (CSR) answers objective four of this research study by suggesting that the customer's social awareness and education on CSR, the customer's health and lifestyle were considered for designing CSR. Also, the customer's culture, religion and personality and the willingness of customers to buy the product were considered for designing CSR programs.

### **DISCUSSION**

The data presented above revealed that the corporate social responsibility of Vodafone Ghana Limited. As revealed by the data, the CSR of Vodafone Ghana Limited has become a major strategy and a vital instrument for enhancing its corporate image and encouraging both domestic and foreign stakeholder acceptance (Castka and Balzarora, 2018). This assertion was affirmed by the data presented above indicating that the corporate image of Vodafone Ghana Limited is mostly enhanced in terms of goodwill.

Thus, CSR always ensures that the reputation of Vodafone Ghana Limited in society is consistent and trustworthy. Vodafone Ghana Limited with its CSR always attract domestic investors by mostly enhancing and promoting positive publicity about the company. Vodafone Ghana Limited's operational activities on CSR are always of no damage to the people's environment. As revealed from the data, Vodafone Ghana Limited focuses on corporate social responsibility as a strategy for balancing their commitment to essential stakeholders in their business environment. The company does this by supporting rural communities by building infrastructures and promoting health related programs. These corporate social responsibility strategies by Vodafone Ghana Limited enhance their customer services through presentation of their products in the market. As suggested by Celik, et al. (2019), in their study, companies like Vodafone Ghana Limited use their CSR as initiatives to meet their business objectives and demands while contributing to improve the welfare of society. This assertion was affirmed by the data presented above indicating Vodafone Ghana Limited through its CSR, which leads to consistently creating quality and safe products to improve the welfare of society.

Corporate social responsibility comes with challenges in its implementation. The data from this study revealed that Vodafone Ghana Limited is faced with an increasing cost of operation with social responsibilities. Sometimes the cost involved in CSR can discourage the company from investing more in such a program. This can lead to bad customer conviction. However, the above challenges do not always put the reputation of the company at stake or cause bizarre image to the company. To ensure that Vodafone Ghana Limited does not decrease its profits due to corporate social responsibility, the company as revealed by the data considers the customer's social awareness and education on CSR before designing CSR. This is because it describes the customer's health, lifestyle, culture, religion and personality. Also, the company considers the willingness of customers to buy the product and the stakeholder's priorities before designing CSR

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

This research investigated the benefits of Corporate Social Responsibility to both the company and society using a case study on Vodafone Ghana Limited. The findings on the benefits of corporate social responsibility (CSR) to Vodafone Ghana revealed that:

- The company's image is enhanced in terms of goodwill and mostly benefits from CSR. The reputation of the company in society is also consistent and trustworthy due to the company's engagement in CSR.
- Also, the findings of this study revealed that domestic investors are always attracted to the company through CSR. In addition, the company's operational activities from CSR are always of no damage to the people's environment.
- Furthermore, the findings of this study revealed that the company's CSR mostly enhances and promotes positive publicity about the company.
- The findings on the benefits of Vodafone Ghana's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to society revealed that the company's CSR is done by supporting rural communities by building infrastructures and promoting health related programs.
- Also, the findings of this study revealed that the company's CSR enhances customer services regarding products in the market. The company's CSR also includes supporting traditional festivals which creates product awareness among the populace. Furthermore, the findings of this study revealed that the company's CSR consistently creates quality and safe products.

The findings on the challenges faced by Vodafone Ghana in implementing its Corporate social responsibility (CSR) revealed that:

- The company's CSR increased the cost of operation with social responsibilities. The company's CSR also leads to and promotes bad customer conviction.
- The findings on the factors considered by Vodafone Ghana when designing corporate social responsibility (CSR) for society revealed that the customer's social awareness and education on CSR were considered before designing CSR. The customer's health and lifestyle were also considered before designing CSR. Again, the findings of this study revealed that the customer's culture, religion and personality were considered before designing CSR. Lastly, the willingness of customers to buy the product was considered before designing CSR.
- Furthermore, the findings of this study revealed that the stakeholder's priorities were considered before designing CSR.

### **Recommendation**

Throughout working on this study, some suggestions concerning the expansion of the present study have arisen. First, in terms of data collection, the researchers suggest collecting data from different sources. This will include further case studies, interviews or face-to-face communication and different research method to allow for a larger sample size to help with generalizations. It is also recommended that the management should develop positive motives towards its corporate social responsibility programs to the society in which they operate. The stakeholder should try and link their priorities with corporate social responsibilities. Additionally, the corporate social responsibility of the organization should be aligned with government regulation to prevent issues that will pose several problems to the organization. It is further recommended that management improve their corporate 'stakeholder information strategy' to keep the general public better informed about corporate social responsibility initiatives to achieve legitimacy and good reputation. Stakeholder information strategy as a communication strategy has a narrow focus on sense giving and runs the risk of the 'self-promoters paradox'. The recommendations derived from this study suggest that Vodafone

Ghana should continue its CSR efforts by aligning them with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and engaging in partnerships with relevant stakeholders.

Finally, it is recommended that corporate organizations ensure that they communicate to the major stakeholders of their CSR involvement to make society know that they care about society's welfare. In doing this, corporate organizations should recognize that understanding society's stakeholder's perspectives and how the company's social responsibility programs are related to the needs and perspectives of the stakeholders is very important.

## **Conclusion**

The influence of Vodafone Ghana Limited in society is to an extent as a result of the various corporate social responsibility they are engaged in particularly through its Foundation. The study investigated the benefits of corporate social responsibility to both the company and society. This study concludes that corporate social responsibility enhances brand image, increases product awareness among existing and potential customers, attracts investors both domestic and foreign as well as positively impacts the society in which the company operates from. Again, although there are challenges regarding the effective implementation of CSR programs, which include high cost, it was observed from the study that the benefits that accrues to a company as a result of its CSR engagement far outweighs the challenges. Also, corporate social responsibility does not always put the company's reputation at stake. Through corporate social responsibility (CSR), corporate organizations can provide support to society in the form of building infrastructures, promoting health related programs, and supporting traditional festivals. This goes a long way to enhance customer perception of the organization's services and products in the market by consistently creating a positive public image.

## **Future Studies**

Future studies on corporate social responsibility can consider other variables on the cost of embarking on CSR by companies. This would provide stakeholders with information in terms of the cost bore by companies engaging in CSR. Also, this would inform the government on how to encourage corporate social responsibility by companies through tax incentives based on the cost incurred with their CSR. Other CSR researchers can consider the impact of the operational performance of companies involved in CSR as against other companies without CSR initiatives.

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