

Determinants to Effective Corporate Social Responsibility Application in Housing Projects in Abuja, Nigeria

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Received: 11 February 2025

Revision: 09 April 2025

Accepted: 18 May, 2025

Published: 18 April 2026. **Vol-7, Issue-1**

Cite as: Achoru, AM. (2026). Determinants to Effective Corporate Social Responsibility Application in Housing Projects in Abuja, Nigeria. *ICRRD Journal*, 7(1), 152-164.

Abstract: Housing remains one of the most key necessities to man therefore improved measures and strategies should be taken towards adequate provision. An integral way to achieve improved housing supply is through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) which ensures that determinants (drivers and barriers) to effective CSR application are taken into consideration in housing project delivery. The aim of the study was to explore the determinants to effective CSR application in housing projects. The objectives of the study were to: examine drivers to effective CSR application in housing projects; identify barriers to effective CSR application; determine the most potent drivers to effective CSR application in housing projects as well as the highest ranked barriers and establish the impact if the determinants on projects. This study collated drivers and barriers to effective CSR application from past literature and afterwards sampled opinion of professionals in four housing development projects in Abuja, Nigeria so as to determine the potentials and risks of these determinants. The study employed the descriptive research design, quantitative design method, case study research strategy, cross-sectional time horizon and multi-stage sampling technique. The data analysis tools adopted include Mean Rating and Kruskal Wallis Test. The study found key drivers to be: Commitment from key stakeholders; sufficient resources and Well-defined CSR alternatives. The top ranked barriers were: shareholders resistance to CSR; Improper budget and Inadequate human resources. The study recommends that information on the ranking of these determinants will inform project stakeholders on importance of their adoption during the course of executing housing projects to address challenges. It is intended that going forward, the extent of impact of the determinants can be further investigated to determine impact on project performance.

Keywords: *Housing Project, Corporate Social Responsibility, Determinants, Drivers, Barriers.*

INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) summarises practices that guide firms towards improving stakeholder relationships and interest while at the same time, generating business value (Nogeste, 2006). CSR can be said to be a self-regulating business strategy that helps a firm to be socially accountable to itself, its primary and secondary stakeholders and the general public in the course of its engagements. In light of this, companies need to be mindful of the nature and effect of the impact they have on all aspects of society, including economic, social and environmental.

Determinants to effective application of Corporate Social Responsibility basically refers to the drivers and barriers to successful corporate social responsibility implementation. Drivers are those factors that enable ease and success levels when applying corporate social responsibility, while CSR barriers are those which constraints CSR in any field of study. An easy way to determine drivers and barriers to the implementation of CSR can be by adopting the actual drivers and barriers in the area of service delivery for which CSR is to be implemented, because CSR is a responsible practice. This indicates that the divers and barriers of housing projects can be considered as drivers and barriers to implementing CSR in housing projects as they positively influence outcomes in CSR implementation.

Housing projects exist with drivers and barriers in the application of CSR in a housing projects which may be determined by the following criteria: The level of reputation which is based on parameters within construction firms such as: reliability; quality; honesty; trust; responsibility towards stakeholders and credibility; The level of relationship which involves enhancing service relationships for the benefit of primary and secondary housing project stakeholders, The high level of sensitivity to the needs of housing project stakeholders.

This involves the ability to respond to demands manifesting in the form of social needs. Sensitising construction firms as regards stakeholder needs and ways to assist plays a vital role in the smooth running of housing project activities and lastly the efficient use of resources and increasing their values which involves the availability of the construction firm to all the resources and the ability of their application in housing projects.

The aim of the research was to evaluate determinants to effective CSR application in housing projects, which help in addressing challenges that are detrimental to the project life cycle. A total of 25 drivers and 11 barriers were collated from past literature relating to housing projects. These determinants to effective CSR application were subjected to housing project participants to give their professional opinion on the potentials and criticality of the determinants in their projects. The Null hypotheses of the study was formulated being that: "There is no significant variation in the perception of stakeholders on the drivers and barriers to implementing CSR in managing housing projects in Abuja". This research received no specific financial support from any funding agency.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the Nigerian context, studies on the drivers to implementing CSR among construction related firms are few and the level of CSR uptake is not apparent (Ekong, Ujene & Ubong, 2014). From reviews, this is however not so in many developed nations. Rangan, Chase and Karim (2016) noted that in CSR practice, factors exist which can be viewed as social drivers used by domestic and foreign organisations. Effective implementation of CSR drivers in relation to safety and health requirements in workplace and environment during a housing project can reduce the cost of paying for litigation expenses, compensation and cost of delays resulting from accidents (fatal or non-fatal) (Preston, 2005). Proper implementation of CSR drivers in the housing project setting also enhances the economy and community lifestyle by reducing poverty and preserving the environment (Yun & Lee, 2011). CSR drivers are determined by the factors that affect CSR implementation in housing projects (Preston, 2005). Basically, drivers of CSR are: government legislation, expectation from firms, nature of service delivery, competitive advantage and corporate culture; while CSR barriers are: low willingness for CSR, lack of measurement systems, lack of strategic vision and lack of resources (Zinczuk, 2012).

Preston (2005) listed the drivers to the effective implementation of CSR in Australian housing projects to be: use of properly defined CSR objectives; a detailed CSR plan; good communication and feedback during the housing project; use of adequately skilled and qualified team; use of competent project managers, availability of resources; well allocated resources during the housing project; good leadership; adequate support from client; effective

monitoring and control; stakeholder engagement to include the use of sufficient housing project staff. Sung (2015) posited that among the many CSR drivers obtainable in housing project management, the following are most important to CSR implementation: the ability to maintain a positive image among stakeholders; peaceful activities in firm and community; periodic increase of wages; the increase in competitiveness; upholding the interest of clients; prestige in the environment due to sponsorship and charitable activities.

Walton (2010) opined that a barrier is a factor that prevents or averts a required goal or objective. Preston (2005) found barriers to CSR implementation in Australian housing projects to include: housing project risks; improper budget; inability to adapt with culture and religion in the housing project location; political instability and the lack of community participation in CSR activities. Further, Yun and Lee (2011) found and listed some of the barriers to effective application of CSR in housing projects to be: inadequate support from top management of firms; lack of employee motivation; lack of knowledge and monitoring capacity of market environment; faulty CSR policies; inability to integrate CSR with firms' practices; unavailability of proper SR working data; resistance of stakeholders to CSR practices and inadequate human resources. Bojar (2007) and Rangan, Chase and Karim (2016) opined that drivers and barriers to CSR implementation play a vital role in the nature of service outcome. Murray (2004) noted that strategizing with CSR drivers in service delivery influences positively. Firms practicing CSR may also be required to work with measurement systems (Hohnen & Potts, 2007). Measurement systems are tools required to quantify benefits for CSR implementation. The enhancement of CSR drivers in housing projects benefits in several ways; the construction firm itself, the community and the environment (Ojo & Oladokun, 2013). When the construction firm helps to improve the conditions of the community it operates in, the community becomes more prosperous and this ensures the firms survival (The CSR Digest, 2008). Drivers are clearly catalysts in CSR implementation therefore by implementing CSR in a community, the community will help the housing project firm in reverse because the community is the host to the construction activities.

As to the construction firms, an anticipated benefit may include increased branding and reputation at par with international construction firms. Drivers to the effective implementation of CSR in housing projects would give benefits to several groups; the construction firm itself, the community and the environment (Preston, 2005). Yun and Lee (2011) found that drivers to CSR implementation help housing development through: an increase in the commitment and motivation of employees; creating an organisational culture that enhances future developments; lowering the cost of supervision, to include enhancement in innovation and profit. According to Preston (2005), the enhancement of drivers to CSR implementation in housing projects benefits the society through: active participation of firms in solving social problems; environmental protection; activation of healthcare benefits; educational programmes for residents and ability to use employees' time; financing of sport, cultural and charity activities. Senawi, Abdul-Rahman, Mohamed and Pin (2016) noted the advantages to stakeholders on the adoption of drivers to CSR implementation in housing development to be that: CSR promotes the adoption of proper rules of engagement; CSR shapes the public image of the firm; CSR helps to attract more clients and strengthen their loyalty; adopting CSR in the field of environmental protection improves the environment, it helps to improve the quality of life of the countries' citizenry. Lomano (2010) advanced that drivers to the implementation of CSR benefit housing projects through: a better recognition for the firm; positive project reputation; savings; enhanced financial performance; greater ability to attract credible staff; organisational growth; to include easier access to project capital. The use of drivers to CSR helps to prevent or mitigate conflicts occurring between the firm and its internal and external environments in a housing project setting (Yam, Ismail & Tan, 2008).

In addition, proper application of CSR drivers in housing projects impacts on the economy, increases community lifestyle by reducing poverty and preserves the environment as determined in Malaysia (Yam, Ismail & Tan, 2008). Sung (2015) posited that CSR drivers in housing projects give a number of direct benefits to firm and community

which include: an increased brand value; better access to finance; a healthier and safer workforce; stronger risk management and corporate governance; a motivated people; client loyalty; an enhanced confidence and trust of stakeholders to include an enhanced public image. These also directly influence construction firms. Sung (2015) found that barriers to effective implementation of CSR in housing projects can lead to the following: the breach of the principle of profit maximisation; CSR may contribute to the dispersion of forces and resources of the firm and thus reduce its economic efficiency; many socially responsible actions are unprofitable because of high costs; to include firms expanding their social responsibility increase control over society. Yun and Lee (2011) found that the following negative effects can occur due to barriers to implementing CSR in housing projects: an increased cost constraint; a decreased awareness of CSR implementation; decreased human resource; a decrease in employee motivation; a decrease in top management commitment; a decreased understanding of CSR concept; enhanced duplication; increased over-emphasis on inspections and cheating; poor CSR technology usage and time resource management.

The implementation of CSR drivers in firms' practices brings more financial benefits than limitations (Iqbal, Ahmad, Hamad, Bashir & Sattar, 2014). This shows that CSR implementation should lean towards drivers, against barriers. Further to that, the all-important consideration that drivers and barriers in CSR determine project success. The benefits and non-benefits concerning CSR in housing projects must be considered as they give clues as to what to expect from CSR drivers and barriers. When a firm helps to improve the conditions of the community in which it operates through CSR, the community becomes more prosperous and this ensures the construction firm's survival (Tharp & Chadhury, 2008). By implementing CSR in the management of housing projects with a view to helping the community, the community can help the construction firm back as this drives reciprocal positivity. This also indicates a steady decline in housing project challenges. As CSR has been established to be beneficial to housing related developments in a myriad of ways, it became necessary to review the Carrols CSR pyramid which is presented in figure 1, and can be vital in determining and implementing workable drivers and barriers to effective CSR application in housing development as it encompasses ethical (justness and fairness), legal (compliance with laws), philanthropic (community development) and economic responsibilities (prompt payment of taxes and wages).

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized the descriptive research design. The descriptive design flows effectively with the Research Onion developed by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007), hence its adoption also. As usual, the research philosophy was guided along Ontology, Epistemology and Axiology stance. Ontology was inclined towards subjectivism because CSR has been conceptualised differently by different researchers and its application varies from place to place. In addition, the measures adopted in applying CSR in the management of housing project life cycle phases so as to prevent and mitigate challenges are of human perception and choice. Epistemology was inclined towards pragmatism because CSR is a social phenomenon with subjective and objective meanings. Accordingly, the research questions were both descriptive (what) and explanatory (how) in nature, suggesting the application of both subjective and objective data. Quantitative and qualitative approaches (mixed design) were also combined for the purpose of achieving the research objectives. The axiological suggestion was inclined in the direction of value laden axiology because data on the application of CSR in each phase of a housing project life cycle was obtained and analysed with the use of different methods and techniques. Furthermore, the researcher was also not completely independent because of interactions between the researcher and the researched were likely to influence the study value.

The research approach adopted was mixed design method, while the research strategy was case study research strategy. Research time horizon was cross-sectional as it involved a shortened and specific duration. The population of the study was unknown considering that it was impossible to determine the total number of

professionals in the built industry in Abuja Nigeria at the time of the study, as many professionals wouldn't have been registered with professional bodies, despite being in active practice.

The study adopted the mixed design and the sampling technique included questionnaire (Purposive) and interview (Judgmental). However, this paper centers on the quantitative results. The methods of data collection were: Questionnaires and Interviews for primary data; and viewing of project documents and CSR policy documents for secondary data. Methods of data analysis included Mean rating and Kruskal Wallis test. The sample size of the study was pegged at 138 respondents as determined by the formula and steps presented below, as suggested by Napierala (2014):

$$n = \frac{Z^2 (p)(q)}{e^2} \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

Where: n = Sample size

e = Acceptable margin of error

Z = Confidence level obtained from the Z score

p = Probability of success (number expected to be returned)

q = 1-p Probability of failure (expected number of un-retrieved instrument)

For this study, the following parameters were used at confidence level of 95%

$$p = 0.9$$

$$q = 1-0.9 = 0.1$$

$$z = 1.96, \text{ for confidence level of } 95\%$$

$$e = 5\%$$

This implies that:

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 (0.9) (0.1)}{(0.05)^2} = \frac{(3.8416) \times (0.09)}{0.0025} = 138$$

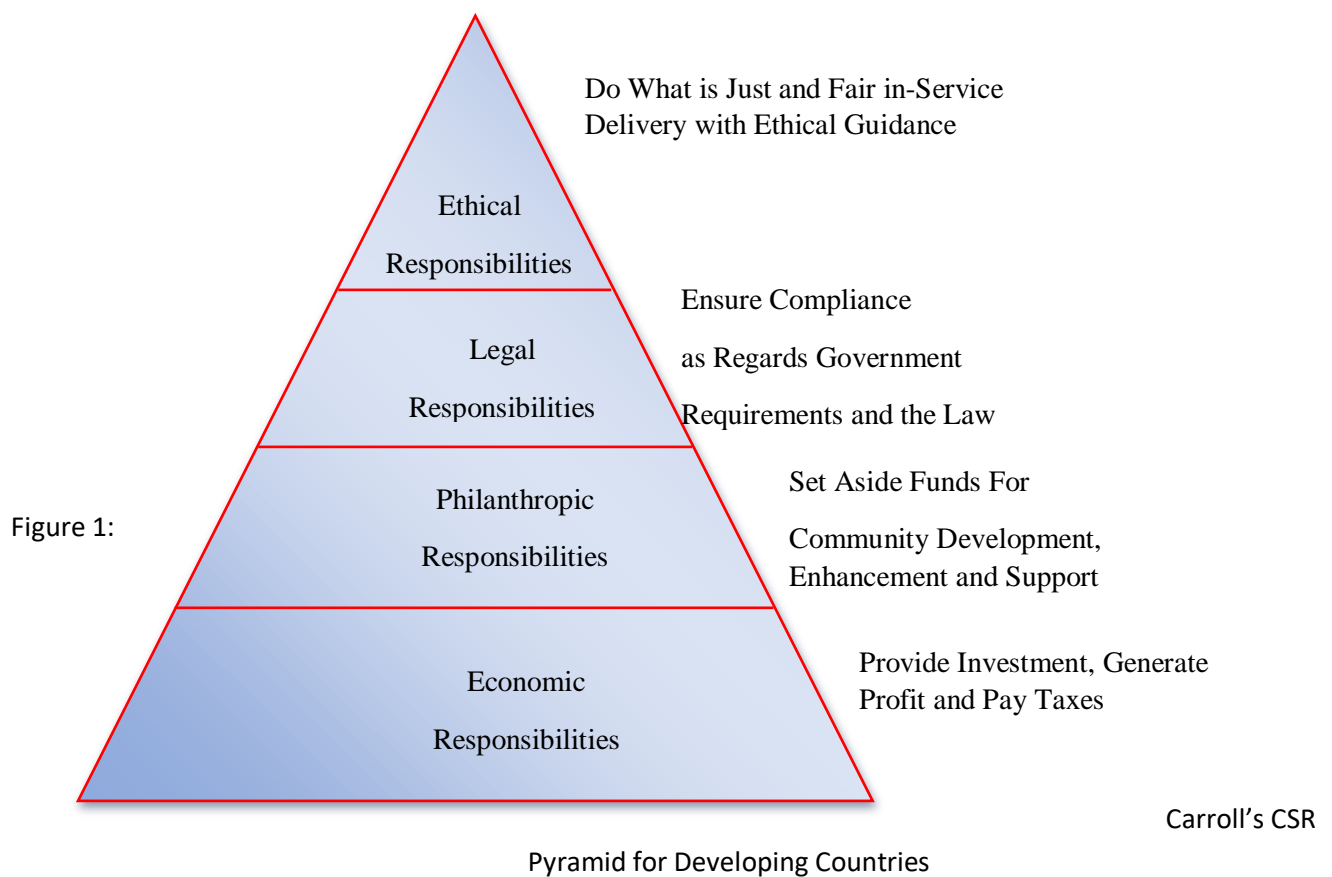
Results of Questionnaire and Hypothesis Test (Drivers)

For the drivers, Commitment from key stakeholders was ranked 1st with a mean score of 5.00, Sufficient resources ranked 2nd (4.98), Well defined CSR objectives was ranked 3rd (4.95), Having competent managers was ranked 4th (4.94) while Integration of proper CSR values and vision ranked 5th with a MS of 4.22. This indicated that the five drivers listed above, were the major drivers for the implementation of CSR in managing housing projects in Abuja. An examination of the submissions of the respondents showed that, there drivers were ranked differently by the different groups. For instance, Commitment from key stakeholders was ranked 1st by contractors, consultants and clients and 2nd by government officials and had a Kruskal Wallis sig. P value of 0.930. Sufficient resources, was ranked 1st by contractors, consultants and clients and 6th by government officials with a sig. P value of 0.845. Well defined CSR objectives was ranked 1st by both consultants and clients, 2nd by government and 10th by contractors with a sig. P value of 0.175. Integration of proper CSR values and vision was ranked 1st by contractors and consultants, 2nd by government and 11th by clients with a sig. P value of 0.163. This indicated an insignificant variation in the opinion of respondents, therefore for this group of drivers, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant variation in the perception of stakeholders on the drivers to implementing CSR in managing housing projects in Abuja, was accepted. However, Competent managers was ranked 1st by contractors, 9th by consultants, 2nd by government and 6th by clients with sig. P value of 0.038 indicating significant variation therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant

variation in the perception of stakeholders among the drivers to implementing CSR in managing housing projects in Abuja was rejected.

Results of Questionnaire and Hypothesis Test (Barriers)

For barriers, Shareholder's resistance to CSR was ranked 1st with a mean score of 4.97; Improper budget came 2nd (4.93); Inadequate human resources ranked 3rd (4.92); Risks associated with CSR in housing came 4th (4.89) while High cost of CSR implementation ranked 5th with a MS of 4.85. This showed that shareholders resistance to CSR, improper budget, inadequate human resources, risks associated with CSR in housing and High cost of CSR implementation were the major hindrances to the implementation of CSR in the management of housing projects in Abuja.



Source: Fernandez and Alvaro (2009).

In terms of rankings by the individual groups, shareholders resistance to CSR was ranked 1st by contractors, consultants and government and 3rd by clients and had a sig. P value of 0.003 while risks associated with the implementation of CSR in housing was ranked 1st by consultants, 3rd by contractors and government and 4th by clients with a sig. P value of 0.041. For these two barriers, there was significant variation in the submissions of the respondents,

hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is significant variation in the perception of stakeholders among the barriers to implementing CSR in managing housing projects in Abuja, was rejected.

On the other hand, improper budget was ranked 1st by clients, 3rd by contractors, 4th by both consultants and government with a corresponding Kruskal Wallis sig. P value of 0.168. Inadequate human resources, was ranked 1st by contractors and clients, then 4th by consultants and government and had a sig. P value of 0.295. High cost of CSR implementation was ranked 3rd by contractors and consultants and 5th by government and clients respectively with a sig. P value of 0.295 indicating an insignificant variation in the opinion of respondents therefore for these three barriers, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant variation in the perception of stakeholders on the barriers to implementing CSR in managing housing projects in Abuja, was accepted.

DISCUSSION

This study further investigated the factors that determine the effective application of CSR in the management of housing projects, as well as the factors that hinder CSR application in the management of housing projects. Commitment from key stakeholders reflects the ability for stakeholders to carry out their respective responsibilities considering time, quality and target towards ensuring project success (Preston, 2005). With high commitment levels, stakeholders' perspectives can be widely sampled bearing in mind the quality and in-depth ideas being gathered, as previously suggested by Rangan, Chase and Karim (2016). This also makes stakeholders perspective more valued, thereby achieving competitive advantage for construction firms. Decisions made originally have been improved which influenced housing project outcomes. Stakeholders informed that in Abuja housing projects, trust and confidence in the production process have been built by stakeholders within and between the project life cycle phases. High levels of commitment breeds improved communication by way of information sharing and gathering which limits risks before they become threats to housing projects, as stakeholder needs and views can be harnessed towards taking informed decisions. A contented, more productive and more accountable housing production setting has often been achieved, thereby sustaining decisions and plans in housing projects. The sufficiency of resources available to a housing project is a major factor in determining the outcome of the project (Abdellatif & Othman, 2006).

Respondents in the case studies in Abuja indicated that sufficient resources boost productivity and improve employees' morale in housing project delivery which corresponds to the findings of Onuachu (2019). With sufficient resources, more technologically advanced and better resources were acquired to advance housing projects efficiently. Also, the services of quality employees were engaged which ensured better execution within a set timeline. Confidence levels were maintained as there was no limitation to quality. Sufficient resources also ensured that employee wages were reviewed periodically and promptly paid. It also aided effective payment of taxes and the provision of health and safety requirements to protect housing project workers.

Table 1: Drivers and Barriers to CSR Implementation in Housing Projects

Drivers	Mean Score	Rank	Kruskal Wallis Value
Commitment from Key Stakeholders	5.00	1	0.930
Sufficient Resources	4.98	2	0.845
Well Defined CSR Objectives	4.95	3	0.175
Competent Managers	4.94	4	0.038

Integration of Proper CSR Values and Vision	4.94	4	0.163
Adequately Skilled& Qualified Team	4.93	6	0.057
Support from Client	4.91	7	0.068
A Detailed CSR Plan	4.91	7	0.068
Effective Communication of CSR Approach, Strategy and Aim	4.84	9	0.000
Enhance Involvement in CSR Development and Implementation	4.83	10	0.000
High Level CSR Awareness Creation	4.72	11	0.014
CSR Stakeholder Engagement	4.70	11	0.004
Sufficient Project Staff	4.67	13	0.000
Effective Monitoring and Control	4.66	14	0.039
Good Communication and Feedback	4.60	15	0.046
Well Allocated Resources	4.60	15	0.000
Effective CSR Reporting	4.54	17	0.000
Good Leadership	4.46	18	0.019
Maintaining Positive Image	4.23	19	0.203
CSR Improvement and Innovation	4.23	20	0.369
Charitable Activities	4.22	21	0.000
Peaceful Activities	4.21	22	0.169
Openness to Learning	3.88	23	0.511
Periodic Wage Increase	3.71	24	0.527
Competitiveness	3.63	25	0.664

Barriers	Mean Score	Rank	Kruskal Wallis Value
Shareholders Resistance To CSR	4.97	1	0.003
Improper Budget	4.93	2	0.168
Inadequate Human Resources	4.92	3	0.295
Risks Associated with Implementing CSR	4.89	4	0.041
High Cost of CSR Implementation	4.85	5	0.295
Non-Availability of Authentic Data For CSR	4.60	6	0.041
Bad CSR Policies	4.46	7	0.000
Culture and Religious Differences and Setbacks	4.26	8	0.056
Inadequate Community Participation In CSR	4.14	9	0.103
Political Instability	3.86	10	0.553
Poor Employee Motivation	3.84	11	0.016

Source: Field Work (2021)

Well defined CSR objectives ensure that the application of CSR in the management of housing projects is well elucidated and can be properly implemented as it streamlines the best CSR strategies and responsible practices available and applicable to firms towards achieving project goals. It was found that in Abuja housing projects, well defined CSR objectives if upheld, can be advantageous to service delivery such as ensuring proper accountability, transparency, ethical behaviours, maintaining and obeying rules of law and human rights in housing projects. Well defined CSR objectives created a better image for firms in Abuja by exposing the practices and achievements and the impact on society which further enhanced firms' reputation. Client and stakeholder loyalty was assured in housing projects due to sufficient use and saving of operation costs to include better financial performance. Furthermore, with an enhanced financial performance, construction firms in Abuja secured easier access to capital when needed. The competency levels of a manager greatly affect housing project outcomes (Nwosu, 2010). Competent managers ensure better vision and direction which improves chances of achieving better results by prioritising resources and ensuring their efficient use. Construction firms in Abuja indicated that the scope, schedule and budget in their housing projects were properly set due to the managers and managerial teams which take sensitive decisions. Cost of resources was able to be kept within budget at times which improved productivity and work quality in housing projects. Competent managers encourage consistent communication amongst client, staff and suppliers as well as project host communities, thereby gaining competitive advantage and satisfying the needs of stakeholders across board (Doloi, 2013). This has created efficiency in mitigating risks capable of derailing projects in Abuja. The use of competent managers in Abuja housing projects has helped to control scope of work by regulating office and site activities which increased efficiency as there became an improved synergy, thereby achieving project expectations. Furthermore, it also improves the chances of successfully implementing CSR.

It was gathered during the study that the first step in the integration of proper CSR values and vision was to ensure that the responsible constituents of a proper CSR strategy in housing projects is put in writing by way of a working document for the purpose of ease of clarity and understanding. Also, CSR constituents can be embedded into construction firms planning and budget process as suggested by Ogban et al., (2022), thereby creating a CSR management system. A CSR management system ensured that CSR considerations were part of all project considerations. In integrating proper CSR values and vision, a process was introduced for employees to raise issues and concerns with any of the responsibilities and strategies for appropriate and timely adjustments to be made. Considering its advantages, it becomes pertinent for CSR application to be supported by shareholders and stakeholders in housing projects. Project performance with CSR constituents can further be communicated to all stakeholders at intervals to buttress its importance in advancing housing projects.

On the other hand, are the hindrances to CSR application in the management of housing projects. As CSR has been established to be beneficial to service delivery including the execution of housing projects in almost every clime, shareholders resistance to CSR only means neglect of some key requirements, thereby leading to lowered operating performance among stakeholders and vulnerability of projects. This also means risk in regards to capital investment and financial losses in accordance with the position of Servaes and Tamayo (2013). In Abuja, respondents opined that the negativity concerned with shareholders resistance to CSR affected brand value and brand image of construction firms in the long run with negative implications on client loyalty and patronage. Construction practitioners in Abuja revealed that any resistance to CSR implementation in housing projects has prevented the chance of engaging and retaining quality employees to advance projects and has the capacity to limit employee engagement. As CSR reflects responsible practices towards stakeholders (Zinczuk, 2012), CSR resistance limits employee engagement which can have a negative implication on societal gains, human rights, education benefits, health and safety as well as environmental sustainability.

Operational savings will surely be reduced as proper coordinating strategies may be absent which can result in difficulty to access funding towards advancing projects. Effective budget and budgeting in a responsible way remains

an integral item that can be beneficial to the management of housing projects however, budgeting in housing projects is many times improperly done. It was observed that budgets, which are periodic, often fail to capture the basic requirements or financial projections required for projects. A resultant and noticeable effect in the Abuja setting is that credit was affected which limited the ability to achieve targeted financial goals as well as difficulty in projecting. Reduction in target of financial goals also leads to firms' inability to make savings. With an un-coordinated financial system as a result of improper budget, the risk of overspending to compromise finances or underspending to compromise standards for profitability yields loss of financial control as well as financial contentment.

Overspending also leads to the possibility of accruing debts due to shortage of running capital required to advance housing projects. Furthermore, the possibility of numerous cash flow issues tends to arise which can further lead to emergencies which are unprepared for one of which is, the criticality in firms' inability to pay wages and delay payment of bills. These factors greatly affect housing project goals and success, thereby leading to housing deficit.

Respondents in Abuja expressed that inadequacy of human resources has affected housing projects countlessly. Inadequate human resources only mean inadequate labour especially skilled, required to drive project activities along the life cycle phases. Inadequate labour leads to increased work load on available employees with a negative effect of shortened breaks and resting times which has caused employee exhaustion and brain drain in different climes (Saluja & Srivastava, 2023). With shortened rest time, health issues are likely to impede productivity, thereby affecting housing projects by way of cost and time overruns as well as compromised quality. Inadequacy of human resources which is as a result of poor firm policies, insufficient funds and corruption or inefficient hiring or engagement process has greatly affected housing projects via lowered profitability and client dissatisfaction. Inadequate human resources present inadequate training and poor team building (Ma et al., 2023). Some life cycle phase responsibilities are likely to be omitted due to pressure which will result in compromised housing project delivery. Project risks present the possibility to affect project schedule which influences the project cost. The likelihood of a poor schedule has negative implications on performance, thereby affecting operation within the project life cycle phases. A reduced revenue as a result of risks hampers the ability to advance as well as complete the housing project. In many cases, litigation had been instigated against construction firms in Abuja, leading to financial losses, time wastage and a dent in the reputation of these firms. The need for CSR has proven to be very important to service delivery (Kolk & Pinkse, 2006).

The need for the application of CSR strategies as well as responsible practices in the project life cycle phases cannot be over-emphasised; however, CSR application always comes at a cost. In the long run, the benefits always outweigh the cost. The ability and willingness to make provision for CSR yields proceeds while its inability comes with consequences to housing projects. For instance, non-implementation of CSR comes with negative business reputation and negative relationships which have the capacity to negatively influence public trust, as CSR provides the opportunity for construction firms to work responsibly by inculcating societal needs. Non-implementation of CSR due to cost deficit can equally affect firms' access to capital as well as operation costs of housing projects, thereby affecting financial performance. This in turn means reduced ability to retain quality employees and even when retained, the professional and personal growth of employees may be affected leading to decreased motivation and performance. Based on the negative implications as regards non-implementation of CSR in housing projects, there becomes a high likelihood for a decreased client satisfaction and loyalty which negatively influences project sustainability.

CONCLUSION

The crux of the study was to evaluate the determinants (drivers and barriers) to effective CSR application in housing projects. The study revealed that there were decisions which was taken in the projects that were not well contemplated and had negative implications on the project. In some cases, decisions were taken with the intention to drive CSR practices with a resultant burden to project shareholders. A number of stakeholders of housing projects were

not aware of the drivers that influence positive outcomes in a project. In addition, there was also inadequacy of knowledge on where and when to activate the use of the drivers so as to enhance the process. Many firms in Abuja failed to determine the workable and achievable drivers to CSR implementation which can conveniently advance their housing projects. On the flip side, enough has also not been done to determine the most detrimental barriers to CSR implementation so as to be weary of such barriers in housing projects.

A number of firms were not knowledgeable as to what to look out for in their decision making on drivers and barriers. Project participants rarely determine the most workable of drivers which can positively impact on their projects which is many times resultant in loss of benefits that ought to accrue thereon. There were also inadequate consideration and adoption of drivers despite its potentials in advancing housing projects. Barriers, which may be man-made or natural affect projects negatively, however, some barriers are unavoidable in projects and can only be effectively managed on a case-specific basis considering project peculiarities as they tend to affect all phases of the project life cycle.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with the findings of the study as well as the conclusion, the following recommendations are suggested to effectively engage determinants to effective CSR application in housing project: In order to ensure the sustainability of construction firms' practices in executing housing projects, proper attention and enumeration should be given to choices during decision making which can be achieved by way of inclining towards utilising housing project drivers as well as mitigating inherent barriers; Information on the ranking of these determinants will inform project stakeholders on importance of their adoption during the course of executing housing projects towards addressing challenges; While adopting drivers to the later, a balance should also be struck towards satisfying stakeholder needs without having to over-burden shareholders; Steps need to be taken by way of proper decision making and effective adoption thereafter so as to determine ways to avoid every form of barrier that can affect the housing project life cycle phases; Seminars can be organised regularly by either private organisations or public, where housing project participants can interface and share experiences so as to determine workable drivers and avoidable barriers and; Consideration, scrutiny and adoption of drivers to effective CSR application in housing projects should be made mandatory as benefits in adoption cannot be over-emphasized.

Funding: The research did not receive financial assistance from any funding entity.

Conflicts of Interest: The author has no conflicts of interest to disclose concerning this study.

Declarations: This manuscript has not been published to any other journal or online sources.

Data Availability: The author has all the data employed in this research and is open to sharing it upon reasonable request.

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