

# CSR as a Strategic Management Tool: Expectations and Realities of Two MNCs in Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

*Corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a concept has been a subject of debate in the management cycle for decades. However, the incorporation of CSR, competitive advantage and strategic management into top management decision making processes, forms a set of new alliances that are beginning to gain attention. This paper examined the strategic alliances of these highly volatile but significantly critical components in order to determine the extent to which these three seemingly incongruous factors can be achieved in reality within a developing country such as Nigeria. Using a comparative case study approach, the activities of two multinationals - Shell Plc and Coca Cola – were examined. The critical success factors were explained based on the strategies adopted in order to determine the impact on the society and whether they were in line with stakeholders' expectations. Findings however indicate that there has been an interplay of high level forces which has resulted in the unsavoury news emanating from the oil producing communities in Nigeria, unfortunately, the activities of Coca Cola in both the content and context of their operations have received little or no attention. This paper contributes to the scarce literature of this discourse within the African continent in general and Nigerian state in particular as well as sets a precedent for future research.*

*Keywords:* Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Management Cycle, Multinational Companies, Nigeria, Stakeholders

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## INTRODUCTION

The world of corporate social responsibility is one that could be described as entangled and interwoven, as well as one that is neck-deep in the murky waters of management all over the world. Multinational corporations (MNC), otherwise known as trans-national corporation

(TNC) or multinational enterprise (MNE), are acronyms which are often used interchangeably to describe international organisations that produces good and/or services which are supplied to more than one country.

Fassin (2008 p.366) stated that MNCs are corporations that have their management headquarters in one country, known as the home

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