


Corporate Philanthropy and Corporate Reputation During a Global Health Crisis: Insights from the COVID-19 Pandemic in Nigeria

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to examine the nexus between corporate philanthropy (CP) and corporate reputation (CR) from the prisms of a global health emergency, cultural orientation and African context. The study adopted a cross sectional survey design. Purposive sampling procedure was adopted in the selection of 200 respondents and data were collected from the 200 respondents (Recipients of palliatives) through a structured questionnaire. Considering organizations as the unit of analysis, the data were aggregated, averaged and analyzed through paired (dependent-sample) t-test, multivariate regression and moderation analysis. The results demonstrate that corporate philanthropy before and during the pandemic had a positive effect on corporate reputation, there was a significant difference in the perceived corporate reputation before and during COVID-19 pandemic while cultural orientation and COVID-19 health crisis orientation moderated the relationship between CP and CR during the pandemic. This study is the first of its kind to empirically examine the link between CP and CR from the lens of cultural milieu, global health emergency of COVID-19 and in African context. The study contributed to management theory and practice through critical findings from the dimension of a global health crisis.

Keywords: Corporate Philanthropy, Corporate Reputation, COVID-19 Health Crisis, Cultural Orientations, Corporate Firms, Nigeria.

Introduction

Corporate reputation (CR) is a critical intangible asset of firms, and the recognition stakeholders accord organizations based on the evaluation of good deeds of entities. CR is the cognitive mapping of stakeholders over attributes of corporate bodies based on their subjective assessments, which depends on the capacity of entities to fulfilling the expectations and interests of stakeholders (Puncheva-Michelotti, McColl, Vocino & Michelotti, 2014; Pérez-Cornejo, de Quevedo-Puente, & Delgado-García, 2019). Corporate philanthropy (CP) centres on mitigating social problems through a discretionary social investment of firms and thus builds and enhances the corporate reputation of firms (Xu et al., 2022). Prior studies of scholars demonstrate that corporate philanthropy contributes to financial performance and sociopolitical legitimacy (Wang & Qian, 2011) while Seifert, Morris and Bartkus (2004) reported that corporate philanthropy does not have a significant

effect on firm performance but that firms' available discretionary resources and level of financial performance that influence the level of corporate giving. In the view of Su and Sauerwald (2018), corporate philanthropy improves firm value due to the cordiality and corporation between firms and stakeholders. In recent times, it has been underscored that corporate giving should not only be with altruistic tendencies, but corporate philanthropy should be with a strategic intent to realize the long-term goals of entities (Saia, Carroll & Buchholtz, 2003; Porter & Kramer, 2002).

A handful of prior studies attempted to establish the link between CP and CR with unclear mixed empirical evidence and argue that there is a nexus between corporate philanthropy and corporate reputation which is an intangible resource of firms (Szócs, Schlegelmilch, Rusch, & Shamma, 2016; Brammer & Millington, 2005). However, few studies were conducted in Western countries. Nigeria as a country has witnessed tremendous dimensions of operations and activities from corporate entities, impacting the physical environment and socio-economic life of the country. Accordingly, varied forms of corporate social responsibilities among organizations are common phenomena in Nigeria and particularly in the Niger Delta region of the country (Osemeke, Adegbite, & Adegbite, 2016). Nonetheless, an investigation into the link between CP and CR in the Nigerian context is missing. This is surprising as Nigeria is an emerging economy and is referred to as the giant of Africa (Sodiq, 2017, Bala & Tar, 2021) with an estimated 191 million people and it is counted as the most populated country on the African continent. Aside, the country's economy recorded a nominal GDP of \$ 1trillion in 2017 is far above the combined GDP of fourteen countries in the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS) (Ode-Ichakpa, Cleeve, Amadi & Osemeke, 2020). This is why research evidence between CP and CR in Nigeria is of a critical relevance in Africa.

The national ethos and sociocultural matrix to a large extent are determinants of individual and corporate giving and corporate philanthropic activities are driven by the national shared values and value systems which are shaped by culture (McDonald & Scaife, 2011). The cultural value system in Nigeria as an African country differs from the Western world. The national collectivist cultural pattern of Nigeria can influence the perception of diverse stakeholders of corporate entities (Ojeme & Robson, 2020), and as noted in the current corporate social responsibility (CSR) literature that the differing national cultural dimensions dictate managerial decisions for corporate philanthropy across various geographic regions and countries (Thanetsunthorn, 2015). As indicated by prior research, religion as an element of culture plays a significant role in the philanthropic disposition of corporate entities, perceptions of stakeholders over social investments and donations of entities in the face of the current health crisis (Du, Jian, Du, Feng, & Zeng, 2014; Li, Li, Wang, Jiao & Pang, 2021)). Nigeria has two predominant religions of Christianity and Islam which propagate the doctrine of philanthropic giving. Nonetheless, the existing studies examined the nexus between religion, corporate philanthropy and corporate performance but the interaction of cultural orientation between CP and CR remains a knowledge gap which the current study aims to address. Consequently, in the context of African cultural patterns and

to examine the moderation of cultural orientation, this scenario requires replication of the study between CP and CR in a different geographic and cultural milieu to validate prior research findings with a view to generalizing the findings in African economies.

During the global health crisis originating from the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) and the declaration of COVID-19 by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a global pandemic on 11 March 2020, thousands of lives have been lost, activities of corporate bodies, public agencies, economies and societies have been disrupted in an unprecedented scale (Liu, Lee, & Lee, 2020; Bharti, 2021). There has been a flurry of philanthropic giving and social investment among corporate citizens consequent upon the outbreak of COVID-19 in Nigeria (Unah, 2020). Furthermore, the previous studies investigated the link between CP and CR but scholars have not explored the relationship between CP and CR in the context of responding to global health crises. This is one critical justification for investigating the nexus between CP and CR in the context of global health emergency of COVID-19. To date, there is a lack of empirical literature and it appears that no study has examined the effect of CP on CR during the global health crisis in both Western and African countries. Accordingly, the link between CP and CR requires full exploration and investigation to bridge the knowledge gap.

This study makes salient contributions to theory and practice. Firstly, the paper makes a significant contribution to management literature by providing penetrating insights from the prisms of an emerging economy such as Nigeria. Secondly, consistent with the crisis, the paper proffers a salient contribution to management scholarship by examining and comparing the perceived link between CP and CR before and during the outbreak of COVID-19. Thirdly, another contribution of the study is by comparing the diversity in stakeholders' perception of corporate reputation before and during the outbreak of covid-19. Fourthly, the moderation of collectivist cultural and religious orientations of stakeholders in the link between CP and CR of entities and finally, the moderation of COVID-19 health crisis orientation on the relationship between corporate philanthropy and corporate reputation is of significant relevance. Thus, the objectives of this paper are to: (1) examine the effect of CP on CR in corporate entities before covid-19; (2) ascertain the effect of CP on CR in corporate entities during the covid-19 health crisis; (3) determine the difference in stakeholders' perception of corporate reputation before and during the covid-19 health emergency (4) examine the moderation of cultural orientation on the relationship between CP and CR in corporate entities, (5) examine the moderation of covid-19 health crisis orientation on the relationship between CP and CR in corporate entities. The rest of the paper is organized as follows: The first section is to review the literature for theory and hypothesis development, the second section is to explain the methodology employed in the study, the third section focuses on data analysis and the fourth section is a discussion of results and the final aspect deals with the limitations and direction for further studies.

Theory and Hypothesis Development

The study is anchored in the stakeholder paradigm which theorizes that managers with the responsibility of overseeing public and private entities must protect the interest of all parties who have a stake in corporate bodies. The theoretical root is a set of propositions which imply that managers of corporate bodies have obligations to groups of stakeholders (Freeman 2015).

Stakeholders are groups “who have a stake in the actions of the corporations”, a stakeholder is an individual or a group of persons “who can affect or is affected”, by decisions and achievements of managers and administrative echelon of private and public organizations (Freeman, 2010; 2015; Freeman & Reed, 1983; Freeman, 1984; Goodpaster, 1991). Further, the theory presupposes that stakeholders are the foundations upon which corporate bodies exist on the grounds that without their support, corporate entities collapse. Scholars have attempted to individuate stakeholders as internal and external, primary and secondary, domestic and international, direct and indirect (de Graaf, 2016; Marques, Bernardo, Presas, & Simon, 2019).

In line with the position of Carroll, (1991), stakeholders consist of shareholders, employees, customers and clients, suppliers, investors, communities and governments and have diverse and conflicting interests which management contends to ensure a balance and meet their expectations. The expectations become the differing interests of groups and thus, corporate bodies are to fulfill economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities. In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, corporate bodies are to shoulder the four dimensions of social responsibilities due to the impact and managerial implications of the global health crisis in the world. Within the corporate philanthropic responsibility framework and in the context of this study, all category of stakeholders is affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and stakeholders expect corporate entities to engage their economic resources for philanthropic giving for the common and public good of society (Carroll, 2021). The corporate engagement of emergency philanthropic funding, donation of relief materials and medical supplies for communities and governments with altruistic and strategic intent during the COVID-19 pandemic translates into reputation capital for the firms. Drawing on the classification of internal stakeholders, external stakeholders and stakeholders’ perceptions of the CR and CP to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, literature germane to CP and CR, dislocations of business sectors, economies and societies are reviewed to support the hypotheses development.

Corporate philanthropy and corporate reputation before the outbreak of COVID-19

Evaluating the existing studies before the outbreak of COVID-19, Szocs et al (2016) examined the cause assessment, corporate philanthropy and corporate reputation. The findings demonstrated that corporate philanthropy improved customers’ and non-customers’ perceptions of corporate reputation dimensions. Prior studies have ascertained the link between corporate philanthropy and corporate reputation which was empirically determined across different industries and findings indicated that firms with exceeding

investments in philanthropic activities had a better reputation than others which committed smaller funds into social investments, albeit this varies among industries (Brammer & Millington, 2005). Williams and Barrett (2000) in a related study attempted to establish the relationship between corporate philanthropy, corporate crimes and corporate reputation. The results from the study showed that corporate philanthropy enhanced corporate reputation while firms that engaged in illegal activities by flouting Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations experienced a diminution in corporate reputation. However, corporate philanthropy positively moderates the relationship between corporate crime and corporate reputation.

Corporate philanthropy and corporate reputation during the outbreak of COVID-19

With the contagion of COVID-19, governments initiated fiscal policy options to fight the global health emergency while not for profit organizations, corporate entities, and public agencies engaged in philanthropic activities to protect the lives of diverse stakeholders to fulfill philanthropic responsibilities (Visser, 2020; Dong & Lu, 2020). Public agencies and corporate citizens distributed medical supplies and personal protective equipment and disinfectants to their workers with the intent to protect employees, thereby demonstrated philanthropic responsibilities and becoming good employers in the cognition of the workforce. Corporate entities engaged in advocacy of preventive measures and ensure that staff adhere to social distancing, washing of hands, and regular use of hand sanitisers. Accordingly, public agencies and corporate bodies demonstrated corporate giving to promote corporate reputation. In line with He and Harris (2020) study of the impact of Covid-19 on corporate social responsibility and marketing philosophy, some manufacturing organizations in the UK transformed their factories to manufacture ventilators, personal protective equipment, other and materials and donated to governments and hospitals. Vodafone provided free airtime to customers while supermarkets donated food items to charitable organisations. Thus, the outbreak of Covid-19 becomes a philanthropic opportunity for firms to build good relations and promote corporate image (He & Harris, 2020). The governments of African countries solicited relief funds from private organizations to deal with the Coronavirus pandemic (Ozili, 2020). The government is one of the external stakeholders and expects corporate organizations to be good corporate citizens. The call for funds from governments to fight the COVID-19 pandemic propelled corporate and public sector organizations to engage in social investments to meet external stakeholder obligations. This is taking place across nations including Africa (Abbas, Ilham, Triani, Arizah, & Rayyani, 2020). In Nigeria, local banks collaborated to mobilize resources to invest in social protection and acquire personal protective equipment for distribution to the health sector (United Nations, 2020).

In assessing the effects of tourism CSR on employee psychological capital in COVID-19 crisis from a survey of 430 employees in tourism in China, Mao, He, Morrison and Coca-Stefaniak (2020) from their study demonstrate that CSR positively impacted employee satisfaction

with corporate COVID-19 response and further asserted that CSR affected employee self-efficacy, hope, resilience and optimism. For internal stakeholder perception of reputation, it is concerned with the perception of employees to COVID-19 response and philanthropic activities of providing face shields and masks, hand sanitizers and other supplies. In the study of understanding employee response to COVID-19 from the perspective of behavioural corporate responsibility, Aguinis, Villamor and Gabril (2020) contend from their review that CSR policies for the COVID-19 pandemic are established by organizations but implementation is vested with individual employees. Accordingly, employee perception and reaction to CSR actions serve as key determinants of CSR implementation and success.

The difference in corporate reputation before and during the COVID-19 health emergency

The focus of this segment is to have a comparative assessment of the perceptions of stakeholders about the reputation of business and corporate entities before and during the COVID-19 pandemic in tandem with the philanthropic activities of corporate bodies. Corporate reputation has acquired diverse meanings arising from the multi-disciplinary approach of scholars. Corporate reputation is conceptualized as an intangible asset, quality products and services, perceptions and value judgement of an organisation. In the context of this study, corporate reputation signifies the aggregate perceptions of an organisation (Barnett, Termier & Lafferty, 2006). Prior to covid-19, Chun (2005) focuses on the meanings and measurement of corporate reputation, disentangles its meaning from similar concepts of corporate image and identity. The scholar further observed that a favourable corporate reputation attracts and retains customers and influences stakeholders' behaviour towards an organisation.

In the context of the COVID-19 health crisis, Le (2022), Singh and Misra (2021) examined the mediating role of corporate reputation, image and identity between corporate social responsibility and SMEs performance. Based on the findings of the study, CSR had a positive and significant effect on corporate reputation and that corporate reputation mediated CSR and firm performance among others. Further, Singh et al indicated that the level of CSR effect on corporate reputation differed between firms with a high reputation had a stronger firm performance than firms with a weak reputation.

Moderation of cultural orientation on the relationship between corporate philanthropy and corporate reputation

Religion is an inherent element in the cultural orientation and collective identity of a people (Zambeta, 2000; Selinger, 2004). In Nigeria, the predominant religions of Islam and Christianity are noted for doctrines of alms giving which is freewill donation, thus religion fosters philanthropic dispositions among the faithful. People of Christian religious backgrounds promote ideals of being good stewards and "Samaritans" as a way of honouring God. (Teck, 2008; Marinetto, 1999, Para-Mallam, 2006). As corporate bodies are social entities with a workforce of diverse religious and cultural backgrounds; an organisational life and its activities are reflections of value systems and cultural

orientations. Accordingly, internal and external stakeholders' perceptions about corporate reputation and corporate giving are affected by the existing national culture. A collectivist cultural orientation is rooted in African countries and by extension, organisational members hold the belief that stakeholders are a part of a larger family which encourages social bond and cohesion, therefore the necessity to demonstrate care for the common good of all (Okpara, 2014). Du, Jian, Du, Feng and Zeng (2014) in their study affirmed that religion influenced corporate philanthropic giving. This implies that religion plays a significant role in the cognitive mapping of management staff and stakeholders, which directed the philanthropic activities of corporate bodies. In line with the study of Li, Li, Wang, Jiao and Pang (2021), the religious atmosphere had an interplay between CP and corporate performance among Chinese family firms. The results demonstrated that corporate philanthropy influenced financial performance. Further, the religious atmosphere positively moderated the relationship between corporate reputation and corporate social performance. Zhao, Lee and Mom (2019) also explored the relationship between employee CSR perception and organisational identity. In the investigation, whether collectivist cultural orientation of employees moderated the nexus between economic, philanthropic and strategic CSR and organisational identity. The outcome of the study indicated that the collectivist cultural orientation positively moderated strategic CSR perception and firm performance while the employee collectivist cultural orientation negatively moderated the link between philanthropic CSR perception and organisational identity.

Moderation of COVID-19 health crisis orientation on the relationship between corporate philanthropy and corporate reputation of entities

Following the stakeholders theoretical root, the interest of stakeholder is of consequential importance because the managerial decisions of firms have far-reaching effects on stakeholders directly or indirectly (Lopez-De-Pedro & Rimbau-Gilabert, 2012). More so, the favourable reputation perception of stakeholders, and the cordial relationship between stakeholders and corporate bodies to a larger extent account for the going concern, continuous viability and sustainability of firms (Gao & Zhang, 2006). Under the circumstance of the COVID-19 global pandemic resulting in high mortality and lockdown measures, the continuous existence of firms was under threat consequent to the restriction of socio-economic activities and death of stakeholders (Shin, Sharma, Nicolau & Kang, 2021). This scenario of the global health crisis prompted advocacy of COVID-19 preventive protocols, philanthropic giving, and provisions of medical supplies by corporate entities. Accordingly, the global health crisis orientation of firms stimulated social investments among corporate entities and as such good corporate citizenship behaviour for the common good of society enhances the reputation capital of respective firms. (Carroll, 2021) Zhang and Morrison (2021) explore the moderation of belief restoration and negative emotions on the relationship between corporate social responsibility and safety behaviour of employees in the hospitality industry during the COVID-19 pandemic. Among several findings, the study indicated that restoration belief positively moderated the relationship

between CSR and employee safety behaviour while negative emotions negatively moderated CSR and employee safety behaviour. Examining the relationship between CSR and customer satisfaction, corporate image, customer loyalty and the moderating effects of COVID-19 pandemic, Zhang (2022) demonstrated that CSR has positive effect on customer satisfaction, corporate image and customer loyalty ($\beta = 0.637, t = 12.48, p < .0.01$; $\beta = 0.44, t = 7.40, p < .0.01$; $\beta = 0.219, t = 3.04, p < .0.01$). Further, the study indicated that COVID-19 pandemic positively moderated the relationship between CSR and customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.78, t = 2.00, p < .0.1$). In line with the literature reviewed, the following hypotheses are presented below.

H_{1a}: CP has a significant effect on stakeholders' perception of CR before the COVID-19 pandemic.

H_{2a}: CP has a significant effect on stakeholders' perception of CR of entities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

H_{3a}: Here is a significant difference in the stakeholders' perception of corporate reputation before and during the covid-19 health emergency.

H_{4a}: Cultural orientation moderates the relationship between corporate philanthropy and corporate reputation.

H_{5a}: Covid-19 health crisis orientation moderates the relationship between CP and CR of entities

Methodology

Design, Sample and Data Collection

A cross sectional survey design is adopted in this study and the design was intended to collect data to provide the relationship and differences of responses as to the objectives and hypotheses of the study. A sample of 10 organizations was selected for the study through the use of a purposive sampling procedure. The reason for the use of purposive sampling was to focus on organizations that engage in corporate giving during the COVID-19 pandemic. In each agency or corporate body, 20 research subjects were selected, totaling 200 respondents from the 10 organizations. The respondents were stakeholders from within and outside the selected organizations. In specific terms, respondents were employees who received help from their employers such as agencies, financial institutions and oil companies that demonstrated philanthropic giving. The rest category of the respondents was not employees of the organizations understudied but received palliatives and medical supplies from the organizations investigated. They include management staff of hospitals, customers, clients, and leaders from communities where such entities are located. The data were collected through the administration of a structured questionnaire to different categories of respondents who benefited from philanthropic activities of entities during the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria. Numeric scores were determined from the summated scales of the dependent and independent variables. The organizations were the unit of analysis and summated scores of each respondent from the respective organizations were 20 observations. The scores were aggregated and averaged, that is

summation of scores of the 20 observations divided by 20, arriving at a unique numeric value for each of the ten organizations. This approach has been adopted by prior studies and scholars (Chun, Shin, Choi, & Kim, 2013). In respect of the demographic factors, discrete and categorical data were determined through the coding of variables. However, to avoid the challenges of Common Method Variance, Podsakoff, MacKenzie and Podsakoff, (2003) proactive data collection recommendations were applied. Therefore, the respondents were assured of anonymity to encourage honesty while responding to the survey and that the responses were not wrong or right answers, counterbalancing question order, improving scale items in the construction of the measurement instrument.

Measures

Dependent Variable

CR is a multidimensional construct and perceptions of internal and external stakeholders of corporate reputation were applied in this study. The dimensions of scales for corporate reputation consisted of 5-items. The CR applied is a structured 5-point Likert scale form of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), neutral (N), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) with corresponding weights of 5 to 1. The items were scored based on internal stakeholders and external stakeholders. The development of the instrument was based on the scientific literature and prior scales of scholars (Fombrun, Cardberg & Server, 2000), but the measurement scales were not in the context of COVID-19 and thus slight changes were made to reflect the current circumstance.

The questionnaire section of CR consists of two parts. The first part is for employees (internal stakeholders) of organizations that engage in philanthropic giving and the second part is for non-employees (external stakeholders) who received palliatives. In each part, there are two major columns with response options. One major column is before the COVID-19 while the other major column is during the COVID-19 pandemic for the respondents to indicate their perception of the reputation of entities before and during the outbreak of the novel coronavirus.

Independent Variable

The independent variable is corporate philanthropy (CP) which was designed on a 5-point Likert scale with a response continuum of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), neutral (N), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) with corresponding weights of 5 to 1. Although, prior scholars have developed scales but considering the most suitable measurement, Schuyt, Bekkers and Smith (2010) philanthropy scale was adopted with necessary changes effected to reflect the context of the global pandemic. The instrument had a total of 10-items. Since the scale for the independent and dependent variables were adapted, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted and the result confirmed that the items were valid and the model fit was established as the chi-square (174.831, $p < 0.05$); RMSEA = 0.028, CFI = 0.995 and the GFI = 0.922 all satisfying the threshold (Hu & Bentler, 1999; MacCallum & Hong, 1997).

Control Variables

Organization age, size and sector were considered in this study as control variables. They were dummy coded in dichotomous and categorical forms. Firm/agency Age: (< 6 years (Young)=0; 6-20 years (Old)=2; > 20 years (Very Old)=3); Size of agency and firm on the basis of number of workers (≤ 500 employees (Small)=0; ≤ 1500 employees (Medium) = 1; > 1500 employees (Large) = 2); Sector: (Private = 0 and Public=1). Prior studies for example (Mol-Gómez-Vázquez, Hernández-Cánovas, & Koëter-Kant, 2020; Sun, Aryee, & Law, 2007) applied the above variables for control at the organizational level of analysis. These firm specific variables were included to control for the heterogeneity of firms and organizations to engage in philanthropic activities.

Moderating Variables

Cultural Orientation

The instrument used for measuring cultural orientation was self-designed. The scale was made up of 3-items used in measuring cultural orientation. Likert scale designed method was adopted. The scale was subjected to exploratory factor analysis since the scale was self-designed. The result showed that the factor loading for each item was confirmed to be above 0.70.

COVID-19 Health Crisis Orientation

The instrument for COVID-19 health crisis orientation was a structured instrument designed in line with the 5-point Likert scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree. The instrument consisted of 6-items which were designed based on the existing scientific literature. Accordingly, an exploratory factor analysis was applied to determine the validity of the instrument. The result showed that the factor loading for each item was determined and they were above the threshold of 0.70.

Validity and Reliability of Measurement Scales

Validity means the extent to which an instrument measures what it intended to measure. First, content validity approach was employed in the study. Thus, the instrument was readjusted by two academics and three stakeholders of the selected firms and to ensure that all aspects of the variables were adequately covered. Finally, the data was subjected to discriminant and convergent validity. Also, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted (See table 1 below for result). The average variance explained is above 0.50. The correlation values are not greater than the squared average variance explained for the constructs, thus confirming discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The result for reliability is further strengthened, as the composite result was all greater than 0.70.

Table 1: Results of Validity and Reliability Test of the Measurement Instruments

Variable	Code	Factor Loading 1	Factor Loading 2	Factor Loading 3	Factor Loading 4	Composite Reliability
Corporate reputation						0.745
	COR1	0.723				
	COR2	0.744				
	COR3	0.751				
	COR4	0.766				
	COR5	0.782				
	COR6	0.748				
	COR7	0.797				
Corporate philanthropy						0.761
	COP1		0.711			
	COP2		0.729			
	COP3		0.783			
	COP4		0.782			
	COP5		0.755			
	COP6		0.781			
	COP7		0.798			
	COP8		0.721			
	COP9		0.743			
	COP10		0.832			
Cultural orientation						0.729
	CUO1			0.732		
	CUO2			0.731		
	CUO3			0.745		
Covid-19 Health Crisis Orientation						0.868
	CHO1				0.742	
	CHO2				0.732	
	CHO3				0.744	
	CHO4				0.885	
	CHO5				0.711	
	CHO6				0.702	

Table 1. Contd.

Discriminant and Convergent Validity Result					
Variables	AVE	Corporate reputation	Corporate philanthropy	Cultural orientation	Covid-19 Health Crisis Orientation
Corporate reputation	0.576	0.759			
Corporate philanthropy	0.584	0.452**	0.764		
Cultural orientation	0.542	0.561**	0.541**	0.736	
Covid-19 Health Crisis Orientation	0.577	0.479**	0.478*	0.562**	0.760

(Note: AVE: Average variance explained)

Further, the test of reliability is to assess consistency and dependability of measurement scales. Cronbach alpha also was employed to determine the internal consistency of the four dimensions of the measurement model. The Cronbach α for CP = 0.78 and CR = 0.76. As suggested by Hair, Anderson, Babins and Black (2010), the reliability index is good when the coefficient is above .70. This implies that the measurement instrument possesses the characteristics of internal consistency and reliability

Table 2: Reliability Statistics of Measurement Instrument

Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach α
Corporate Philanthropy (CP)	10	0.74
Corporate Reputation (CR)	5	0.72
Cultural Orientation (CO)	3	0.71
COVID-19 Health Crisis Orientation (CHCO)	6	0.75

Source: From SPSS computations, 2020

Method of Data Analysis

In testing the hypotheses postulated for the study, paired t-test was employed to determine the difference in CR of the respective entities between before the COVID-19 and during the COVID-19 pandemic while the relationships between CP and CR were tested using multivariate regression and the interacting roles of CO and CHCO between CP and CR were tested through moderation analysis. For the moderation analysis, Hayes (2022) Macro Process plug in was applied through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 32) while the multivariate regression was applied through stata software of version 15. The reason for the application of multivariate analysis was to take into account of moderation analysis and the more than one dependent and independent variables.

Table 3a: Multivariate Regression Analysis of Corporate Philanthropy (CP) and Corporate Reputations before and during the COVID-19 pandemic

	Ob	RMSE	R-Sq	F	P
Corporate Reputation					
before the COVID-19 pandemic	10	3.81	0.06	3.17	0.014
during COVID-19 pandemic	10	4.01	0.15	8.50	0.000

Source: Computations from Author, 2020.

Table 3b: Multivariate Regression Analysis of Corporate Philanthropy (CP), Internal and External Corporate Reputations

Variables	Coefficients		Std Error	t	P > t	95%Confidence Interval	
Before COVID-19	Unstandardized	Standardized					
CR	B	β					
Entity Type	1.28	.16	0.69	1.86	0.06	-0.08	2.65
Age	-0.41	-.11	0.28	1.45	0.15	-0.96	0.15
Size	1.11	.22	0.47	2.37	0.02	0.18	2.03
CP	0.15	.20	0.05	2.87	0.00	0.05	0.26
Constant	13.88	-	1.43	9.70	0.00	11.66	16.74
During COVID-19							
CR							
Entity Type	2.93	.34	0.73	4.03	0.00	1.50	4.37
Age	0.06	.02	0.30	0.20	0.84	-0.52	0.64
Size	1.65	.30	0.49	3.36	0.00	0.68	2.62
CP	0.23	.26	0.06	4.01	0.00	0.12	0.34
Constant	10.55	-	1.51	7.00	0.00	7.58	13.53

Source: Computations from Author, 2020.

To test hypothesis ($H_{1\&2}$), the effect of CP on CR before and during period of COVID-19 outbreak is examined. For CR before the COVID-19 pandemic, table3a shows that R-square = 0.06, $F = 3.17$ and $P = 0.014$. With R-square of 0.06, indicating 6% variation of CR is explained by CP while the regression analysis of variance is ($F = 3.17$, $p = 0.014 < 0.05$). The result implies that CP is a good predictor of CR. Further, table 3b shows that CP has a significant effect on CR before COVID-19 pandemic ($\beta = .20$, $t = 2.87$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). In view of CR during the COVID-19, table3a shows that R-square = 0.15, $F = 8.50$, $p = 0.000$. The statistics suggest that 15% variation in CR is accounted for by CP included in the model. In table3b, the result demonstrated that ($\beta = .26$, $t = 4.01$, $p = 0.00 < 0.05$). Accordingly, CP had a significant effect on CR during the COVID-19 contagion. In comparative analysis of the two periods, the R-square, the beta coefficient and the t value of during the COVID-19 pandemic were far above the statistics before the health crisis. This implies that the effect of CP on CR was more than the period before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 4: Regression Diagnostic Test for Multicollinearity

Variables	Collinearity statistics			Collinearity statistics	
Before COVID-19	VIF	1/VIF	During COVID-19	VIF	1/VIF
CR			CR		
Entity Type	1.64	0.608776	Entity type	1.64	0.608776
Age	1.25	0.802178	Age	1.25	0.802178
Size	1.85	0.541310	Size	1.85	0.541310
CP	1.02	0.981275	CP	1.02	0.981275
Mean	1.44		Mean	1.44	

Source: Computations from Author, 2020.

Table 4 demonstrates a diagnostic test to ascertain whether the regression analysis suffers from multicollinearity. The estimated variance inflation factor (*VIF*) values were much lower than the typical threshold value of 10, indicating the absence of multicollinearity and this means that the regression results do not suffer from collinearity as asserted by Chatterjee and Hadi (2012) and Levine, Stephan, Krehbiel and Bereson (2008) state that *VIF* above 10 should be of concern because such regression results are spurious.

Table 5: Paired Samples t-Test for Corporate Reputation before the COVID-19 and during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Statistics	Pairs
	During / Before COVID-19 (Pair 1)
Paired Difference Mean	11.77
Standard Deviation	2.79
Standard Error of Mean	.88
95% Confidence Interval Upper	13.70
Lower	9.72
t-Test	13.27
Df	9
Sig(2tailed)	.000

Source: Computations from Author, 2020.

To test hypothesis (H_{3a}) and ascertain a statistically significant difference, paired t-test was applied as shown in table 5 above. Pair 1 examined the perception of corporate reputation of firms before COVID-19 and during COVID-19. With t-test = 13.27, $p=.000$, <0.05 , there is a significant difference in the perception of the corporate reputation of entities before the COVID-19 and during the COVID-19 pandemic. This implies that the stakeholders' perception of CR of firms was better during the COVID-19 as against the period before the COVID-19 and this is on account of the series of the CP activities within the period.

Table 6: The moderation of cultural orientation, Health Crisis Orientation between CP and CR during COVID-19 pandemic

Variables	Coeff.	SE	t	P
Constant	3.462	0.245	14.120	0.001
Corporate Philanthropy (CP)	0.645	0.114	5.201	0.000
Cultural Orientation	0.463	0.145	3.193	0.001
COVID-19 Health Orientation	0.573	0.187	3.064	0.001
Corporate Philanthropy x Cultural Orientation	0.352	0.115	3.060	0.002
Corporate Philanthropy x COVID-19 health Orientation	0.381	0.187	3.048	0.003
R = .483; R-sq = 0.233; MSE 6.45; F = 8.14; P = 0.001				

From the table 6, the result demonstrated that a 48% of change in corporate reputation was accounted for by corporate philanthropy and while the F value of 8.14 showed that the model has a good fit. However, the focus is to examine the moderation effect, the interaction between corporate philanthropy and cultural orientation. The result demonstrates that cultural orientation has a positive significant effect on the relationship between corporate philanthropy and corporate reputation among firms during the COVID-19 health crisis in Nigeria ($\beta = 0.35$, $t = 3.06$, $p < 0.05$). Further, the finding implies that cultural orientation of corporate entities positively influences and strengthens the relationship between CP and CR.

In addition, the interaction between corporate philanthropy and COVID-19 health crisis orientation is also analysed. The result demonstrates that COVID-19 health crisis orientation has a positive significant effect on the relationship between corporate philanthropy and corporate reputation among firms during the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria ($\beta = 0.38$, $t = 3.04$, $p < 0.05$). Furthermore, it implies that COVID-19 health crisis positively influenced the relationship between CP and CR during the pandemic.

Discussions and Managerial Contributions

The motivation for this study was to ascertain the difference in CR before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, the effects of CP on CR before and during the COVID-19 pandemic and the moderation of cultural and COVID-19 health crisis orientations on the relationships between CP and CR. This becomes important, consequent upon the array of philanthropic activities of organizations to contain the contagion of the novel coronavirus. Drawing on the data analysis, it is argued that CP positively impacted CR before and during the global pandemic as underpinned by the research findings. The findings demonstrated that there was a significant difference in the CR of firms before and during the COVID-19 pandemic of entities investigated. As firms engaged in philanthropic activities during the pandemic, the stakeholders' perception of corporate reputation during the COVID-19 were higher as opposed to their corporate reputation before the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, CP had a significant effect on CR during the pandemic as against the preCOVID-19 pandemic era.

These findings are symmetrical to the empirical evidence of Aguilera-Caracuel and Guerrero-Villega (2018) who in their study found that social responsibility activities of multinational enterprises in developing countries had a positive effect on corporate reputations. The findings imply that corporate reputations of organizations have been enhanced arising from the recent philanthropic giving to employees, clients, leaders of communities, governments and other stakeholders in the health crisis. Thus, the entities are considered good corporate citizens in this difficult time.

The findings of the study offer critical contributions to the existing body of management, corporate reputation and philanthropic literature by expanding theory building and empirical foundations. The findings of the study underpinned the pyramid model of corporate social responsibility by Carroll (1991). In Carroll's theoretical model, corporate entities are obligated to fulfill economic, legal and ethical responsibilities and these responsibilities are not optional. In contrast with corporate philanthropic responsibility which is at the top of the pyramid, 'the icing of the cake', CP is not as important as other corporate responsibilities but is highly valued and prized. From responses and results from the study, philanthropic giving in the period of COVID-19 by entities is highly valued and accorded reputation and moral capital while firms that do not engage in a charitable cause and disaster relief are perceived as bad corporate citizens. The firms, which do not engage in philanthropic activities, are not concerned about the welfare of stakeholders and the common good of society in the period of the health crisis.

In terms of the stakeholder theoretical paradigm, corporate entities continued, and long-term existence depends on balancing and meeting the expectations of various stakeholders. Thus, the interests of stakeholders are satisfied through the philanthropic activities of providing medical supplies, facemask, hand sanitizers, cash donations and food items (Freeman, 1998; Freeman 2015; de Graaf, 2016). In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a dearth of empirical scholarship on CP and CR and moderation of culture and health crisis orientations. Thus, the findings of this study contributed to the empirical evidence of business citizenship scholarship.

From the perspective of managerial practice, Managers and Chief Executive Officers of corporate entities need to respond to any emergency and crisis affecting the common good of stakeholders. As philanthropic activities for communities and societal well-being promote the corporate reputation of firms, managers need to develop philanthropic programmes to address emergencies such as the global COVID-19 pandemic. The managerial implication of such philanthropic activity facilitates greater visibility, builds high esteem and a favourable reputation (Aguilera-Caracuel & Guerrero-Villega, 2018), and Barney (1991), Barney and Clark (2007) and further affirms that a favourable corporate reputation is an intangible asset leading to competitive advantage.

In addition, another managerial implication of philanthropic giving to employees by entities builds not only a corporate reputation capital but also attracts talented and key human capital. Corporate philanthropic giving to employees and other stakeholders in times of crisis creates goodwill, boosts morale, motivates the workforce and in general creates a

reputation and moral capital from the assessments by the various publics of such entities (Godfrey, 2005; Collin, 1995).

Limitations and Direction for Further Studies

The study was conducted in one state. Accordingly, there is a need to exercise caution when generalizing the findings of the study. In addition, the main method of data collection was a questionnaire and as such only primary data were utilized for the study through self-reports of various stakeholders. In view of these limitations, further studies could validate the findings by investigating the entire south-south region of Nigeria. Also, at the end of the COVID-19 health emergency, corporate philanthropy and reputation can be investigated by employing secondary data from corporate entities before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Further studies can also examine corporate philanthropy and corporate reputation with moderating role of slack resources which enable firms to engage in philanthropic giving.

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We hereby declare that there is no potential conflict of interest with the authorship and publication of this paper.

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