PHILANTHROPIC RESPONSIBILITY AND PERFORMANCE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS FIRMS IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Empirical studies show that corporate firms make substantial contribution to the political infrastructure and the socio-economic of the developed and the developing countries through corporate social responsibility. However, in the Telecommunication industry, there's limited literature to show that Corporate Social Responsibility influence the performance of firms. As stated by the Communications Authority of Kenya, telecommunication firms in Kenya spend an estimate of one billion shillings annually on corporate social responsibility. However, some of these firms have shown exemplary growth, while their counterparts' fortunes have been dwindling over the years. Due to the existing contradictory stance coupled with mixed results on performance of these firms, there is need to determine how philanthropic responsibility influences performance of Telecommunication firms in Kenya. This study used a descriptive research design. The design utilizes the positivism philosophy due to its ease of replication of the findings. The target population was the telecommunication firms in Kenya. The sample size was 393 respondents determined from Yamane's formula. Stratified random sampling was used to select the respondents to constitute the sample size from each firm. Questionnaire was administered to collect the data from the respondents. This study also carried out a pilot study to test for validity and reliability of the research instruments. Quantitative as well as the qualitative data were gathered, put into code, evaluated using statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS Version 23) computer software, and excel. Descriptive statistic was used to analyse the data in frequency distribution and percentages that were later used to present findings in tables, charts. Inferential statistics was used to analyse data namely, basic and multiple regression analysis. The study found that there was a strong correlation between the performance of telecommunications firms and philanthropic responsibility ($r=0.838$ and $p=0.001<0.05$). The study concluded that philanthropic responsibility has a statistically significant influence on performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya. The study deduced that while philanthropy plays a role in financial fluctuations, its influence may not be as pronounced as other CSR dimensions. The study emphasizes the need for strategic considerations in philanthropic initiatives, highlighting the importance of timing and nature in influencing firm performance. Practitioners should also prioritize stakeholder engagement throughout the CSR planning and implementation processes. Actively seeking input from employees, customers, and the local community ensures that CSR initiatives are not only well-received but are also tailored to meet specific needs. This engagement fosters a sense of shared responsibility and enhances the effectiveness of CSR programs.

Key Words: Corporate Social Responsibility, Philanthropic responsibility, Firm performance, Stakeholder engagement

INTRODUCTION

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is the obligation of the organizations to the improvement of its partners and to the evasion and amendment of any negative results brought about by firm activities. Mugesani, Gachunga and Gichuhi (2018) characterize CSR as business practices which mean to influence partners emphatically and goes past its monetary intrigue. It is the ongoing commitment by organizations to act morally and add to financial turn of events while improving the personal satisfaction of the labor force and their families just as of the nearby residents and society everywhere (Rendon, 2018). As indicated by Li, Khalili, and Cheng (2019), CSR is connected to moral standards, consistence with lawful prerequisites and regard for individuals, societies and the surroundings.

Throughout the long term this idea of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has increased phenomenal force in business and public discussion and has become a vital issue bungling the departmental limits and influencing the manner by which an organization works together (García-Sánchez, 2020). It has become so significant that numerous associations have rebranded their basic beliefs to incorporate social duty. Practically all corporate sites, arrangements and reports talk about their undertakings' for CSR which has become a method of guaranteeing that the association is satisfying all the commitments towards society and subsequently is qualified for the permit to work. These exercises of CSR going from little gifts to greater ventures for social government assistance rehearses contrast from association to association contingent upon the assets accessible to an association for undertaking economical practices (Brown, Mawson & Mason, 2017).

The idea of CSR has a long history related with how it impacts on association's conduct. So as to comprehend CSR's impact on association's conduct, consequently, it is important to grasp the theoretical advancement of CSR in firms and its movement. CSR research has changed continually during the most recent 60 years (Li, Khalili & Cheng, 2019). During the 1950s the essential spotlight was on organizations obligations to society and carrying out beneficial things for society. In 1960's key occasions, individuals and thoughts were instrumental in describing the social changes introduced during this decade. During the 1970s business chiefs applied the conventional administration capacities when managing CSR issues. While during the 1980s business and social intrigue came nearer and firms turned out to be more receptive to their partners. During the 1990s the possibility of CSR turned out to be generally affirmed. It was additionally upgraded with methodology writing. At long last, during the 2000s, CSR turned out to be absolutely a significant key issue (Pena, Serra & Ramon, 2017).

Overtime, CSR is discussed vivaciously by researchers and administrators across business capacities, for example, correspondences, showcasing, money and human asset (Lu et al., 2019). There are likewise huge definitions. A portion of these definitions have vital establishments, while others have more mental establishments (Li, Khalili & Cheng, 2019). A few definitions propose objective, though others recommend abstract of CSR. For instance, Cankül and Yücesoy (2019), conceptualize CSR as activities taken by a firm that surpass those needed by the law and which are intended to propel some social great.

Ahmad and Islam (2018) suggest a more idiosyncratic approach and conceptualises CSR to be concerned with stakeholder views and situation-specific behavior and policies. Ahmad and Islam (2018) differentiate fixed CSR from outlying CSR. Fixed CSR is concerned with an organization's core competencies and suggests that CSR should be incorporated into the strategies of a business. In comparison, outlying CSR focuses on non-strategically integrated operations. Although there is no single, universally agreed concept of CSR, it usually refers to business decision-making linked to moral standards, legal compliance, and respect for individuals, societies and the surroundings (Cankül & Yücesoy, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

Corporate Social Responsibility is an essential business practice, since customers want to purchase goods from firms they trust as much as possible, distributors want to form relationships with corporations they can rely on, workers want to work in organizations they value, and non-governmental organizations want to partner with firms searching for cost - effective solutions and developments in related areas (Kathambi & Bitange, 2017). In order to satisfy both of these stakeholder groups, businesses increase their commitment to another significant group, investors who may profit from meeting the criteria of other stakeholder groups.

The outbreak of the Coronavirus (COVID 19) in Kenya has forced telecommunication industries to revamp their CSR in order to stay afloat hence stimulate growth. A good example is seen from Safaricom Limited Company that waived fees charged to transact via Mpesa so as to reduce cash transactions that are believed to increase the spread of the virus. Airtel Company on other hand is has been offering free internet access services to the students at home to continue studying via various e-learning platforms until schools reopen (Wafula & Agutu, 2020). These companies have also contributed considerable sums of money and goods in kind to the COVID19 Emergency Response fund.

Overtime, Telecommunication companies have been spending a significant percentage of their expenditure towards funding CSR activities as confirmed by majority of Kenyan scholarly work (Opilo, Mulili & Kimani, 2018; Gitau, 2017; Kathambi & Bitange, 2017; Mwangangi et al., 2019). Mwangangi et al. (2019) conducted a study on the Effect of Corporate Social Responsibility on Performance of Manufacturing Firms in Kenya. The results of the study showed that consumer, community and government ties have a beneficial and important impact on the success of Kenya's manufacturing companies. Despite myriad of benefits accrued to companies from their CSR practices there is limited research globally, regionally and locally linking CSR to firm performance. In Kenya, for example, a research gap exists where limited research has been done to assess whether the aspects of corporate social responsibility such as philanthropic responsibility have a positive or negative impact on performance of telecommunications firms. In the Kenyan context, this study aimed to resolve this knowledge gap.

Theoretical Framework

The study was hinged on Carroll's Four-Part Theory. Corporations ought to more actively consider their social responsibilities. Before engaging in any CSR activities, it is necessary to understand what types of obligations CSR creates. Carroll's four-part theory is one commonly accepted theory of CSR's components (Anim & Cudjoe, 2015). Carroll (1991) developed his four-part CSR theory, arguing that four forms of social responsibilities constitute CSR: economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities. Economic duties are the primary component of the four responsibilities. It is the fundamental layer of the CSR pyramid at Carroll. It is the responsibility of all businesses to provide products and services that are required by society. As a result, income from the sale of products and services go to shareholders and other investors in order to sustain and expand a business (Gitau, 2017).

A company's economic responsibilities are the basis for the provision of legal, ethical and philanthropic duties. Legal responsibilities are the second level of the Hierarchy and the basic precepts of the free market framework coexist with economic responsibilities. Although producing income for shareholders, corporations are required to work under the legal framework and regulations. By being legally accountable, businesses meet the social contract between corporations and society. The codified ethics of business activities, as well as the pursuit of economic obligations laid down by politicians, are also legally accountable (Carroll, 1991).

Ethical responsibilities include actions and behaviors that are required by society and willingly carried out by businesses with regard to fairness, justice and the consideration or preservation of the moral rights of stakeholders. Ethical obligations are collective actions of businesses, since they are not codified in any statute or regulation. These roles reflect customer, employee, shareholder and community social norms, aspirations and concerns (Anim & Cudjoe, 2015).

Ethical obligations go deeper than legal obligations because they incorporate newly emerging principles and expectations that the public expects an organization to comply with and are at a higher level of corporate practices than required by the existing legal framework. Ethical responsibilities, however, are not easy for businesses to contend with because new public standards continue to arise, making the validity of ethical considerations constantly under discussion (Carroll, 1991).

Philanthropic responsibilities include the actions of corporations that, through altruistic actions, strive to become good citizens. In order to support social welfare, society and communities require businesses to use their capital (Gitau, 2017). To foster human welfare and goodwill, this means actively participating in actions or services. Philanthropic responsibility is characterized by a sense of discretion from ethical duties. The public would not view companies that fail to meet philanthropic obligations as unethical because philanthropy is not in the fields of ethics and morality (Carroll, 1991).

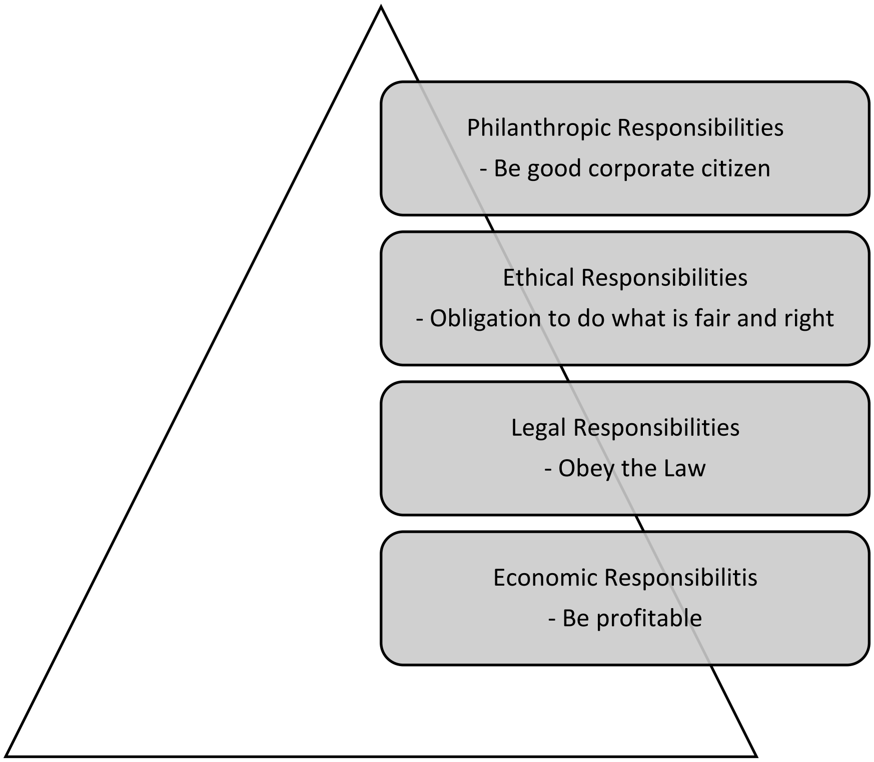

Figure 1: The pyramid of corporate social responsibility (Carrol, 1991)

Because of its logical nature, Carroll's (1991) four-part CSR theory is popular in both academics and the world of business. Firms should link their CSR to each of these four dimensions. The basic duties of corporations to shareholders are economic and legal responsibilities. By being accountable to other stakeholders besides shareholders, ethical and philanthropic obligations help corporations become outstanding and become good corporate citizens. It was against this background that the researcher used this theory to examine how this CSR affect the performance of firms in the Telecommunications industries in Kenya.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Philosophy

A philosophy of analysis is the theories that the scholar has, or the way the researcher sees the universe. The hypotheses of the researcher about knowledge structure the development of the research questions, methodology and finding interpretation (Bell, Harley & Bryman, 2022). Thus, within the chosen conceptual context, the research approach and procedure that the researcher follows should match. All academic analysis, therefore, has some philosophical principles of the worldview on which the thesis is centered. Sometimes, worldviews are referred to as paradigms. Key principles such as ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology (Creswell & Clark, 2017) define the research framework.

Positivism, realism, interpretivism and pragmatism are among the foundations of research philosophy. These foundations are presented to explain the assumptions that form the research and provide guidance on what methods and methodologies should be adopted. This research was motivated by the view of interpretivism. The concept of interpretivism is selected because a comprehensive picture is needed to understand the effect of corporate social responsibility on performance of firms in the telecommunications industry in Kenya, while taking into account the social structures surrounding these firms. The model of interpretivism has historically originated from hermeneutics (the requisite condition for interpretation and comprehension as part of the research process) and phenomenology (the study of experience based on a paradigm of personal knowledge from the perspective of the individual) (Ryan, 2018).The interpretivism philosophy views the nature of reality or being as socially constructed and subject to change, as human behaviour influences knowledge of the changing world (Ryan, 2018).

Interpretivism's epistemological stance is subjective and focuses on the specifics of the case, which is also a critique of this theory, however it is important to consider the subjective reality and to gain insight into the motives and behavior of people that explain the issue. This model does not rely exclusively on the topic of empirical evidence, but is also influenced by linguistic traditions and adapts to the likelihood of interpreting the same data differently. The distinctive characteristic of this model is that, as the researcher is part of what is being studied, analysis is value-bound (Muhaise et al., 2020). This research was therefore context-sensitive to the emotions, values, ideas, opinions and behaviors of the circumstances and participants, as the philosophy is conscious of the fact that human actions are highly dependent on the world in which they find themselves.

Research Design

Creswell and Creswell (2017) define research design as a collection of decisions that sets out the framework to determine the methods and procedures for gathering and analyzing the information needed. A descriptive study research design was adopted for allowing a much wider population to generalize research findings. A descriptive research design is defined by Plomp (2018) as a comprehensive research method for the collection of data from a representative sample of people using tools composed of open and closed-ended questions. The primary objective of descriptive research is to provide accurate and reliable representations of the behaviors or variables that contribute to the research question or are important to it (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2020).

The design also helped the researcher to gather quantitative data that was then quantitatively analyzed to achieve useful output with the use of both descriptive and inferential analysis statistics. This design also helped one to gather reliable research data, offering a lucid image of the phenomenon of the analysis. Descriptive survey design offers an accurate account, in real life circumstances, of the characteristics of a single person, event or community (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Target Population

A population refers to a whole category of similar measurable characteristics of objects/individuals (Silverman, 2020). It is also a full set of units that need to be explored. A population also appears to have a large geographic distribution, and the researcher is not generally interested in the overall or universal population in most situations. All people, items or things that can fairly be generalized in research results constitute the population of interest to the study.

The study population consisted of all employees from the fifteen telecommunications firms targeted. This target population was appropriate for the study as the various employees are aware of how CSR influence firm. The target population of the study was 21,217 respondents. These individuals were better placed to reveal imperative information in regard to the effect of corporate social responsibility on performance of the telecommunications firms in Kenya.

Sampling Frame

Sileyew (2019) define a sample frame (also known as a working population) as a portion of the population from which the sample size was chosen and excludes subjects in the population who cannot be accessed or interviewed by the researcher. The sampling frame of this study included all the 21,217 employees from 15 telecommunications firms in Kenya.

Table 1: Sampling Frame

Name of the company	Population size
Airtel Networks Kenya Ltd	889
DT One Fixed and Mobile Pte Ltd	58
Eaton Towers Ltd	79
Ericsson Kenya Ltd	1145

Finserve Africa Ltd	8959
Jamii Telecommunication Ltd	200
Liquid Telecom Kenya Ltd	1000
MTN Business Kenya Ltd	200
Safaricom PLC	5500
Sea Submarine Communications Ltd	261
Telkom Kenya Ltd	1329
Vodacom Group Ltd	50
Wananchi Group Kenya Ltd	1000
ZTE (Kenya) Ltd	347
iWay Africa Kenya Ltd	200
Total population	**21217**

Sample and Sampling Technique

According to Kombo and Tromp (2018), the rule of the thumb is to obtain as big a sample as possible. Taking a population size of 21217 respondents, the study used the sample size formula developed by Yamane (1967) to calculate the sample size at a confidence level of 95% and a precision or error of 5%. Yamane formula was used due to its simplicity in: usage scientific and applicability in large populations. The sample size was calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = Sample size,
N = Population size
e = the level of precision desired

$n = \frac{21217}{1+21217(0.05)(0.05)}$ = 392.5984 = 393 respondents (approx.)

The sample size computed from Yamane formula comprised of 393 respondents to be selected from the telecommunication firms comprising of the target population. The study therefore adopted a purposive sampling technique where units were selected because they had characteristics that needed in the sample. In other words, units were selected “on purpose” in purposive sampling (Silverman, 2020). Researchers often believed that they can obtain a representative sample by using a sound judgment, which result in saving time and money. Alternatively, purposive sampling method proved to be effective when only limited numbers of people can serve as primary data sources due to the nature of research design and aimed and objectives. The researcher thus decided to pick 30 respondents per company to bring a total of 450 respondents as the sample size.

Data Collection Instruments

In this study primary data was used. The research instruments that were used for data collection are: a self-administered structured questionnaire and interview guides. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data. The interview guides were used to collect qualitative data.

The main research instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed to include both closed-ended and open-ended formats. As a result, this format was used in all sections of the questionnaires. In order to prevent respondents from selecting the simplest alternative and to provide less opportunities for self-expression, it was important to combine closed and open-ended answer items in order to attract qualitative information in order to provide respondents with in-depth feelings and impressions of the analysis. A Likert scale was often followed for the closed-ended objects (e.g., 5-strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-neutral, 2-disagree, 1-strongly disagree).
Interviewing was conducted on the Senior Managers of the fifteen Telecommunications firms. According to Mohajan (2018), an interview gives the study more insights into the problem at hand. Interviewing method involves interviewer physically meeting the respondents and asking questions face to face. This method usually had a higher response rate than a self-administered questionnaire.

Data Collection Procedure

De Groot and Spiekerman (2020) describe data collection as a means of collecting information from selected investigative topics. While collecting data, questionnaire and interview guide were used to collect information from the respondents. The said questionnaire had both structured and open-ended questions. A Likert scale was used for the closed ended items. The questionnaire was used because it enabled the researcher to collect huge amounts of information within a reasonable time. Personal contact with the respondents enabled the researcher to interact with respondents with a view to clarifying any problems the respondents might encounter while filling in the questionnaires.

A questionnaire is described by De Groot and Spiekerman (2020) as a document consisting of a number of questions printed or typed on a form or collection of forms in a definite order. Primary data was collected from the four Telecommunications firms. The research instruments were distributed and collected on the same day after the users had filled them. Interview guides were used to collect data from the senior managers. Conversely, secondary data was collected using information from previous studies by other researchers on the same subject (Silverman, 2020). Approval from the University was obtained to conduct this study. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the regulator, CAK and the respective Telecommunications firms. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the respondents by using the drop and pick the questionnaires. The interviews were done face to face or through phone calls depending on the availability.

Pilot Testing

Pilot testing was done to pretest the quality of research instruments in their ability to measure study concepts. During pilot testing, 45 questionnaires were administered to staff in the companies at random representing 10% sample size. These respondents did not take part in the main study. The results of the pilot test formed the basis for refining questionnaire items before administering the questionnaire on the study population. Ghauri, Grønhaug and Strange (2020) suggest that the role of pretesting is to gain knowledge on how the questionnaire would be interpreted by the respondents. Pretesting is important for testing the appropriateness of measures, in order to gain insight as to whether the same questions were answered consistently in the same way.

Validity of Research Instruments

There are three main types of validity and these are: construct validity; criterion validity; and content validity. To achieve construct validity, a number of measures was done. One of the measures was to have the questionnaire evaluated by the supervisors on the appropriateness and meaning. The other measures involved obtaining opinion from a panel of experts in the field of study to ascertain as to whether constructs are being measured correctly. To further enhance construct validity or suitability of indicators factor analysis was done using principle component analysis (PCA) and those indicators found not to be suitable was left out in further statistical analysis. Factor loading for each item will also give an indication as to whether the constructs are distinct from each other (Muhaise, Ejiri, Muwanga-Zake & Kareyo, 2020). Similarly, for content validity the same panel of experts reviewed the items in the instruments for appropriateness and clarity.

The recommendations of experts including that of the supervisors and conclusions from pilot testing was used to review the research instrument items where necessary in as far as retaining meaning, change or elimination of questions (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2020). De Groot and Spiekerman (2020) argue that the wording of questions should not lead to multiple answers to the same question by the same individual. Care therefore was taken to ensure respondents answer to what questions address by ensuring construct and content validity of instruments.

Reliability of Research Instruments

Reliability was enhanced by use of split half method on the questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was tested to determine the usefulness of the questionnaires to the current study.

Creswell and Creswell (2017) argue that reliability testing is important for new questionnaires because they have not been used in previous studies and therefore their reliability is not known. To test reliability through split half method, items of the same construct were split into two to obtain two sets from same questionnaire. However, during piloting the entire instrument was administered to a population similar to that of the study area. The credibility of the qualitative instruments was ensured through consultations with research experts and the supervisors. Split half method for reliability requires only one administration of questionnaire to respondents. The administered questionnaire test results were split into two using an even and odd approach. Total scores for each half of scores were calculated for each respondent. Correlation between even and odd test results was computed to obtain a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. A Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient varies from 0 and 1. According to Silverman (2020), reliability of 0.7 and above is considered sufficient. The instruments were considered reliable if the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient is 0.7 and above.

Reliability coefficient of the research instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (α) which was computed as follows:

$\alpha = k/k\text{-}1 \times [1 - \sum (S^2)/\sum S^2 sum]$

Where:

α= Cronbach's alpha

k = Number of responses

$\sum (S^2)$ = Variance of individual items summed up

$\sum S^2 sum$ = Variance of summed up scores

Data Analysis and Presentation

This study utilized the descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative data was analyzed within specified themes using descriptive narratives. Quantitative data was descriptively analyzed by use of measures of central tendencies and measures of dispersion. The measure of central tendency was the arithmetic mean while standard deviation was the measure of dispersion for data obtained from interval scales and ratio scales. The standard deviation determined how strong or weak data was from the measure of central tendency which was arithmetic mean.

The dependent variable which was performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya is a single variable therefore univariate analysis was used to describe its properties. According to Creswell and Clark (2017), univariate analysis is a technique used to describe one variable. Consequently, this study used mean and standard deviation to describe performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya.

According to Plomp (2018), Perason correlation is a way of knowing if two variables are related. Correlation between two variables is called bivariate correlation (Ørngreen & Levinsen, 2017).

Therefore, objective one, two and three data was analyzed to establish if the independent variables corporate social responsibility separately are correlated to Performance of telecommunications firms. Correlation coefficient (r) obtained in each case indicated the existence of association and the extent two variables are associated. The correlation coefficient r ranges between -1 and +1 where -1 indicates that two variables are negatively perfectly correlated and +1 indicates the two variables are positively perfectly correlated. Therefore, a negative coefficient indicated a reverse relationship between the variables and a zero value of r means the variables are not correlated. The significance of correlation was established through a nun directional null hypothesis: H: $r \neq 0$. Significance testing of correlation between two variables was done using a two tailed t-test. This is in agreement with Flick (2020) who indicated that correlation significance is tested with one tailed t –test or two tailed t-test. If p value is less than 0.05/2 then the null hypotheses regarding the non-significance of r was rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted at significance level alpha 0.05. The qualitative data from the open-ended questions and the interviews was analyzed using content analysis.

Descriptive Analysis

Likert scale types of questions was used in the study. These were differentiated as Likert item; when an item is used to measure a single variable and Likert Scale; when a number of items are arranged as a group intended to measure a simple variable (Plomp, 2018). Likert scale data was analyzed as an interval measurement scale. These scales were created by the researcher by composite score computation (sum or mean) 4 point or more Likert scale. Hence, the Likert scales composite score needs analysis as an interval scale measurement. For items with interval scales it is recommended for descriptive to be used. Additionally, analysis of data proceeding suitable for interval scales included the Personsγ, t-test, ANOVA, and regression procedures. To support this, Plomp (2018) argued that Likert scale can themselves be scaled to add further requirements and weighed scoring to the aggregation of items into sub-scale and total scales to scores, which also tends to empire to linear and interval scale properties of the resulting composites. To support this, Ryan (2018) said that in summing up Likert questions responses which makes the data interval, all questions must use the same scale (5-point scale) and there must be a defendable approximation to an interval scale.

Composite score was used in analysis and decision rules after analysis of mean scores and it was guided by the logical equal levels of the score approximated to the first decimal point in line. This study used one verbal anchors; 5-strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-neutral, 2-disagree, 1-strongly disagree. This creates a scale that has an equidistance of correlations coefficient was used to measure relationships. Decision rule which was followed guidelines that γ-value of between 0.10 to 0.29 means small or weak correlation; γ-value of between 0.30 to 0.49 means medium or moderate correlation and γ value of between 0.50 to 1.0 means large or strong correlation. These guidelines apply whether or not share is a negative sign out in front of the γ value. The negative sign refers only to the direction of the relationship, not its strength. The indicators combination at the level of empirical represents a particular construct is called a variable. Indicators may have several attributes (or levels) and each attribute represent a value. Values of attributes may be quantitative (numeric) or qualitative (non- numeric) (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

Correlation Model and Regression models

For Correlation models, Stepwise and combined Pearson correlation was conducted for the hypothesis to measure the strength of the relationships between the moderating, independent and dependent variables. For Regression Models, Stepwise regression was conducted for hypothesis testing. The models were as shown below

$Y= \beta_0+\beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$. ………………..………i

Where

Y= Performance of telecommunications firms

β_0 = constant

β_1 = Regression coefficient

X_1 = Environmental responsibility

ε=Error term

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Firm Performance

The research sought the level of agreement on the statements relating to the firm performance. The responses were recorded on Table 2.

Table 2: Performance of Telecommunications Firms in Kenya

	SD F (%)	D F (%)	N F (%)	A F (%)	SA F (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
Participation of the business in CSR operations has contributed to an expanded return on investment through the years	18 (11.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	63 (38.7)	82 (50.3)	4.172	0.715
Participation of the business in CSR operations has contributed to expanded market share through the years	20 (12.3)	22 (13.5)	33 (20.2)	46 (28.2)	42 (25.8)	3.417	0.832
Participation of the business in CSR operations has contributed to higher consumer loyalty and satisfaction through the years	20 (12.3)	21 (12.9)	26 (16.0)	52 (31.9)	44 (27.0)	3.485	0.840

Participation of the business in CSR activities has led to an increase in sales through the years	13 (8.0)	5 (3.1)	0 (0.0)	66 (40.5)	79 (48.5)	4.184	0.640
Participation of the business in CSR activities has led to the retaining of employees through the years	18 (11.0)	0 (0.0)	10 (6.1)	53 (32.5)	82 (50.3)	4.110	0.747
Participation of the business in CSR activities has increased the number of customers through the years	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	60 (36.8)	103 (63.2)	4.632	0.984
Sub-composite Mean and Standard deviation						**4.000**	**0.793**

Table 2 shows the results from the statement that participation of the business in CSR operations has contributed to an expanded return on investment through the years, 82 (50.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 63 (38.7%) agreed, while 18 (11.0%) strongly disagreed. The mean score was 4.172 which was above sub-composite mean of 4.000 implying that the participation of the business in CSR operations has contributed to an expanded return on investment through the years. The standard deviation was 0.715 which was lower than the sub-composite standard deviation was 0.793. This implied that the opinions converged.

On the statement that participation of the business in CSR operations has contributed to expanded market share through the years, 46 (28.2%) of the respondents agreed, 42 (25.8%) strongly agreed, 33 (20.2%) were undecided, 22 (13.5%) disagreed, and 20 (12.3%) strongly disagreed. The mean score was 3.417 and standard deviation was 0.832. The item had a mean score lower than the composite mean of 4.000 implying that participation of the business in CSR operations has not contributed to expanded market share through the years. Further, the standard deviation was above the sub-composite standard deviation of 0.793 implying that the opinions were inconsistent.

Regarding the statement that participation of the business in CSR operations has contributed to higher consumer loyalty and satisfaction through the years, 52 (31.9%) of the respondents agreed, 44 (27.0%) strongly agreed, 26 (16.0%) were undecided, 21 (12.9%) disagreed, while 20 (12.3%) strongly disagreed. The mean score was 3.485 and standard deviation was 0.840. The item had a mean score lower than the composite mean of 4.000 implying that participation of the business in CSR operations has not contributed to higher consumer loyalty and satisfaction through the years. Also, the standard deviation was above the sub-composite standard deviation was 0.793 implying that the opinions were inconsistent.

On the statement that participation of the business in CSR activities has led to an increase in sales through the years, 79 (48.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 66 (40.5%) agreed, 13 (8.0%) strongly disagreed, while 5 (3.1%) disagreed. The mean score was 4.184 and standard deviation was 0.640. The item had a mean score above the composite mean of 4.000 implying that participation of the business in CSR activities has led to an increase in sales through the years. Further, the standard deviation was lower than the sub-composite standard deviation was 0.793 implying that the opinions converged.

On the statement that participation of the business in CSR activities has led to the retaining of employees through the years, 82 (50.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 53 (32.5%) agreed, 18 (11.0%) strongly disagreed while 10 (6.1%) were undecided. The mean score was 4.110 and standard deviation was 0.747. The item had a mean score above the composite mean of 4.000 implying that participation of the business in CSR activities has led to the retaining of employees through the years. Moreover, the standard deviation was lower than the sub-composite standard deviation was 0.793 implying that the opinions converged.
Regarding the statement that participation of the business in CSR activities has increased the number of customers through the years, 103 (63.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed while 60 (36.8%) agreed. The mean score was 4.632 and standard deviation was 0.984. The item had a mean score above the composite mean of 4.000 implying that participation of the business in CSR activities has increased the number of customers through the years. The standard deviation was above the sub-composite standard deviation was 0.793 implying that the opinions were inconsistent.

The respondents were asked to state their overall appraisal on the degree to which Corporate Social Responsibility impact their company's performance. The respondents indicated that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) significantly impacts their company's overall performance. According to their feedback, their commitment to CSR initiatives has elevated their brand image and fostered positive relationships with various stakeholders. Engaging in socially responsible practices has resulted in tangible benefits, including increased customer loyalty, improved employee satisfaction, and a positive impact on the communities we operate in. The respondents highlighted that their CSR activities align with their corporate values and mission, contributing to sustainable business practices. The initiatives we undertake address environmental concerns, philanthropic endeavors, and consumer protection measures, reflecting a holistic approach to CSR that positively influences their company's success. Furthermore, the respondents emphasized the positive correlation between their CSR efforts and economic expectations. Responsible business practices were seen to lead to operational efficiencies, cost savings, and heightened investor confidence, contributing positively to their financial performance.

Philanthropic Responsibility

The research aimed to establish the effect of philanthropic responsibility on performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya. The respondents were required to indicate their level of agreement with the statements on philanthropic responsibility in relation to performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya using the 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= strongly agree. The findings were tabulated on Table 3.

Table 3: Statements on Philanthropic Responsibility in Relation to Performance of Telecommunications Firms in Kenya

PHILANTHROPIC RESPONSIBILITY INDICATORS	SD F (%)	D F (%)	N F (%)	A F (%)	SA F (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
Our organization contributes resources regularly to the community and to charity	21 (12.9)	26 (16.0)	34 (20.9)	80 (49.1)	2 (1.2)	3.098	0.601
Our organization performs in a manner consistent with the philanthropic and charitable expectations of society	12 (7.4)	10 (6.1)	6 (3.7)	63 (38.7)	72 (44.2)	4.061	0.680
Our organization voluntarily supports projects that enhance the community's quality of life	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	72 (44.2)	91 (55.8)	4.558	0.998
Our staff members are constantly involved in charity and volunteer work on behalf of the firm	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	73 (44.8)	90 (55.2)	4.552	0.999
Our organization is actively involved in a project(s) with the local community	18 (11.0)	23 (14.1)	26 (16.0)	47 (28.8)	49 (30.1)	3.528	0.844
The organization takes part in community sporting events	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	63 (38.7)	100 (61.3)	4.614	0.988
Poor CSR activity can have a negative impact on organisational brand value	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (1.2)	75 (46.0)	86 (52.8)	4.515	0.525
Our organization has recruitment policies that favour the local communities in which it operates	35 (21.5)	22 (13.5)	26 (16.0)	77 (47.2)	3 (1.8)	2.945	0.744
Our organization consults the community before embarking on CSR activities	16 (9.8)	17 (10.4)	17 (10.4)	41 (25.2)	72 (44.2)	3.834	0.853

Our organization offers scholarships to needy students	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (1.2)	70 (42.9)	91 (55.8)	4.546	0.524
Sub-composite Mean and Standard deviation						**4.025**	**0.776**

As per the findings in Table 3, on the statement that the organization contributes resources regularly to the community and to charity, 80 (49.1%) of the respondents agreed, 34 (20.9%) were undecided, 26 (16.0%) disagreed, 21 (12.9%) strongly disagreed while 2 (1.2%) strongly agreed. The average was 3.098 and standard deviation was 0.601. The item had a mean score lower than the composite mean of 4.025 implying that the organizations did not contribute resources regularly to the community and to charity. Further, the standard deviation was lower than the sub-composite standard deviation of 0.776 implying that the opinions converged.

On the statement that the organization performs in a manner consistent with the philanthropic and charitable expectations of society, 72 (44.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 63 (38.7%) agreed, 12 (7.4%) strongly disagreed, 10 (6.1%) disagreed while 6 (3.7%) were undecided. The average was 4.061 and standard deviation was 0.680. The item had a mean score above the composite mean of 4.025 implying that the organizations performed in a manner consistent with the philanthropic and charitable expectations of society. Further, the standard deviation was lower than the sub-composite standard deviation of 0.776 implying that the opinions converged.

Regarding the statement that the organization voluntarily supports projects that enhance the community's quality of life, 91 (55.8%) of the respondents strongly agreed, while 72 (44.2%) agreed. The average was 4.558 and standard deviation was 0.998. The item had a mean score above the composite mean of 4.025 implying that the organizations voluntarily supported projects that enhance the community's quality of life. Further, the standard deviation was above the sub-composite standard deviation of 0.776 implying that the opinions were inconsistent.

On the statement that the staff members are constantly involved in charity and volunteer work on behalf of the firm, 90 (55.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed, while 73 (44.8%) agreed. The average was 4.552 and standard deviation was 0.999. The item had a mean score above the composite mean of 4.025 implying that the staff members were constantly involved in charity and volunteer work on behalf of the firm. Further, the standard deviation was above the sub-composite standard deviation of 0.776 implying that the opinions were inconsistent.

On the statement that the organization is actively involved in a project(s) with the local community, 49 (30.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 47 (28.8%) agreed, 26 (16.0%) were undecided, 23 (14.1%) disagreed, while 18 (11.0%) strongly disagreed. The average was 3.528 and standard deviation was 0.844. The item had a mean score lower than the composite mean of 4.025 implying that the organizations were not actively involved in a project(s) with the local community. Further, the standard deviation was above the sub-composite standard deviation of 0.776 implying that the opinions were inconsistent.

On the statement that the organization takes part in community sporting events, 100 (61.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed, while 63 (38.7%) agreed. The average was 4.614 and standard deviation was 0.988. The item had a mean score above the composite mean of 4.025 implying that the organizations took part in community sporting events. Further, the standard deviation was above the sub-composite standard deviation of 0.776 implying that the opinions converged.

On the item, poor CSR activity can have a negative impact on organisational brand value, 86 (52.8%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 75 (46.0%) agreed, while 2 (1.2%) were undecided. The average was 4.515 and standard deviation was 0.525. The item had a mean score above the composite mean of 4.025 implying that poor CSR activity had a negative impact on organisational brand value. Further, the standard deviation was lower than the sub-composite standard deviation of 0.776 implying that the opinions converged.

On the statement that the organization has recruitment policies that favour the local communities in which it operates, 77 (47.2%) of the respondents agreed, 35 (21.5%) strongly disagreed, 26 (16.0%) were undecided, 22 (13.5%) disagreed, while 3 (1.8%) strongly agreed. The average was 2.945 and standard deviation was 0.744. The item had a mean score lower than the composite mean of 4.025 implying that the organizations did not have recruitment policies that favoured the local communities in which it operated. Further, the standard deviation was lower than the sub-composite standard deviation of 0.776 implying that the opinions converged.

On the statement that the organization consults the community before embarking on CSR activities, 72 (44.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 41 (25.2%) agreed, 17 (10.4%) disagreed, 17 (10.4%) were undecided, while 16 (9.8%) strongly disagreed. The average was 3.834 and standard deviation was 0.853. The item had a mean score lower than the composite mean of 4.025 implying that the organizations did not consult the community before embarking on CSR activities. Further, the standard deviation was above the sub-composite standard deviation of 0.776 implying that the opinions converged.

On the statement that the organization offers scholarships to needy students, 91 (55.8%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 70 (42.9%) agreed, while 2 (1.2%) were undecided. The average was 4.546 and standard deviation was 0.524. The item had a mean score above the composite mean of 4.025 implying that the organizations offered scholarships to needy students. Further, the standard deviation was lower than the sub-composite standard deviation of 0.776 implying that the opinions converged.

The researcher asked to know whether there were other effects of philanthropic responsibility on performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya. According to the responses gathered, philanthropic responsibility within the framework of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has diverse and noteworthy effects on the performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya. Respondents emphasized several key dimensions where philanthropy contributes to organizational success. Firstly, the findings revealed a positive impact on brand image and corporate reputation. Respondents highlighted that engaging in philanthropic initiatives, such as supporting community projects and charitable causes, enhances the perceived social responsibility of their firms. This, in turn, results in a favorable public image, bolstering the overall brand reputation and influencing customer loyalty.

The respondents also emphasized the role of philanthropy in talent attraction and retention. Many indicated that a strong commitment to philanthropic activities resonates well with employees, especially the younger generation, who often seek purpose-driven and socially responsible employers. Engaging in philanthropy was seen as a means to create a positive workplace culture, attracting skilled professionals and reducing turnover rates.

Furthermore, philanthropic responsibility was noted to have a direct impact on community relations. The telecommunications firms that actively participate in philanthropy reported stronger ties with the local communities they serve. By investing in community development, education, and healthcare, companies build goodwill and foster positive relationships with residents, contributing to a supportive business environment.

In terms of regulatory and stakeholder relationships, respondents identified philanthropy as a tool for navigating the complex regulatory landscape and cultivating positive connections with government bodies. By demonstrating a commitment to social causes, companies can build rapport with regulators and policymakers, potentially influencing favorable policies.
Moreover, the respondents were asked to give their overall appraisal of the degree to which the philanthropic responsibilities of CSR impact the success of their companies. According to the insights gathered from the respondents, their overall appraisal underscores the substantial impact of philanthropic responsibilities within the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) framework on the success of their respective companies. The respondents provided nuanced perspectives on the degree to which philanthropy contributes to organizational success.

A recurring theme in the responses was the positive influence of philanthropy on brand perception and corporate reputation. Many respondents expressed a belief that actively engaging in philanthropic initiatives significantly enhances the external image of their companies. By aligning with social causes and supporting community development projects, firms are perceived as socially responsible entities, thereby contributing to a positive brand image. This positive brand perception, in turn, is seen as a crucial factor impacting the overall success and market position of their companies.

Furthermore, the respondents emphasized the relevance of philanthropy in talent management. They acknowledged that the commitment to philanthropic activities plays a pivotal role in attracting and retaining skilled employees. Particularly, the younger workforce often seeks employers with a sense of social responsibility, and philanthropy was perceived as a means to foster a positive workplace culture, influencing employee satisfaction and, consequently, organizational success.

The impact of philanthropy was not limited to internal factors; respondents highlighted its significant role in shaping community relations. Companies actively involved in philanthropy reported stronger ties with the local communities they serve. This positive relationship was seen as a contributing factor to business success, as it creates a supportive environment and enhances the overall social license to operate.

Moreover, respondents recognized philanthropy as a strategic tool for navigating regulatory landscapes. By actively participating in philanthropy, companies can build goodwill with regulatory bodies and policymakers, potentially influencing favorable policies and regulations. This strategic approach to philanthropy was considered as an integral component of overall business success.

Correlation between Philanthropic Responsibility and Performance of Telecommunications Firms

Analysis was carried out to establish the direction and magnitude of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables under investigation. This was in line with the second objective of this study, which was to establish how philanthropic responsibility influences the performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya. Data was collected from the respondents and results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Correlation between Philanthropic Responsibility and Performance of Telecommunications Firms

		Philanthropic responsibility
Performance of telecommunications firms	Pearson Correlation	0.838
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001

Table 4.15 indicate strong correlation between the performance of telecommunications firms and philanthropic responsibility since it had r=0.838 and p=0.001<0.05. This therefore implied that philanthropic responsibility was significant and that there was a strong correlation between the performance of telecommunications firms and philanthropic responsibility.

Regression Analysis of Influence of Philanthropic Responsibility on Performance of Telecommunications Firms

Further, linear regression analysis was conducted to establish the influence of philanthropic responsibility on performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya. Additionally, in testing its hypothesis data was collected from the respondents on philanthropic responsibility and then the composite index was computed and used in the analysis. The following hypothesis that was in line with objective two was formulated and tested.

Hypothesis Testing

The following hypothesis was tested using simple regression model to satisfy the second objective.
H_{a1}: There is a significant relationship between philanthropic responsibility and performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya.
H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between philanthropic responsibility and performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya.

Regression Model

The mathematical model used for testing the null hypothesis was as follows:
Performance of telecommunications firms = f (Philanthropic responsibility)
$Y = f(X_1, \varepsilon)$
$Y = \beta 0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$
Where:
Y = Performance of telecommunications firms
X_1 = Philanthropic responsibility
$\beta 0$ = Constant term
β_1 = Beta coefficients
ε = Error term
Data was analyzed and the regression results for the influence of philanthropic responsibility on performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Regression Analysis of Influence of Philanthropic Responsibility on Performance of Telecommunications Firms

Model Summary				
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**
1	0.838	0.703	0.702	1.132

ANOVA						
Model		**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
	Regression	914.414	1	914.414	713.238	1.69E-81

1	Residual	387.182	302	1.282		
	Total	**1301.596**	**303**			

Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.987	0.208		4.745	.000
	Philanthropic responsibility	0.895	0.245	0.838	3.653	.000
	Predictors: (constant), Philanthropic responsibility Dependent Variable: Performance of telecommunications firms					

Table 5 shows that r=0.838. This indicates that philanthropic responsibility has a strong relationship with performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya. $R^2 = 0.703$ indicating that philanthropic responsibility explains 70.3% of the variations in the performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya. The overall F statistics, ($F=713.238$, $p=1.69E-81<0.05$), indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between philanthropic responsibility and performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected and it was concluded that philanthropic responsibility significantly influences performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya.

Conclusions

The study concluded that philanthropic responsibility has a statistically significant influence on performance of telecommunications firms in Kenya. The study deduced that while philanthropy plays a role in financial fluctuations, its influence may not be as pronounced as other CSR dimensions. The study emphasizes the need for strategic considerations in philanthropic initiatives, highlighting the importance of timing and nature in influencing firm performance.

Recommendations

In light of the study's findings, several policy recommendations emerge. Firstly, there is a pressing need for regulatory bodies, such as the Communications Authority of Kenya (CAK), to actively encourage and enforce CSR initiatives within the telecommunications sector. This can be achieved by introducing policies that incentivize firms engaging in environmentally responsible practices, philanthropic endeavors, and consumer protection initiatives. The government should consider providing tax breaks or other financial incentives to firms that demonstrate a strong commitment to CSR, thus fostering a culture of responsibility within the industry.

Additionally, practitioners should also prioritize stakeholder engagement throughout the CSR planning and implementation processes. Actively seeking input from employees, customers, and the local community ensures that CSR initiatives are not only well-received but are also tailored to meet specific needs. This engagement fosters a sense of shared responsibility and enhances the effectiveness of CSR programs.

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