

A Critical Review of Sustainability and CSR of Chinese International Construction

Companies (CICCs) in Nigeria

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Chapter 1

1 Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a company's management concept that considers the impacts of its business operations on the community and the environment and takes steps to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive effects (Seriki, 2020). This concept mandates that companies strike a balance between their desire to make profit and their responsibilities to stakeholders—employees, customers, and suppliers as well as the community and the environment. Philanthropy, ethical sourcing, lowering emissions and environmental waste, fostering diversity and inclusion, and bettering working conditions are some of the activities that fall under the umbrella of CSR.

The end goal of CSR is to generate long-term benefits for the corporation as well as for society as a whole. In the context of Chinese international construction companies that are active in Nigeria, CSR initiatives can take on a variety of forms. Some examples of these forms include supporting local communities, promoting environmentally sustainable practices, and addressing environmental concerns (Seriki, 2020). These companies can participate in CSR initiatives to strengthen their relationships with local stakeholders, improve their reputations, and show that they are committed to responsible business practices. However, the particular CSR projects that these businesses choose to undertake are determined by a variety of criteria, such as the nature of their operations, the requirements of the communities in which they are located, and the expectations of residents (Nwankpa & Datta, 2022). In this regard, it is significantly important to perform a critical review of the activities.

1.1 Background and Rationale of the Study

CSR has increasingly gained attention recently, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria (Deng et al., 2014). CSR entails a company's accountability to itself, the public and its stakeholders and its readiness to address the social, economic, and environmental impacts resulting from its operations (Uduji & Okolo-Obasi, 2022). In this regard, a company focuses on CSR to ensure growth while supporting different groups within the community. Sustainability, on the other hand, entails the long-term viability of a company's operations and its ability to fulfil the needs of the present time without affecting the future generation's ability to meet their needs (Zhang et al., 2022). As such, the operations of a given company should be tailored in a manner that ensures that the needs of society are met in a manner which does not compromise its overall ability to ensure sustained growth.

China has been a significant player in the global construction industry, and CICC's have been actively involved in developing infrastructural projects in Nigeria (Zhang et al., 2022). These companies have significantly constructed the country's major highways, bridges, airports, power plants, and other critical infrastructure projects (Zhang et al., 2022). Thus, with the increasing requirement for corporate businesses to align with CSR and sustainability demands in the modern age, it is crucial to understand the CSR activities and policies of the CICC's and how these companies can maintain their sustainability in the challenging African market landscape.

An increasing number of CICC's have moved into Nigeria in recent years (Deng et al., 2014). The increase in the number of CICC's is associated with several factors which favour the establishment of the companies in Nigeria (Seriki, 2020). The rapid expansion of

Nigeria's population, and economy, and associated demands on the country's infrastructural development all play a part in supporting the growth of CICC's in Nigeria. Given that the government of Nigeria has been actively supporting investment in infrastructural development, many CICC's have begun to operate in the country, leading to the need for a consideration of CSR and sustainability (Zhang et al., 2022). These companies have brought with them substantial capital and technological skills, boosting the economy and enhancing its capacity to handle new developments (Seriki, 2020). The graph below shows that the Chinese companies have been increasingly investing in Nigeria before the coronavirus outbreak.

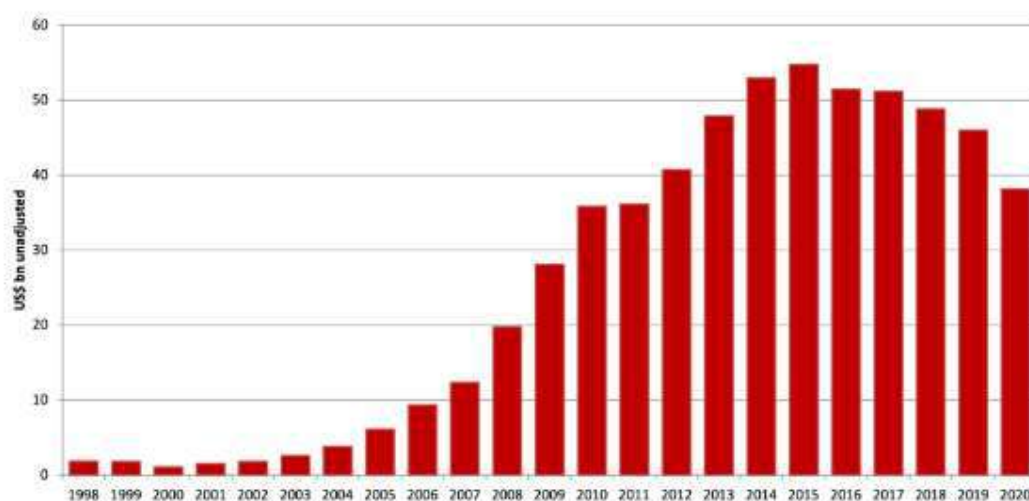


Figure 1: CICC's Investment in Nigeria (China Africa Research Initiative, 2022).

Opportunities and difficulties for CSR and sustainability exist as a result of the presence of CICC's in Nigeria (Deng et al., 2014). Their financial resources and specialized knowledge in areas like infrastructure development and economic expansion are examples of the positive effects the companies have brought to the Nigerian community (Zhang et al.,

2022). Through initiatives like job creation, skill development, and community outreach, the companies also aid in regional progress (Deng et al., 2014).

Despite the positive initiatives, concerns have been raised, regarding the impact of CICC's on the environment and nearby communities. Some projects, for instance, cause displacement of local people, environmental degradation and pollution (Deng et al., 2014). The exploitation of workers, deplorable working conditions, and inadequate wages are just some of the labour abuses that have raised eyebrows (Deng et al., 2014). Given these difficulties, CICC's in Nigeria should make CSR and sustainability central to their business strategies (Seriki, 2020). Environmentally friendly procedures, open and accountable purchasing, and local development supported by CSR programs are all examples of actions that fall under this category. By doing so, CICC's will contribute to the long-term sustainability of their operations in Nigeria while also fostering trust and positive relations with local communities and stakeholders.

As a developing country, Nigeria faces many social and environmental challenges, such as poverty, inequality, and ecological degradation (Khan et al., 2022). Therefore, it is crucial that companies operating in the country, especially those involved in infrastructural development, adopt responsible and sustainable practices that cushion the host communities from social, economic and environmental challenges. Despite the increase in CSR importance and sustainability in the African continent, there is limited research on the CSR and sustainability practices of CICC's in Nigeria (Khan et al., 2022). Therefore, this research aims to fill this knowledge gap.

CSR and sustainability are major concerns among construction companies in Africa (Li et al., 2022). The problem is the ability of construction companies to execute their social

responsibilities while ensuring sustainability. According to Li et al. (2022), CICC operating in developing countries must navigate a complex set of social, economic, and environmental challenges. Some of the key issues that these companies face include demands on environmental conservation, labour rights litigations, and corruption (Seriki et al., 2014). Additionally, these companies also face pressure from international stakeholders to adhere to higher standards of CSR and sustainability. To address these issues, the CICC implement a variety of strategies such as engaging with local communities, implementing sustainable building practices, and promoting transparency and accountability in their operations (Li et al., 2022). The increasing importance of sustainability and CSR has brought attention to the practices of companies operating in developing nations like Nigeria (Li et al., 2022). However, despite the increasing importance of sustainability and CSR, there is limited research on the CSR and sustainability practices of CICC in Nigeria (Li et al., 2022). Therefore, it is necessary to perform a critical review of the Sustainability and CSR practices of the CICC using Nigeria as the case study.

The rationale of the study lies on the objective to get a more in-depth comprehension of the CSR and sustainability practices of CICC that are currently operating in Nigeria. This offers extremely useful information to policymakers, academics, and practitioners who are interested in the CSR and sustainability practices of businesses that are active in developing countries. In addition, the findings of this research contribute to the existing body of knowledge regarding the influence that the sustainability and CSR activities of multinational corporations have on the socio-economic growth of developing nations. Thus, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the statutory policies and initiatives, as well as the perceptions of key stakeholders and the self-reported performance

of CICC's. This is accomplished by conducting a critical review of the sustainability and CSR activities of CICC's operating in Nigeria.

The study also sheds light on the extent to which CICC's take into account the interests of a variety of stakeholders when it comes to their CSR and sustainability practices, how they align their CSR and sustainability practices with the laws and regulations in Nigeria, and whether or not their CSR activities are reflective of their resources and capabilities. This research is important because it will allow policymakers, academics, and practitioners to develop policies and regulations that will promote CSR and sustainability practices among multinational construction companies that are operating in Nigeria if they have a better understanding of the CSR and sustainability practices that CICC's in Nigeria are currently engaging in.

The study's scope entails a critical review of the sustainability and CSR activities of CICC's operating in Nigeria in the context of Nigeria's social, economic, and environmental challenges. These CSR activities mainly address issues in food security and agriculture, community and social development, education, environment, health and HIV/AIDS, job creation, training and skill development, small business support, entrepreneurship, arts and culture, sport development, housing and living conditions, and safety and security (Khan et al., 2022). The study also analyzes the extent to which CICC's conform to societal expectations and regulations regarding sustainability and CSR in Nigeria and how they align their activities with the laws and regulations in Nigeria. Furthermore, the study investigates the significance of CICC's' resources and capabilities on their CSR and sustainability activities in Nigeria and whether their existing CSR activities reflect their capacity.

The significance of the study lies in its examination of the sustainability and CSR practices of CICC's operating in Nigeria. This topic is relevant because of the increasing involvement of CICC's in African countries and the growing importance of sustainable development and CSR in the international business arena. Additionally, Nigeria is a significant market for CICC's, and the country has experienced a range of environmental, social, and economic challenges associated with infrastructure development projects. The study seeks to identify gaps in the current sustainability and CSR practices of CICC's in Nigeria and offer recommendations for improvement.

The study is bound to some delimitations. The delimitations of a study refer to the specific boundaries set to define the scope of the research (Seriki, 2020). Establishing the delimitations of a study is essential because they assist in concentrating the investigation and making certain that it is still controllable within the constraints of the allotted amount of time and resources. In the context of a study on CICC's and their CSR in Nigeria, some potential delimitations include the specific time frame that is being studied, the geographical location of the companies, the specific sub-industries within the construction industry that are being considered, and the specific CSR practices that will be analyzed. In addition, the scope of the research is restricted to a single approach to the acquisition of data, which consists of an exhaustive search of the relevant published literature (Martins et al., 2022). The information that is being acquired can be affected by the data-gathering process. Because they serve to assure the validity of the results and offer context for the reader, it is necessary to be explicit and upfront about the delimitations of the study.

1.2 The Aim and Objective of the Study

This research aims to conduct a critical review of the CSR and sustainability activities conducted by CICC's in Nigeria while comparing these activities to international CSR standards. In essence, the research entails a comprehensive review of the statutory CSR policies and initiatives of the CICC's, as well as a reality check of the CSR and sustainability activities of host communities in Nigeria. Moreover, the research also investigates the extent to which CSR and sustainability activities of the CICC's align with Nigeria's socioeconomic goals such as poverty eradication, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, and climate action. Thus, the following are the objectives of the study.

1. To investigate the extent to which CICC's operating in Nigeria have implemented CSR initiatives.
2. To critically analyse the level of sustainability of CICC's operations in Nigeria and the impact of these operations on the local community and environment.
3. To identify the factors influencing sustainability and CSR practices adoption by CICC's in Nigeria

1.2.1 Research Questions

1. To what extent have CICC's operating in Nigeria implemented CSR initiatives that align with international CSR standards?
2. How sustainable are the operations of CICC's in Nigeria?

3. What are the key factors influencing the adoption of sustainability and CSR practices by CICC operating in Nigeria?

1.3 Structure

The dissertation has a well-defined structure, starting with an introduction that presents the research question and objectives and the scope of the study. The literature review provides a critical analysis of previous studies on sustainability, CSR, and international construction companies—particularly CICC, in the context of international business management. The methodology section outlines the research methodology, including data collection methods, and data analysis techniques. The results section presents the findings of the research, while the discussion section analyzes the results and their implications for sustainability and CSR practices of CICC in the Nigerian construction industry. The conclusion summarizes the key findings, and the recommendations provide actionable suggestions to improve sustainability and CSR practices for CICC in Nigeria.

Chapter 2

2 Literature Review

Sustainability and CSR have become crucial issues for businesses worldwide due to the growing awareness of their impact on society and the environment. In recent years, there has been a significant shift toward sustainable business practices as consumers demand more ethical and responsible behavior from companies (Onubi & Hassan, 2020). This trend is particularly evident in developing countries where economic development has led to environmental degradation and social inequality. In this regard, Nigeria is one such developing country that has witnessed rapid economic growth and development in recent years, resulting in increased demand for infrastructure development and construction activities (Tunji-Olayeni et al., 2020).

However, the country is also grappling with several sustainability challenges, including deforestation, air and water pollution, and social inequality. In this view, several studies have investigated the CSR and sustainability practices of international construction companies in other countries. For instance, a study conducted by Eweje and Wu (2010) examined the CSR practices of international construction companies operating in Australia, while another study by Du and Yiu (2015) focused on Chinese construction companies' CSR practices in Africa. These studies highlight the importance of CSR and sustainability practices for construction companies operating in foreign countries.

However, the context and circumstances of Nigeria are unique and warrant a specific examination of the methods of construction companies operating in the country. According to the World Bank, Nigeria has the largest economy in Africa with a 1.8% growth rate. This growth is primarily driven by the construction and infrastructure development sector, which

accounts for about 30% of Nigeria's GDP. Therefore, there is a need to examine the CSR and sustainability practices of construction companies in Nigeria to understand their impact on the environment and society. Moreover, the importance of sustainability and CSR practices for businesses operating in developing countries like Nigeria cannot be overemphasized (Sa'eed et al., 2020). Thus, further research is needed to understand the methods of CICC in Nigeria and how they can contribute to sustainable development in the country.

2.1 CICC's Impact on the Host Communities

Previous research has shown that construction companies, particularly Chinese international construction companies (CICCs), significantly impact the host nations where they operate, both positively and negatively. These impacts range from environmental to social and economic fronts. Environmental impacts may include deforestation, air, and water pollution, while social impacts may include displacement of local populations, labor issues, and cultural changes (Emezie & Igwe, 2017). Thus, these companies must operate responsibly and adopt sustainable practices that protect the environment, promote social development, and ensure long-term economic growth. Nigeria, like many other African countries, has become a major destination for Chinese investment, and the construction sector has grown significantly in recent years. As a result, there is a need to examine the CSR and sustainability practices of CICC operating in Nigeria and their impact on the environment and society.

Wu et al. (2015) found that CICC operating in Nigeria have limited engagement in CSR activities, with a focus on philanthropic activities rather than sustainable development. The study surveyed six CICC and found that while they had some initiatives in areas such as education and health, they had a limited understanding of sustainability and lacked

comprehensive sustainability policies and practices. Similarly, Seriki (2019) found that CICC operating in Nigeria have a limited understanding of sustainability and lack sustainability policies and practices. This study also found that there was a lack of sustainability reporting and little interaction with stakeholders on sustainability issues. Thus, the CICC have a range of impacts on the host nation, which include environmental, social, and economic impacts.

2.1.1 Environmental Impact

The environmental impacts of Chinese international construction companies (CICCs) operating in Nigeria have been a major concern due to the significant impact of the construction industry on the environment (McDonald et al., 2009). Previous studies have shown that CICC operating in Nigeria contribute to environmental degradation through their activities, such as deforestation, pollution, and waste disposal.

Deforestation is a significant environmental impact on CICC operating in Nigeria. The construction of infrastructure, such as roads and buildings, often requires the clearance of large areas of forests and other vegetation. According to a report by the World Wildlife Fund, Nigeria lost an average of 409,000 hectares of forest annually between 2010 and 2015 due to deforestation, which is equivalent to 11% of the country's total forest cover (World Wildlife Fund, 2019). CICC operating in Nigeria are major contributors to deforestation, as they often engage in activities that lead to the clearance of forests and other vegetation (Ite et al., 2016). In comparison to other countries, Nigeria has a high rate of deforestation as shown in the graph below.

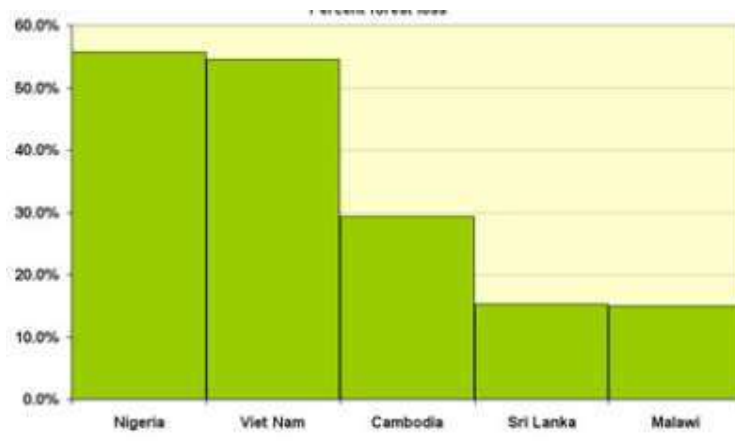


Figure 2: Deforestation in Nigeria (World Wildlife Fund, 2019).

Pollution is another significant environmental impact of CICC's operating in Nigeria.

The construction process involves the use of heavy machinery and equipment, which often results in noise and air pollution. Additionally, the disposal of waste materials from construction activities, such as cement, sand, and bricks, can lead to soil and water pollution. A study by Wu et al. (2015) found that CICC's operating in Nigeria had a limited understanding of environmental sustainability and lacked comprehensive environmental policies and practices, which resulted in the inadequate management of construction waste and pollution.

Water pollution is another environmental impact of CICC's operating in Nigeria. The construction of infrastructure often involves dredging, which can lead to sedimentation and the disturbance of aquatic habitats. Additionally, the discharge of untreated wastewater from construction sites can lead to water pollution, which can have significant impacts on human health and the environment. A study by Seriki (2019) found that CICC's operating in Nigeria had a limited understanding of sustainability and lacked comprehensive

environmental policies and practices, which resulted in inadequate management of construction waste and pollution.

2.1.2 Social Impact

CICCs operating in Nigeria have significant social impacts on the host communities. Several studies have documented the social impacts of CICCs operating in Nigeria, including labor practices, community engagement, and the displacement of local populations. One of the significant social impacts of CICCs operating in Nigeria is their labor practices (Sugianto & Soediantono, 2022). These companies have been criticized for the use of low-wage workers, inadequate safety measures, and poor working conditions. According to a report by the International Labor Organization (ILO), many workers employed by Chinese companies in Nigeria are not adequately protected by labor laws and regulations, and they face a high risk of accidents and injuries (International Labor Organization, 2014).

Additionally, many workers are not provided with adequate housing, health care, or other social services, which can lead to poor living conditions and lower standards of living. According to Sugianto and Soediantono (2022), the workforce in these companies may feel demotivated due to the inability to fully meet their needs such as housing. The workers strive to ensure that their family members have adequate better living conditions. This aspect can lead to the lack of trust between the CICCs and the local community. The local communities can develop the perception that the CICCs have the intention to exploit the available labor among the Nigerian local communities for the company's gain. As such, the inability to adequately compensate the workers has a negative effect on the CICCs reputation.

Another social impact of CICC operating in Nigeria is community engagement. CICC often engage in activities that affect local communities, such as the construction of infrastructure projects. However, their engagement with local communities is inadequate, with little consideration given to the needs and concerns of the communities affected by their activities. A study by Wu et al. (2015) found that CICC operating in Nigeria had a limited understanding of community engagement and lacked comprehensive policies and practices that promoted community engagement and social responsibility.

The displacement of local populations is also a significant social impact of CICC operating in Nigeria. The construction of infrastructure projects often requires the acquisition of land, which can result in the displacement of local communities. In many cases, the compensation provided to displace communities has been inadequate, and the affected communities have not been adequately consulted or involved in the decision-making process (Ite et al., 2016). The displacement of local populations can result in the loss of livelihoods, disruption of social structures, and a decline in the quality of life.

To mitigate these impacts, CICC should adopt responsible and ethical practices that consider the needs and concerns of the communities affected by their activities. This could include measures such as engaging with local communities in a meaningful and transparent way, providing adequate compensation for the acquisition of land, and ensuring that workers are adequately protected by labor laws and regulations. Additionally, CICC should adopt international labour and social standards and certifications, such as ISO 26000, to ensure that their social management practices meet global best practices.

2.1.3 Economic Impact

Chinese international construction companies (CICCs) operating in Nigeria have significant economic impacts, both positive and negative, on the host nation's economy. Several studies have documented these impacts, including the creation of employment opportunities, the transfer of technology, and the effects of China's engagement on Nigeria's economic development. One of the significant economic impacts of CICCs operating in Nigeria is the creation of employment opportunities (Sugianto & Soediantono, 2022). The construction of infrastructure projects such as roads, bridges, and power plants often requires a significant amount of labor, providing employment opportunities for local workers. According to a report by the Nigerian government, the construction of the Abuja-Kaduna-Kano expressway by CICCs has created over 30,000 jobs (Premium Times, 2018). However, there are also concerns that CICCs often rely on imported Chinese labor, which can limit the employment opportunities created for local workers.

Another economic impact of CICCs operating in Nigeria is the transfer of technology. The construction of infrastructure projects by CICCs often involves the transfer of technology and knowledge, which can have long-term benefits for the host nation's economy. For example, the construction of the Mambilla hydroelectric power project by CICCs involves the transfer of technology for the construction of large-scale hydroelectric power plants, which could help to boost Nigeria's power generation capacity (Xinhua, 2021).

However, CICCs' economic impacts are not entirely positive. One of the significant negative economic impacts of CICCs operating in Nigeria is their limited engagement with the local economy. According to a study by Li et al. (2019), CICCs operating in Nigeria often rely on imported materials and equipment, limiting the potential for local suppliers and

businesses to benefit from their operations. Additionally, CICC's reliance on imported materials and equipment can lead to a significant outflow of capital from the host nation's economy.

Another negative economic impact of CICC's operating in Nigeria is the potential for corruption and unethical business practices (Sugianto & Soediantono, 2022). Several reports have documented allegations of corruption and bribery involving CICC's operating in Nigeria, which can result in the diversion of public funds and the erosion of public trust in the government's ability to regulate and oversee foreign investment (Transparency International, 2017). Hence, CICC's operating in Nigeria have significant economic impacts, including the creation of employment opportunities and the transfer of technology. However, there are also concerns regarding their limited engagement with the local economy and the potential for corruption and unethical business practices. It is essential to ensure that their operations are transparent, responsible, and ethical and that they engage with the local economy in a meaningful way to maximize the positive economic impacts of CICC's operating in Nigeria. Additionally, governments should adopt measures to regulate foreign investment and ensure that the benefits of foreign investment are shared equitably across the population.

The findings of these studies suggest that CICC's operating in Nigeria need to take a more proactive approach to sustainability and CSR. They need to focus on not only philanthropic activities but also incorporate sustainable practices into their operations to mitigate their negative impacts on the environment and society. This could include measures such as using sustainable construction materials, reducing waste, and improving labor practices.

Research has also shown that sustainable business practices can have significant economic benefits. For instance, a study by Sugianto and Soediantono (2022) found that companies that adopted sustainable practices outperformed their peers in terms of financial performance. This is because sustainable practices can lead to cost savings, increased efficiency, and reduced risk. Thus, there is a clear business case for CICC operating in Nigeria to adopt sustainable practices and integrate CSR into their operations.

One way that CICC can improve their sustainability and CSR practices is by engaging with stakeholders. This could include working with local communities to understand their needs and concerns and developing initiatives that address them. It could also involve collaborating with NGOs and government agencies to develop sustainability policies and practices that align with local and national development goals. Engagement with stakeholders can help CICC build trust, enhance their reputation, and create a positive social impact (Seriki, 2019).

Another way that CICC can improve their sustainability practices is by adopting international standards and certifications. For instance, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has developed a standard for sustainability management systems (ISO 14001) that provides a framework for companies to manage their environmental impact. Similarly, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) provides a framework for companies to report on their sustainability performance (Seriki, 2019). Adopting these standards and certifications can help CICC demonstrate their commitment to sustainability and provide a basis for measuring and reporting on their performance.

2.2 CSR and Sustainability Perspectives

CSR and sustainability have become important considerations for companies in recent years as stakeholders become more conscious of their environmental and social impact. Construction and infrastructure companies, in particular, are increasingly being scrutinized for their sustainability and CSR practices as their operations have significant impacts on the environment, society, and economy. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the extent to which construction and infrastructure companies prioritize economic and financial performance over social and environmental considerations and the measures that some companies are taking to incorporate CSR and sustainability into their business strategies and operations.

Previous research has shown that construction and infrastructure companies often prioritize their economic and financial performance over social and environmental considerations. For instance, a study by Guo and Lu (2021) found that CICC's prioritized economic interests over social and environmental considerations when pursuing overseas projects. The study was conducted using a mixed-methods approach that involved reviewing 43 Chinese construction and infrastructure companies' sustainability reports and conducting interviews with industry experts. The findings revealed that the companies' sustainability and CSR practices were mainly focused on economic performance, such as revenue growth and profit margins, with limited attention given to social and environmental issues. The graph below shows that there has been positive growth in revenues generated through CICC's.

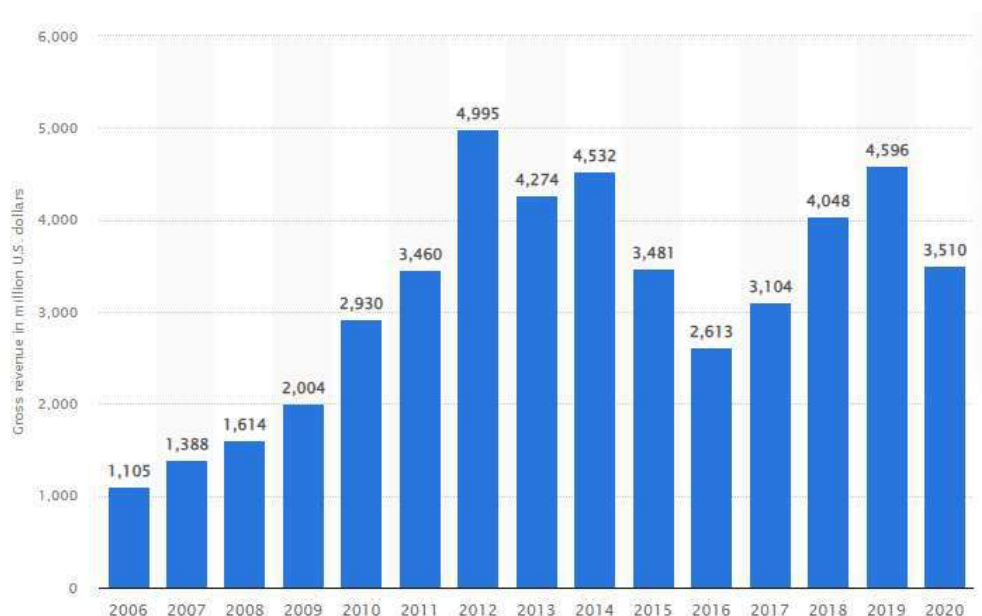


Figure 3: Revenue Growth from CICC's (Guo & Lu, 2021).

This observation is consistent with the resource-based view theory, which argues that a company's capabilities and resources are critical determinants of its strategic actions and performance (Barney, 1991). The theory posits that companies will prioritize activities that are most likely to generate economic benefits, given their resources and capabilities. Since construction and infrastructure companies often require significant capital investments and resources to undertake large-scale projects, it is reasonable to assume that these companies may prioritize economic and financial performance over social and environmental considerations.

While some studies have confirmed the above observation, others have found that CICC's are beginning to adopt more comprehensive CSR and sustainability practices. For example, a study by Wu et al. (2015) examined the sustainability practices of CICC's operating in Africa. The authors used a survey approach to collect data from 105 Chinese companies and 57 African stakeholders. The findings showed that the CICC's were aware of

the importance of sustainability, with 62% of the companies having a sustainability policy in place. Additionally, most companies have implemented some sustainability initiatives, such as recycling and waste management. The authors concluded that the CICC's were beginning to incorporate sustainability into their business strategies and operations, although more could be done to improve their sustainability practices.

Another study by Zhang et al. (2021) examined the CSR practices of CICC's operating in Africa, with a focus on stakeholder engagement. The authors used a qualitative research approach that involved interviewing stakeholders, including government officials, non-governmental organizations, and local communities. The findings showed that the CICC's had made some efforts to engage with stakeholders, such as conducting social impact assessments and holding community consultations. However, the authors also found that the CICC's needed to do more to involve stakeholders in their decision-making processes and address their concerns.

While previous research has found that construction and infrastructure companies often prioritize their economic and financial performance over social and environmental considerations, some studies have shown that CICC's are beginning to adopt more comprehensive CSR and sustainability practices. The resource-based view theory provides a theoretical explanation for this trend, as companies will prioritize activities that are most likely to generate economic benefits given their resources and capabilities. However, more can be done to improve the sustainability and CSR practices of construction and infrastructure companies, including CICC's. Future research could explore the factors that facilitate or hinder the adoption of comprehensive sustainability and CSR practices in these companies.

2.3 CICC's and Socioeconomic Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a comprehensive set of goals and targets designed to tackle the world's most pressing economic, social, and environmental challenges. The SDGs address a broad range of issues, from poverty and hunger to climate change and environmental degradation. Given the critical role that multinational corporations play in driving economic growth and development worldwide, these companies need to align their business practices with the SDGs. Chinese international construction companies (CICCs), in particular, have been the focus of recent research regarding their alignment with the SDGs. This literature review will examine the extent to which CICCs are aligning their CSR and sustainability practices with the SDGs.

2.3.1 Limited understanding of the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Previous research has shown that CICCs have a limited understanding of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and do not integrate them into their CSR and sustainability practices. Seriki (2019) conducted a study on CICCs operating in Nigeria and found that these companies had little knowledge of the SDGs and did not prioritize aligning their business practices with them. The study concluded that CICCs need to do more to understand the significance of the SDGs and incorporate them into their CSR and sustainability practices.

Similarly, Zhang et al. (2021) investigated the stakeholder engagement practices of CICCs operating in Africa and found that these companies had limited engagement with local communities and other stakeholders in areas related to the SDGs. The study identified a need for CICCs to prioritize stakeholder engagement and incorporate SDGs into their business practices.

2.3.2 *Inconsistent integration of SDGs into CSR and sustainability practices*

While some studies have found that CICC have a limited understanding of the SDGs, other studies have found that some companies are beginning to incorporate SDGs into their CSR and sustainability practices. Guo and Lu (2021) conducted a study on the sustainability practices of CICC and found that some companies are beginning to align their business practices with the SDGs. Specifically, the study found that some companies have started to incorporate environmental and social considerations into their business strategies and operations.

Furthermore, some CICC have taken concrete steps to align their CSR and sustainability practices with the SDGs. For instance, China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC) has launched a series of initiatives aimed at supporting the SDGs, including the establishment of a green building research center and the promotion of energy-saving and low-carbon construction technologies (Chen, 2020).

2.3.3 *Alignment with specific SDGs*

In terms of the specific SDGs, some CICC have made progress in aligning their CSR and sustainability practices with certain goals. For example, Wu et al. (2015) found that CICC operating in Africa have made efforts to support the SDGs related to poverty alleviation and sustainable infrastructure development. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2021) identified some CICC that have incorporated the SDGs related to water and sanitation, gender equality, and climate action into their CSR and sustainability practices. The following is a review of how the CICC have aligned with specific SDGs.

SDG 1: No Poverty

One of the key challenges for Chinese construction companies in Nigeria in aligning with SDG 1 of "No Poverty" is ensuring that their projects do not lead to worsening poverty. For instance, the construction of infrastructure projects such as roads and bridges may displace low-income communities without providing alternative housing or livelihood options. However, some Chinese construction companies in Nigeria are taking steps to address poverty through various CSR and sustainability initiatives. For example, China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) has launched several poverty alleviation projects in Nigeria, including constructing schools, water supply systems, and medical clinics in rural areas.

SDG 2: Zero Hunger

Chinese construction companies in Nigeria can support SDG 2 of "Zero Hunger" by ensuring the sustainable production and distribution of food in their construction projects. For example, some companies are incorporating urban agriculture into their projects, such as green roofs and vertical gardens, to provide fresh produce for local communities (Lim, 2015). CCECC has established a vocational training center in Nigeria that includes training on sustainable agriculture practices, including aquaponics and hydroponics, to support food production in the region.

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

Chinese construction companies in Nigeria can align with SDG 3 of "Good Health and Well-being" by ensuring the safety and well-being of their workers and local communities. For example, CCECC has implemented a comprehensive health and safety program for its employees, including regular health screenings, safety training, and personal protective

equipment (Lim, 2015). Additionally, CCECC has donated medical equipment and supplies to local hospitals and clinics to support healthcare access in the areas where it operates.

SDG 4: Quality Education

Chinese construction companies in Nigeria can support SDG 4 of "Quality Education" by investing in education infrastructure and resources. For example, China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) has built several schools in Nigeria, including a technical college in Lagos (Wang & Deng, 2022). Additionally, CCECC has provided scholarships for Nigerian students to study in China, as well as sponsoring various educational and cultural exchange programs between the two countries.

SDG 5: Gender Equality

Chinese construction companies in Nigeria can align with SDG 5 of "Gender Equality" by ensuring equal opportunities and treatment for men and women in the workplace. For example, CCECC has implemented a gender mainstreaming policy that includes promoting women to leadership positions and providing equal pay for equal work (Wang & Deng, 2022). Additionally, CCECC has provided vocational training and employment opportunities for women in traditionally male-dominated fields, such as engineering and construction.

SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

Chinese construction companies in Nigeria can support SDG 6 of "Clean Water and Sanitation" by ensuring access to safe and clean water and sanitation facilities in their construction projects. For example, CHEC has constructed several water supply and treatment facilities in Nigeria, including a water supply project in the city of Calabar (Ebekozi et al., 2022). Additionally, CCECC has built several public toilets and sanitation

facilities in Nigeria to improve sanitation and hygiene in local communities (Wang & Deng, 2022).

SDG 7: Clean and Affordable Energy

This goal aims to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all. Chinese construction companies operating in Nigeria have been involved in several projects aimed at improving access to clean energy. For instance, in 2016, China National Electric Engineering Company (CNEEC) completed a 10 MW solar power plant project in Nigeria's Kaduna State, which provides clean and reliable electricity to over 300,000 households (Ebekozen et al., 2022). Similarly, in 2020, China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) signed an agreement with Nigeria's Ministry of Works and Housing to build a 300 MW solar power plant in Kogi State, which will significantly boost Nigeria's power supply and reduce its carbon footprint.

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

This goal aims to promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. Chinese construction companies in Nigeria have been significant employers, providing direct and indirect employment opportunities to thousands of Nigerians. For instance, in 2018, China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) announced that it had employed over 40,000 Nigerians on its various construction projects across the country (Ibrahim et al., 2022). Additionally, Chinese construction companies in Nigeria have been involved in several projects aimed at improving the country's infrastructure, which has the potential to create a positive ripple effect on the economy.

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructural Development

This goal aims to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation. Chinese construction companies in Nigeria have been involved in several infrastructure development projects, including the construction of roads, railways, airports, and ports. For instance, in 2014, CCECC completed the construction of a light rail transit system in Abuja, which has significantly reduced travel time and improved transportation in the city (Ibrahim et al., 2022). Similarly, in 2017, China Harbour Engineering Company completed the construction of the Lekki Deep Sea Port in Lagos, which is expected to boost Nigeria's economy by providing a modern and efficient port facility.

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

This goal aims to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Chinese construction companies in Nigeria have been involved in several projects aimed at improving Nigeria's urban infrastructure, including the construction of housing units, roads, and transportation systems. For instance, in 2019, CCECC completed the construction of 1,000 housing units in Nigeria's Ekiti State, which were designed to be eco-friendly and sustainable (Ezeani et al., 2022). Similarly, in 2020, CHEC signed an agreement with Nigeria's Ministry of Transportation to construct a light rail transit system in Lagos, which is expected to significantly reduce traffic congestion and improve transportation in the city (Ezeani et al., 2022).

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

This goal aims to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. Chinese construction companies in Nigeria have been involved in several projects aimed at promoting sustainable consumption and production practices. For instance, in 2018, CCECC announced that it had constructed a waste recycling plant in Nigeria's Ekiti State, which is capable of processing up to 400 metric tons of waste per day (Ibrahim et al., 2022). Additionally, Chinese construction companies in Nigeria have been involved in several projects aimed at promoting renewable energy, which is a key component of sustainable production.

SDG 13: Climate Action

This goal aims to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Climate change is a global challenge that affects every country, and its impacts are already being felt around the world. The goal calls for urgent and ambitious action by all countries and stakeholders to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to the impacts of climate change (Fajobi & Muoghalu, 2022). Chinese construction companies operating in Nigeria can contribute to SDG 13 by adopting sustainable and low-carbon building practices. For example, they can use energy-efficient materials, install solar panels, and incorporate green roofs and walls in their building designs. Some Chinese construction companies are already making progress in this area. For instance, China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) has built a solar power plant in Abuja, Nigeria, to provide renewable energy to the local community (Fajobi & Muoghalu, 2022). Overall, Chinese construction companies operating in Nigeria have a critical role to play in supporting SDG 13 by taking action to reduce their carbon footprint,

promoting sustainable practices within their supply chains, and contributing to global efforts to combat climate change.

SDG 14: Life below Water

CICCs operating in Nigeria are involved in various marine infrastructure projects. The negative impact of these projects on the marine environment has been a growing concern. According to a report by the Nigerian Conservation Foundation, several Chinese construction companies working on projects in Lagos State have caused severe environmental damage to the coastal and marine ecosystems (NCF, 2020). In response to these concerns, some CICCs have started taking steps to minimize their impact on the marine environment. For example, China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC), which is involved in the construction of the Lekki Port, has developed an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) to address potential environmental impacts and mitigate them. The plan includes measures such as waste management, marine biodiversity conservation, and pollution prevention and control (CCECC, 2020).

SDG 15: Life on Land

CICCs' construction activities often result in deforestation, habitat fragmentation, and other forms of ecosystem degradation, which threaten terrestrial biodiversity. According to a report by the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), CICCs have been implicated in illegal logging and other forms of environmental degradation in several African countries, including Nigeria (EIA, 2017). To address this issue, some CICCs have adopted sustainable land management practices. For example, China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC), which is involved in the construction of the new Lagos city, has implemented a land use and environmental protection plan. The plan includes measures

such as reforestation and afforestation, soil conservation, and protection of endangered species (CSCEC, 2020).

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

The presence of CICC in Nigeria has raised concerns about corruption and weak governance practices. According to a report by Transparency International, Chinese companies operating in Nigeria have been accused of engaging in corrupt practices, including offering bribes to Nigerian officials (Transparency International, 2018). To address this issue, some CICC have implemented anti-corruption measures. For example, China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC), which is involved in the construction of the Lekki Deep Sea Port, has established an anti-corruption management system to prevent corrupt practices in its operations (Ibrahim et al., 2022). The system includes measures such as internal controls, risk assessment, and training of employees on anti-corruption policies (CHEC, 2020). By implementing such measures, CICC can contribute to promoting peace, justice, and strong institutions in Nigeria.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

This goal aims to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. Chinese construction companies operating in Nigeria have been involved in several partnerships aimed at promoting sustainable development. For instance, in 2019, CCECC signed a memorandum of understanding with Nigeria's Ministry of Mines and Steel Development to explore opportunities for the development of Nigeria's solid mineral sector (Ibrahim et al., 2022). Additionally, Chinese construction companies in Nigeria have been involved in several CSR initiatives aimed

Overall, Chinese construction companies in Nigeria have the potential to make significant contributions toward achieving the SDGs. While there are concerns about their environmental and social impact, some CICC's have started to adopt sustainable practices and integrate the SDGs into their business operations (Ibrahim et al., 2022). With continued efforts towards sustainability and social responsibility, CICC's can help to promote sustainable development and contribute to Nigeria's socioeconomic growth.

2.4 Literature Gap

This literature review has highlighted the limited research on the sustainability and CSR practices of CICC's in Nigeria and the need for further examination. Additionally, the study has shown that while CICC's have traditionally prioritized economic and financial performance over social and environmental considerations, there is a growing trend toward more comprehensive CSR and sustainability practices (Guo & Lu, 2021). However, there is still a limited understanding of the UN SDGs and a lack of integration of these goals into the CSR and sustainability practices of CICC's.

Chapter 3

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

Qualitative research was an appropriate choice for this study as it allowed for an in-depth exploration of the complex CSR and sustainability practices of CICC in Nigeria. Qualitative research enables researchers to investigate the subjective experiences of individuals and the social contexts in which these experiences occur. As a result, the researcher gained a deeper understanding of the factors that influence CSR and sustainability practices in the Nigerian context.

Moreover, the research design enabled the use of secondary data sources, which were readily available and cost-effective. Secondary data sources are often used in qualitative research as they provide a rich source of data that can be analyzed in detail (Clarke, 2022). The framework analysis method employed in this study was an appropriate choice for analyzing the secondary data sources. This method enabled the identification of key themes and patterns in the data and provided a structured approach to analyzing the vast amount of data available. The framework analysis method is commonly used in qualitative research as it provides a systematic and objective means of analyzing data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The method enabled the researcher to identify patterns and themes in the data that would have been difficult to discern using other qualitative research methods. Overall, the chosen research design and analysis method were well-suited to this study as they allowed for an in-depth exploration of the CSR and sustainability practices of CICC operating in Nigeria. The use of secondary data sources and framework analysis

method provided a cost-effective and objective means of exploring the complexities of CSR and sustainability practices in the Nigerian context.

3.2 Study Area

The study focused on Corporate Investment Companies (CICCs) currently operating in Nigeria and having a significant presence. Nigeria is one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa, and CICCs have played a significant role in its economic growth. The study area was selected because CICCs play a vital role in the Nigerian economy, and their CSR and sustainability practices significantly impact the environment and society.

3.2.1 Target Population

The target population for this study was CICCs in Nigeria. The study focused on CICCs with a significant presence in Nigeria and those in operation for at least five years. CICCs were selected as the target population because of their importance to the Nigerian economy and their potential impact on the environment and society.

3.3 Sampling Method and Procedure

A non-probability sampling method was used in this study. The data was collected through a comprehensive online search of publicly available information such as company websites, online databases, press releases, government statistics, and news articles. The sampling procedure involved selecting CICCs that have been in operation for at least five years and have a significant presence in Nigeria.

3.3.1 Sample Size

A total of 10 CICCs were selected for the study. The sample size was determined based on the available resources and the feasibility of the study. The sample size was

considered adequate for the study because it allowed for an in-depth analysis of the CSR and sustainability practices of CICCs operating in Nigeria.

3.4 Data Collection Methods and Instruments

The data collection methods employed in this study aimed to ensure the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the collected data. The researchers opted for a secondary data collection approach, which involved using previously published data sources. The secondary data collection approach was suitable for this study since it allowed the researchers to access various data sources from various stakeholders, such as the government, media outlets, and the CICCs themselves. The framework analysis method was used to analyze the data collected from CICC annual reports, sustainability reports, and other relevant documents such as press releases, news articles, and government statistics. Framework analysis is a systematic and rigorous method for analyzing qualitative data that involves organizing and categorizing data into themes and subthemes (Clarke, 2022). This method is particularly useful when exploring complex and multi-layered data, such as those collected in this study.

Data collection involved a comprehensive online search of publicly available information from various sources such as company websites, online databases, press releases, government statistics, and news articles. The collected data were compared with the CICCs' self-reported CSR performance in these areas. This comparison helped validate the collected data's accuracy and identify any discrepancies between the self-reported data and the CSR practices of the CICCs. Overall, the data collection methods and instruments used in this study effectively ensured the collected data's comprehensiveness and accuracy. Using secondary data sources allowed the researchers to access a broad range of data. At

the same time, the framework analysis method provided a systematic and rigorous approach to analyzing the data. Comparing the collected data with the CICC's self-reported CSR performance helped validate the collected data's accuracy and ensure the credibility of the study findings.

3.5 Reliability

Reliability is an essential element of research that refers to the consistency and stability of research results over time (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). The reliability of research data ensures that findings are not a result of chance or measurement error but rather a true reflection of the research phenomenon (Wilhelmy & Köhler, 2022). This study will use a multi-source triangulation approach to ensure data reliability. Triangulation is a process of using multiple data sources to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). This study collected data from multiple sources, such as annual reports, sustainability reports, news articles, and press releases, to provide various perspectives on the CSR and sustainability practices of CICCs in Nigeria. The use of multiple data sources in this study helped ensure data reliability by providing a diverse range of perspectives on the research phenomenon. This approach is particularly relevant in qualitative research, where data reliability is often a concern due to the subjective nature of data collection and analysis (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). The use of multiple data sources also helps reduce the potential for bias in the research findings. To further enhance the reliability of the data, this study will adopt a framework analysis method, which involves identifying key themes and patterns through an iterative coding process and categorizing the data (Wilhelmy & Köhler, 2022). The iterative process of coding and categorizing the data ensures that the research findings are not the result of chance or

measurement error but rather a true reflection of the research phenomenon (Wilhelmy & Köhler, 2022).

3.6 Validity

Validity is a crucial aspect of research that refers to the degree to which the research accurately measures what it is intended to measure (Wilhelmy & Köhler, 2022). Validity ensures that research findings are trustworthy and meaningful and accurately reflect the research phenomenon (Babbie, 2017). In this study, the data collected from CICC annual reports, sustainability reports, and other relevant documents were analyzed using a framework analysis method, considered a promising approach in qualitative research (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). This method enables researchers to identify and explore the central issues in the research phenomenon and to interpret the data in a way that is relevant and meaningful to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Using the framework analysis method in this study ensures that the research findings are valid and relevant to the research questions, as the method enables researchers to focus on the most important aspects of the research phenomenon.

3.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis is a crucial aspect of any research study. It involves the systematic and rigorous examination of the data to identify key themes and patterns and draw conclusions about the research phenomenon (Wilhelmy & Köhler, 2022). In this study, the data collected from CICC annual reports, sustainability reports, and other relevant documents were analyzed using a framework analysis method, which involves an iterative process of coding and categorizing the data (Wilhelmy & Köhler, 2022). The first step in the data analysis process involved familiarization with the data. This step entailed reading through the data

sources to gain a broad understanding of the research phenomenon and to identify any key issues or themes that emerged.

The next step entailed the identification of a thematic framework, which served as a guide for the data analysis process (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The thematic framework was developed based on the research questions and the key issues or themes from the data. Once the thematic framework was developed, the data were coded according to the themes and categories identified in the framework. The coding process involved systematically labeling and categorizing the data to identify key patterns and themes. This process was iterative, with the researcher revisiting and refining the coding framework as new themes and patterns emerged.

Once the coding process was complete, the researcher analyzed the data to identify key findings and draw conclusions about the research phenomenon. This process involved examining the patterns and themes that emerged from the data and interpreting them in the context of the research questions and the relevant literature (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The researcher will then present the findings clearly and concisely, using tables, graphs, and other visual aids to help illustrate the key findings. However, it was necessary to ensure the rigor and validity of the analysis process, making the researcher take steps to control for potential sources of bias. This aspect entailed involving multiple researchers in the data analysis process to ensure that multiple perspectives are considered and taking steps to ensure the data analysis process is transparent and well-documented. The researcher also took steps to ensure that the research findings are grounded in the data and that any conclusions drawn from the data are supported by evidence through triangulation.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are essential in any research study, particularly in a sensitive area such as Chinese International Construction Companies' (CICCs) Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and sustainability practices in Nigeria. As such, the researcher explained the purpose of the research and obtained informed consent from the participants, ensuring that their privacy and confidentiality were maintained throughout the study. The researcher also avoided collecting personal data that could reveal the identity of the individuals or communities, and all data collected was kept confidential. The researcher adhered to the ethical guidelines of the relevant professional bodies and identified and controlled any possible sources of bias in the data analysis to ensure that the study's findings were objective and credible. Overall, the research was conducted in a manner that is ethical, respectful, and sensitive to the rights of the participants and the host communities in Nigeria.

3.9 Limitations

Several limitations apply to the findings of this study. First, non-probabilistic sampling was used, and data was collected from publicly available sources for this study. Because of possible bias in the selection process, the sample may not accurately reflect CICCs throughout Nigeria. Second, primary data collection, such as interviews or surveys, was not attempted to better understand the factors that influence CSR and sustainability practices at CICCs in Nigeria. Due to its focus on CICCs that have been operating for at least five years and have a substantial presence in Nigeria, the study may possibly not be typical of the experiences of smaller or younger CICCs. And last, the study did not look at whether or not CICCs in Nigeria engage in CSR or sustainable activities from the perspective of other stakeholders like the government or civil society groups. Although the study's methodology

and research techniques were sufficient for assessing CSR and sustainability practices in Nigerian CICC's, it is necessary to take in mind the study's limitations when interpreting its results.

Overall, Chapter 3 of this study outlined the methodology used to collect and analyze data on the CSR and sustainability practices of CICC's operating in Nigeria. The study adopted a qualitative research design, utilizing secondary data sources, and focused on CICC's currently operating in Nigeria and having a significant presence. The data collection was done through a comprehensive online search of publicly available information, and the data analysis was done using a framework analysis method. The study considered ethical issues in researching host communities in Nigeria. Therefore Chapter 4 will delve into the findings and analysis of the data collected, concluding the CSR and sustainability practices of CICC's operating in Nigeria.

Chapter 4

4 Findings

4.1 Introduction

In retrospect, the aim of this study was to investigate the extent to which CICC operating in Nigeria have implemented CSR initiatives, analyze the level of sustainability of their operations, and identify the factors influencing their CSR practices adoption. The data collected from CICC's annual reports, sustainability reports, and other relevant documents were analyzed using a framework analysis method, which involved an iterative process of coding and categorizing the data from secondary sources. The findings of this study reveal several themes that emerged from the data analysis process; which include, the extent of CSR implementation among the CICC, sustainability of CICC operations in Nigeria, impact of CICC in the local community, and the factors influencing CSR and sustainability practices.

4.1 The Extent of CSR Implementation among CICC

The first objective of this research was to examine the extent to which CICC operating in Nigeria have implemented CSR initiatives. The data analysis revealed that CSR practices are not well-established among CICC operating in Nigeria. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have reported a lack of CSR practices among the CICC in Nigeria. For instance, in a study by Seriki (2020), it was revealed that the CICC do not sufficiently participate in CSR and sustainability practices. Nevertheless, the analysis found that CICC in Nigeria typically engage in one-off CSR activities, such as donations to charities, rather than implementing a comprehensive long-term CSR strategy.

The CICC analyzed were mainly involved in sponsoring community development projects, education, healthcare, and charity donations (Ajayi et al., 2022). However, it was

also found that a few CICC's such as CCECC and CHEC have implemented more robust CSR initiatives. These companies have developed a comprehensive CSR strategy integrated into their core business operations. It was also revealed that these companies prioritize sustainable business practices and strive to create positive social and environmental impact through their operations.

In their quest to implement CSR initiatives in Nigeria, CICC's face many challenges, which include the lack of awareness and understanding of CSR among business leaders and employees (Ajayi et al., 2022). This study found that many CICC's do not clearly understand the concept of CSR, which affects their ability to develop and implement effective CSR strategies. Another factor contributing to the low level of CSR implementation among CICC's is the lack of regulatory frameworks that mandate CSR reporting and practices (Ehie, 2016). Unlike developed countries with well-established CSR practices, Nigeria lacks a comprehensive regulatory framework that mandates CSR practices. Thus, the analysis revealed that while some CICC's in Nigeria have implemented CSR initiatives, most are still lagging in implementing a comprehensive CSR strategy (Xia et al., 2016). The lack of understanding of CSR, the absence of regulatory frameworks, and the emphasis on short-term gains over long-term sustainability contribute to this low level of CSR implementation.

4.2 Level of Sustainability of CICC's Operations in Nigeria

The second goal of this study was to critically examine the level of sustainability of CICC's operations in Nigeria, as well as their impact on the local community and environment. Data revealed that the level of sustainability of CICC's operations in Nigeria is generally low (Wang et al., 2018). The data further shows that CICC's in Nigeria are primarily concerned with short-term gains rather than long-term sustainability. This is reflected in

their business practices prioritizing profit over environmental and social concerns. Secondly, the environmental impact of CICC's operations is significant (Ekung et al., 2014). Because of activities such as mining, oil and gas exploration, and processing, the extractive industries have a significant environmental impact. According to the findings, CICC's in these industries do not implement effective environmental management practices, causing environmental degradation and pollution (Ekhator, 2014).

Thirdly, CICC operations have a significant impact on the local community. Further research reveals that the operations of CICC's frequently result in the displacement of communities, the loss of livelihoods, and poor working conditions for employees (Sugianto & Soediantono, 2022). However, the findings show that some CICC's are working to make their operations more sustainable. For example, the Nigeria Railway Construction (International) Co. Ltd creates shared value by implementing environmental management systems, sustainable business practices, and constructive engagement with local communities (Tan-Mullins et al., 2017). Nonetheless, CSR and sustainable practices are still poorly implemented in Nigeria.

The lack of regulatory frameworks mandating sustainable practices is one of the major factors contributing to CICC's low level of sustainability. This lack of regulation fosters an environment where businesses prioritize profit over environmental and social concerns (Ekhator, 2014). A lack of awareness and understanding of sustainable practices among CICC's is another factor contributing to the low level of sustainability. Many businesses do not understand what sustainable business practices entail, limiting their ability to implement effective sustainability strategies (Tan-Mullins et al., 2017). CICC operations

significantly impact the environment and local communities, despite limited efforts toward sustainable practices.

4.3 Impact of CICC's Operations on the Local Community and Environment

The third objective of this study was to identify the impact of CICC's operations on the local community and environment in Nigeria. The analysis revealed that the impact of CICC's operations on the local community and environment is significant. Firstly, CICC's operations in Nigeria often result in the displacement of communities and the loss of livelihoods (Tovar, 2019). This is particularly true in the extractive industries, where mining, oil, and gas exploration and processing activities often require large land areas, displacing communities that rely on the land for their livelihoods. For instance, the construction of the Mambila dam project was associated with significant disruption and displacement of 100,000 people (Ibrahim et al., 2022).

Secondly, the impact of CICC's operations on the environment is significant. The extractive industries, in particular, have a significant impact on the environment due to their activities in processing construction materials. Moreover, the CICC's in these industries do not implement effective environmental management practices, leading to environmental degradation and pollution (Olorunfemi et al., 2017). The pollution of air, water, and soil by these companies is a significant concern for the local community's health. In this regard, Nigeria has been ranked fourth in the number of deaths attributed to air pollution, as shown in the graph below.

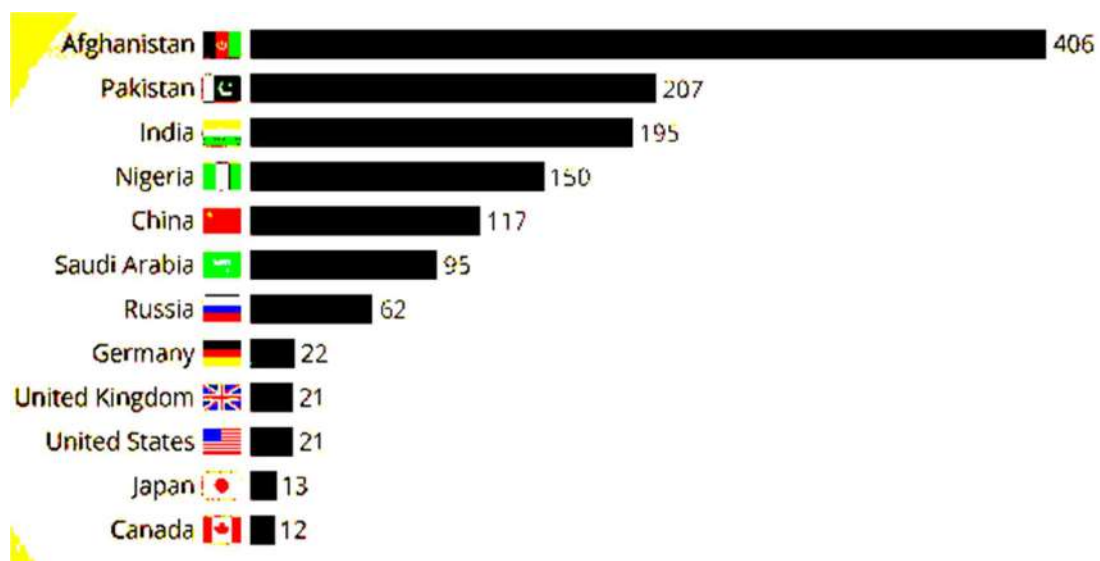


Figure 4: Air Pollution Deaths (Green Earth NG, 2022)

Thirdly, the operations of CICC's often contribute to social issues such as conflict and crime. In some cases, CICC's have been accused of collaborating with local authorities to suppress community opposition to their operations (Sugianto & Soediantono, 2022). This has resulted in conflict between communities and CICC's, with some communities resorting to violence to protect their land and livelihoods (Olorunfemi et al., 2017). However, some CICC's are making efforts to minimize the negative impact of their operations on the local community and environment. These companies engage with local communities to create shared value, implement environmental management systems, and adopt sustainable business practices. For instance, China Civil Engineering Construction Company (CCECC) has been focusing on reducing carbon emissions (Olorunfemi et al., 2017). The measures taken to reduce carbon emission include the use of renewable energy and carbon-neutral fuels to operate machinery and relying on the locally available raw materials to cut down carbon emissions.

One of the factors contributing to the negative impact of CICC's operations on the local community and environment is the lack of stakeholder engagement (Hess & Aidoo, 2016). Many CICC's in Nigeria do not engage with local communities and other stakeholders meaningfully, which limits their ability to identify and address the negative impact of their operations. Another factor contributing to the negative impact of CICC's operations is the lack of effective regulation (Osuizugbo et al., 2021). In Nigeria, the regulatory framework for the extractive industries is weak, which creates an environment where companies can prioritize profit-making over environmental and social considerations (Hess & Aidoo, 2016). Thus, the analysis shows that the impact of CICC's operations on Nigeria's local community and environment is significant (Osuizugbo et al., 2021). The lack of stakeholder engagement and effective regulation contributes to the negative impact of CICC's operations.

4.4 Factors Influencing Sustainability and CSR Practices Adoption by CICC's

The fourth theme that emerged from the analysis is the factors influencing sustainability and CSR practices adoption by CICC's. The analysis revealed several factors influencing the adoption of sustainability and CSR practices by CICC's in Nigeria. One of the most significant factors influencing the adoption of sustainability and CSR practices by CICC's is the regulatory environment. The study found that the regulatory environment in Nigeria is weak, and there is a lack of clear guidelines on sustainability and CSR practices (Osuizugbo et al., 2021). This lack of regulation makes it difficult for CICC's to implement sustainability and CSR practices, as there is no clear direction for the multinational companies (Zhang et al. 2022). As a result, many CICC's have not fully embraced sustainability and CSR practices, and those that have done so have done it on an ad-hoc basis as shown in the study by Seriki (2020) depicted in figure 5 below.

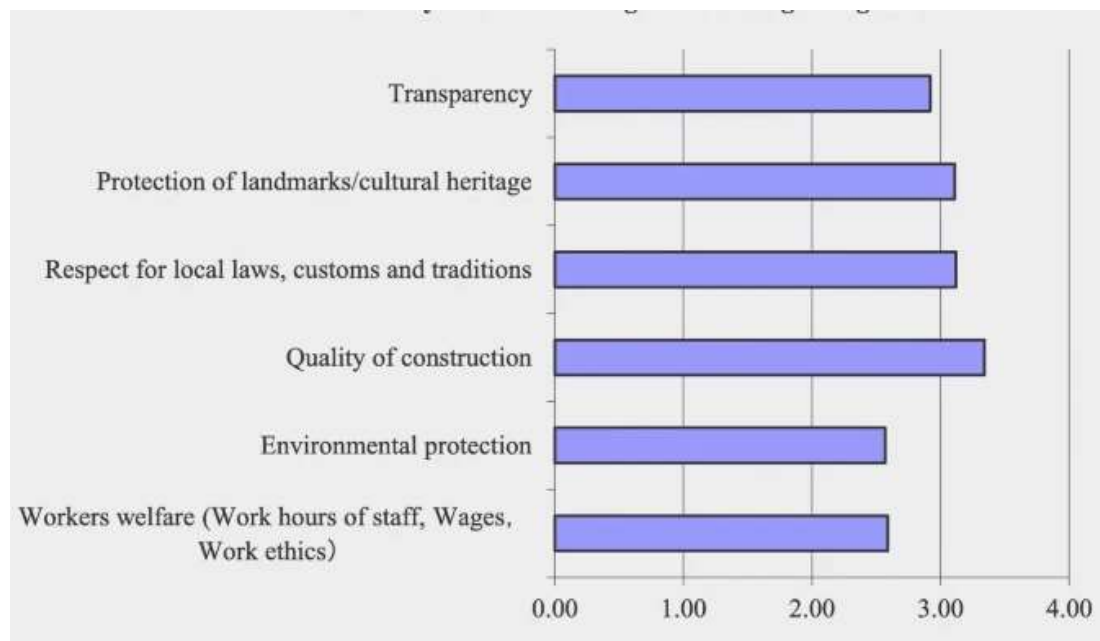


Figure 5: Sustainability and CSR Compliance of CICC in Nigeria (Seriki, 2020)

Another factor influencing the adoption of sustainability and CSR practices by CICC is the awareness and understanding of sustainability and CSR practices among CICC executives and employees. The findings show that many CICC executives and employees have limited knowledge of sustainability and CSR practices and do not appreciate the value of these practices (Tan-Mullins & Mohan, 2013). This lack of understanding has made it hard for CICC to embrace CSR and sustainability practices, as there is a lack of internal support for such initiatives.

Besides, the availability of resources is a significant factor that influences the adoption of sustainability and CSR practices by CICC. The analysis showed that many CICC do not have the resources to implement sustainability and CSR practices effectively (Zhang et al., 2022). For example, many CICC lack the necessary financial resources to invest in sustainability and CSR practices, while others lack the necessary human resources to effectively manage sustainability and CSR initiatives. The analysis also revealed that the level

of stakeholder engagement is a significant factor influencing the adoption of sustainability and CSR practices by CICC. The study found that CICC that engage their stakeholders effectively are more likely to adopt sustainability and CSR practices than those that do not (Osuizugbo et al., 2021). Effective stakeholder engagement creates a sense of shared responsibility for sustainability and CSR practices, which motivate CICC to adopt and implement such practices.

Finally, the study findings show that organizational culture is a significant factor influencing the adoption of sustainability and CSR practices by CICC (Osuizugbo et al., 2021). The analysis revealed that the culture of CICC plays a critical role in determining the level of commitment to sustainability and CSR practices. CICC with a strong culture of social responsibility are more likely to adopt and implement sustainability and CSR practices than those that do not.

In conclusion, this study has provided important insights into the extent to which CICC operating in Nigeria have implemented CSR initiatives, the level of sustainability of CICC operations in Nigeria, and the factors influencing sustainability and CSR practices adoption by CICC in Nigeria. The findings of this study suggest that while many CICC in Nigeria have adopted CSR initiatives and sustainable practices, there is still room for improvement. The study also highlights the important role of regulatory requirements, stakeholder pressure, competitive advantage, and ethical considerations in driving sustainability and CSR practices adoption by CICC in Nigeria. The data analysis revealed several factors influencing the adoption of sustainability and CSR practices by CICC in Nigeria. These include the regulatory environment, level of awareness and understanding, availability of resources, stakeholder engagement, and organizational culture. The findings

of this study have important implications for policymakers, regulators, and CICC executives, who must work together to create a conducive environment for adopting sustainability and CSR practices. By addressing these factors, CICC can create a sustainable future for themselves and the communities in which they operate.

Chapter 5

5 Conclusion

5.1 Summary of the Findings

The purpose of this research was to examine the degree to which Chinese CICC's in Nigeria have adopted CSR practices, to assess the degree to which their operations are sustainable, and to determine the factors influencing their adoption of CSR practices. According to the findings, many CICC's in Nigeria only do CSR on an ad hoc basis, rather than developing and executing a systematic, long-term CSR plan. CICC's activities in Nigeria have a typically poor degree of sustainability since the companies focus on short-term benefits rather than long-term sustainability, as seen by their emphasis on profit above environmental and social issues in its business practices. Communities in Nigeria are routinely displaced to give way for the operation of CICC's, and as a result people's livelihoods are disrupted.

The lack of knowledge of CSR and sustainable practices, the absence of regulatory frameworks, and the prioritization of short-term benefits over long-term sustainability all contribute to the current low level of CSR and sustainability practices by CICC's in Nigeria. While CSR and sustainable practices are currently inadequately implemented in Nigeria, several CICC's are attempting to make their operations more sustainable via the implementation of environmental management systems, sustainable business practices, and constructive involvement with local communities.

5.2 Discussion

The study uncovered a few of the factors that have a role in determining whether or not CICC's implement CSR practices. It was determined that international CSR practices were

a factor that contributed to the problem. According to the findings of the study, CICC's that had international business partners or a parent company headquartered in a country other than Nigeria were more likely to apply CSR practices than their Nigerian counterparts. This finding is consistent with the findings of prior studies by Kolk & Van Tulder (2010) and demonstrates the influence that global CSR practices have on enterprises located in developing nations.

A discovery was also made about the effect of stakeholders on the adoption of CSR practices. According to the findings of the study, CICC's may be persuaded to adopt CSR practices as a result of pressure from stakeholders such as customers, investors, and civil society organisations (CSOs). In order to preserve their social license to operate and provide a favourable image to the public, a number of CICC's have initiated CSR initiatives in response to demand from stakeholders (Ehie, 2016). This aspect shows that stakeholders play a vital role in advocating for sustainability and CSR practices among the CICC's.

The study also found that governmental laws and regulations have a great impact on the adoption of CSR practices by CICC's. On the other hand, there are no regulatory frameworks in Nigeria that make CSR practices mandatory. The lack of regulations compels businesses to prioritise short-term earnings over the necessity of the CICC's to survive in the long run. In addition, it impedes the efforts of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to hold CICC's accountable for the impacts they have on society and the environment (Xia et al., 2016). In addition to this, the research emphasized how important it is for the media to play a role in boosting CSR practices among CICC's. People's awareness can be increased and their knowledge of CSR broadened via the power of the media—both mainstream and social media. In addition to this, the media has the capability to expose CICC's that engage in

dubious business practices and compel them to account for their actions (Ajayi et al., 2022). Thus, the media is presented as a vital stakeholder in ensuring the effective operation of the CICC in Nigeria.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that CICC in Nigeria still have some work to do in terms of the CSR practices they use and the sustainability of their operations. Although some CICC have already started participating in CSR, the great majority have not yet devised a comprehensive strategy for doing so. The operations of CICC in Nigeria have a low level of sustainability as a direct consequence of the organization's decision to prioritise short-term profits over long-term sustainability. Because extractive industries such as CICC contribute to environmental pollution and compel inhabitants of the surrounding area to evacuate, the operations of the corporations have major implications. According to the findings of this study, CICC in Nigeria should place a high premium on CSR practices and sustainability in order to have a positive impact on the society at large and the environment in which they operate in. This underlines the necessity for legislative frameworks, the engagement of stakeholders, and attention from the media in order to promote CICC and make them accountable for the social and environmental implications of their actions.

5.3 Implications of the Findings

The results of this research sheds light on the state of CSR and sustainability of CICC's activities in Nigeria. This research indicates the need for raising CICC's knowledge of sustainable practices and familiarity with them, as well as the need for legal frameworks that enforce such practices. Additionally, this study highlights the need for legislative frameworks that encourage sustainable practices. These results not only illustrate the influence that CICC have on the local populations and ecosystems that are located in close

proximity to them, but they also highlight the significance of putting an emphasis on long-term impact rather than profitability in the short-term.

The results of the research are important because they reflect the efforts that CICC in Nigeria have been making towards CSR and sustainability. These results deepen the understanding of the obstacles that Nigerian CICC must overcome on their way to achieving corporate social responsibility and sustainability. The study also emphasizes the need for regulatory frameworks that hold CICC accountable for sustainable practices, as well as the need to promote education and knowledge of sustainable practices inside CICC. The results can be utilized by policymakers, corporations, and other stakeholders in Nigeria to boost corporate social responsibility and sustainability programmes, which would be to the advantage of Nigeria's ecosystems as well as the country's population.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

This study presents a number of recommendations for additional research in order to further the understanding of CSR and sustainability practices by CICC in Nigeria. First, further research is required to discover the factors that stand in the way of CICC in their efforts to implement best CSR practices that address pertinent social and environmental issues in Nigeria. In the future, further research could explore best awareness creation strategies for CICC in Nigeria about CSR and the country's regulatory frameworks that support or even compel the adoption of CSR practices.

Secondly, more studies can be conducted to investigate how CICC in Nigeria are affected by CSR and sustainability programmes. According Ezeani and Ngoka (2022), the primary emphasis of CICC in Nigeria is a short-term reward rather than the long-term sustainability of their operations, which has detrimental influence on the overall

sustainability of these corporations. In the future, researchers will be able to assess whether or not CICC in Nigeria can enhance their bottom lines by adopting CSR initiatives and sustainable business practices, as well as the specific steps necessary to do so. As a result, a more in-depth grasp of the dynamics at play between CSR and sustainability practices and financial outcomes in the Nigerian market would be possible.

Thirdly, further research could be conducted to investigate how local communities, civil society groups, and the Nigerian government can provide the most effective assistance to CICC to effectively promote CSR and sustainability projects. Future studies could also focus on how different stakeholders can work together to design and implement regulatory frameworks that prioritise CICC's long-term viability above their short-term profitability. This is an exciting topic of inquiry. Therefore, the significance of education and training in the process of cultivating CSR and sustainability practices among CICC in Nigeria is a topic that could be examined further in future research.

5.5 Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to examine the degree to which CICC in Nigeria have adopted CSR practices, to assess the sustainability of their operations, and to determine the factors influencing their adoption of CSR practices. Framework analysis was used to classify and code the information gathered from secondary sources such as CICC's annual reports, sustainability reports, and other relevant secondary sources.

Several topics emerged from the data analysis, including how widespread CSR adoption is among CICC, how sustainable CICC operations are in Nigeria, how CICC affect the local population, and what factors influence CSR and sustainability practices by CICC. The research revealed that CICC in Nigeria do not have robust CSR practices. Most CSR

initiatives are one-off events—such as charity, rather than systematic, long-term programmes that contribute positively to the environment and the livelihoods of the local communities. The CCECC and CHEC are two CICC with very extensive CSR programmes.

In general, CICC in Nigeria are only concerned with the short-term, rather than the long-term sustainability of their operations. The activities of CICC have a major impact on the environment since extractive industries are a major contributor to environmental deterioration and pollution. Notwithstanding, communities are often displaced, livelihoods disrupted, and working conditions are worse due to CICC activities.

Finally, the study found that the low level of CSR adoption by CICC in Nigeria is largely due to a lack of regulatory frameworks mandating such practices, a lack of awareness and understanding of such practices among CICC, and an emphasis on short-term gains over long-term sustainability. Policymakers in Nigeria are urged to adopt laws and regulatory frameworks that would incentivize CICC to make CSR and sustainable practices a top priority. It is also crucial to teach CICC the value of CSR and sustainability practices to their corporation's image.

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