

**EXPLORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CORPORATE SOCIAL INVESTMENT TO THE
COMPANY'S CORPORATE IMAGE AND REPUTATION: A CASE STUDY OF A
PETROCHEMICAL COMPANY**



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Katleho Ralehoko

The Vaal University of Technology, 20 October 2017.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, my biological mother Agnes M Ralehoko and my guardian mother Margret T Ralehoko who have been my pillars of strength. When times were hard I recalled all the life lessons you both taught me, which has made me become the man that I am today.

To my young brother Tshepo N Ralehoko, I hope this is proof to you that hard work pays. My success serves as an example for your life; you can accomplish anything you set your mind on. Always remember: “*In their hearts, humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps.*” – Proverbs 16:9

In loving memory of the late Rosa Benedetta Majobo Peta-Moshesh, may your soul rest in peace!

ABSTRACT

Corporate Social Investment (CSI) has turned out to be a significant subject in the businesses environment in the past twenty years and is perceived as an important element of the organisational image and corporate reputation. Corporate social investment communication provides stakeholders with information about the company's involvement, and about being accountable to the society. Companies use their communication about CSI initiatives to project a positive image of themselves to the stakeholders. The purpose of the study was to explore how the company's Corporate Social Investment activities contribute to the company's image and corporate reputation among the local community. The study also looked at the possible gaps between the image projected by the company through their communication about CSI activities and the communities' perceptions of these activities.

The researcher used a case study qualitative approach with multiple data sources. The company's online press releases were analysed with a view to determining the corporate image projected by the company. In the second stage three focus groups were conducted with community activists, university students, and unemployed community members in order to understand the different perceptions how CSI activities influence the community stakeholders perceptions on organisation's reputation.

The findings indicate that although there is a gap between the projected image communicated by a company and stakeholders' perceptions about company's reputation the community is generally familiar with CSI of the petrochemical company in question and that CSI activities contribute to the positive reputation of the company. Furthermore, the findings highlight the challenges of not including community stakeholders in decision making when creating CSI initiatives. Interestingly, the study reveals that organisations with CSI activities aligned to the national framework are considered socially responsible.

Keywords: corporate activity, corporate image, corporate social investment, reputation, community relations

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS/CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

The following defines the concepts used:

- **Community relations:** is the planned activity with a community to maintain an environment that benefits both the organisation and the community (Wilcox, Cameron, Ault & Agee 2003:08).
- **Community stakeholder:** is defined based on geographic proximity to a business or industry, and this segment represents a general or “mass” audience in the sense that it encompasses all community members in a given region; it differs, however, in audience involvement and experience with the advocated industry (Miller & Sinclair 2013:38).
- **Corporate image:** is the perception different audiences have of an organisation and result from the audience’s interpretation and meaning ascribed to the cues presented by an organisation (Roper & Fill 2012:36).
- **Corporate social investment:** is a set of activities focused on establishing social infrastructures contributing to the upliftment of communities through education, charities, and skills with the aim of creating sustainability (Samuel & Arnold 2007:05).
- **Stakeholders:** are various groups of people with whom an organisation intends to build effective relationships. Organisations are dependent on such groups as they have a stake in the business which usually includes employees, customers, suppliers, financiers (stockholders and banks) and communities in which they operate (Skinner, Mersham & Benecke 2013:40).

LIST OF ACRONYMS

B-BBEE:	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
CR:	Corporate Responsibility
CSI:	Corporate social investment
CSP:	Corporate social performance
CSR:	Corporate social responsibility
CWAC:	Coordinated Waterbird Count
EIP:	Eco-industrial Park
ESD:	Enterprise and Supplier Development
HIV/AIDS:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
IM:	Impression management
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPO:	Non-Profit Organisation
NSSD:	National Strategy for Sustainable Development
OIM:	Organisational Impression Management
PR:	Public Relations
PRISA:	Public Relations Institute of South Africa
PRP:	Public relations practitioners
RQ:	Reputation Quotient
SA:	South Africa
SBI:	Sasol Business Incubator

SEAT:	Socio-economic Assessment Tool
SMME:	Small, Medium and Micro-sized Enterprise
SR:	Social responsibility
SSS:	Student Support Service
TB:	Tuberculosis
WCED:	World Commission on Environment and Development

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Investment (CSI) has turned out to be a significant subject in the business environment in the past twenty years and is perceived as an important element of the organisational image. CSI is a sub-concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and was coined in South Africa and can be understood as CSR activities performed by organisations at a national and international scale which particularly focus on social issues such as education, HIV/AIDS, healthcare and welfare (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:335). Furthermore, the CSI approach advises corporates to become ethical and responsible towards their stakeholders as a core principle to yield strategic outcomes (Mersham & Skinner 2016:114; Golob, Lah & Jancic 2008:83). Kirat (2015:443) explains that for petroleum companies around the world, it is highly important to be actively engaged in CSI and to ensure that they do more for their society or organisations in promoting social welfare since their service or practice is potentially hazardous to the environment. What is projected by the organisation may not necessarily be the actual reality; hence it is important for the researcher to measure the validity of corporate reputation through stakeholders and transparency. The main premise of this view is that the corporation bears the obligation of ensuring that it acts responsibly towards its stakeholders. According to Van der Kooy (2014:17), companies are expected by their stakeholders to be involved in corporate social investment activities, as well as being transparent about these activities. A local community, which exists within the geographical area where an organisation operates, is an important stakeholder and building a positive reputation among the community brings long-term benefits for an organisation (Dahlen, De Lange & Smith 2010: 221).

According to Golob, Lah and Jančič. (2008:93) stakeholders expect organisations to communicate philanthropic activities using different mediums. Different communication mediums such as print media, electronic media, radio or television can be used to communicate key messages about CSI to stakeholders. As a reply to needs by stakeholders due to their different perceptions, corporate communication has seen a growth in CSR

information and has seen businesses pay attention in directing more time on addressing issues related to CSI (Saat, Selamat 2014:393). Cheng and Ahmad (2010:608) and Verboven (2011:416) highlight the need to appropriately communicate the CSI activities to the stakeholders as a means of achieving legitimacy and a positive reputation (Verboven 2011:416). According to Rindell (2013:208), there is a shift in patterns on how the company presents its image to the public by incorporating CSI communication using different methods to influence the public's social interpretation of the organisation. Furthermore, understanding stakeholder's opinion about the company leads to value creation in a more proactive and responsive manner (Per Skålen 2006:204).

1.2 RATIONALE AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The reputation of companies lies in the stakeholders' perceptions of the company's actions and communication. Ditlev-Simonsen and Wenstøp (2013:144) state that it is rare to see organisations involving stakeholders (communities) in pursuit of CSI projects. Most large organisations in South Africa have CSI programmes and communicate these programmes to their external stakeholders thus projecting a positive image of themselves. However, research among the intended recipients of CSI programmes on the actual value these programmes bring to the community indicates mix results (Ako 2012:13). In addition, Skinner & von Essen (2008: 241) indicate that in South Africa only about half of the companies regularly measure and evaluate their CSI activities. Furthermore, companies actively contribute towards their reputation by communicating the desired image to their stakeholders. However, since reputation is built over time (Roper & Fill 2012:35) and depends on the stakeholders perceptions of an organisation's actions and its communication (Floreddu & Cabiddu 2016: 491) there may be a gap between the intended image created by communicating about CSI and the community's assessment of the organisations CSI programs.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The petrochemical organisation, which is the context of this study was established on 26 September 1950 and is an international integrated energy and chemical company operating in 37 countries with over 32 400 employees. Its oldest plant was established in a town named Sasolburg situated in Free State province. The company has had both a positive

impact and negative impact on the community over the years. It provides employment for many in the area and contributes to the town's development but also has had a negative impact on the environment. Despite the company, operating in the area for nearly seven decades the town faces many challenges such as high youth unemployment and slow economic growth.

In line with Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory which holds organisations directly or indirectly responsible for improving stakeholder's life, corporate social responsibility' investment is a modern approach to uplift the various stakeholders (Rakotomavo 2012:200). The social investment by big companies is particularly important in the South African context where the social needs are vast and cannot only be provided by the state but require the strategic involvement of all the public or private sector players, including large corporations such as the petrochemical organisation in Sasolburg. While the organisation has been involved in numerous CSI activities in the local area, it is not clear how the local community perceives the effectiveness of these initiatives. In addition, the literature indicates that there is a positive relationship between CSI and company's reputation (Hinson & Ndlovhu 2011:334), however, no research has been done on the reputation of the studied organisation among the community of Sasolburg.

1.4 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to instigate how the CSI programmes of the petrochemical company's contribution to the company's reputation among the community stakeholders. In addition, the study aims to understand if there is a gap between the image projected by the company when communicating about their CSI activities and the community's perceptions about these initiatives.

1.4.1 Empirical objectives

The following objectives have been set for the study:

- To understand the communities perceptions of CSI activities of an organisation
- To explore how the CSI initiatives contribute to the company's reputation among the community
- To understand what is the intended image projected by the company when communicating its CSI.
- To investigate whether a gap exists between the projected corporate image communicated by the company and reputation held by the community stakeholders of Sasolburg.

1.4.2 Research questions

The following research questions were posed:

- How does the community of Sasolburg perceive the CSI activities of the company?
- How do CSI initiatives contribute to the reputation of the company in the community?
- What image is being projected by the company when communicating about its CSI?
- Is there a gap between the image projected by the company when communicating their CSI activities and what are the perceptions of the company's reputation held by the stakeholders?

1.5 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

The stakeholder theory and impression management theory provides a theoretical base for this study. These two theories assisted the researcher in obtaining a clear understanding of how the petroleum company treats its stakeholders and how the company portrays itself to the community in a true reflection of what they are. Ihlen (2008:136) remarks that the stakeholder theory was developed by Edward Freeman (1984), and that its primary concept includes an indication of the important relational aspects of organisations, which looks at how an organisation's success depends on being able to manage its relationships with key groups, which can affect its ability to reach its goals. Stakeholder theory is based on the premise that

corporations are aware of their communities and act favourably to their different stakeholders with the aim to develop a relationship and respond to stakeholders' projected needs (Luoma-aho & Paloviita 2010:50).

Stakeholder theory is relevant to this study because it focuses on community stakeholders and understanding their opinions of Sasol's communication of their corporate image through CSI. Public relations practitioners must be attentive when sharing narratives about the organisation's responsibilities or how they portray the organisation's image to stakeholders (Ihlen 2008:143). In order to do so, the practitioners need to identify and understand the stakeholders with whom they communicate, and build relations using the CSI activities. The researcher also included Ullman's social performance theory, which seeks to suggest how empirical research can use social data to determine the corporate social performance (CSP) (Ullman 1985:40). Gond and Crane (2010:684) mentioned that when it comes to the measurement of CSP, theoreticians have argued that it is not about how correct the method used is, finding the appropriate and suitable model can be applied according to the Ullmans concept of "data in search of a theory". In line with the social performance theory, the study looks at how organisations communicate to influence the image formed by multiple stakeholders. Impression management seeks to assist the organisation to understand how they can position and present their image to stakeholders.

Impression management (IM) theory was popularised by Goffman (1959) as a process through which people seek to influence the image others to have of them in order to attain a specific goal. Impression management theory is known for identification of different factors like image building and information distribution that can impact the delivery of bad news or activities which may be caused by adjusted expectations from engaging in community stakeholders (Bies 2013:155). The theory looks from different angles at how companies use their stories to reach stakeholders and create a positive image. Spear and Roper (2013:494) state that exploring the Impression management approach is reflected through the way in which corporations regulate their stories as an indication of how stories can influence and create an impression to an audience. Stakeholder theory focuses on the community stakeholder as an important external factor, whilst the IM theory looks at how internal

stakeholders create stories to influence the stakeholders. The purpose of integrating these two theories is to look at different sides of the story and not only focus on the one side.

Within a South African context, development and change of mindset exist about the corporate social investment (CSI) which had a negative association based on companies' historical contribution to the apartheid system (Skinner & Mersham 2006:241). Nevertheless, it is clear that South Africa has demonstrated careful consideration which has led to strong interest in the development of CSI as an integral aspect of business management. Increasingly more businesses in South Africa are encouraged to promote sustainable growth and human development, which forms an important aspect of corporate social investment. Hinson and Ndhlovu (2011:333) suggest that South Africa leads in the development of CSI literature in the African continent, which is due to results of corporations maintaining a balance between the interests of its stakeholders and creating consensus among the public and private institutions. This is highlighted by the new regulations imposed on companies in practicing its responsibility and being transparent to their stakeholders.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

For this research, a qualitative research approach was adopted. This method assisted the researcher in understanding the different views and perceptions the community of Sasolburg hold about the Sasol organisation. Qualitative research deals with an overall logic of gathering and understanding of data about a topic discussed (Thomas 2003:33) and qualitative research approach involves selecting a research topic, studying literature that is related to the topic discussed, and collecting relevant information and analysing it (Leedy & Ormrod 2014:97).

1.6.1 Data collection method

Two data collection methods were used for this research; content analysis of the company's press releases was applied in the first phase, and in the second phase three focus groups were conducted with the participants selected among the community.

1.6.2 Study population and sampling

In the first stage of the study, the population of the study included online media releases about their CSI, which were posted by the studied company on their website from 2014 to 2017. There were 13 such media releases and all of them were analysed. The population of the study was with the adults of the community of Sasolburg, whom were permanent residents and lived around the area for three years or more. Sasolburg falls under the Metsimaholo Local municipality which has a population of approximately 149 108 people, with 32.1% of the unemployment rate for the area and the youth's unemployment stands at a high rate of 41.6% (STATS SA, 2018). The study only focused on 18 adults that were interviewed using a semi-structured interviewing method (focus groups).

Sampling refers to selecting a small group(s) in a setting and is the most important feature in most research designs, including qualitative research (Aurini, Heath & Howells 2016:54). The research sample was purposely selected. Purposive sampling selects people in a typical group setting purposely with a justified reason in order to obtain various perspectives on a research question (Leedy & Ormrod 2014:221). The participants included in the focus group were purposely selected due to their social experiences, involvement, and knowledge on CSI activities, familiarity with programmes or even in order to understand the reputation created through CSI communication and help the researcher in obtaining different perceptions from community stakeholders regarding Sasol. The sample size of 18 participants was selected and formed groups of six per focus group, with interviews lasting about an hour. The criteria used for this sample were demographic information (age, gender, and education level), residential status and being familiar with Sasol's corporate social responsibility programmes. The participants of the study were over 18 years old and included: university students from a tertiary institution in the area, community activists and people who were unemployed at the time of research. The individuals selected participated, had the knowledge or directly or indirectly benefitted from the CSI programmes done by the organisation. The researcher asked screening questions to determine if the respondents knew about the CSI activities performed by the petrochemical company before the start of the focus group discussion, this was to inquire and investigate if the respondents were familiar with the CSI projects in the area.

1.7 DATA ANALYSIS

The qualitative content analysis was applied to this study. Thematic analysis was used to identify and understand the underlying themes (Bazeley 2013:191). The themes from phase 1 and phase 2 were then compared in order to identify the possible gaps or the level of congruence between the intended corporate image as expressed in the media releases and the actual company reputation held by the community.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher followed the Vaal University of Technology's ethical guidelines. The participation in the focus groups was voluntary. Wisker (2008:195) points out that before conducting fieldwork, a detailed explanation needs to be given to the participant with regard to what the research is based on. Permission from Sasol to conduct an independent research was obtained on 5 December 2016.

The researcher only analysed the Sasol documents which are published online by the company to the benefit of external stakeholders and are already available in the public domain.

1.9 INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

The researcher only included a small sample of 18 individuals who reside in the Sasolburg community where the company is located. The participants were purposely selected, the study identified three community public organisations that cater to the community's development such as a Non-profit organisation (NPO), university, and a library. Participants that had the knowledge of the organisation's CSI activities were permanent Sasolburg residents and over 18 years old participated in the study. The researcher only used media releases that were published by Sasol about CSI projects in Sasolburg communities which had taken place during the period February 2015 to April 2017 only and did not consider articles published by external media outlets such as local community newspapers.

1.10 CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION

Chapter 1: Introduction and background to the study

This chapter is a brief summary of essential elements on the topic and provides a background of the topic. The problem statement is discussed and an overview of the phenomenon is stated as a foundation for the study.

Chapter 2: Literature review (synthesis)

Chapter 2 gives a detailed analysis of the literature and how it supports the topic under discussion. This sets the scene and describes the idea to the experience, with support from expert opinions about corporate social investment. An analysis and overview of the company's communication and its stakeholders' view of the CSI are carefully used to build a foundation for the study, stating the complexity of companies and how they are believed to have survived through the power and support of stakeholders, and how companies should be responsible towards specific stakeholders. This chapter provides a theoretical framework for the study; it looks at the relevant history of the phenomenon.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

In this chapter the researcher clearly describes the research methodology used in the study. It investigates different aspects of the chosen group with its target audience or beneficiaries that will assist the researcher in understanding the relationship with and perceptions of the stakeholders. Various methods of data collection relevant to the study were applied, which provided sufficient details of how the objectives of the study would be achieved.

Chapter 4: Results and interpretation

Chapter 4 entails a review and analysis of the data, understanding what the findings concerning the different perspective from stakeholders are and what the image held by community stakeholders is. This chapter answers all the research questions that are on the researcher's mind, with the researcher further clarifying the topic.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations

The chapter provides a summary of the study and the findings and gives the significant results from the outcomes of the research by concluding the findings. The organisation is provided with recommendations, as well as to authors that would venture a study similar to this one, coupled with the limitations of the study to be taken into consideration.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a global phenomenon, and a strategic approach for companies to communicate to their stakeholders about how responsible and committed organisations are in developing communities. Globally, studies (Jallow 2009; Kadlubek 2015; Kirat 2015; Yisa & Le 2016) have proven that organisations' participation in CSR is perceived by stakeholders as an important factor in considering social aspects in the communities in which companies operate. The implementation and execution of CSI can form a dialogue between stakeholders and the corporation as to what is being communicated is a true reflection of what is being implemented.

In this chapter, the researcher reviews the existing literature on the origins and the current state of corporate social investment in South Africa. The relation between reputation and CSI and the role of public relations in contributing to organisational reputation when communicating about its CSI activates will be discussed. The literature on the stakeholder theory and the impression and corporate social performance is also reviewed below.

2.2 STAKEHOLDER THEORY

Oruc and Sarikaya (2011:382) point out that the main objective of stakeholder theory is redefining companies' responsibilities by maintaining efficient growth; while proposing an important approach that ensures stakeholders are taken equally seriously. The concept *stakeholder* discussed finds its roots in the stakeholder theory developed by Freeman and colleagues in the 1980s and 1990s. Stakeholder theory is that whereby organisations are positioned in relation to the responsibility businesses have to people or communities they impact, without looking at how driven they are to strategic operational objectives (Maier 2015:30). The stakeholder theory speaks of how the strategic approach of stakeholders can assist companies in becoming successful through engaging with their different stakeholders. To avoid any harm to the company, the stakeholder theory is used to address the problem of collaboration between vital audiences (Tullberg 2013:128). However, the stakeholder theory also looks at involving stakeholders in an organisation's decision-making process.

Marshall, Akoorie, Hamann, and Sinha (2010:3406) share their views on how a balanced approach can help companies in understanding the fundamental drivers of managerial-decision regarding the stakeholder theory perspective. In support, Moriarty (2014:824) argues that “a decision thus balances all stakeholders’ interests when it benefits (or harms) stakeholders in proportion to the (possibly different) values of their contributions to the firm.” The basic tenant of the theory is the stakeholder inclusion in decision-making and building relationships with stakeholders. The stakeholders are more likely to be interested in the organisation, if they are part of the decision-making process (Moriarty 2014:825). Boubaker, Djebabra, and Saadi (2014:336) believe that among other things, when businesses are able to include the stakeholders in the decision making process, then it can be recognised as socially committed.

Jensen and Sandström (2011:475) argue that although the stakeholder theory is an important aspect in organisational success, it has ignored and overlooked the challenges that local communities face when focusing on their international image. Lepineux (2005) supports claims that the concept of *stakeholder theory* has many faults, and linking problems together creates a shortfall for companies to address the diverse challenges that community stakeholders encounter. In contrast to the views shared, Hörisch, Freeman, and Schaltegger (2014:223) believe that the theory is compatible with other theories such as stakeholder management, which is built on pillars such as relationship management, communication, stakeholder motivation and negotiation even though there are developments which pose challenges to the stakeholder theory.

Different assumptions concerning stakeholder theory indicate the widespread use of the model in various literature to support the arguments of different authors regarding stakeholder management (Jensen & Sandström 2011; Oruc & Sarikaya 2011; Moriarty 2014; Maier 2015 *et al.*). The stakeholder theory approach is primarily based on managing expectations from different stakeholders or communities and in the process building responsible organisations that are able to meet the needs of stakeholders. Stakeholder strains are seen as prospects rather than limitations and by participating in CSR initiatives, the company gains competitiveness (Carrol & Shabana 2010:98).

Developments in the stakeholder theory have influenced stakeholders' perceptions of the organisation, which suggests a growing interest is established through a relationship between the organisation and its primary and secondary stakeholders (Martinez, Fernandez & Fernandez 2016:04). Elijido-Ten (2007:166) states that the stakeholder theory proposes corporate planning to ensure that companies are able to meet varying demands from the society as part of investing in their environmental issues. Interacting with the stakeholders helps the organisation to be able to understand the different opinions formed by stakeholders, and this process requires a company to reach out to the internal and external stakeholders and understand the grass-root issues or concerns raised by their stakeholders (Seravalli & Simeone 2016:329).

Stakeholders are becoming aware of their power of influence and more educated about policies or rules that govern the company. The increased pressure on companies from internal and external stakeholders is about reporting more on social and environmental performance, rather than focussing on the financial reports (Banson & Bednarova 2015:183). Communities are usually faced with many social issues, and the stakeholder theory is linked when corporations use the corporate social investment to meet the demands of their communities. Wellens and Jegers (2014:224) mention that in order for a company to develop, organisations need to fulfill their obligations by managing their relationships with stakeholders appropriately, which is a true reflection of the stakeholder theory. Basically, the theory suggests that the long-term survival of the company is attributed to the manner in which they treat or work with their stakeholders.

Stakeholders are not concerned about the profits the company is making, but are interested in the contributions made by firms and the manner in which they treat their employees and the community. A company's goodwill is most certainly linked to good customer feedback and the perceptions that accumulate create a corporate image. Communication fulfills a significant role in influencing people to form a certain image of an organisation.

2.2.1 The main assumptions of the theory

Harrison, Freeman and Sá de Abreu (2015:860) believe that stakeholder theory is a management theory which is founded based on corporates having moral conduct towards their stakeholders and is a different treatment to how the organisation approaches CSR. In their study, they mention that there is a difference between applying stakeholder theory and CSR, and this can be seen in the way a company approaches the two concepts. CSR is the obligation that organisations have towards the stakeholders and stakeholder theory deals with the manner in which firms conducts themselves in relation to ensuring that they serve their stakeholders. Bridoux and Stoelhorst (2014:108) suggest that CSR and stakeholder theory have the same ethical effects, but do not have similar approaches to create stakeholder fairness and cannot be assumed that both approaches can add to economic performance.

Due to the mutual nature of how business view ethics as a core element in stakeholder management, the approach of CSR and stakeholder theory are interlinked (Hörisch, Freeman, & Schaltegger 2014:331). The main assumption of stakeholder theory looks at “How should firms manage the relationships with their stakeholders to create value?” and how organisation approach in managing stakeholder to create value (Bridoux & Stoelhorst 2014:107). The stakeholder theory is concerned with creating relationships with stakeholders, whereas the CSR approach looks to engage stakeholders and strengthen relations. Fernando and Lawrence (2014:158) identified the following as some of the main assumptions for stakeholder theory:

- Organisations central goal is to identify stakeholders from a strategic position.
- Effective stakeholder management can lead the firm to attain their objectives.
- Organisations have different stakeholders with different needs, which can cause incompatible concerns from different stakeholders.
- A company needs to be aware of stakeholders’ conflicting needs and be able to manage them, whether through the internal or external environment.
- Stakeholders exert pressures on organisations for various reasons.
- The influence that stakeholders have on companies is determined by the relationship between the organisation and stakeholders.
- The responsibility of a company to its stakeholders is associated with financial, social, and environmental responsibilities.

For the purpose of the study, the researcher looks at the assumption that stakeholder theory seeks to ensure that organizations have a financial, social and environmental responsibility to their stakeholders. The difference between stakeholders' lies in the group dynamics, some stakeholders are considered authoritative (influencers) by organizations, while others have minimal command (claimants) and are mostly affected by actions of the firms (Tullberg 2013:128). The community stakeholders are a group of stakeholders that are affected by the firm's decisions and actions. An interesting view from Mainardes, Alves and Raposo (2011:242) considers research inquiries into stakeholder theory as an essential aspect to pursue solutions through qualitative and quantitative study. To understand the role of stakeholder theory, the concept of a stakeholder is described in the following section.

2.2.2 The concept of stakeholder

Stakeholder refers to a "group of individuals who are influenced by or who influence the organisation. These groups can be found inside the organisation (employees, unions, sub-groups such as gender, ethnic, or age groups) or in the external environment" (Steyn & Puth 2016:4). Johnson (2017:176) defines stakeholder as "Those who have a vested interest in a particular community issue or concern, such as personnel and participants in key organisations and programs, and are critical to understanding the issue and how it impacts various groups". In this chapter, identifying the stakeholder's group which can influence or build the reputation of an organisation through perceptions of these stakeholders is essential to understanding how organisations communicate with these groups. A generally used definition by Freeman (1984:5) is that stakeholders are groups or individuals that are affected by an organisation or contribute to the wellbeing of an organisation. Businesses operate differently, but commonly consider the needs of different stakeholders and use CSI initiatives to tackle different socio-economic factors. To determine the group that has an influence on the corporate responsibility actions, the study sets out to define and indicate the stakeholders who are influenced and affected by the business.

Tullberg (2013:127) states that for companies to be able to clearly differentiate between stakeholder groups if they are not able to identify influencers and claimants, the result of identifying certain groups as stakeholders can have a negative impact on how the targeted

stakeholders are described. Stakeholders can be classified as a group of individuals with a mutual relationship with the organisation, and through understanding the group this gives public relations practitioner's an opportunity to reach and engage with them (Smith 2013:58). As much as not all the groups can be considered stakeholders, there are different expectations in terms of corporate responsibility expectations. These groups are usually divided into primary and secondary stakeholders and often segmented into specific target groups. The primary and secondary stakeholders are responsible for the success of the corporation and increase the credibility of the organisation's reputation.

According to Park, Chidlow and Choi (2014), the primary stakeholders can include consumers, internal managers, and employees, business collaborators while the secondary comprise governments, Non-government Organisation (NGO), media and most importantly the local community. Outlining these groups offers a clear framework and the indication of what the study refers to in defining stakeholders. Stakeholders make up one of the most important aspects of any business. It is important for the author to clearly define and indicate nature and role stakeholders play in relation to corporate social responsibility. Understanding how stakeholders interact or behave assists the researcher in gaining a better understanding of what motivates the stakeholder to have a positive or negative perception of the organisation.

Jo, Song and Tsang (2015:19) explain that stakeholders and corporate social responsibility are closely linked; making them a great tool to soften the relationships between the organisation and its community. In order to cater for different stakeholders, companies need to understand the needs of their stakeholders and find value through classifying the group which influences their CSI. These groups understand how the business functions and are at liberty to expect the organisation to play a role in the community by giving back. Stakeholders understand how corporations operate and behave, and therefore have admitted to having different intentions that create a platform of transparent stakeholder communication in CSR (Kim 2014:838). Stakeholders have become influential groups that directly or indirectly contribute to increasing the firm's productivity; whether through ideas that are habitual or by making decisions that may not necessarily have positive outcomes (Boubaker, Djebabra & Saadi 2014:336). Companies that do not engage with their stakeholders run at a risk of being

abandoned or neglected by the community, and this can result to loss of profit because the behaviour of the people is reflected through the relationship it has with the organisation.

The large businesses that have a high-profit margin which are in specific industries become a characteristic which makes the public to strongly analyse them and can indicate power by exerting stakeholder influence on businesses which may, in turn, be expected to be visible on corporate social investment (Lu & Abeysekera 2014:434). In order to understand the relationship between organisations and stakeholders, the research seeks to understand the value that stakeholders bring to companies.

2.2.3 Stakeholder segmentation

Keller (2003:39) defines segmentation as a tool often used by organisations in identifying different groups which share the same needs or interest, in order to become their target market. Stakeholder segmentation is the process of identifying the specific individual groups of stakeholders which have unique distinctive qualities that are significant for the organisation and its corporate activities, which is the first crucial step for selection of stakeholders (Šimberová 2008:439). Stakeholder segmentation is central to understanding the different groups that are similar or different in characteristics, through an analysis of looking at their demographic information. To analyse and understand the complexity of stakeholders or to be capable of identifying which stakeholder can influence the reputation of a company, can create clarity about information on which people are considered stakeholders which are authentic. In order to identify the relevant stakeholders, by looking at the demographics and socio-economic status or attitudinal variables, can assist firms in understanding the basic foundation of what targeted stakeholders need and can build a corporation's reputation (Hillenbrand & Money 2009:101). In relation to this study, the researcher looked at the community, consumers, shareholders, and employees as a target group of stakeholders that have an influence on business and form the stakeholder map.

Before the author describes in depth the stakeholders related to the study, an outline of certain groups that companies need to consider in their strategic management process of identifying stakeholders are identified in the stakeholder map:

Table 1.1: A stakeholder map (Steyn & Puth 2016:195)

A STAKEHOLDER MAP	
<p>EMPLOYEES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management • top management/middle management/supervisors • Non-management • Specialists/administrative/secretarial/security • Union representatives • Other non-management staff 	<p>COMMUNITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community media • Mass/specialised • Community leaders • Public officials/educators/religious leaders • Professionals/executives/bankers • Neighbourhood leaders/union leaders/ethnic leaders • Community organisations • Civic/service/social/business/cultural/religious/youth/political/special interest
<p>MEDIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mass media • local • print (newspapers/magazines) • TV/radio • National (print/broadcast/cable/wire) • Specialised media • Local • Trade, industry, ethnic/special groups/specialised broadcast stations • National (general business/national trade, industry and associations/special groups/special broadcast 	<p>INVESTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shareowners and potential owners/security analysts • Financial press • Major wire services e.g Reuters • Major business magazines e.g Financial Times, Finansies & Tegniek • Major newspapers e.g Business Day • Statistical services
<p>GOVERNMENT</p> <p>National</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The legislative branch (members of Parliament, parliamentary committees) • The executive branch (President, Cabinet, advisory committees) <p>Provincial/Local</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative branch • Executive branch 	<p>CONSUMER PUBLICS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees • Customers (professionals, middle-class, working class, students, other) • Activist consumer groups • Consumer publications • Community media (mass and specialised) • Community leaders and organisations
<p>SPECIAL PUBLICS</p> <p>Media and leaders</p>	

2.2.4 Community as stakeholders

Before the author explains 'community as stakeholders', the description of 'community' is offered by Tumiel-Berhalter, Watkins and Crespo (2005:95) as a group of representative from a certain area of focus that is not tied to the company (not employees or shareholders). The community is considered as an important group for an organisation; however, companies

struggle to determine an effective approach to engage the different groups or develop relations (Deigh, Farquhar, Palazzo & Siano 2016:228). According to Heath (2010:558), the term *community relations* refers to “the various methods companies use to establish and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship with the communities in which they operate”. One of the most important activities in public relations communication is the community relations, which ensures the survival of the business through the establishment of an on-going, reliable, and respected external communication process (Daymond & Holloway 2011:4); the organisation’s success is dependent on the community in which it is located and how effectively it communicates with different audiences (Wells & Spinks 1999:108). Gregory and Halff (2017:07) argue that the mechanisms of connecting businesses and communities present a blind-spot that needs to be investigated so as to determine how business activities are linked to communicative community-building. In support, Kemp and Owen (2013:524) are of the same view that CSR efforts in certain industries can attempt to use community relations and development to determine the company’s responsibility regarding social performance.

Organisations need to conduct thorough research in an attempt to determine the opportunity or problems within the community and to analyse what is working and what not. Smith (2003:254) claims that to date, the success or failure of community relations has been determined by businesses practising corporate social responsibility to confront issues arising in certain industries. Organisations in the oil industry need to co-operate with the communities to create a win-win solution for both parties, which will create a stable working environment. The societal contribution is one of the more traditional areas that practice CSR to address stakeholder engagement, encourage community participation and supply chain integrity in order to create opportunities for the society and eradicate inequality (Visser 2011:20). Community relations, therefore, seem to be a key component for creating a mutual relationship with the local community, who are important stakeholders in cultivating growth.

One of the common challenges in building community relations is lack of communicating the organisational information with the targeted audience using media outputs to disseminate messages to the community (Cardwell, Williams & Pyle 2017:158). The organisation needs to have a clear media audience, and knowledge of how the messages will reach the public and target audience (Panagiotopoulos, Barnett, Bigdeli, & Sams 2016:87). Organisations that

understand their target audience are able to cater to their stakeholders, the following section looks at how the basic tenant for taking responsibility is an issue in stakeholder theory.

2.2.5 Accountability to stakeholders

Accountability can be defined in terms of “indicating the approach organisations play in justifying its actions and the daily routines in their operational objectives that relate to the written or spoken communication” (Mabillard & Zumofen 2015:05). Accountability is synonymously used with and linked to transparency. However, the two concepts mean different things. Accountability supports transparency in terms of implementing the actions instead of merely reporting on it. Companies need to support (prove) what they communicate to stakeholders through their actions; hence the concept of *corporate social responsibility* becomes a core value in business operations.

Reporting is very important and it correlates with what the company communicates and what it actually does. When companies are able to justify and confirm accordingly their decisions and actions, this constitutes accountability (Fox 2007:668). When a company takes responsibility for its actions, it can become a key element which influences stakeholders’ perceptions and increases how they view the organisation. Taking responsibility for one’s actions or constantly practicing good ethical practices relates to being accountable. This will surely command respect from the society and lead to the development of a good working relationship, which is good for the business.

When firms address and attend to the interest of the community stakeholders through reporting on CSI, it is considered as accountability. Companies that communicate how socially responsible they are and demonstrate how they are accountable for their actions tend to receive positive feedback from the communities in which they operate. Lack of accountability can worsen a legitimacy gap (Conway, O’Keefe & Hrasky 2015:1079). A business needs to ensure that it has a good relationship with its stakeholders and to demonstrate what it says it stands for. For stakeholders to have complete trust in the organisation, they need to know that the company’s reporting is a true reflection of its engagements.

2.3 SOCIAL PERFORMANCE OF ORGANIZATIONS (ULLMANN'S THEORY)

Studies (Freeman 1984; Watrick & Cochran 1985) over the past years have tried to investigate the relationship between social performance, social disclosure or economic performance and Ullman (1985) work on data in search of a theory has detailed the misfortunes of research studies in indicating a relationship between the concepts. Ullman (1985:540) identified lack of availability of information roots, deficiency of a theory and not defining keywords correctly as the three factors can constitute towards inconsistencies when trying to understand the relationship between social revelation, social performance, and economic performance. Interestingly, Godfrey (2005:788) has uncovered how the manner in which an organisation does things, may have an opposite influence on the host community or stakeholder group which the organisation serves. The way in which companies operate on a daily basis may have a negative reaction or effect on the external stakeholder, whether in a natural or social environment. For example, if the organisation decides to cut down costs or restructure and this results in loss of jobs, this can affect a lot of household incomes which are dependent on the organisation.

Gond and Herrbach (2006:360) emphasises the seriousness of how Ullman (1985) theory has sparked an academic inquiry into how dynamics of corporate social performance (CSP) and other concepts are too broad. There is a need to narrow down and clearly describe the relation of how these constructs are connected. The inquiry of information communicated by organisations can develop support for the understanding the CSP relationship, however, there might be a limited justification on the link for the association and the outcomes may provide a rationalisation for the research design and not information on how CSP and other constructs connect (Rowley & Berman 2000:401). A thorough probe into understanding the role that stakeholders play in CSR activities and a look at the stakeholder theory by Freeman (1984) as a background to clarify opportunities and problems on a regular basis is imperative (Gilbert & Rasche 2008:760). The stakeholder theory is a building block for the researcher to understand why stakeholders are considered important by a company, and if there is a relation to socio-economic performance. Brower and Mahajan (2013:314) found that:

- organisations that are considerate towards what their stakeholders require to generate worth through concentrating on marketing strategies;
- experience additional demands from different stakeholders

- are analysed more by the stakeholders, and
- the stakeholders face challenges about the depth of corporate social performance related to the stakeholders.

Mallin, Michelon and Raggi (2013:36) suggest that CSP is at times undesirable and linked to the scope of social and environmental revelation, and has seen underperforming organisation provide more information which results in a bad relationship between reporting and performing. The organisation that communicates more of their CSI activities are mostly considered as underperforming, so there is no actual connection between reporting and performing. Parmar, Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, de Colle & Purnell (2010:15) mentions that “the concept and capabilities of CSR, which rely on a separation between business and societal interests, and also a separation of business and ethics, fall short in addressing the three problems that stakeholder theory aims to solve.”

Although Ullman (1985) concluded that stakeholders are responsible for external pressures, there remains to be no concrete motive given to why organisations reveal public information during the study (Wangobe 2013:650). Moreover, the size of an organisation, the industry where it operates and risk factors are control variables, because the size of a firm can also be an effective predictor of performance (Wolf 2014:325). Companies that report on sustainability can assist the organisation with information about social and environmental performance, and this will assist the organisation in making informed decisions. Notably, it is significant to understand the guidelines that determine whether CSP is positive or negative, this will improve information on stakeholder theory about identifying and determining the different CSP variations (Mattingly 2017:809). In relation to the stakeholder theory, Sameta and Jarboui (2017:40) believe that the environmental, the social and the corporate governance performance are the areas that enhance the CSR performance for organisations. For the purpose of this study, the researcher will look to do an analysis of a gap between the organisation’s corporate image and stakeholder’s perception of the organisation’s reputation. The study seeks to outline the manner in which organisations interact with external groups such as stakeholders, and how stakeholders can be managed.

Ullman theory (1985:540) suggests that even though there is a multifaceted relationship between social performance and economic performance, organisations that manage to successfully meet various demands of their stakeholders may have a positive link in determining how well the company does. Studies of this relationship usually search to investigate a potential connection between the depth of a company's collective disclosure and its societal performance. To determine social performance, the study looks at CSR as a measure of social performance.

2.4 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

According to Sheikh (2017:2) corporate social responsibility (CSR) is considered as a foundation for gaining social performance in the stakeholder theory, and is considered as a formula which forms part of a long-term strategic investment. Since the 1960s, there has been an increasing trend in research across the world about the effect of CSR on Corporate Financial Performance (CFP), which have not indicated a clear relationship between CSR and CFP (Chetty, Naidoo & Seetharam 2015:193). The concept CSR has grown over the years and has provided different definitions and meanings to companies being responsible. Bae, Chang and Yi (2018:1) argue that organisations are involved in performing diverse CSR practices, such as philanthropy, environmental efforts, and ethical labour practices while other businesses create value through CSR as a core business function for developing the society. Cheng and Ahmad (2010:595) define CSR as a commitment of business to contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of society at large in an ethical and responsible manner. According to ISO 26000 (2014) an international standard for guidance on social responsibility (SR), corporate social responsibility can be defined as follows:

“A responsibility of an organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behaviour that contributes to sustainable development, including health and the welfare of society; takes into account the expectations of stakeholders; is in compliance with applicable law and consistent with international norms of behaviour; and is integrated throughout the organization and practised in its relationships.”

Therefore, the term *corporate social responsibility* (CSR) is seen as a broader expression for companies to act responsibly and make contributions by assisting the community in meeting its needs. In the past, CSR has been seen as a way to manage different stakeholders' interests that may have a direct or indirect influence on the company, compared to being primarily used to increase profit margins for the organisation and to benefit the shareholders (Jiang & Wong 2016:852). In the same context, CSR and CSI can be seen to serve the same purpose through different ways of positioning the definition. The emerging view about CSR is shifting over time and companies are required to become socially responsible instead of using the concept to be voluntarily involved (Juggernath, Rampersad & Reddy 2011:8225).

Isa (2012:335) agrees that CSR has become a multi-dimensional construct (MDC), making its meaning to become broad and flexible while maintaining the same business-related principles which include becoming responsible and meeting expectations. It is necessary to reconsider a multilevel approach on CSR, which can assist organisations to measure the impact and understand the fundamental actions of the CSR agenda (Aguinis & Glavas 2012:98). CSR seems to be a dynamic concept that can be differentiated according to the nature of the business or even understood differently by people. D'Aprile and Mannarini (2012:54) discovered three topics which seek to understand the meaning of CSR using qualitative content analysis, these were (a) CSR meaning originates through community stakeholders; (b) social groups have a certain way in which they classify CSR approaches and (c) the psychosocial measurements of CSR happens through cognitive, affective and behavioural mechanism.

CSI programmes and activities are a further focused category of CSR practices and refer to the organisations involved in philanthropy and welfare with the community stakeholders where the company functions and looks to mend societies that are underprivileged (Botshe 2016:6). CSI is a dimension of CSR which is a word, coined in South Africa and is mostly accepted by firms as being more focused on socially uplifting communities. Fig (2013:599) concludes that in South Africa the notion of "investment" is used more than that of "responsibility" which is associated with voluntarism, and looks at corporate voluntarism as not being able to address the social disparities in the communities.

Western Europe, United States of America and Japan sparked a beginning of the first dialogue on the concept CSR and the definition thereof in the early twentieth century during the emergence of the production industrial age revolution (Martinez, Fernandez & Fernandez 2015:2; Isa 2012:328). As much as CSR has been a concept established over two centuries ago, it still is relatively new within the African culture.

Within the African context, the literature on CSR is still developing. Many African countries, unlike South Africa, do not have a sizeable or simplified structure in their markets, which obstructs corporate governance from having a meaningful model that best executes the framework (West 2009:15). Nigeria and South Africa have been in the forefront and leading in CSR studies; both nations have a developing market, making them two of Africa's leading economic powerhouses.

Nigeria, however, excels in research that links oil companies to corporate social responsibility studies, which ensures that the government educates the citizens about the role that large corporations need to fulfill in developing communities. With suggestions that the disclosure of Environmental reporting in Nigeria is surprisingly low, most companies fear to know what their stakeholders' perceptions about the organisation might be, which points to poor management decisions and skills (Odera, Scot & Gow 2016:411). The calls for Nigeria to improve their CSR performance, one example of a developing country that has managed to implement corporate social responsibility in growing its economy in South Africa. According to Hinson and Ndhlovu (2011:340), South Africa adopted a performance-based CSR and accountability rating from developed countries such as Hungary and Turkey, which gave birth to a new concept of corporate social investment (CSI).

2.4.1 CSI as a construct of CSR

Mersham (2016:111) explains that South African history has influenced the development of the corporate social investment (CSI) concept, in order to support and implement the policy for good CSR practices by private sectors. Corporate social investment (CSI) is a narrow expression used, which is more focused on using CSR to invest in stakeholders for long-term development by contributing to projects that improve infrastructure, education or skills development. Skinner and Marsham (2008:240) explain that the "corporate social investment"

(CSI) term was coined following a new democratic country to shift from the negative association related to the apartheid government and make it a concept associated with transformation and development in the modern South African context. CSI is mainly focused on rewriting the wrongs of the past (apartheid era) and enhancing transformation by contributing towards the socio-economic development of South Africa, by encouraging companies to move away from “doing charities” to being involved in “long-term investment” to impact a larger public (Ndhlovu 2011:84).

Manchidi (2012:11) refers to CSI as a term which is interchangeable to CSR and is associated to CSI, often used in South Africa in the same context but CSI is an element of CSR. The term CSI is derived from the concept of CSR and can be conceptualised as offering a fresh and fundamental way of addressing developmental challenges in the country (Hinson, Avornyo, Kuada & Asante 2017:6). Ngoben (2011:16) that the term CSI can have different meaning according to the manner in which a specific company may use it, and may be restricted to the impact organisations have on stakeholders. According to Skinner *et al.* (2008:247), poverty relief, food, and agriculture, health and welfare, HIV and Aids, business development, sustainable job creation, education, and training are CSI projects that private sectors normally engage in especially in African countries and specifically South Africa. This may be due to a huge gap of inequality, social and economic disparities caused by various factors that impact the economic growth.

Corporate social investment contributes to increasing the organisation’s reputation. It is imperative to understand literature on the different organisations’ social, environmental and governance performances, which comprise their CSI initiatives and the role they fulfill by contributing to reputation. Identifying and understanding that a business operates in a community with cultural differences, different backgrounds, and developmental issues can aid in improving social and environmental performance which relates to CSR initiatives (Ortas, Alvarez, Jaussaud & Garayar 2015:682). All these factors can influence the perspectives of stakeholders’ reputations, and focusing on the social and environmental responsibility performance can give a clear description of how reputation can be measured.

Societies that have a strong governing community presence often tend to be concerned about the well-being of their groups and expect organisations to contribute to facing socio-economic challenges (Mzembe & Downs 2014:226). Encouraging companies to fulfill their role in assisting in developing their local communities which can contribute to the local and national economy is strongly emphasised. The essence of conceptualising CSI is very relevant to understanding the implications associated with the terminology. The study attempts to understand the two terms which are commonly used interchangeably, and aims at determining whether CSR and CSI are the same idea or have different meanings. Botshe (2016:1) explains that due to the strategic shift of the word “responsibility” which companies interpreted it as being forced to practice CSR because of the historical background, the term “investment” has a positive spin on how organisations should behave.

CSI is more focused on issues impacting the society as a whole and contributes directly to improving social welfare and transparently communicating its practices with its stakeholders (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:340). Moura-Leite and Padgett (2011:529) point out that an extensive history is associated with the evolution of CSR and how it influences the behaviour of organisations. In order to understand the broad concept of *corporate social responsibility*, the researcher looks at different definitions by scholars that explain this phenomenon. CSI should be viewed as a good management practice that contributes to uplifting poor communities, rather than observing it as a strategic business function aimed at improving profit margins. This is an opportunity for companies to contribute to the long-term benefits for their community development, and strategic means to invest in solving problems for the future.

2.4.2 CSI in South Africa as a developing country

The post-apartheid government of South Africa is focused on implementing transformation as part of creating a socially balanced resource distribution, which can ensure that poverty is eradicated in the process, presenting equal opportunities for all, and encouraging companies to act socially responsible in ensuring that economic power is shared equally amongst all races. Othman and Mia (2008:239) mentioned that racial inequality created by the former Apartheid government in South Africa has created a huge gap which impacts the current social, economic and political forces. In support of this statement, research by Ramlall

(2012:271) states that CSR analyses in South Africa have identified socio-economic factors as one of the major challenges that need to be tackled. Visser (2005:31) states that globalisation has been another influential factor in South African companies acting socially responsible, due to their competitive nature of becoming consistent with international standards. In the way businesses are conducted, corporate responsibility (CR) should be reflected in the community where it operates, and companies bear a responsibility of safeguarding their environment.

One of the main focuses of CSI is to continuously contribute towards the upliftment and sustainability of communities and disadvantaged individuals. According to Reverte, Gomez-Merelo and Cegarra-Navarro (2016:2870), one of the purposes of CSR is to develop a sustainable corporate culture through corporate business activities while strengthening the economic state, social and environmental aspect. The role of corporate social responsibility and investment is supposed to be a day to day business operations involvement; it looks at the contribution outside business and profit making that organisations bring in developing and improving the socio-economic state. Skinner *et al.* (2010:276) state that CSI is the finance of, and contribution in, a socio-economic development which usually focuses on the following areas of involvement:

- Education
- Housing
- Health
- Welfare
- Job creation
- Community development and empowerment
- Small business development
- Arts and culture
- Environmental conservation
- Rural development

Mzembe and Downs (2014:226) state that companies in developing countries are expected to actively engage in CSR, in order to contribute towards increasing low levels of economic development, skills development, poor infrastructure, and unemployment rate. Generally,

developing countries have highlighted the importance of corporate social responsibility by incorporating it into their legislations or corporate governance. According to Idemudia (2011:5), the CSR agenda has not yet reached its potential in developing countries, it faces multi challenges to link the CSR initiatives to developmental outcomes due to the dynamics of stakeholders' expectations, emerging critical perspective about CSR and engagement with government amongst other problems.

Differences in government structures and the manner which they enforce or encourage CSR engagement can be analysed through institutional perspectives leveraging on issues such as social aspect, environmental management or labour rights (Jamali, Lund-Thomsen, & Jeppesen 2015:27). Globalisation has become the measurement tool for companies in developing countries, to try and match the standards of the international organisations from Developed Economies. This sets the bar for the companies to maintain or match the level of performance and principles on how CSI should be implemented to support the government objectives to grow socially and economically.

Ako (2012:13) argues that corporations do not understand the dynamic of CSR and the environments in which they operate, and not valuing expectations of community stakeholders, normally create the general views about misconception on CSR in developing countries. Criticism on how Public Relations (PR) companies use CSI to build brand loyalty as a cost-effective strategy may be a major concern, compared to the change of attitudes on the development in communicating CSI activities to relevant stakeholders (Ngobeni 2012:27). This indicates the lack of understanding of how PR is aligned in highlighting the dynamics of CSI.

The western culture is different from the African culture, and this is an indication that challenges developing countries face may differ from the ones in developed countries. There should be a shift in paradigm for organisations when dealing with local communities and learn to understand their social values. Developed countries are advanced in technology developments and in resource allocations, with world-class infrastructure while developing countries strive to improve in developments and decrease the gap between urbanisation and rural development.

More and more people in developing countries need to understand the framework of CSR, and the role it fulfills in overcoming social inequalities and helping the government in improving the economy of the nation. In order to address social issues, and ensure that most companies are performing in accordance to the international level while contributing to uplifting their communities there has to be a measuring tool for companies.

For organisations to prove that they are not merely interested in resource exploitation but are there to build a business that can empower local communities through strengthening their relationships in CSI programmes, this puts companies in a good position to understand the communities which directly influences the organisation's reputation (Yisa & Le 2016:41). Companies need to understand their environments, and know the different problems affecting the public. The challenges of CSR in developing countries can only persist if there are no structures or design plans put forward that encourage proper systematic implementation of CSI. Jamali (2014:39) mentions that in order for CSR to be executed properly in developing countries, the contribution to developing a country should be a collective effort from national and international institutions which includes governments, NGOs, legal, social, cultural or religious traditions. There are government policies that regulate the public and private sectors.

Exchanges Socially Responsible Investment Index (JSE SRI Index) which was a guiding instrument for companies to be responsible; the Companies Act 71 of 2008 was the third mechanism and lastly the government has established a unique approach called the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Act 53 of 2003 to enable a practical environment for businesses to practice CSI (Dyk & Fourie 2015:73). South Africa is one of the developing countries in Africa with a framework such as B-BEEE which can be used to encourage businesses to uplift communities through CSR.

2.4.3 CSI effects on the level of economic development

One of the main drivers and goals of businesses is the ability to grow from a small organisation and into a worldwide corporation, and thus providing job opportunities and skills training for its employees. CSI is one of the business factors that have a potential to contribute towards economic development, by focusing on education, housing, health,

welfare, job creation, community development and empowerment, small business development, arts and culture, environmental conservation and rural development (Skinner, von Essen & Mersham 2004:275). All the above-mentioned areas of CSI are fundamental in the direct or indirect contribution of economic or environmental development, and societal uplift which can result in the quality of life is improved. Oil companies have a potential to construct CSI programmes that can support and empower the host communities, and be able to measure the impact of the projects.

Ehlers and Lazenby (2010:89) argue that good business practice in recent years has influenced organisational shift in the manner businesses to engage responsibly with stakeholders, and by showcasing their responsible leadership through tackling initiatives that measure the triple bottom line (economic, social and environmental level); the organisation sets a benchmark of satisfying and addressing the needs of stakeholders. Companies often use CSI as a measurement tool for contributing towards socio-economic development. Before the colonial era, most companies strategy were simply based on engagement and lacked new impactful ideas, transformation, and integration; now South Africa is in a state of implementing innovative improvements on CSR and this has resulted in certain corporates identifying, managing and tailor making their own socio-economic assessment tool (SEAT) which can directly impact the local stakeholders or communities affected (Moon 2014:69). The impact of corporate social investment needs to be examined, in order for organisations to be able to implement programmes that are effective in enhancing transformation and improving the lives of societies.

South Africa is an emerging market, and developing CSI policies can be argued that it has slowly helped advance the economy. Social responsibility should yield economic developments and not be considered as a burden for organisations that are profit driven (Isa 2012:334). Martínez, Fernández & Fernández (2016:12) state that the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) report about social responsibility suggest that when recurring problems such as environmental contamination (pollution, non-renewable energy, lack of recycling, etc.) and social inequalities (poverty, hunger, underdevelopment within countries, etc.) affecting communities can be addressed, this can highlight the economic growth of businesses and ensure that there is responsible development as well as

sustainability protection. The role that CSI plays in tackling social issues which affect the society has a great impact in helping to improve lives and developing the economy of the nation.

2.4.4 Government, Private sector partnerships on CSI

Shakirova (2017:467) states that for governments to carry out public works and services projects for community relations, public (government) and private partnerships are key tactics in utilising resources and expertise from public sectors. The concept of government and private partnership is drawn from the views that in order to provide the community with good services and safe resources, there is a need for collaboration between government, non-profit organisations and private businesses (Jacobson & Choi 2008:638). For private sectors, the benefits that are attached to practicing CSI include enhancing a company's reputation and legitimacy, which can strengthen the relationship with the government and lead to empowering the society at large (Ndhlovu 2011:82).

Companies usually assist where local government normally has failed through CSR activities, these projects go beyond company's core business area and look for opportunities that will achieve sustainability and benefit stakeholders (Cortes, Duarte & Dias 2014:272). According to Sabry (2015:570), the partnership between government and public businesses results in better outputs and can attract more private investments, which yield better services.

However, in order to understand how organisations attempt to create relationships with their stakeholders, the study discusses stakeholder theory by Freeman (1984) and Ullman's (1985) theory to identify how companies engage with their stakeholders. Sheikh (2017:2) argues that a company can improve their reputation as a result of CSR, which is the main premise for stakeholder theory and rely on the stakeholders' enthusiasm to increase the value of the organisation.

2.5 REPUTATION AND CORPORATE REPUTATION

Ferris, Harris, Russell, Ellen III, Martinez and Blass (2014:250) define reputation as "interactions between perceptions of various internal and external stakeholders". Reputation takes place on a personal note and at an organisational level, where organisations are

expected to interact with their stakeholders. One of the interesting definitions of corporate reputation is formulated by Satir (2006:57) where the author simplifies it as involving elements such as corporate activities, quality of service, the degree of its performance and fulfilling its social responsibilities, the synthesis of corporations' expectations related to solving problems for the purpose of receiving quality observations. One of the most relevant definitions related to the researcher's work is by Roper and Fill (2012:07), in which they describe *reputation* as 'communicating corporate traits that develop from relationships companies establish with their group of residents'. Reputation mainly involves the views stakeholders hold about the organisation, whether positive or negative.

Hence *reputation* refers to the views of the external public concerning the company, which may be either positive or negative. The literature looks at how organisations communicate by using CSI activities, and what the stakeholders' opinions are in line with the organisations image. The value of reputation can only be achieved if the organisation's management of culture and image are well executed, and the messages distributed by the corporation make a positive impression, which reflects the direction of the business (Golgeli 2014:313). The culture (unique ways) of the company is the driver of corporate image, which is influenced by the corporate social investment goals and fulfills a strategic role in communicating the company's key attributes (Mousiolisa & Bourletidisa 2015:512). Only after a certain period of time can reputation be said to be good or not good and can, therefore, be associated with a certain level of trust which people outside the organisation have in the firm. Organisations that have a strong reputation are easy to trust, and people decide where to invest based on reputation which can be valuable or fragile at times (Clow & Baack 374).

Corporate reputation in this study is linked to the corporate image, which is strongly associated with the manner in which perceptions are created. The relationship between corporate reputation and corporate image is described by Gotsi and Wilson (2001:29) as relating to two sides, by means of which the author explains that the two concepts are dynamic, yet that the corporate image projected can affect the corporate reputation and vice-versa. Reputation can easily be compromised, and how it is projected by individuals can be seen as the image of the business.

External stakeholders will critique or praise a business, based mostly on what they have read and internal stakeholders will perceive an organisation according to the manner in which it treats its staff or others outside the business. One of the contributing causes of CSR perceptions and reputation is the information from different stakeholders, which is normally associated with individuals in a certain group such as those in a community environment (Sirsly & Lvina 2016:09). This statement emphasises the importance and value of understanding the different perceptions held by community stakeholders and of considering consulting with stakeholders about CSR in order to influence reputation. Corporate reputation is highly reliable, depending on the manner in which an organisation communicates its key messages to the external community.

When looking into the concept of *CSI*, a researcher needs to consider stakeholder approach as a catalyst in examining corporate reputation. Neville, Bell and Menguc (2005:1193) suggest that organisation reputation is fundamental to any company, and stakeholders' expectations are used as a yardstick to broadly measure the reputation of the organisation. Stakeholders are one of the important groups in the organisation, and how the community at large perceives the business can determine the corporate image. The *CSI* communication needs to be aligned with the corporate image, which is the message projected by the company to its stakeholders.

Acquaah (2003:389) suggests that using empirical literature; corporate reputation can be seen as a predictor or response variable and is largely based on perceptions stakeholders hold, which can be reinforced or managed through corporate social investment activities. Managing reputation is the most important element for companies for ensuring that stakeholders develop trust in the organisation, and trust is encouraged through different feelings that arise when an organisation meets a community's expectations.

For companies to have a strong reputation alignment, it is important that, before making decisions, it should consider the interest of all stakeholders even if the decision positively or negatively affects the organisation's reputation (Goldring 2015:788). The direct daily experience of stakeholders with a company or dialogue created through information ultimately

influences individuals' perceptions of corporate reputation. Reputation cannot be achieved in a day; it takes time and effort to assess the organisation's reputation.

2.5.1 Components of reputation

Reputation can be conceptualised as a combination of emotional and rational constructs, which evaluates the corporate reputation based on subjective thinking of perceptions of different constructs of companies (Eberl & Schwaiger 2005:49). The increasing interest in defining and measuring reputation comes with the competitive nature of companies in showcasing their decision-making and performance to stakeholders. Mahon and Wartick (2003:27) consider one of the main components of reputation, when dealing with companies' key stakeholders, to be credibility, and it is often developed over time.

Credibility can be seen as a quality of trustworthiness (van der Kaa and Krahmer 2014:2). Only after a certain period of time can reputation be said to be good or not good and can, therefore, be associated with a level of trust, which people outside the organisation have in the firm. Trust is an important component of corporate reputation. *Trust* implies a standard of ethical certainty regarding how facts can be recognised as a result of observed analysis or reflective stability between two parties, it is also a multifaceted concept which has been researched broadly across disciplines (Jarvenpaa & Teigland 2017:12). Authors (Davis, Lee & Ruhe 2008; Gultom 2016; Jarvenpaa & Teigland 2017) argue that the concept of trust is multidimensional. Hence, the authors measure it using different scales. Davis, Lee and Ruhe (2008:152) state that organisational success is highly dependent on trust that both (stakeholders and the company) party will be responsible to each other.

Significant analysis needs to be performed on corporate reputation and trust which, if understood clearly, can add value to the structure of reputation over a certain period (Şatir 2006:57). A Two-way communications aim at helping the organisation to communicate accurate information and gives stakeholders a chance to engage on whether they trust the information relating to CSI activities. Dwyer (2008:1214) believes that trust is responsible for creating social interaction between parties and prompting reasonable decision making, thus it is imperative for an organisation to visibly communicate and implement its vision for achieving

competency. Furthermore, effective communication by firms, and community engagement can build trust with the publics and maintain reputation (Gultom 2016:487).

Carrol, Greyser and Schreiber (2011:467) explain that companies can have numerous kinds of corporate reputation, and believes that the re-occurring corporate reputation types which communicate messages about the organisation are - AC⁴ID:

- *The actual reputation* - is the actual untainted representation of about the organisation, which is the organisations image at the time. It also includes the qualities which make up the organisation and can either be understood or unknown (What the company is).
- *The communicated reputation* - is messages (corporate Image communication) that the company wants to disseminate relating to the business. Different media channels such as controlled media (public relations, sponsorships or marketing, and advertising) or uncontrolled media (social media, word of mouth or news reports).
- *The conceived (or perceived) reputation* - is how the organisation is seen by the stakeholders (What the people think about us).
- *The construed reputation* - the presumption about how other external parties view our organisation (what the company thinks others see).
- *The covenanted reputation* - represents the meaning of the brand itself and the belief of what stakeholders think about the business (Brand meaning)
- *The ideal reputation* - is the way in which the company wants to be seen towards the target audience (Brand positioning).
- *The desired reputation* – this is the vision of the company, and what it wants to become in the future (Long-term goals).

The value of the reputation can only be achieved if the organisation's management of image is well-executed, and the messages that are distributed by the corporation make a positive impression that reflects the direction of the business (Golgeli 2014:313). Seen from an organisational perspective, what organisations say and do can inversely reflect their image to stakeholders, and how those messages are received ultimately creates a reputation.

2.5.2 The concept of corporate reputation

One of the key questions that Goldring (2015:785) poses in understanding the concept of corporate reputation in his study is “*what is the impact of reputation management efforts on perceptions of corporate reputation and business performance?*”. This question is important in helping the researcher to be able to understand the notion of corporate reputation based on the host community’s perceptions. One of the intangible assets that companies need to carefully consider and manage is to comprehend the potential factors which can improve corporate reputation, this can be an exceptional means to increase and sustain competitive advantage (Maden, Arikan, Telci & Kantur 2012:656).

Although corporate reputation can be seen as a mirror image through the views of stakeholders and may sometimes be interpreted as the organisation’s experiences, it must be noted that it is only shaped via an interaction between the organisation and its stakeholder (Dophin 2004:80). To understand the concept of corporate reputation, perhaps it is important to view corporate reputation as a means to make an organisation be socially responsible towards their stakeholders. According to Neville, Bell & Menguc,(2005:1189), the company’s role in the community determines the different reputation held by stakeholders and thus create different expectations. Organisations contribute different things to the community and this result in different forms of corporate reputation amongst stakeholders, and this can be further explained looking at the corporate image as a contributor to reputation.

2.5.3 Corporate image

Qualities that people outside the organisation ascribe to the company and with which they identify it, usually are referred to as *corporate image* (Somani & Krishnan 2004:08). Lievens (2017:2) definition of the corporate image which is in line with the study looks at the organisational image as the global impressions from individuals in relation to the company and stakeholders unattached constructions of information and firm opinions about an organization. Lopez, Gotsi, and Andriopoulos (2011:1602) believe that corporate image is a result of shaped perceptions of experiences, feelings, beliefs, impressions and knowledge concerning a company, which can be used to explain the difference between corporate image and eventually reputation. Corporate image is formed when individuals start to have a certain association with the organisation. In addition, Brønn (2010:308) describes image as mental

cues which internal stakeholders use to associate the organisation with external views. The organisations image of the company can be either aided by the culture of the organisation; the message of the information communicated, or the way in which the organisation treats its community.

Public relations activities (low or high profile), corporate logo (none or well known), advertising (none, or very frequent and easily recognised), national identity (African, English, Afrikaans or international), nature of business (petro-chemical or electronics) are several aspects that corporate image is established through and which can also affect corporate image (Skinner *et al.* 2010:269). People may have different perceptions or image regarding a company. Clow and Baack (2014:40) claim that corporates can create an impression in the minds of the stakeholders, and think that corporate image as a result of external public beliefs is more important. What people say about the company has more value than what the company says about their business.

When people are aware of the firm's effect on the society, this may be caused by the corporate image communicated effectively to the stakeholders (Livens 2017:3). Understanding how organizational image is constructed or communicated plays a role in getting a comprehensive clarity on how reputation can affect the organisation. The distinction outlined above between the two concepts summarises the roles which need to be incorporated in ensuring that CSI can be implemented effectively. Once information concerning the organisation is in the hands or on sight of the stakeholders, there is no guarantee with regard to how both the internal and external stakeholders will interpret the information and it remains uncertain which views will be formed (reputation).

Goldring (2015:795) concludes in his study that positive corporate reputation is linked to building a good organisational culture, and can be understood through the image. The image that the community stakeholders have about the organisation ultimately contributes to the perceptions of stakeholders which result in corporate reputation. Over time, the corporate image becomes the most noticeable measure of stakeholders' perceptions about the reputation of an organisation (Rindell 2013:199). On the next section, the study looks to

differentiate between corporate image and reputation and determine the relationship between the two concepts.

2.5.4 The link between corporate image and reputation

The terms (*corporate image and reputation*) seem to interlink and can mistakenly be used in the wrong context. Discussing each independently will clearly assist the reader in understanding and identifying how the one word build to the other. However, when messages are projected to the external stakeholders it becomes a *corporate image*, and when the stakeholders' holistic evaluation and construction of different messages regarding the organisation's image based on personal experience, it then becomes *reputation* (Lewellyn 2002:448). These two concepts are linked through communication of messages to different stakeholders and reception of feedback, which is a fundamental aspect of Public relations.

Cian and Cervai (2014:198) suggests that communication that is normally unprompted and commercialised can influence a company's reputation, which is embedded in either internal or external stakeholder and is characterised either as "corporate image", "projected image", "identity", "culture" and "construed image". Nevertheless, through communication, PR activities in organisations tell a story of their image (the way they want others to see them) to the external stakeholders. Thus, if they see themselves as caring for the environment – investing in a community – they will want to send this message to the external stakeholders. The study will distinguish the relationship between corporate image and corporate reputation. In the following section, the researcher discusses the different elements of organisational performance in contributing to reputation.

2.5.5 Organizational performance and reputation

The use of financial performance; quality of management; social and environmental responsibility performance; employee quality and the quality of the goods/services provided will be used constantly to determine the characteristics of the organisation in an attempt to understand the perceptions the different stakeholders have of the organisation of which reputation is being managed. This model allows different stakeholders to make inputs and determines which attributes best describe the organisation. The organisations reputation is built through its values and how it converses with its stakeholders, as well as the manner in

which it carries itself through moral principles (Sisson & Bowen 2017:287). The quality of management from organisations can be analysed based on how they interact with their stakeholders (internal or external) and a manner in which they align to their organisational values or standards.

According to (Marsh 2018:4) when there is adequate communication between a business and the society, it boosts the reputation of the organisation and enables a platform for a mutual relationship where factors such as quality of services thrive. A firm's characteristic is determined by the uniqueness of the kind of goods or services that it provides. The petrochemical company produces oil, which is a commodity and contributes to the economic growth of the country. The oil production places the organisation's to be in a good financial position and may entail that the business is making a profit. Financial performance is a topic worth noting under the social responsibility umbrella and can imply that an organisation with a surplus of funds has resources which can be used to invest in socially responsible activities (Melo 2012:37). The organisation performs better when it has a good relationship with internal or external stakeholders and this can influence its reputation.

Businesses that are socially responsible are considered as caring and accountable by the society. Any business that conducts itself in a socially acceptable manner, gains the confidence of the community and the end result is reputation. In order to understand the end result of a good reputation, the study of the literature of the value of good reputation to organisations will be discussed.

2.5.6 Value of good reputation to organizations

Engaging in CSI sometimes has various positive or negative outputs; however, the researcher looks at the value that organisations get from reputation. An interesting observation by Gaines-Ross (2008:6), describes reputation as “how positively, or negatively, a company or similar institution is perceived by its key stakeholders – the people or entities that the company or institution relies on for its success.” In the above meaning, the stakeholders' perceptions are considered as an important community in managing the reputation of the organisation. However, the three mechanisms of managing reputation for organisations mainly involve crisis management, issues management, and social responsibility and they

require understanding and taking care of the three aspects (Griffin 2008:19). The three above variables are used to determine how a reputation of a firm can be enhanced or ruined. Gaines-Ross (2008:7) believes that maintaining a good reputation for companies can help generate more capital, attract good employees, increase sales from loyal customers, attract strategic partners, and also shield the organization from any future problems that can occur.

Additionally, Griffin (2008:77) states that when reputation is at the center, businesses change their mindset of how companies can engage with stakeholders and position the company to advance in reputational initiatives such as CSR. Reputation and corporate social responsibility/investment go hand in hand, and the CSR initiatives mainly help improve an organisation's reputation. Individuals look at corporate social responsibility as important to the communities they live in, and CSI has become influential in business and can ultimately increase the financial performance and image of the organization (Gaines-Ross 2008:159). To manage a continuing reputation management, organisations need to consider the components of reputation which are regarded as performance/behavior and communication, and Doorley and Garcia (2011:25) have used the following formula to indicate how organisations can achieve a successful reputation: $\text{Reputation} = \text{Performance} + \text{Behaviour} + \text{Communication}$. This definition indicates how performance, behavior, and communication are critical components of reputation. When the organization does not perform, that affects the reputation and similar to the behavior. The manner firms treat its stakeholders or perform in relation to other businesses that are the core contributors related to reputation, and lastly, communication. The manner the company communicates with its stakeholder can either break or make an organisation's reputation. The way an organization manages their performance, behavior and communication can result into reputation.

Enhanced reputation, maintained credibility and legitimacy are benefits that CSI brings to a company over other firms, and this can empower the community as a whole through corporate citizenship; social involvement and responsiveness (Hinson & Ndhlovu 2011:340). Companies understand that there is value in CSR practices and that comes in a form of good reputation. Hannington (2004:3) state that reputation is perhaps one of the company's important qualities, and although it is difficult to place any value to it, it can help an organization to win new business, protect it from competitors and even increase positive

media attention. Although reputation can take years to build but lost in a matter of minutes, companies need to always ensure that they manage their reputation in order to craft a good organizational image.

2.5.7 Reputation management

According to Mokaean, Moloi and Oksiutycz-Munyawiri (2017:384) state that the management of corporate reputation entirely involves the dos and don'ts by an organization in communicating its plan of action, which can affect both internal and external stakeholders. The study aims to analyse whether a gap exists between the intended corporate image communicated by Sasol and its corporate reputation held by the community stakeholders of Sasolburg. The central concepts of reputation management are offered as one significant way that corporate communication, and the practitioners working within it, can direct the manner in which organisations interact with different stakeholders in order to benefit the company (Cornelissen 2004:57). Organisations need to manage their reputation in order to build relationships with the stakeholders. In support, Mishra, Boynton and Mishra (2014:195) believes that the main aims of organisational communication are to manage the reputation of the company's brand and image, stimulate employee interaction and encourage the conversation to enhance trust with key stakeholders.

Favourable comments can help alleviate reputation in crisis and unfavourable comments can threaten the reputation of the organisation, so it is important for companies to identify relevant communication channels to manage reputation (Coombs & Holladay 2013:45). Comments about the company are a result of the perceptions of different stakeholders about the organisation. Grunig and Hung-Baesecke (2015:24) explain that managing organisational behaviour is essential to managing reputation for organisations and when an organisation is exposed of wrongdoings that become the crux of a negative reputation. Organisations actions result in reputational outcomes and need to manage their reputation through dealing stakeholders viewpoints.

To understand how the organisation is perceived (image) and how they communicate with their stakeholders can influence the company's standing (corporate reputation). The study

looks at corporate image and reputation to seek understanding on how they are linked or if the terms have a relation.

2.5.8 Communication (PR) and reputation management

Steinberg (2009:292) mentions that external communication is crucial for companies to collect information from stakeholders and in return give information to the stakeholders. The most generic way in which organisation disseminate information to external stakeholders and be relevant is either through social media, electronic or print media, press releases, which can foster relationships (Waters, Burnett, Lammb & Lucas 2009:2). The value of Press releases is to provide valuable organisational content to the media, in order to publish information about the organisation (Skinner et al. 2010:127). Information which is published in different media gets accessed by community stakeholders through their preferred channel of communication. Communication is the process of information (data, intelligence, knowledge, and message) transmission, receiving of communicated content and processing of information by a person, group or organisation (Clow & Baack 2014:18). Basically, communication involves a two-way exchange of information amongst internal and external stakeholders (Mishra et al. 2014:184). Building a strong image requires an effective communication process, and this can be executed soundly when the organisation has established a desired communication platform with stakeholders. All these actions performed by a business are in the interest of increasing its reputation. Companies have a different way of presenting themselves to stakeholders or communicating their uniqueness which gives them a competitive edge over other businesses.

Steinberg (2009:19) identified the following functions which ensure the participation through a social need or stakeholders, and how it can be achieved through communicating:

- *Physical and psychological needs* - The role of communication is to satisfy the basic business needs and fulfill psychological needs by interacting with other individuals.
- *Relationship* – Any links or dealings with various stakeholders regardless of any outcome.
- *The sense of self* – By communicating with others and observing the way they respond, there is an image development and feedback received.
- *Information* – Communication intends to share data and gain more information regarding the specific topic of interest.

- *Decision making* – Information communicated and received enables people or companies to make informed decisions.
- *Persuasion* – Companies communicate to persuade stakeholders and make them understand, and even change their attitude or behaviour.

The role of communication is broad and may vary according to organisations. Chaudhri (2016:421) said: “The role of communication is to align diverse stakeholders in a manner that allows organizations to reap the strategic business benefits of CSR.” The role of Public Relations should be clearly outlined and understood, and an explanation of the major role Public Relations fulfills in the CSI communication is important. There are many definitions of what Public Relations is and what it is not, but one of the definitions imprinted on South African scholars remains to be that of the Public Relations Institute of South Africa (PRISA). This popular definition, which will assist in understanding the value PR holds, states as follows: “PR is a management, through communication, of perceptions and strategic relationships between an organisation and its internal and external stakeholders”.

Somerville and Wood (2012:175) point out that Public Relations as the first point of interaction outside the usual roles of business transactions has a role of being capable of explaining and justifying the corporate social responsibility programmes to the public in general. Public Relations has been a platform for strategically communicating with targeted stakeholders (Himelboim, Golan, Moon & Suto 2014:371) Skinner *et al.* (2013:4) gives an excellent explanation of PR according to the Public Relations Institute of South Africa (PRISA), as being “the management through communication, of perceptions and strategic relationships between an organization and its internal and external stakeholders”. The definition gives a clear description of how PR is planned and used as a tool to inform the public about what the organisation is doing while managing to build and maintain a relationship and analysing feedback from stakeholders.

Organisations use PR in a strategic management manner in order to ensure that they can communicate the CSI of the business. This is by encouraging and communicating good organisational practices, and showing off the goodwill demonstrated by the firms in social responsibility, or activities that give back to the community. Communication becomes a barrier

to the recipient only when the person's attitude is negative towards information presented, without making any effort to interpret it (Skinner, Von Essen, Mersham, Motau 2010:77). Communication linked to good corporate action will actually create relationships and perceptions that are favourable to the organisation. Information-sharing strengthens relationships and even open up opportunities for constructive feedback and idea-sharing. Pompper (2015:57) believes that to accomplish good communication of CSR, the skills possessed by public relations are important when managing relationships between the stakeholders and a company.

Identifying and understanding which communication tool to use when communicating messages to stakeholders is essential. Communication can be a tool that can alleviate the effects of the crisis and restore the organisation's reputation (Heide & Simmons 2014:130). Mishra, Boynton and Mishra (2014:184) agree that fundamentally, communication involves a two-way exchange of information. Companies communicate in different ways; report-writing or publications can be one of the strategies companies apply to inform stakeholders about their CSI initiatives (Jallow 2009:516). Indeed, to grow the public's awareness of CSI agendas online communication has become the center of becoming the most important channel for companies to use for distributing information. Corporate social investment is a very sensitive issue and can be used as a value proposition for companies, and needs to be handled with caution because individuals tend to be very observant in establishing the contribution and impact the business has on the community.

Cornelissen (2004:9) mention that one of the notable forms of a company's communication from other professional communications such as business and management communication, which is based on a corporative viewpoint, and looks at the stakeholder that it addresses, and other management activities that form part of the organisation's responsibility is corporate communication. Communication practices are able to influence stakeholders or the public. The value of communication is that it contributes to creating a joint and cooperative culture with the organisation's stakeholders and thus fostering relationship building, which enables an environment for knowledge sharing and interaction (Blumberg 2008:89). Communicating with stakeholders is more than just information sharing, it is a process of engaging with stakeholders to bring value to the organisation.

Steyn and Puth (2016:220) mentions that corporate communication is responsible for ensuring that organisational stakeholders have the ability to participate in issues that are relevant to them and can take action. Communicating with stakeholders can be used to draw attention to CSI initiatives that the organisation has. Organisations paying attention to communication efforts around CSR to prompt stakeholders about how they practice clear communication can enhance their reputation when the dialogue is on caring about social issues (Kim 2014:840). The manner in which companies communicate with stakeholders should reflect the messages that they want to convey about CSI projects, and communicating corporate social responsibility is discussed below.

2.5.9 Communicating corporate social investment

Skinner *et al.* (2010:283) explain that effective communication of CSI projects by organisations plays an imperative part in projecting how caring the organisation is towards its residents. Communication tools such as media releases, newsletters, internet, annual reports and the local press can be utilised to convey information regarding the CSI activities. The environment or area in which the business operates can influence the manner in which the local stakeholders observe the company, and more studies need to be conducted on understanding the impact CSI communication has on community stakeholders.

Mousiolisa and Bourletidisa (2015:514) mention that studies around the established practice of CSR communication have resulted in the impact of an organisation's reputation, legitimacy and culture, which is brought about by lack of central concepts that can link reputation and image to the importance of CSR actions. Communicating CSR can become a challenge when it is not aligned with the values or vision of the organisation. When CSR is not well-communicated, it can affect the reputation of the organisation and the result can negatively impact the business somewhat. Organisational communication of CSR serves different interconnected functions involving a business's image and reputation; this can help organisations to anticipate redirecting criticism by engaging stakeholders support and identification by forming awareness and information sharing (Chaudhri 2016:421).

Reverte *et al.* (2016:2880) identified aspects such as the practice of using eco-friendly technologies which reduces greenhouse emissions, the use and introduction of alternative renewable energy, programmes on saving energy, recycling of materials and management of waste disposal which all need to be highlighted in the CSI strategies to allow for an interaction and dialogue among communities and the organisation in order to evaluate the performance of sustainable social and environmental initiatives.

Organisations need to be responsible for sustaining the environment, and stakeholders normally take note of the way in which organisations conduct their businesses and how transparent they are. Companies demonstrating concern for the environment normally excel in the CSR department and value their employees, society, and stakeholders, which clearly demonstrates the necessity to improve performance and implement CSI strategies that communicate directly to communities (Agan, Kuzey, Acar & Açıkgöz 2016:1880). CSI that is linked to the needs of the community can influence stakeholders and impact the performance and competitive edge of the company. Golob, Podnar, Elving, Nielsen, Thomsen and Schultz (2013:178) CSR communication is considered a way to influence stakeholders viewpoints of the company through different information disseminated, to inform stakeholders about the CSR initiatives. This will either create a positive or negative image among communities, depending on the key messages the organisation communicates with regard to CSI.

One of the ways in which companies can articulate CSI is by communicating via publications as an art to inform external stakeholders (Jallow 2009:516). Communication can at times be persuasive and may influence people's attitudes towards reacting in a certain way. Communication is an important function of Public Relations practitioners and is strategically compiled to create messages that can directly reach the target audience. Adapting to new technological developments such as new media is essential for communicating with target audiences. New media such as social networks (twitter, facebook, LinkedIn or Instagram) can be an alternative way that companies can use to communicate CSI projects. When a company has decided to grip the online social media space in an intended and organised way, it should plot to listen to; engage with; and initiate dialogue on issues affecting people's lives (Koekemoer 2013:230).

Dickinson-Delaporte, Beverland and Lindgreen (2010:1857) state that when exploring how communication fulfils a vital role in delivering key messages to stakeholders as a strategy for achieving its goals, companies which are socially responsible are more likely to be perceived as a unit by the external community (Ditlev-Simonsen 2010:455); In support of this, Jamali (2008:217) adds that organisations that have reflected meeting the social needs of their stakeholders' expectations are considered by the community to be socially responsible. There is a need for communicating socio-economic development in South Africa, and companies that are in the petroleum industry and making a profit need to prove that they are involved in the social upliftment of the community.

2.5.10 Incorporating CSI communication with reputation and image

According to Theunissen (2014:612), the role of Public relations in communicating an organisation's CSI image is only acceptable for the comparison of stakeholder's perceptions on how the image created by the public can be aligned with the corporate image to create a strong reputation. Communicating the organisation's image regarding its CSI initiatives can assist in forming part of the informing strategy, which is usually used by the PRPs to strategically place stories or information that portray the organisation as acting socially responsible. (Mishra, Boynton & Mishra 2014:192) believes that PR professionals have a role to build trust through dialogue with target audiences or stakeholders, in dealing with the company's reputation. Communication can be seen as a tool that nourishes understanding and is the essence of long-term relationship building between the organisation and its stakeholders, which promotes trust through information being, shared (Balaji, Roy & Wei 2016:186). Local newspapers, community radio stations, and broadcast television are media the organisation can use to get messages out to the community.

2.6 IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

Impression management (IM) looks at the creativity of communicating with the public to enhance a good image of the organisation. Originally popularised by Goffman (1959), many authors (Leary & Kowaski 1990; Johnson, Sivadas & Kashyap 2009; Jones 2011) have expanded their definition of IM from the social interactive view which depicts people as primary subjects when presenting or performing before an audience by using impression management in an organisational capacity to make a good impression. Public relations

practitioners act in the best interest of the organisation, and this can include managing the organisation's image by carefully placing information about the organisation to influence stakeholders. Impression management is the way people present themselves to the public and currently refers to how the companies present themselves to the stakeholders. Spear and Roper (2013:498) define *impression management* as being a strategic description from organisations in order to influence stakeholders through stories while building its reputation.

Impression management (IM) literature, although mostly referred to as a personal influence, can be used between an organisation and its stakeholders (Parhankangas & Ehrlich 2014:546). The theory is usually practised within a public relations context and is used to influence the views of individuals towards a company. Impression Management was previously used as a communication discourse with a view to persuading stakeholders to hold favourable perceptions of the organisation and to engage with the business. Presently, it is easy to make the decision by simply observing public information made accessible due to governance reports (Benson, Brau, Cicon & Ferris 2015:841).

Companies communicate differently with their stakeholders and usually communicate to develop a positive image with the public (Plewa, Conduit, Quester & Johnson 2015:645). Organisations cannot afford to put themselves in a compromising position by being too transparent, and are more likely to report about what they think can enhance their public perceptions (Monahan & Fisher 2015:710). Coombs and Holladay (2013:214) state that company's only value the development of CSI initiatives due to the public goodwill it attracts, and the CSR reporting only increases awareness through the placement of key messages. Dawkins and Ngunjiri (2008:288) state that the main motives for organisations reporting about CSR are: to keep or increase the perceptions of legitimacy; managing the opinions of important target groups; and revealing their organisational values in the process.

Messages which are central to the organisation's values are evident in the content which is generated and communicated by the business through website content, published speeches or even news releases to create an image for (Huang-Horowitz & Freberg 2016:199). Generating content and disseminating information about the organisation can create a competitive edge over other competitors, and may portray the organisation as being a pioneer

in tackling social issues and assisting in growing the economy of the nation. Agyemang, Williams and Kim (2015:611) believe that due to the high demand of society calling out for organisations to be accountable, practicing impression management can potentially be related to the process of corporate reputation. In order to maintain a favourable impression, companies need to take proactive measures to ensure that they appeal to the community stakeholders, and use visuals to appeal to the emotions of their stakeholders so that information can clearly state intended messages (Moonasamy 2017:75).

Reporting on favourable stories about the firm and only communicating positive news, is one of the strategies in organisational impression management (OIM) that may influence the audience. In order to increase the corporate brand or reputation, using positive and cautious strategies to inform the targeted stakeholders can demonstrate how influential IM is to shaping perceptions (Spear & Roper 2013:495). Herremans, Nazari and Mahmoudian (2016:426) shares that companies inform their stakeholder to gain engagement as a slight option to build relationships with stakeholders and communities; this assists the organisation in acquiring raw material as well. To develop a good relationship with stakeholders and be transparent, the information that is communicated to the stakeholders needs to be an actual reflection of what the organisation practices. No false statements from the business can be communicated in order to gain favourable treatment by the stakeholders; if the relationship is to be valid and trustworthy, companies need to clearly present factual information.

The IM theory aims at clarifying the social behaviour of individuals and that of an organisation, and looks at how the management tactics such as communication influence these stakeholders. The discovery of personal information can assist firms with uncertainty reduction and relationship building with several stakeholders in the community (Lundy & Drouin 2016:272). Communication can help the organisation to discover certain aspects about their image from the stakeholders' perceptions. Sandberg and Holmlund (2015:679) mention that companies can use impression management to easily deceive stakeholders with regard to matters about environmental issues, from which in certain cases they benefit more in efforts to change behaviours and actions. In such cases, Impression Management of a company can be used to tell stories which may be very persuasive and can build a corporate

image. This is a way in which businesses can influence the viewpoint of any stakeholders, including those of community stakeholders.

Communicating favourable information instead of all the accurate information can create distrust. Trust remains to be a probable link to recovering trust-violation and reputation-damaging events because it is mostly used as an act of restoring the reputation (Rhee & Hadwick 2011:308). What this means is that in order for the organisation to be deemed trustworthy, the quality of their work and how effectively they communicate builds characteristic behaviour among stakeholders. The basis of the relationship between the organisation and its community is based on the trust and integrity of the company. Petroleum companies often issue out CSI communication to the stakeholders about different CSI activities and are able to engage with the community stakeholders while informing them of activities which they perform. The organisation in this case study also uses communication tools such as website as a platform to feed the media with content about the finer details concerning the CSI activities planned or achieved. Mishra *et al.* (2014:197) state “If the company shares information widely, employees feel a sense of belonging and a shared mission with their employer. This develops a bond of trust between the organization and the employee, which leads to employee engagement”. Organisational trust demonstrated by stakeholders will be influenced by the way in which the organisation demonstrates its effectiveness.

There are many strategies petroleum companies can follow to improve their legitimacy. By becoming more accountable and reporting on the social impact CSI has on the community can close the legitimacy gap (Conway, O’Keefe & Hrasky 2015:1079). In addition and Ki (2018:2) adds that knowing what messages and stories to disseminate to the stakeholders has a major impact on the responses businesses receive. This information is only used to position the company and is a true reflection of the strategic decisions the organisation makes. Lewellyn (2002:448) agrees that the intentional communication of an image, which is a message sent from an organisation to the stakeholders, is impression management. Businesses in the oil industry use impression management to enhance their image. According to Erhardt and Gibbs (2014:161), companies use impression management as an effort to uncover different views from public and while maintaining a favourable public image.

Impression management can be closely linked to image building. When organisations are able to use their messages to engage stakeholders, create dialogue and maintain their impressions, the image of the organisation can be used to influence the perceptions of the audience (Huang-Horowitz & Freberg 2016:196). As discussed above, organisations can construct content to build their image. The image projected through media releases can be used to influence the perceptions of the community stakeholders. Organisations construct content which is complementary to their image, and this is to influence the perceptions and build a strong reputation.

2.7 SUMMARY

The study highlights the role of corporate social investment (CSI) in the development of the community, which presents a perfect opportunity for creating a mutual understanding between the organisation and its stakeholders. Businesses have a responsibility towards their stakeholders and can foster relationships or influence the way different stakeholders construct messages and create corporate reputation by the manner in which they engage with society. Corporate image is seen as the communication efforts that build up to creating a reputation, and through CSI communication can create a dialogue amongst internal and external stakeholders. Reputation can be influenced by different factors; hence it is important to understand the value of reputation so as to investigate whether a petroleum company's CSI communication is the direct result of image-building.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to describe the methodology used in this research study, how it was applied and presented as a guide to how the researcher obtained relevant information. Different methods can be applied to collect data, and the researcher described a process used for finding and collecting data. In order to achieve objectives specified, the selected methods used ensured that the data collected was relevant and a true reflection of the analysis of the data pertaining to the participants.

The following objectives stated below were investigated to determine the perspective of community stakeholders regarding the image created by an organisation's corporate social investment communication:

- How does the community of Sasolburg perceive the CSI activities of the company?
- How do CSI initiatives contribute to the reputation of the company in the community?
- What image is being projected by the company when communicating about its CSI?
- Is there a gap between the image projected by the company when communicating their CSI activities and what are the perceptions of the company's reputation held by the stakeholders?

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is a proposal for the collection and analysis of data with the means of addressing the research questions from the study (Verwey 2003:164). The research design process in qualitative research instigates logical assumptions that the researchers make in deciding to undertake a qualitative study (Creswell 2017:2). Furthermore, when analysing data and reporting, the research design can provide a clear need in assisting a qualitative study to develop a sounding instrument (Sobh & Perry 2006:1196). For the purpose of this study, an exploratory research was used for this research design. Exploratory research is applicable when the focus does not have sufficient information and the researcher aims to collect specific perceptions regarding the problem, with the aim of giving contextual information that can be used for the explanatory research (Yin 2017:5). Research refers to the

act of deciding or structuring the research flow based on the research questions provided in the study, and of using multiple data collection methods for selecting the applicable methodology (Aurini, Heath & Howells 2016:47).

According to Kothari (2013:113) case study approach is a qualitative analysis technique which is cautious about how a person, community, groups or organisation can be observed or analysed according to their relationship. Yin (2009:18) describes a case study as an empirical inquiry that thoroughly tries to understand a topic in relation to conditions in a social context. However, when conducting a case study, the researcher needs to identify which questions to pose, explain and limit the case, understand the purpose and consider the studies prospective participants (Lapan, Quartaroli & Riemer 2012:248). In the case study, qualitative research deals with understanding how people address a specific subject through one or more cases (Cresswell 2015:30). The study has identified a petrochemical company in Sasolburg as a case study.

Case study research can use multiple sources to gather data and is not limited to one source (Yin 2012:10). The study is not restricted to use just one source for data gathering but can use different sources to achieve the objective. In this study, the researcher used two sources of data: the community respondents and documents- media releases. The research includes two steps which are necessitated by the studied research questions and looks at two different data collection methods which include documents (text): media releases in order to analyse Sasol's image, and the focus groups to determine whether the image corresponds with the reputation. Thomas (2012:10) emphasizes that collecting information from various sources as opposed to a single source has become an important characteristic of a case study research, which distinguishes it from other types of research, and the study gets to collect more information using a small number of respondents. Additionally, Maxwell (2013:78) states that the case study approach to achieve representativeness when gathering data, the sample study should justify the sampling strategy used in the study.

The combination of research methods for data collection proved to be very successful in investigating the phenomena and outlining broad themes. Document analysis coupled with focus group interviews can give convenient guidelines to provide complete, reliable and

meaningful data (Guthrie & Abeysekera 2006:120). In all qualitative research, interviews are a common way of gathering data and are most crucial in research that is community-based; they also provide valuable understanding into the behaviour of participants, their opinions, attitude and highlight storytelling and describes the fruitful narratives (Johnson 2017:81).

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.2.1 Research approach

A research approach is a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is a conceptual framework suitable for approaching fieldwork and collecting data in order to answer the questions posed or to reach the stated objectives of the study (Hennink *et al.* 2011:32). Qualitative research is regarded as using methods such as observations, interviews, focus groups or content analysis to gather information to create data, to avoid relying on one specific source but using multiple sources (Creswell 2009:175). In support, du Plooy (2002:104) suggest that qualitative research is important when the study is focusing on a specific group of people in a social setting, in order to determine information on their values, behaviour and even opinions. Quantitative researchers incline to uncover more on the what, whereas qualitative researchers investigate the how and this is the tool that determines human behaviour and decision-making can be determined (Pasadeosa, Lammeb, Gowerb & Tianc 2011:163).

Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014:173) explain that qualitative research primarily deals with the subjective experiences as one of its main qualities, and is associated with the meanings derived from the phenomena. Qualitative research emphasises the social nature of reality and meaning of a study, which is more of an intimate relationship that aims at pursuing answers to the research questions (Denzin & Lincoln 2013:17). Qualitative research techniques involve the identification and exploration of a number of often-related variables that give insight into the nature and causes of certain problems for those affected (Vijayalakshmi & Sivapragasam 2008:80). The primary list of qualitative research structure includes a diversity of methods and tactics, the author becomes flexible to adopt flexible methods in conducting qualitative research, identifying suitable methods and theories to apply, and looking at viewpoints of the partakers and their diversity (Flick 2010:14).

Qualitative research can provide information from a social setting and explain the community's experiences regarding the topic discussed. Therefore, it offers real-life experiences considering that the data is taken next to the site or in close proximity thereof, and participants can relate to the concept discussed which gives it an advantage over other methods (Guercini 2014:663). Qualitative research is conducted to understand the study and its objectives by addressing the "how" and "why" questions that explain behaviours, opinions or emotions from the participants' perspectives, and to understand the meanings and interpretations the participants attach to certain phenomena based on their experiences (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011:10).

Cresswell (2016:94) states that one of the important features in good qualitative research includes exploring the main objectives of the study with a view to describe the core idea or phenomenon being discussed. The study has discussed the literature on CSI, image, and reputation, which are linked to the objectives that the researcher specified in the first chapter.

3.3.1 Target population

Sasolburg is an area named after the petrochemical company in the Free State, which was established in 1954 (Stats SA 2018) to provide accommodation for the workers of the company and falls under the Metsimaholo municipality - which means "big water" in Sesotho due to the abundance of water in the area (Metsimaholo 2017). Sasolburg is surrounded by settlements in the Zamdela (The name is a Zulu word that means 'despise' or 'undermine') which is the biggest community in the area and Vaalpark, and these places actually fall under the community of Sasolburg. According to Stats SA (2018), Zamdela and Sasolburg alone have a combined population of 113 038 and the majority of people in the area are black Africans. The community of Sasol is next to one of South Africa's oldest production petrochemical plant, which is a fundamental income stream for most households in the host community.

3.3.2 Sample and sampling

The participants included a diverse field such as teachers, entrepreneurs, community forum workers, students, beneficiaries, unemployed individuals and former Sasol employees. The general description of the participants is that they were between ages 19 and 50 years, and

active community members that valued the development of the Sasolburg community. A letter from the alphabet was allocated to each participant. While collecting data, the individuals were referred to as Participant A, B, C, D, E or F, and numerals were used to identify each participant in a focus group (e.g. Participant A, Group 1). The researcher used codes for the groups to identify individuals in a group discussion and ensure that confidentiality was maintained. Table 4.5 shows how each participant was given a unique image code:

Table 3.1: Participants' grouping codes

<i>Participant (Alphabetically)</i>	<i>Group 1 (G1: Community activists)</i>	<i>Group 2 (G2: University students)</i>	<i>Group 3 (G3: Unemployed youth)</i>
<i>Participant A (PA)</i>	PAG1	PAG2	PAG3
<i>Participant B (PB)</i>	PBG1	PBG2	PBG3
<i>Participant C (PC)</i>	PCG1	PCG2	PCG3
<i>Participant D (PD)</i>	PDG1	PDG2	PDG3
<i>Participant E (PE)</i>	PEG1	PEG2	PEG3
<i>Participant F (PF)</i>	PFG1	PFG2	PFG3

One of the key aspects of research design is sampling and this is a method of selecting a subgroup from an identified population for the study (Guest, Namey & Mitchell 2013:41), there are various approaches to sampling. In qualitative research, there are two kinds of samples in research, firstly the sampling method that is constructed from probability (random sampling) and secondly the sampling approach which is not (Bernard & Ryan 2010:358). The study uses a non-probability sampling. Aurini *et al.* (2016:55) suggest that when choosing the research population for qualitative research, the study mostly depend on nonprobability sampling techniques, which looks at purposively selecting a study population which mirrors the characteristics of the group identified, events or activities performed.

Ngobeni (2011:64) suggest that purposive sampling is suitable when used to grasp an identified sample in the most timeously manner, and proportional sampling is not required. Furthermore, Leedy and Ormrod (2010:147) emphasize that purposive sampling permits the researcher to identify and select the people or groups that have the capacity to give valuable information with regard to the research inquiry or topic investigated.

The sample size is merely dependent on how large the sample group is, and whether the sample determined was sufficient for the study conducted (Graustein 2014:111). The study looks at the instrument that was used to collect data and how it was analysed using purposive sampling. Maximum variation sample was used. Maximum variation deals with varied attitudes and perspectives on a topic discussed and heterogeneity in a small sample size can produce arguments that relate to different experiences (Aurini *et al.* 2016:56).

3.3.2.1 Focus group sample

The sample was selected from the population of adult individuals permanently residing in the Sasolburg community. Although the population of Sasolburg is large, for a qualitative research there are samples acceptable for conducting focus groups. There is an increasing substantiation of conducting interviews in a nonprobability sampling of 20 – 60 knowledgeable people, which is considered sufficient (Bernard & Ryan 2010:360). The researcher set out to interview 24 participants and reached data saturation after conducting three focus groups with 18 participants. Saturation is when the researcher reaches a point in data collection where information from respondents does not amount to a great significant extent of new information, codes or themes being developed (Cresswell 2015:125).

The researcher firstly contacted a non-profit organisation and requested a meeting with their community activists that attend the Thursday classes. Community activists are people that are actively involved in the matters concerning the society and are part of creating initiatives such as community support groups, community forums or community outreach programmes. After having been granted permission, the researcher spoke to a group of 20 persons about the research and selected individuals that were willing to participate voluntarily and met the criteria. Based on a first-come preference, the first group consisted of different age groups, ranging from 21 to 50 years. The group consisted of 4 women and 2 men who were selected after having willingly shown interest in taking part in the discussion and met the criterion which was previously specified. The discussion was held in the boardroom of an NGO in Sasolburg on Thursday, 30 March 2017 after their class had adjourned. All the community activists were selected due to their participation in the programme which was conducted by an NGO, which exist to support and improve lives and sustainable social impact.

The second focus group consisted of university students, with ages ranging from 19 to 30 years. These students were all undergraduates who attend at the Vaal University of Technology which is situated in Vanderbijlpark and all live in Sasolburg. University students are conscious and informed when it comes to issues that relate to the upliftment of the community at large. The participants were selected after the researcher had put up posters on the university notice boards, and participants were selected after multiple calls and referrals from people meeting the stipulated criteria. The interview took place on 11 April 2017 in the Student Support Service (SSS) boardroom at Vaal University of Technology. The group consisted of mixed genders (3 female and 3 male participants), which allowed for a variety of opinions.

The third group comprised of unemployed community members. Unemployment is one of the factors that slow the economic growth in societies and is caused by various dynamics which contribute immensely to overcoming social inequalities. The interview took place at the Sasolburg Library in town, on 4 May 2017. The focus group started in the morning around 11:30 and lasted approximately 1 hour and 10 minutes. The group had individuals from different Sasolburg locations and the participants were aged between 25 and 35 years. The researcher recruited people who attended computer classes which were held at a computer centre that was donated by Sasol, which is mostly attended by community members seeking jobs on the internet. The discussion progressed well, and also arranged for the other focus groups, the participants were served with refreshments during and after the discussion.

Media releases were also sampled; the researcher looked at communication that included CSR/CSI activities relating to Sasolburg area only and no other areas. Media releases older than three years were not considered.

3.3.2.2 Media releases - purposive sample

Data from content analysis can be viewed through texts, images and expressions which carry meanings that can be seen, read or interpreted through analysis and can distinguish it from other methods of inquiry (Krippendorff 2013:xii). The method that the researcher used for acquiring the documents was by accessing the Sasol website (www.sasol.co.za) and then proceeding to the media centre page. While on the page, the researcher navigated and

clicked on all the links under media releases that appeared on the website. Before saving documents, the researcher read through each one and selected media releases to ensure that the content was directly linked to the targeted population which resides in the Sasolburg area. The documents were then classified as Media release 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 and sorted chronologically, from the older media release numbered 1 to the latest release numbered 10. This allowed the researcher to keep track of the release when analysing the data and to be able to refer back.

The researcher downloaded thirteen articles from the Sasol website dating from February 2015 to April 2017, under the media archives and only reported on past or upcoming events related to CSR.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

3.4.1 Data collection method – Focus groups

Data was collected by means of an internet research of media releases and focus groups interviews. Data collection refers to gathering information in a systematic process which can answer the questions posed in the research on an issue of interest and is an important method for maintaining research integrity (Creswell 2016:137). Document analysis was used to analyse media releases from the Sasol website about corporate social responsibility/investment. Content analysis assisted the researcher in analysing the texts from the media releases and in creating meaning from Sasol's corporate image communication.

In addition, focus group interviews were used to understand the views of community stakeholders regarding the organisation's reputation. Prince and Davies (2001:207) state that focus groups are open to moderator bias; during interviews, the groups need to work with one facilitator to influence the same leadership style in order to engage and provoke thoughtful discussions with the participants. In addition, Hennik, Hutter and Bailey (2011:136) state that focus groups are interactive discussions which are supervised and seek to achieve a broad range of views within 60 – 90 minutes about a research topic, and are held with six to eight selected participants. Focus groups are one of the core methods used in qualitative research and gather together in one room people with similar characteristics, to discuss a topic from the study (Tortorella, Viana, & Fettermann 2005:231).

The term *focus group* is derived from the word *focussed* which is a general qualitative approach of which the main objective is to understand group dynamics affecting individuals' insights; and which strives to determine the reasons behind individuals accepting or rejecting other participants' ideas by observing how they process information and make decisions (Steward & Shamdasani 2015:10). Harding (2013:23) maintains that interactions between group members create a distinguishing feature for focus groups – an advantage which allows participants to express their views by producing personal stories about their experiences. A focus group gathering is a popular way of conducting interviews, and typically includes approximately six individuals (Creswell 2016:127).

Aurini *et al.* (2016:125) state that the moderator who also plays a key role as a facilitator bears the responsibility of ensuring that the discussions flow and that participants are all contributing to the topic discussed in the focus group. The researcher adopted a directive approach style by granting all participants an opportunity of speaking and sharing their experiences and also by ensuring that participants were constructively adding value by sharing different subjective opinions on the topic discussed. The directive approach allows the facilitator to have control over the discussion and to direct the structure thereof by asking probing questions so as to avoid participants deviating from the topic and having little interchange to allow participants to express their views (Steward *et al.* 2015:99).

Three focus groups were conducted, which involved participants that fit the criteria set by the researcher, which looked at segmenting stakeholders by including participants that are 18 years or older, part of the host community, familiar with Sasol's CSI activities. When collecting data from all the focus groups, the location of the focus groups differed; therefore the researcher categorised the focus groups. The three groups involved were Non-government organisation (NGO) community activists and unemployed community members from Sasolburg, university undergraduates from Vanderbijlpark. Community involvement can be described as stakeholders' participation in different groups, which is a framework for identifying stakeholders in certain structures where they belong and for presenting information or holding discussions about additional perceptions (Creswell 2014:96). All participants in the three different groups shared one particular characteristic; they were all members of the

Sasolburg community. The researcher used open-ended questions to engage participants in a dialogue and recorded the discussions.

3.4.2 Data collection procedures

The steps qualitative research follows in collecting information by means of discussions include (Creswell 2014:189): Helping the researcher understand the phenomena and the research question. The first step of qualitative research entailed identifying media releases that report on the topic discussed and purposefully identifying participants for the focus group discussions who shared common characteristics such as the same level of education, residential status, employment status, company ownership and same event interest.

Hennink *et al.* (2011:150) explain that focus groups should consist of participants with a relatively homogeneous socio-demographic characteristic, which can be achieved by segmenting the groups by age, gender or education level. However, the researcher ensured that the groups contained mixed gender in order to have a fair representation of gender equality. The group dynamics in focus groups create an opportunity for participants to share personal experiences and ideas that can expand the topic, but the data collection method can be criticised by pointing out that other participants may feel pressurised by the majority to agree on a certain question even when they hold a different view (Stokes & Bergin 2006:28). The researcher ensured that it was explained to participants before the focus group convened that it was acceptable to hold different viewpoints in a discussion and that all participants were to respect each other's views.

According to Krueger *et al.* (2015:81) categorizing a focus group by homogeneity, which entails recruiting participants who have something in common, can create a variation among the focus group participants and offer different opinions. Carey and Asbury (2012:28) point out that in focus groups, the interactivity of participants leads to information contribution and creates a trust relationship which enhances the quality of the data collected. To make sure that no misrepresentation of the statements made by the participants occurred, the discussion was tape-recorded by the assistant and was later transcribed. The transcribed raw data was later analysed and elaborated into meaningful information that assisted the researcher in attaching meaning to the responses given.

Individuals involved in focus group discussions are referred to in this study as participants and were given approximately 60 minutes to answer the questions and discuss the topic while using probing questions to keep the dialogue flowing. Various methods were used to select participants, the first being cold calling, using a poster to search for participants, and receiving references through calls from people not able or eligible to participate. The participants were from various age groups and lived in the community of Sasolburg in areas such as Vaalpark, Iraq (informal settlement), Zamdela, France, Snake Park and Taylor Park. Probing questions were used to guide the participants into a discussion that could yield opinions from experience and to keep the conversations flowing.

The researcher was in charge of facilitating the small focus groups and ensured that the participants were voluntarily taking part in the discussion. The researcher was assisted by a postgraduate Public Relations student whose role as an assistant entailed helping the researcher in dealing with the registration documents for participants interested in receiving feedback on the results of the study, and ensuring that the focus group discussions ran smoothly without any disturbances.

The purpose of using these groups was to extract information from all dynamic stakeholders and to ensure that the data was not replicated. Before a discussion started, the researcher took the time to explain the purpose of the study and confirm that all participants were suitable to participate. The researcher was responsible for facilitating all three focus groups that were conducted until reaching data saturation. The focus group was audiotaped and later transcribed into text to analyse whether the key messages or themes derived from media releases are either aligned or inconsistent with the issues discussed in the focus groups. Information collected was not tampered with and remained in its raw form before the researcher used thematic analysis so as to develop a true representation of data collected from different opinions expressed.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS METHOD AND PROCEDURE

The researcher performed two analyses – the first phase entailed analysing content from the organisation's website and in the second phase focus group interviews were conducted which

required a selection of participants with similar characteristics. Denscobe (2004:270) investigated ways of analysing qualitative data, and interpreting a large amount of information a researcher can use in the following manner:

- Describing and explaining in detail the phenomena being investigated, to draw comparisons with works of other researchers after having acquired the necessary information.
- Using an analytic coding process which entails simplifying raw data collected from content analysis or focus group interviews, and classifying the data into elements which represent a certain idea or theory to be analysed by the researcher.
- Reviewing the data collected, re-reading and making additional notes in order to stimulate new trains of thought concerning the concept forms part of analysing data.
- Validating data by revisiting the fieldwork with new concepts and evaluating the themes which emerged in the early stage with the current results.
- Expanding themes and generalisations by defining new sets of subjects developed from the results of the study, and comparing them with theories derived from data collected to improve findings.

Analysis of data can be a long process but if done correctly, it can ease the interpretation of data. The purpose of data analysis in this study was to arrange the mass of data and convert it into understandable results which indicated the true perceptions formed by community stakeholders concerning Sasol's corporate image.

Data can be prepared and analysed in various ways. For the purpose of this study thematic analysis was used. Bazeley (2013:191) presents thematic analysis as an alternative to coding segmented data into themes for the researcher to interpret, analyse, and theorise qualitative data. It is a tool that describes detailed data into a list of ideas, concepts or categories to develop an understanding of the phenomena through individuals' experiences. Themes are recurring patterns, topics, viewpoints, emotions, concepts or events which can emerge multiple times during data analysis, and present similarities in identified cases as a result of coding (Bailey 2007:153). The researcher followed this process to collect the raw data from media releases and focus group transcripts and analysed them in order to turn them into specific themes. Content analysis is a reductive systematic analysis of written responses that

lead to some thematic categorisation (Devlin 2006:196). The thematic analysis method searches for themes that develop from responses obtained from the transcribed dialogue.

Denscombe (2004:272) explains that in qualitative data analysis, in order to identify and discover the interconnections or themes, the researcher needs to look out for any points that emerge time and again. This will make it easier to give a validated explanation that can explain and clarify the relationship.

Reading the responses repeatedly is aimed at identifying repeat-patterns in the responses of the different participants which could lead to the formation of themes (Ponnam & Dawra 2013:32). Re-reading the data gathered will enable the researcher to make sense of the different data and to consequently understand the different data and thereby also the phenomenon. In qualitative analyses, thematic analysis can be used as an additional interpretation method and includes steps such as immersion in the data, development of codes, coding of data that are merged with field notes, identification of themes and review of refinement (Carey *et al.* 2012:83).

Discussion during the focus group interviews was recorded and transcribed. The process of transcribing involves writing down word by word what was said during the interview and quoting the responses to the questions to ensure that the information is not altered and is a true reflection of what transpired during the interviews. Once the focus groups responses have been transcribed, they become texts; therefore the same method of analysis and data treatment can be followed in both cases. Using various codes to collect data can save time and become an effective method to use when growing the study's validity and reliability, and also reducing the researcher's biases (Jonsen & Jehn 2009:125).

3.5.1 Data coding

In qualitative analysis, coding is important when testing assumptions and conclusions on data presented to the researcher. It aims at assisting the researcher in remembering the key elements of data, and this process can take place by identifying, locating, sorting, questioning and managing data (Bazeley 2013:125). The idea of coding is mainly to keep track of the data

and also to use the data for developing ideas, and turning those ideas into broader themes (Carlson, Fosmire, Miller & Nelson 2011:8).

According to Harding (2013:108), the purpose of coding is to identify similarities and differences of descriptions or statements from the data; coding creates categories and sub-categories prior to analysis and the development of themes. At this stage, not all the information is clearly packaged yet and is considered data. Once the data had been classified into categories, the researcher was able to use codes to construct themes to be used to support the theory.

When coding the information, the researcher went through all thirteen media releases, and identified three headings – organisation's CSI activities, the message communicated and area of involvement. A table was created, and the three headings were split into three columns. Information from the thirteen media releases that were grouped according to the three headings, which allowed the researcher to identify key areas Sasol was involved in. The purpose of grouping information in this manner is to identify themes that are re-occurring and understand the main themes that Sasol communicates.

Saldaña (2009:3) data coding can involve texts, respondents observation field notes, journals, documents, literature, photographs, video, websites, e-mail correspondence, and another form of data. According to Harding (2013:83), there are four steps that the researcher needs to follow in the process of using empirical codes:

1. *Reading the transcripts to find preliminary categories*

After conducting the focus group discussion, it was important for the researcher to read over and over till identifying the categories which are dominant from the transcripts. This can be done by highlighting important sentences or phrases and ensuring that information is separated and sorted meaningfully.

2. *Jotting down codes next to the transcripts*

After writing codes, the next step was to reduce the information and make it easy to understand. When data is trimmed, it assists the researcher to be able to identify themes

and select themes which are related to the topic investigated. Coding in this stage meant that the researcher had to carefully select information and simplify data which was later interpreted.

3. *Studying the codes, looking for the category and grouping codes according to the relevant category*

Coding in this step means that the researcher was able to identify codes, and made observations about which category will comprise of the themes derived from the transcripts. The researcher then decides on how the information can be presented, and how to create a flow of data which is connected.

4. *Searching for themes and discovery of the category*

After selecting the category, the researcher broke down the themes into sub-themes in order to have meaningful coherent data. In this step, the key themes emerge and can be easily be presented and understood by the reader.

To determine whether the initiatives were CSI related, the researcher used the literature (Skinner *et al.* 2010:276) on CSI areas of involvement in South Africa as a guideline to retrieve media releases. The website provided different media releases covering different subjects and the author read through approximately 62 media releases (from January 2017 to April 2017) and identified 13 media releases which involved CSI related areas.

3.5.2 Thematic content analysis

Thematic analysis (TA) was used to analyse the focus groups and content analysis for analysis of the media releases pertaining to the company's CSI (texts) available on their website. According to Clarke and Braun (2013:120), TA is a process included in qualitative data, which is basically a way of finding information and examining the different patterns. To identify the big themes in information gathered, the researcher used TA to be in a position to interpret the text. Bazely (2013:191) advised that thematic analysis can at times be presented as an alternative to coding texts.

Cresswell (2016:152) explains coding text data as a process of coding written information, and typically happens in the following steps:

- *Organizing the documents: This process involved collecting information through downloading documents and sorting them in a logical order, for example, according to dates published.*
- *Standard information analysis process: This is the stage where the researcher was thoroughly reading the text and taking notes based on the observations from the respondents.*
- *Coding: to determine what was said by the respondents, the researcher wrote and allocating labels next to the respondent's description.*
- *Themes: Lastly, the researcher created themes that are linked to the topic discussed and became headings for the findings in the qualitative data.*

On the next section, the researcher explains in depth coding as part of an analysis used in the study. Before engaging in the overall process of qualitative data analysis, managing recorded texts and turning it into meaningful data is considered as the initial step of coding (Creswell 2016:152). Coding is a form of data analysis and was a process used to identify the main themes of the topic investigated.

3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS

To be considered trustworthy and looking at the accuracy of the result of data collected and develops support by indicating relationships with existing theories (Krippendorff 2013:334). In order to verify the truthfulness of the information collected in the study by means of interviews, the process the researcher has to perform is called *validation* (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala 2013:25). Validity in qualitative research looks at the use of a correct measurement which is used to measure what the study proposed to be measured (Golafshani 2003:599). Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014:485) point out that quantitative research requires the researcher to determine how the study developed its demanding methods for verification, while in qualitative research there is often a vague explanation as to which exact methods used in the study can lead authors to theories and relations. Validation enables the researcher to check data for accuracy. Validation is not merely about predicting and

supporting ideas developed with other literature; the process requires a systematic qualitative method that is capable of stating strong justifications for the concept before supporting the statements (Charkas 2009:132).

The researcher's attentiveness and clarification on how respondents behave, what their requirements or wishes are, attitude, habits, background, and other data collection which is crucial in examining the research phenomena through coding, sorting plus shifting information in qualitative data analysis (Chowdhury 2014:1138). Validation is a good method to use for analysing and understanding the transcribed notes from the focus group. Selecting the best data collection method for answering the research question can guarantee trustworthiness in content analysis (Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen & Kyngäs 2014:23). Trustworthiness is established when findings are as close as possible in reflecting the meaning described by the participants (Lincoln & Guba 1985:290).

Interestingly, Credibility, dependability, conformability and transferability are terms often used to describe the trustworthiness of qualitative content analysis, which is imperative to critically study the trustworthiness of every step used to analyse data - arranging data, categorising information, and reporting findings (Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen & Kyngäs 2014:1). Authenticity, integrity, and triangulation often arise on the subject of trustworthiness, but for this study, the author focuses on credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability as a criterion to achieving qualitative results that are of value. Anney (2014:276) identifies and describes the qualitative research trustworthiness criteria as dependability, truthfulness, transferability, and confirmability, which are used to ensure the quality of the qualitative research findings and describes the manner the concepts can be applied when doing research as follows:

Dependability is often used when the study needs to indicate how soundness the information presented is, and how data can be validated. The study used a qualitative approach to collect data through documents and focus group discussions during fieldwork, and information was thoroughly collected before being analysed. To achieve trustworthiness, the researcher identified certain perception from the data collected in focus group discussions reflected the information presented in the documents retrieved from the petrochemical firm (credibility). The

study gave a justification on the criteria used for selecting participants (transferability) and the sample used for the research. The methodology used to set out to determine logic and answer the inquiry from the phenomenon investigated and ensured that the results presented are aligned to the information that was collected (documents and focus groups) and interpreted to indicate confirmability. The researcher was constantly jotting down notes about the events that took place and observations made from the fieldwork.

Questioning the results and looking at alternatives that can be explored ensures that the results are a true reflection of reality, which can aid the study in checking for validation. Onwuegbuzie, Dickinson, Leech and Zoran (2009:12) admit that comparing words and statements made repeatedly during focus group interviews, and patterns appearing from one group to the next until saturation has been reached, can serve as an effective tool for validation. The important ways of establishing validity in qualitative research are in determining the richness of available data by collection, analysis, and reporting findings (Elo *et al.* 2014:8).

Consistency in the manner in which information is dealt with will create knowledge that will be used to understand the objectives of the study and draw accurate conclusions based on the new data or support from other sources of literature from scholars who previously published work on corporate social responsibility/investment. The reader does not necessarily have to agree with the researcher but can reason on how the researcher arrived at the conclusion through the concept *trustworthiness*, which embeds variables such as credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability (Bailey 2007:181). Onwuegbuzie, Dickinson, Leech and Zoran (2009:12) admit that comparing words and statements made repeatedly during focus group interviews, and patterns appearing from one group to the next until saturation has been reached, can serve as an effective tool for validation.

In qualitative research, the researcher should always consider challenges and threats to validity in the studies and this can be done depending on the design or sample size used (Creswell 2016:19). Holliday (2008:151) cautions researchers to be wary of the barriers they should avoid when investigating a social setting, and advises them to build a common ground by establishing relationships with participants. This suggests that they create room for an

understanding between the researcher and the people involved in focus group discussions, and will, in turn, weigh on the responses given by the participants. On the next section, the researcher describes a concept of ethical considerations.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher complied with the University's research ethics guidelines and obtained ethical clearance from the Vaal University of Technology. All necessary precautions were taken during the fieldwork, and the researcher ensured that no harm transpired during the collection of data. The organisation was made aware of the study and permission from the Sasol Company to conduct the study was granted by the legal department on behalf of the organisation. Individuals in the focus group were required to sign a consent form before participating in the study. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed.

The researcher never mentioned any individual's name. The researcher cannot guarantee or control what participants do outside the focus group but appealed to the integrity of individuals to not disclose any of the discussions or and to not take matters further.

3.8 SUMMARY

When conducting a research, various ways and methodologies can be applied to collecting data. The author had to carefully consider and select a suitable methodology based on the research design and topic to achieve accurate results from data collected. For this study, transcribed texts, media releases, and focus group discussions were used for data collection and to understand different perspectives regarding the research topic. The researcher followed a thematic analysis guideline for interpreting large data and used the process of qualitative data analysis to determine the trustworthiness of the study.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the research methodology and data collection procedures were clearly outlined. This included identifying the research population, collecting data and analysing data which was applicable for investigating the phenomena discussed. The data from the population was captured in the form of content analysis and focus group discussions, which provided a foundation for gathering raw data about the organisation's communication and perceptions from community stakeholders.

This chapter focuses on discussing and presenting the results of the investigation carried out by the researcher according to the data collection procedure mentioned in the previous chapter. The findings from the data collected from the media releases and the focus group population were processed and analysed according to the outlined method of analysis discussed in Chapter 1 (Introduction) and Chapter 3 (methodology). The data was collected in two Places – at Sasolburg and at the Vaal University of Technology in Vanderbijlpark with all participants being residents in the Sasolburg community.

4.2 ANALYSIS OF DATA

The researcher used thematic content analysis for both media releases and focus group analyses. The results are discussed and presented in the context that looks at answering the research objectives that were outlined in the first chapter.

4.3 MEDIA RELEASE ANALYSIS

In the media release population, the researcher downloaded articles on corporate social investment activities related to Sasolburg from the Sasol website (www.sasol.co.za). On Sasol's website, under a Media page, there is a list of media releases which are uploaded. The media releases are arranged in a chronological order according to the current date, to the oldest date. In this case, the researcher considered articles that were only published and

related directly to the projects which took place in the Sasolburg community. The following table (**Table 4.1**) relates to the title of the media release and the date on which the releases were published.

Table 4.2: CSI-related articles

<i>Media release (number)</i>	<i>Title of the Media release</i>	<i>Date published</i>
MRel 1	<i>Sasol Marathon builds champions of tomorrow</i>	<i>02 February 2015</i>
MRel 2	<i>Hat-trick victory for Mokwalakwala at the 21st annual Sasol marathon</i>	<i>07 February 2015</i>
MRel 3	<i>Waterbird count on the Vaal dam shows an abundance of many bird species</i>	<i>12 February 2015</i>
MRel 4	<i>Entertain your brain at Sasol techno x 2008</i>	<i>16 July 2015</i>
MRel 5	<i>Sasol donates nearly 20 000 books</i>	<i>30 September 2015</i>
MRel 6	<i>National champions crowned at Sasol marathon 2016</i>	<i>08 February 2016</i>
MRel 7	<i>Sasol promotes 10 start-up SMMEs at proudly SA's buy local summit and expo</i>	<i>29 March 2016</i>
MRel 8	<i>Sasol HIV/AIDS support programme launch in Sasolburg</i>	<i>15 April 2016</i>
MRel 9	<i>Sasol creates a springboard for emerging industrialists</i>	<i>09 May 2016</i>
MRel 10	<i>Sasol hosts the biggest science and technology career exhibition in Sasolburg</i>	<i>16 August 2016</i>
MRel 11	<i>Start preparing for the 23rd Sasol marathon</i>	<i>03 January 2017</i>
MRel 12	<i>Veterans reign at 23rd Sasol marathon</i>	<i>04 February 2017</i>
MRel 13	<i>Sasol launches the second phase of HIV/AIDS support programme</i>	<i>07 April 2017</i>

The researcher found 13 media releases reporting directly on different CSI activities that had taken place in Sasolburg from the period January 2015 to April 2017. In those three years, there were different articles relating to different topics about corporate social investment projects.

4.3.1 Media releases published

Figure 4.1 indicates the title and number of Sasol media releases, which were published and linked to various CSI activities.

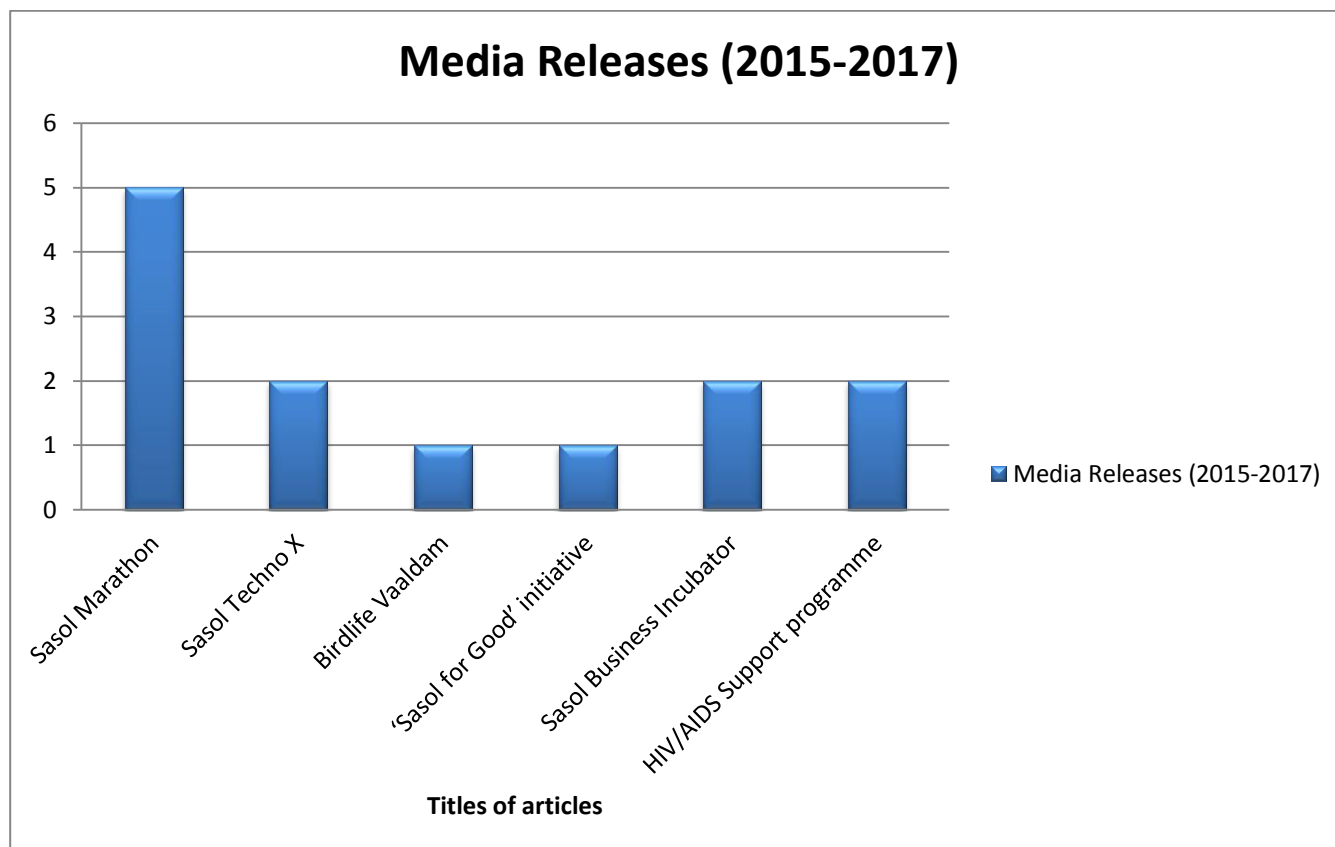


Figure 4.1: Number of published articles and titles of the CSI activities

The highest numbers of media releases were related to the Sasol Marathon (**Figure 4.1**). Recreation and sport-related activities such as the Sasol Marathon, which caters to improving the healthy lifestyle habits of community members, were frequently covered on Sasol's media releases. Whereas, the CSI activities such as education; health; welfare; social and economic matters did not get a lot of coverage. Out of 13 articles published, five reported on the Sasol Marathon which is an annual race for athletes across the country and people of all ages including family participation for fitness levels, which normally takes place at the DP de Villiers Stadium in Sasolburg.

This means that the organisation has identified Sasol Marathon as an important CSI activity promoting healthy lifestyles among community members, making the project a priority in creating awareness of recreation involvement. The Sasol Marathon has been in existence for the past 23 years and became an essential part of the company's image. The Sasol Marathon may not be an area of focus which can contribute towards social economic upliftment, which is one of the main concerns of developing CSI initiatives. The development of corporate social investment activities in African countries has seen contributions to economic and social development emerging. Idemudia (2011:14) is of the view that the CSR agenda in developing countries have intended to focus on the priorities and challenges the countries face, and has not yet reached its full potential in African countries.

Below is a table (**Table 4.2**) partitioned into three columns; the first being a list of various "CSI activities" conducted by the organisation; and in the second column the researcher looks at the "messages communicated" in the media releases published; and the last column includes the "area of involvement" identified from the messages communicated in the different media releases. The following table is a valuation of the messages communicated by Sasol, which forms part of the corporate image which the firm projects to its stakeholders. Analysing the corporate image which Sasol projects when communicating their CSI through media releases, can assist the study to observe the company's area of involvement. The researcher will later develop themes using the CSI communication from the media releases, to identify which CSI areas the organisation is focused on.

Table 4.3: Sasol's CSI areas of involvement identified from media release messages

Organisation's CSI activities	Message communicated	Area of involvement
Sasol Marathon	<p><i>The 4,9 km fun run, is what we aim for to encourage an active and healthy lifestyle in our communities.</i></p> <p><i>Sasol Marathon has brought the Sasolburg community together to enjoy a great line-up of endurance races for all athletes and a host of activity for the entire family to participate in.</i></p> <p><i>Caters for all fitness levels and ages making it the ultimate sporting event for family participation.</i></p>	<p>Sport, active and healthy lifestyle</p> <p>Unity in the community</p> <p>Active lifestyle</p>
Sasol Techno-X	<p><i>Sasol Techno X has become the largest Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) career guidance exhibition in the country that annually attracts more than 20 000 visitors from seven provinces.</i></p> <p><i>Inspired by what they see and experience at the exhibition, learners are able to source information on career paths, subject choice and admission requirements to tertiary institutions.</i></p> <p><i>The future will demand many more skilled science professionals if our country is to maintain the rate of economic growth we currently enjoy.</i></p>	<p>Promoting STEM education</p> <p>Facilitating learners career choices</p> <p>Skills development in the skills shortage areas</p>
Birdlife Vaal Dam	<p><i>The Sasol Vaaldam Bird Count is one of the largest and most successful citizen science programmes in South Africa, providing much-needed data for waterbird conservation around the world.</i></p> <p><i>Sasol's involvement in bird wildlife is focussed on environmental conservation and education, whilst also promoting birding as a pastime.</i></p>	<p>Citizen science programmes</p> <p>Environmental conservation and education</p>
'Sasol for Good' initiative	<p><i>As our first global Sasol for a Good project, we called on our people to contribute to the educational development of children in communities worldwide.</i></p> <p><i>Reading is an essential life and business skills.</i></p>	<p>Educational development</p> <p>Worldwide development</p>
Sasol Business Incubator	<p><i>Sasol has for more than 60 years played an important role in the industrialisation growth and socio-economic development of South Africa.</i></p> <p><i>Another highlight not to be missed is the Skills Centre where learners will be exposed to a number of industrial artisan trades and existing training opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>As a proud contributor to South Africa's economic development, we believe that stimulating entrepreneurial activity has significant potential in enhancing industrial growth</i></p>	<p>Industrialisation growth and socio-economic development</p> <p>Skills development</p> <p>Economic development</p> <p>Stimulating entrepreneurial activity</p>
HIV/AIDS Support programme	<p><i>Supports government's back-to-care approach where primary healthcare is taken to the community.</i></p> <p><i>We upgraded and expanded four clinics in Zamdela and provided four fully equipped mobile clinics to take primary healthcare into the community.</i></p>	<p>Primary healthcare in the community</p> <p>Providing tangible healthcare facilities</p>

The findings provided in Table 4.2 indicate the various areas of CSI activities the organisation has communicated through their published media releases. The CSI activities in the organisation were examined to understand the link between stakeholders perceptions and the organisations CSI area of involvement which is in line with fombrun's reputation quotients (RQ). This addresses the research question - to analyse the reputation Sasol has gained among the community (external) stakeholders in the Sasolburg community. In this study, Fombrun's RQ will not be used as a measurement instrument, but will be used to give the study a guideline to analyse of the organisation has the six dimensions needed to measure reputation. Social responsibility, vision and leadership, emotional appeal, product and services, workplace environment and financial performance are the six dimensions of measuring reputation which were outlined by (Fombrun & Van Riel, 2004:34).

Based on the MRel 1 to 13, the organisation portrays itself as providing "forward-looking statements to stakeholders in order to influence investment decisions" and positions itself as the best innovative company. The organisation's media releases indicate that Sasol is an organisation that strives to excel in developing the community by engaging the community in their multiple CSI programmes. On the MRel 7, the organisation describes how it had become an established South African (SA) company over the past 60 years and continues to be a contributor to the economic growth of the country. The company communicates its corporate social investment image by positioning itself as being active in propelling the nation's economy through its CSI activities.

4.3.2 Themes identified in the media releases

Based on the media releases communicated by the organisation, the areas of involvement in corporate social investment were identified as environmental conservation, primary healthcare, active lifestyle, education and skills development, and socio-economic development:

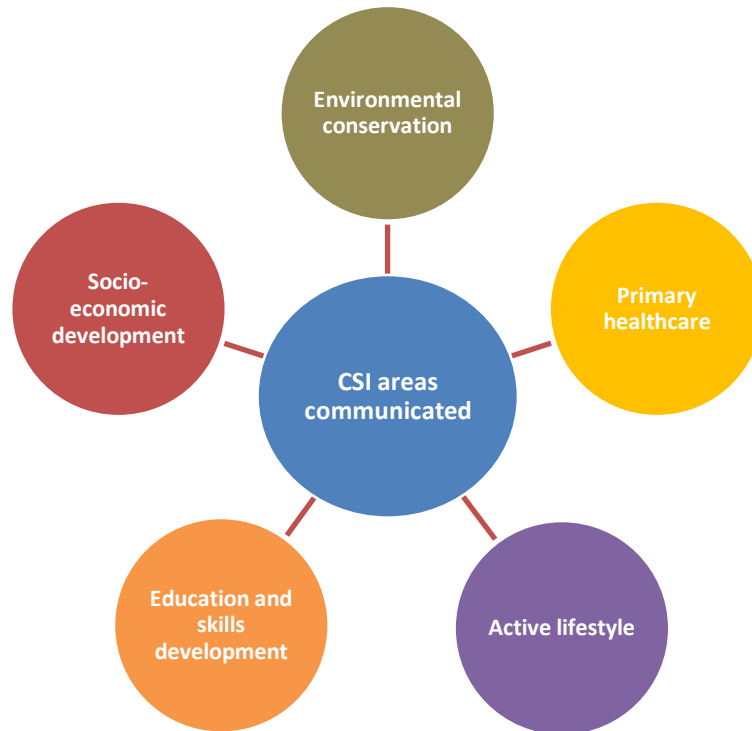


Figure 4.2: Sasol's CSI communication themes in media releases (2015-2017)

The concept map above reflects the major themes identified by the researcher through coding and analysis of the content provided by the organisation's releases. The social issues identified in the company's media releases on CSI include environmental conservation, primary healthcare, active lifestyle, education and skills development, and socio-economic development, as indicated on the organisation's CSI communication themes (**Figure 4.2**). These are the themes which seem to dominate the company's CSI activities in the Vaal area as represented by the analysed media releases. The findings indicate that various themes are communicated through CSI activities; the themes identified can describe the nature of the CSI projects in which the organisation is involved.

- **Environmental conservation:** The ripple effect of environmental change cannot be remunerated through the projects that the petroleum company has implemented, but there are ways in which they can promote a green environment. Although it is reported that environmental reporting is relatively poor in South Africa and other developing African countries due to little responsiveness to issues such as environmental degradation, this has caused organisations to prioritise the improvement of social infrastructures such as roads, hospitals and community centres (Idemudia 2011:02). Kirat (2015:443) is of opinion that CSI in the oil and gas industry should make an added effort to give back to the society due to potential environmental damages such as carbon dioxide emissions from their daily operations. The organisation's communication of environmental conservation projects on MRel 3 is an indication that it is committed to contributing to a green environment and the protection of wildlife.
- **Primary healthcare:** In an effort to improve the accessibility of primary healthcare, MRel 8 and MRel 13 indicate that the organisation joined forces with the Free State Department of Health and upgraded and expanded four clinics in Zamdela (Sasolburg) and provided four fully equipped mobile clinics to take primary healthcare into the community. The mobile clinics are responsible for visiting communities and screening or testing people for Tuberculosis (TB) and HIV/AIDS. Millions of people have no access to basic healthcare services and this predicament threatens the development of communities; hence the demand for CSI activities to focus on curbing the rapid spread of HIV and Aids (Skinner *et al.* 2008:240). If more people have access to primary healthcare in Sasolburg, the community's population will increase and they will actively participate in contributing to economic growth.
- **Active lifestyle:** The majority of media releases (MRels 1, 2, 6, 11 and 12) reported on the Sasol Marathon sporting event, with one of the business' objectives in view to attract more national and international sports events to Sasolburg. This can increase the tourism industry of Sasolburg or contribute to the creation of job opportunities and economic growth. Cortes *et al.* (2014:273) point out that the development of sports, cultural and leisure activities can provide a foundation that can support and encourage educational campaigns that have a great social inclusion in communities. Sport and

active lifestyle can increase the fitness levels of all community members and bring families and communities together.

- **Education and skills development:** Consistent with the findings in MRel 4, Mujtaba and Cavico (2013:60) express the need for businesses to be involved in Education and training of communities to develop skilled employees and community members through socially responsible activities to increase opportunities and profit. Arya and Bassi (2011:690) suggest that companies usually focus on Education; improving the community's health issues; and creating job opportunities through several socio-economic development projects, in order to increase their scores on corporate social investment indicators. The organisation is actively involved in the community's education through projects such as Sasol Techno-X, which is an annual career guidance exhibition which exposes learners to different disciplines in the technology-related area. In support of the community's skills development, the petroleum company also sets up a Skills Centre where learners will be exposed to a number of industrial artisan trades and existing training opportunities. MRel 5 disclosed how the internal stakeholders were contributing by donating books and educational toys over a period of 30 days during the month of International Mandela Day, which forms part of an organisation strategy to contribute to the educational development of children in targeted communities, including Sasolburg.
- **Socio-economic development:** In line with the findings from both MRel 7 and MRel 9, the organisation is involved in fulfilling a role in ensuring that the community of Sasolburg is exposed to economic development. The organisation is also involved in growing small, medium and micro-sized enterprises (SMME), which creates job opportunities through the Sasol Business Incubator (SBI). Ngobeni (2011:04) states that in order to overcome the social, political or economic challenges that societies face, the corporate social investment must be used by companies as a platform to subsidise socio-economic development. Sasol has to structure and conduct CSI programmes that will uplift societies and help improve social, political and economic issues. In developing countries, CSI is affected by the socio-economic environment such as economic, social, environmental, health-related, or industrial challenges which

can be seen by organisations as an opportunity to structure their CSI priorities (Jamali 2014:31).

- **Social performance:** The study reveals that the social performance theory highlights the organisation's social performance which can be determined through observations or information captured through experiences. The author believes that the relationship between social performance and economic performance is closely linked. Organisations that invest (education, healthcare, and building or improving infrastructure) in their communities contribute towards curbing the socio-economic disparities within the community and help develop a good reputation in the process. The benefits of creating a strong image are that communities turn to associate companies that are socially responsible with offering quality goods or services, and this result to profit making.
- **Impression management:** A manner in which an organisation can position itself as socially responsible and be able to influence the perceptions of stakeholders is through impression management. In line with the findings, the oil company seems to be using the IM strategy to project their CSI initiatives for building their image. The organisations areas of communication do not seem to address or report on the concerns raised by the participants about the amount of pollution created. However, the oil company in their intended CSI communication highlighted all the positive coverage based on the company and are using that to position their image as a socially responsible organisation. The organisation only publishes narratives about the impact of their CSI projects in the community of Sasolburg, which seems to have solidified the reputation of the firm.

It needs to be noted that these were not the only CSI-related activities the organisation communicated – they are the ones that appeared on the company's website during the period February 2015 to April 2017. In the next section, the researcher investigates the perceptions of the community's stakeholders concerning the organisation's reputation and the gap the company intends to fill according to the corporate image communicated by it.

4.4 FOCUS GROUP DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher conducted three focus group discussions of which the responses were later transcribed. To ensure the reliability of data, the focus group transcripts were analysed by applying the thematic content analysis method. The focus group discussion focused on five themes which were expanded to probing questions, which were used as a discussion guide. The questions were constructed with the intention to provoke ideas and answers according to each individual's experiences, and these topics were:

- Topic 1: Knowledge of Sasol's CSI initiatives
- Topic 2: Opinions concerning the effectiveness of these initiatives
- Topic 3: Participants' exposure to Sasol's corporate communication
- Topic 4: Participants' expectations concerning Sasol's involvement in the community
- Topic 5: Opinions concerning Sasol's reputation

4.5 FAMILIARITY/KNOWLEDGE WITH SASOL'S CSI INITIATIVES

In the subsequent section, the researcher tabled the questions and emerging trends from the discussions. The table consists of three columns, namely quotes/codes, categories, and comments, and to indicate the participants the researcher used the following codes to disguise their image.

The above table shows the unique codes given to the different participants to guarantee their anonymity and confidentiality. The first two letters PA refer to the participant's agreed alphabetic letter, and the last letter and number G1 represent the group number.

4.5.1 CORPORATE SOCIAL INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES

In this section, the author has identified the responses of the participants when they imparted their knowledge of the different CSI activities that were discussed.

4.5.1.1 CSI Project visibility

Table 4.4: Discussion question 1

Quotes/codes	Categories	Comments
<i>Discussion question 1: Do you know of any programmes in the community conducted by the Sasol firm? And what are they?</i>		
PFG2, PEG3: Non-government organisation support activities	Ability to identify the organisation's different CSI activities	Mainly aware of activities related to educational development and recreation
PBG2, PDG2, PFG2: recreation activities		
PCG1, PAG2, PEG3: Support in education programmes		

The participants were able to identify several corporate social investment projects, which are listed below:

- Science Expo (Sasol Techno X)
- Iketsetseng Skills development projects
- Boiketlong centre
- Learnerships and Bursary opportunities
- Active lifestyle
- NGO support
- Mobile clinics
- Schools and clinic fencing

Of the CSI activities mentioned by the participants, the projects that were identified in the media release communication included Science Expo (Techno X – MRel 4 and 10), supporting of Boiketlong centre (MRel 4), events under active lifestyle (MRel 1, 2, 6 and 12) and mobile clinics (MRel 8 and 13). The other projects participants mentioned may be outside the sample frame used for the media release sampling, or may be covered in the company's annual reports.

The establishment of supporting recreational activities in a community can contribute to channeling the youth in the right direction for promoting health and well-being projects that are educational and to the benefit of the community (Cortes *et al.* 2014:276). Identifying recreation activities in the community indicates that the organisation's interest in the community's well-being is a priority and the following statements support the researcher's observations.

PFG2 said: ***“Yes, I know of a few, I know of a swimming programme which is conducted by them. I know athletics, I know of a lot of sports programmes that they facilitate. There are a lot of projects that are done by Lusa (NPO) that are supported by Sasol. There's one where they took students for a course for their non-profit organisation (NPO) for their development.”***

The researcher observed that the participants are generally familiar with a wide variety of Sasol's projects, and in support of the researcher's findings PEG3 stated: ***“Also, what I know is Sasol supports NGOs. Like there is this NGO up there, next to ZIO. Its name is Lusa Community Chest, they sponsor the NGO.”***

The above-mentioned responses support the views of Sirsly and Lvina (2016:09) about how the knowledge and information of different stakeholders from a certain community setting, concerning the CSI activities which can contribute to the organisation's reputation, may differ. The ability to identify different initiatives linked to the organisation means that the participant has some knowledge of CSI programmes performed by Sasol. Most participants were aware of the initiatives that invest in education, such as the Science Expo and Learnership programmes that promote skills development. Organisations prefer to collaborate with Non-profit organisations in developing CSR activities, it is rare to see organisations involving stakeholders (customers) in pursuit of CSR projects (Ditlev-Simonsen & Wenstøp, 2013:144).

In support, PCG1 added: ***“Normally in August, they host an expo. Where they would invite executives, it's a week-long intervention where schools come in, maybe the science part of it.”***

Investing in education is an important CSI communication for companies, and in order for organisations to reach their CSR objectives and achieve high scores in the social investment indicator, they have to invest in programmes such as socioeconomic development projects aimed at job creation, education, health improvement of local communities (Arya & Bassi 2011:690). Socioeconomic development projects make a huge impact through their attempts to deal with the social challenges the community faces, and by their endeavours to develop the economy, be it by contributing to the society through encouraging transformation or by creating access to health-care facilities for everyone.

4.5.1.2 Approaches to identifying CSI activities

Table 4.5: Discussion question 2

Quotes/codes	Categories	Comments
<i>Discussion question 2: How can you identify which programmes are linked to Sasol?</i>		
PCG1, PFG2: Recognise their logo	Capacity to link programmes associated with the company	Organisation's different CSI initiatives are recognised mostly through billboard communication
PCG2, PBG3, PEG3: Has a Billboard showing information		
PEG1: Articles via local newspaper		

Participants were able to identify programmes linked to the organisation, and described how they were able to distinguish programmes related to the organisation. Most of the participants listed branding materials such as billboards as a key element to identifying the firm's contribution to CSI projects, and no mention was made of media releases.

PCG2 replied: ***“Usually there, I can say there are billboards.”***

PBG3 added: ***“Most of the time they have a billboard, written sponsored by Sasol.”***

Research by Bidin, Muhaimi and Bolong (2014:327) indicates that brand communication is one of the strategies used by organisations to improve visibility and improve the reputation of stakeholders to gain a competitive edge. Using various touch points such as billboards,

advertisements in a local newspaper and other marketing communication channels is a good strategy to keep on reminding the community stakeholders of the huge contributions the organisation makes in the community. The statement below indicates that the organisation informs the community about their projects through various communication platforms including communication using a newspaper publication:

PEG1 mentioned: ***“Before those cameras were installed, there was an article that was issued out at the Vaal Ster that something of this nature is going to take place in Sasolburg, it’s been sponsored by Sasol firm.”***

The literature indicates that communicating with the community stakeholders before and after implementing programmes assists in managing the relationships between the organisation and the targeted stakeholders. Parris, Dapko, Arnold & Arnold (2016:224) explain that the result of communicating openly and information sharing by organisation leads stakeholders to trust an organisation and become a foundation tool for addressing distrust. However, the organisation uses billboards more than any other form of communication to reflect the various types of activities that they implement in the community. The organisation’s use of its logo on various communication platforms gives the participants an idea of which company is responsible for certain activities, this is important for the community to be able to link the programmes to the organisation.

4.6 OPINIONS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CSI INITIATIVES

The following section investigates the different sentiments shared by the participants about the usefulness of the CSI projects implemented by the organisation. The participants were requested to express their views on what they thought about all the programmes that were identified and to also air their opinions on what they think could be done to improve certain CSI initiatives.

4.6.1 PERCEPTIONS OF CSI PROJECTS AT SASOL

In this section, the researcher looks into the different responses of the participants regarding their perceptions of the CSI projects Sasol works on in the community.

4.6.1.1 Stakeholders' engagement

Table 4.6: Discussion question 3

Quotes/codes	Categories	Comments
Discussion question 3: What do you think of the programmes?		
PFG1, PFG2, PAG2, PDG2, PEG2: The programmes benefit the community	Stakeholders' perceptions of the programmes	Mostly feel that the programmes benefit the community
PBG1, PEG1: More improvements need to be made to the programmes		Few people feel that the projects can be improved and they should not cater to certain areas only but must work to the benefit of the entire community.
PAG1, PCG3: Programmes do not benefit the community – only certain areas		

The following quotes serve to support the preceding views.

PAG2 mentioned: ***“I personally think that they are good programmes, but now the thing is if they start with the programmes they don’t continue yearly.”***

PBG3 agrees: ***“And also I have seen in Clinics they have fences, so I think Sasol sponsored the fencing of the Clinics and some clinics around. So when it comes to that, it provides safety because people will be secure. Yeah, it is effective when it comes to health and safety.”***

The participants expressed how they feel about the CSI programmes, and most of them had positive opinions about the company’s contribution to the community. The participants described the activities as good and effective but raised concerns about not being involved in decision-making. For organisations, CSI development is merely a means to attract positive community attention, to create awareness and to communicate key messages (Coombs & Holladay 2013:214). The organisation’s involvement in CSI has enjoyed the positive reception. However, there are concerns from participants about Sasol not consulting with the community stakeholders before executing the projects. PEG3 replied: ***“I think the only***

people who actually benefited from Sasol are those who did Technical subjects and they are the ones who are given learnerships.”

PFG2 comments: ***“I like the programmes that they are forming but I feel like they are not affecting the relevant people. They are good programmes but then they are not reaching the right crowd or the right amount of people that they should be reaching into.***

Some concerning views from the participants about the organisation reflected that some of the company’s CSI projects do not have value to the community as a whole – certain areas benefit more than others.

PDG3 said: ***“....the most benefiting communities now it’s in town. If I don’t live in town, I don’t benefit.”***

PEG3 commented: ***“I am saying they should not only focus (CSI activities) in town, they also need to focus on the locations where they are not given attention.”***

PAG1: ***“It seems as if it is focusing on the other side (Town) while the other community (Township) is not benefiting.”***

PFG2: ***“They are not going into the townships and tell the black kids that hey that swimming pool over there you can swim in it. It is only the privileged circle that gets to hear about such things because they are always around the people that are accustomed to Sasol and are accustomed to the social responsibility that Sasol is giving.”***

If the community thinks that the organisation focuses on one area, this can cause conflict among community members, and the organisation might receive a backlash on their projects. The severity of this situation can cause unrest in the community and if the organisation is not fair to all parties, it will create societal instability. Odera, Scott and Gow (2016:411) agree that companies operating in developing countries are pressured by society to practice CSI

activities due to raised community expectations and stakeholders understanding the significance of social and environmental issues. The community members' views on the project that the organisation needs to commit to, creates expectations that need to be met by companies. Communities should not be divided or treated in a different way; instead, they should be equally treated by the business in order to maintain peace and stability. Ditlev-Simonsen and Wenstøp (2013:144) suggested that in the quest of developing CSR activities that are effective, companies need to include stakeholders.

4.6.1.2 Sasol's CSI Projects ability to uplift the community

Table 4.7: Discussion question 4

Quotes/codes	Categories	Comments
<i>Discussion question 4: Have you benefited from any projects? Or do you know people who have benefitted?</i>		
PEG1, PBG1, PAG3: did not benefit personally but know someone who has.	Awareness of CSI benefits and beneficiaries among the community	A few participants did not benefit but were able to identify people that have benefitted from the programmes.
PDG2, PBG2, PDG3: No I haven't benefitted, and do not know anyone from the community who has		Most participants did not personally benefit and have no knowledge of people that have.
PFG2: Yes, I did benefit and know someone who has benefitted.		Only one person has benefitted and knows someone who has also benefitted.

During the focus group discussions, most participants had few recollections of their interaction with any individuals which they think or know has been aided by the CSI activities from around their communities. However, participants mentioned that when it came to Sasol's CSI projects, certain people benefitted more than others.

PBG2 mentioned: ***"I have never benefited anything from Sasol. I don't even know any person, I only know people from outside Sasolburg and not from Sasolburg."***

PAG1 responded: ***“Yes I can add on this, I don’t see it benefiting the community. It seems as if it is focusing on the other side (Town) while the other community (Township) is not benefiting.”***

According to the participants, only a few privileged people benefit from the CSI initiatives, while the majority that is in need were said to have been abandoned. The participants feel that those that live in the high-income areas around Sasolburg benefit more than the individuals who are in the township areas such as Zamdela, Taylor Park, Amelia and Snake Park. An increase in social difference is said to be the cause of giving people wrong views about feeling neglected and thinking that their challenges are not addressed even if they are (Cortes *et al.* 2014:269). When asked whether they had benefited from the projects, the participants were deflecting their response to indicate that only few benefits while others suffer.

4.6.1.3 Community education viewed as important

Table 4.8: Discussion question 5

Quotes/codes	Categories	Comments
<i>Discussion question 5: Which communities should Sasol invest in and why?</i>		
NONE: Focus on high-class areas (Vaal park and town)	Ability to identify affected areas and solutions	High-class areas do not need development
PCG1, PEG1, PEG1, PAG2, PCG2, PDG2: Focus on Low-class areas (Zamdela, Amelia, Iraq, France, Snake Park and Taylor Park)		Low-class areas affected more and in need of development
PEG2, PAG2, PCG3, PBG3: Support educational activities		Education activities are a priority
PCG2, PEG3, PFG3: Health facilities		Health facilities are a secondary priority

Most of the participants when asked what they felt Sasol projects should focus on, responded by admitting that although Sasol bears a huge responsibility in investing in the community, most of their programmes were structured for educational purposes. This includes offering bursaries and learnerships, which is the one key area of CSI they focus on mostly. They went

on to describe how their bursary criterion does not benefit the community at large, and how most learners are overlooked. PEG3 mentioned: ***“I think the only people who actually benefited from Sasol are those who did Technical subjects and they are the ones who are given learnerships.”*** The Corporate Social Responsibility course handbook (2012:09) states that one of the frameworks drafted by the B-BBEE objective of empowering the community and supporting those previously disadvantaged is by investing in Education, infrastructure, and employment to improve the economy of the country.

PBG2 said: ***“When it comes to the events that they (Sasol firm) do, locational events then I have benefited and learned a lot from Sasol firm. Because they invest a lot in education, and in educating the public in general.”***

PEG3 concurred: ***“Sasol has played a huge role, especially in education. That one I don’t want to lie because we have a school called Iketseng and it just donated technical equipment which eventually will groom people with skills.”***

Research by Skinner *et al.* (2008:247) indicates that education and training is one of the CSI projects organisations should engage in – specifically in South Africa and other African countries. PDG3 replied: ***“Well I can say that Sasol has contributed to the economic development, to a job creation and educational development”***. Education is important for the development of a community, and for contributing to economic development. The majority of the participants in the focus group felt that the organisation was only providing bursaries to students that study science subjects, which was a small fraction of the students from the community. More improvements need to be made in the education area in order to improve the community of Sasolburg and increase the literacy rate of the community.

4.7 CORPORATE COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

The next section looks into the information-seeking or -receiving strategies and behaviour of the stakeholders and how they interact with the organisation from time to time about the communicated key messages.

4.7.1 INTENDED CORPORATE IMAGE COMMUNICATION

The sentiments shared below by the participants were perceptions concerning the understanding and knowledge of stakeholders regarding the organisation's image as a result of CSI communication.

4.7.1.1 Organisational communication

Table 4.9: Discussion question 6

Quotes/codes	Categories	Comments
<i>Discussion question 6: How does Sasol communicate with people in this area?</i>		
PCG1, PEG1, PAG1, PFG2, PAG2, PBG3: They communicate by using local newspapers	Media of communication that the organisation frequently uses	Mainly receive communication via local newspapers
PDG1: They use the councilor to communicate		Community leaders used in one instance
PEG1, PCG2, PDG3: Communicate via radio broadcasts		Radio is the second communication platform the organisation uses

The organisation needs to have a reliable communication platform so as to strengthen the relationship between the company and its stakeholders. On a few occasions, the participants expressed how they received communication via radio. ***“Sometimes they pass on the message through local radio stations like Karabo FM. Sometimes when there those emergency alerts”*** (said PCG2). In line with the participants, Crumpton (2011:126) believes that if the organisation does not want stakeholders to be suspicious of them or to doubt them, communication should be a key strategic platform for proving correct and reliable information.

PBG3 expressed: ***“There are newspapers, Ster and Vaal Weekblad. They advertise them there.”***

PCG1 added: ***“They communicate via local newspaper like Vaal Ster and the Vaal Beeld.....”***

PDG1 stated: ***“They communicated through our councillor. They sent our councillor to the community so that the councillor can unite people in a church, and came to talk about whatever they were saying.”***

PFG2 comments: ***“I think, I feel like they could do more with their marketing strategy or their way to get to people and try and get them to be part of their programmes because most people have this stigma about the programmes that are being formed by Sasol. That they are only made for a specific group of people...so I feel like they could do better with their marketing strategy, but they have really great programmes.”***

All of the above participants discussed their experiences of how they first found out about the organisation’s goodwill activities. They expressed different views, which are a clear indication that the organisation uses different methods for communicating with the community stakeholders. Communicating image clearly and consistently to the public will instill trust in the communities in which the organisation operates, which will add value to its reputation and attract positive relations (Huang-Horowitz 2015:346). Most participants remarked that the organisation frequently uses local community newspapers to circulate information.

4.8 PARTICIPANT’S CSI EXPECTATIONS

In this section, the researcher looked at the expectations of the stakeholders regarding the different initiatives the organisation is involved in. This granted the participants an opportunity of expressing their views on what projects they would like the firm to get involved in. The descriptions are tabled below:

4.8.1 OPINIONS ON ACTIVITIES

The following part is about determining what the stakeholders’ opinions are about the organisation and how they feel about all its contributions. EXPECT

4.8.1.1 Sentiments on improving CSI initiatives

Table 4.10: Discussion question 7

Quotes/codes	Categories	Comments
<i>Discussion question 7: What can be done to make the existing projects better? Describe any additional community goodwill activities you would like to see Sasol get involved in?</i>		
PCG1, PEG1, PFG1, PFG2, PCG2, PAG2, PAG3: Focus on youth empowerment	CSI initiative improvement	Mainly concerned about youth empowerment
PCG1, PEG1, PEG3, PFG3: Community development		Some participants feel community development is important
PFG2, PCG2, PDG3: NGO support		Others feel the organisation must continue with NGO Support
PCG1, PEG1, PEG2, PBG2, PCG3, PFG3, PBG3: infrastructure improvement		Most concerns are about the Improvement of infrastructure

A question was posed regarding the participants' views on how the existing projects can be improved, and the participants raised their concerns about the increased criminal activities in the community.

PEG3 mentioned: ***“I was thinking if they could build a centre, a lot of youth do drugs and if they can just build a centre like a rehabilitation centre.”***

PEG1 agreed: ***“We are battling with the youth now, who are into drugs and crime. You sit here and you ask yourself, what has gone wrong with our society or why is this happening now if it wasn't happening 10 or 15 years ago or 20 years ago, whatever the case may be.”***

From the responses that were received, the main concerns were regarding the high increase in crime due to drug intake by the youth. The youth form part of the shocking statistics on the unemployment rate in South Africa; those who are unemployed resort to drug abuse. Mzembe and Downs (2014:226) reiterate the importance of the role of organisations in developing

countries. By engaging in CSR activities organisations can make contributions by combatting the increasing low levels of economic development, by presenting skills development programmes and assisting in improving poor infrastructure and unemployment rate. Young people that suffer from anxiety due to lack of job opportunities in their community may resort to alcohol and drug abuse, and drug abuse has been identified by participants as one of the factors contributing to criminal activities. Deitch, Koutsenok and Ruiz (1999:340) found that the social and economic issue in communities has become the crossing point of crime and drugs, and suggest that proper treatment must be implemented to curb the catastrophe. Community empowerment will lead to community development, which might improve the state of the conditions in the communities and contribute to transformation.

G2PE mentioned: ***“I think they should focus more on the health side, by building maybe enough clinics in every area there.”***

G1PC concurred: ***“The facilities as well in the location because we need parks. There is so much vacant space.”***

Infrastructure development is very important for the development of the economy and the community of Sasolburg understands the importance of improving the community's infrastructure. Improved infrastructure can result in an increase of tourism, and that will create job opportunities for local people and thus contribute to strengthening the economy.

4.9 PERCEPTIONS REGARDING ORGANISATION'S REPUTATION

The last part of the discussion covered the overall opinion regarding the organisations efforts regarding CSI, and how they treat the community and its internal stakeholders.

4.9.1 CORPORATE REPUTATION

In this section, the participants were asked to share their honest opinion with regard to how they feel about the organisation.

4.9.1.1 Perceptions about the organisation's image

Table 4.11: Discussion question 8

Quotes/codes	Categories	Comments
Discussion question 8: What do you think of Sasol?		
PAG1, PFG1:Organisation not performing	Perceptions regarding the organisation	The organisation does not have a bad image among the community members
PCG1, PEG1, PAG2, PFG2, PDG2, PCG2, PCG3, PDG1, PEG3:Organisation performing well		The organisation has a good reputation among the community members

Based on the quotes below, the participants have a positive view of Sasol and its CSI identified activities. PFG2 said: ***“I feel like they are doing the best that they can do from looking at it as a corporate perspective. They are going the extra mile because as a company they do take out money that is supposed to go towards the development of infrastructure within Sasolburg...”*** The majority of the participants from the focus groups held the following views regarding the organisation.

PFG2 mentioned: ***“So whatever they had in their hands they take good care of it, and they give it to the community to use for free. The Stadium, the swimming pool.....some of the employees that work for Sasol have perks that empower their family and their children, cousins, and aunts. So there is a lot, I feel that they are doing. More than they should be doing.”***

In support, PAG2 stated: ***“They do care; it’s just that we as Sasolburg residents we are not aware of how much they are doing.”***

Companies communicate with their stakeholders to develop a positive image with the public, and from the responses given in the discussions; the participants feel that the organisation is trying their best to develop the community of Sasolburg. Qualities that people outside the organisation identify and describe the company with are usually referred to as the corporate

image (Somani & Krishnan 2004:8). The image of the organisation is considered to be positive and participants feel that the organisation cares about the community stakeholders.

PDG2 agreed: ***“Sasol, it is trying because imagine Sasolburg without Sasol firm. Imagine Sasol (Sasolburg) without Sasol firm, where would we be?”***

PCG2 concurred: ***“I would say that from the work that they have done, I don’t have anything bad to say, like from the work that they have done and the things that they have sponsored.”***

In line with the findings from the participants, most participants showed that they perceive the organisation’s CSI initiatives as working well for the community. The stakeholders’ holistic construction and analysis of the messages about the organisation’s image, based on their personal experience with the CSI initiatives becomes a reputation (Lewellyn 2002:448). Reputation is based on the perceptions of the stakeholders. Golgeli (2014:313) suggests that reputation can be achieved when the image of an organisation is well-presented, and the messages delivered to stakeholders relay a positive impression regarding the business culture and operations. The findings above indicate that the organisation has formed a strong reputation amongst its community members through its CSI activities; this is in line with the perceptions of the community stakeholders. The table below looks at the perceptions of stakeholders to determine if the organisation has environmentally friendly practices.

4.9.1.2 Environmental preservation

Table 4.12: Discussion question 9

<i>Quotes/codes</i>	<i>Categories</i>	<i>Comments</i>
<i>Discussion question 9: Do you think the organisation cares about the environment?</i>		
PDG2: Do care about the environment	Environmental awareness and sustainability	Only one person believes they care
PDG1, PCG2, PFG2, PDG2, PFG2, PEG3, PCG3: Do not care about the environment		The majority seem to think that they do not care about the environment

The importance of environmental preservation cannot be emphasised enough. Social and environmental well-being must remain a priority when the planning and implement corporate social investment. Due to the dreadful impacts that petroleum companies have on communities, companies should always bear in mind to avoid escalation of communities they should meet the CSR expectations of the stakeholders (Ako 2012:12).

PDG1 mentioned: ***“Because on the bad side I would say health-wise, because of the pollution they are making.”***

PFG2 agreed: ***“If you are standing in Vaal Park, and you look at the direction of the location. You will see the cloud of smoke that is over the township.”***

During the focus group discussions, participants were very unhappy about the amount of pollution the organisation causes during their daily operations. PDG2 commented: ***“And also in, they can look for ways in how they can control the pollution that they are making every day. In a way, maybe come up with something, I don’t know what.”*** They raised the gravity of complaints about the carbon dioxide emissions from the Sasol firm and wanted the organisation to take serious actions. PEG3 replied: ***“On environmental issues, I would like Sasol to be very vigilant about that, not only to the developing townships but their issue on the environment is very serious. But in terms of maybe come up with an on-going programme that focuses on pollution, cleaning campaign because Zamdela is not at that standard.”*** Kirat (2015:443) explains that for petroleum companies around the world, it is highly important to be actively engaged in CSI projects that focus on environmental issues and must ensure that they do more for their society or organisations in promoting social welfare as their services or practices are potentially hazardous to the environment.

4.9.1.3 Municipality's failure to support CSI projects

Table 4.13: Discussion question 10

Quotes/codes	Categories	Comments
<i>Discussion question 10: Do you think Sasol works with the local municipality?</i>		
PBG2: Have a good relationship	Relationship awareness between the local municipality and Sasol	One person thinks there is a good relationship
PBG1, PCG1, PAG2, PAG3: Do not have a good relationship		They mainly think the relationship is not good
PDG2, PFG2, PCG2, PEG3: Relationship is complicated		Most do not understand the relationship

Most participants expressed their disappointment in the local municipality's involvement in CSR. The descriptive statement below shows how participants in all three focus groups articulated the local municipality has failed the community and the people.

PCG1 said: ***“So what I am saying is somebody in the municipality or in the local office has failed us....”***

In support, PCG1 added: ***“For information to be orchestrated down, it boils down to the municipality not doing their part.....Because they are supposed to approach Sasol in assisting them in some areas in local government.”***

Most participants expressed their disappointment in the local municipality for not being able to assist the organisation in reaching its full potential. The government has always been in the forefront of promoting the concept CSR and has been the driving force behind encouraging organisations and non-government organisations to be responsible to their communities (Moura-Leite & Padgett 2011:533). To benefit the society, the Private and Public (Government) sector should not be seen as being in conflict but should rather have a complementary relationship on the basis of creating positive economic gain and a strong relationship based on either good governance, quality service or independence (Sabry 2015:577).

PDG3 revealed: ***“At some point, we see that they can deliver certain projects but let them (Sasol) not rely on the municipality to say this they (Municipality) would run it because they are frauds, corrupt...”***

PBG1 explained: ***“When I look at Sasol, the relationship between Sasol and the local government I see a problem there.”***

In support, Okoye (2012:374) agrees that developing countries face a challenge with governmental institutions being regarded as not being responsible and accountable to their people. Thus, increasing the perceptions that the government neglects its primary responsibility regarding community development, and issues such as corruption prevail. The majority of the participants were frustrated when asked whether they thought a work relation exists between the organisation and the local municipality and aired their perceptions on how Sasol is doing more for the community than the local municipality.

4.9.1.4 Brand Awareness

Table 4.14: Discussion question 11

Quotes/codes	Categories	Comments
<i>Discussion question 11: How can you distinguish Sasol from other organisations?</i>		
PCG1, PEG1, PDG1, PBG1, PAG1, PAG2, PAG2, PFG2, PAG3, PBG3: By logo	Distinguishing the organisation from other companies	Mainly able to recognise the company's logo
PCG1, PEG3: Through banners		Ability to identify communication materials
PEG1, PCG1, PFG2, PDG2, PAG3, PFG3: Corporate colours/clothing		Most participants associate Blue with the organisation

The organisation displays good brand awareness, and the stakeholders mentioned that the organisation is easily recognisable.

PFG2 said: ***“The gas bubbles that is how I can differentiate. Immediately when I see the gas bubbles, I know it is Sasol.”***

PAG3 mentioned: ***“Mostly they have something like there, when you get to the computer centre you will see that this is sponsored by Sasol in their image, showing Sasol’s logos or some information. But most of the times you find stuff like that.”***

PAG3 coincided: ***“Their colour coding.”***

One of the questions posed was for the participants to describe how they can differentiate Sasol from other organisations. Most participants were able to talk about the different brand image linked to the company. PEG1 responded: ***“Sasol is a world-class company in a third class world. So you cannot miss it for anything if you live around here. There is no way you won’t know that this is Sasol because it is a world class company”.*** Mousiolisa and Bourletidisa (2015:513) share the same sentiments, namely that corporate social responsibility should be about changing the organisation’s image to be meaningful and at the same time about improving the environment in which the company operates.

4.10 DISCUSSION

The purpose of this section is to highlight the issues which have developed from the research findings in this chapter. The researcher presents a critical discussion on the important matters that emerged during the observation of data collection, and has identified the following themes:

4.10.1 The organisation’s CSI programmes are well-known in the community

According to the feedback received, most participants were generally familiar with a wide variety of Sasol’s CSI projects. The ability of stakeholders to identify different social investment initiatives in which the organisation is involved means that the organisation’s image communication is fairly noticeable among community stakeholders. In support of the above statement, Staub, Kaynak and Gok (2016:74) believe that solid corporate image is achieved through maintaining the organisation’s performance by embracing the mission and vision of the company through sustained relationships. Reverte, Omez-Melero and Cegarra-

Navarro (2016:2880) state that firms that act responsibly towards societal and environmental issues have a good reputation, which assists in increasing relationships with external stakeholders.

Increase in CSI visibility among the community stakeholders will assist the people in seeing the value the organisation brings to the society. This will influence more people to hold a good image of the organisation. If stakeholders view the organisation positively it can strengthen the reputation of the petroleum company. CSI programmes mentioned by the participants were linked or identical to the ones reported in the organisation's media releases. The data revealed that most participants identified the organisation's CSI projects mainly through billboards during the activities. This is one common way in which participants identify whether the initiative was linked to the oil company. Organisations normally use billboards as an effective tool to advertise and communicate their CSI initiatives in an attempt to build and maintain relationships with external stakeholders (Nyahuye 2012:77).

Sasol can use activities that they support to advertise and communicate image messages by merely placing the company's logo. Maurya *et al.* (2015:161) explain that corporate image comes into existence when appropriate positioning of brand concepts are applied at both internal and external level and, if used to communicate with the right stakeholders, it can influence customer orientation. When the society associates a certain activity with an organisation, it is a result of strong brand positioning.

In view of these findings, it can be concluded that participants' opinions regarding Sasol's image were shaped according to the knowledge they possess about the CSI activities which were communicated mainly through billboards, newspaper articles and promotional materials such as banners.

4.10.2 Companies' approach to stakeholder engagement

During the investigation, the researcher discovered that most community members are actually content with Sasol's CSI initiatives. The participants shared that they think the projects implemented by the organisation benefit the society, although concerns were raised

that they occasionally tend to act to the benefit of certain areas more than to that of others. Organisations and community stakeholders do not always reach consensus in terms of expectations regarding CSI activities; companies require alternative strategies to approach CSR and to make the stakeholders aware that there are limitations to what CSR can achieve (Idemudia 2011:08). Stakeholders' engagement enables a responsible practice and is related to organisations demonstrating their commitment, which is a cause and effect relationship whereby accountability and responsibility are achieved when organisations are constantly engaging with stakeholders (Greenwood 2007:316). Stakeholders are considered to be an important audience for most organisations and the researcher's point of departure was to understand how the community of Sasolburg, where the Sasol firm has one of its oldest plants, perceive the organisation.

The participants feel that the company needs to broaden its scope of CSI activities to different areas, which could assist in developing the community of Sasol. The concept *corporate social investment* refers to tackling socio-economic challenges and supporting the government in the process of developing the community in which the company operates (Dima & Mirshak 2007:243). Most responses from people indicated that they had not personally benefitted and did not know people from the community who had benefitted, yet they saw the community as a whole benefits from the company's CSI programmes.

4.10.3 Perceptions on improving Sasol's CSI activities

During the discussion, most of the participants were able to identify the areas that were severely affected by poverty and needed a lot of work in terms of development. The low-income families were identified by participants to be from the Sasolburg Township called Zamdela, which comprises informal settlements in areas such as Snake Park, Iraq, and Taylor Park. The conditions in Vaalpark (town) differ from those in Zamdela (township) and participants from the townships feel that the Sasol firm only focuses on improving infrastructure in the towns and not in the townships. In support, one of the participants (PFG2) who was from Vaal Park (town) also mentioned that only people that are privileged are informed about CSI activities, not people who are from the townships and in need.

Furthermore, one of the important focus areas the majority of the participants felt needed to be addressed by Sasol's CSI initiatives was the improvement of education. Interestingly, education is one of the essential areas that was identified by the researcher through the media release analysis, which formed the focus areas that Sasol is interested in improving in the Sasolburg community. Literature has proved that oil companies' objectives involve improving the lives of communities through training and education, recreational activities, health and environment activities in their endeavour to achieve sustainable development and to assist the country in socio-economic progress (Kirat 2015:442). According to Figure 4.2, the education and training forms part of Sasol's areas of involvement.

Education and training are crucial to the development of communities; the more people are educated the better their opportunities to work in a better workplace and to earn a better income with which they can be able to support their families and reduce poverty. Sasol has one of long-standing educational programmes called the Sasol Techno-X, which has existed for almost 10 years and according to MRel 4 "seeks to expose, at a practical level, the many facets of technology and encourage learners to explore the wide range of exciting disciplines and career choices that science, mathematics and technology offer". In view of the above findings, it is evident that an organisation such as Sasol is continuously involved in improving the quality of the education and giving the less fortunate opportunities to further their education through bursaries issued. To improve the youth's employability the organisation has introduced a Skills Centre presented during Sasol Techno-X where learners are exposed to a number of industrial artisan trades which is a skill in demand in the company.

In the process of understanding how the CSI activities can be improved to benefit the community, the concerns raised were mainly about empowering the youth. Most participants clearly stated that the youth empowerment opportunities were very significant in curbing the high drug and alcohol abuse in the community, which might be related to the high crime activities. Sasol's contribution to the improvement of the economy of the country by involving the youth in programmes is vital since this initiative can create job opportunities. Organisations' CSIs should be able to prepare the youth for the workplace and equip them with the relevant skills, and in so doing, continue to fight against the global crisis of youth unemployment (Penn 2014:15).

The group discussions yielded ideas about what the community stakeholders think the organisation can do to improve its CSI initiatives. Some of their suggestions include building new infrastructure for healthcare. Facilities such as rehabilitation centres can help the youth who are abusing alcohol and drugs to receive help and to encourage them to participate in entrepreneurial activities.

The overall perception of the company's social performance from the findings is that the organisation is socially responsible, and is associated with profit making. This correlates with the claims that social performance is related to economic performance and those organisations that are economically performing are socially responsible. Although stakeholders have different expectations, the general views from the respondents were that the community is mutually satisfied with the contributions made by the oil company. According to Ullman's theory (1985:554) of social performance, there is a connection between how stakeholders with low power, can be linked to having passive decision makers (community leaders or CSI leaders) who can affect the social performance of the organisation. The study revealed that majority of the participants raised concerns about the community not being included in the decision-making process.

4.10.4 Communicating the CSI initiatives

The way Sasol communicates with the community members, who are the recipients, is most imperative for developing platforms which they can use to soundly convey their message about CSI initiatives. The informing strategy for organisational communication was mainly reported by participants to be through newspapers, which are widely circulated and issued, free of charge. Newspapers are a good platform for communication and are easy for community members to access. One participant (PDG1) stated how opinion leaders are occasionally used as intermediaries to convey messages concerning projects, and to discuss plans that the organisation intends to implement. Opinion leaders such as community counsellors represent the local government but also act as a community's representative in addressing community issues or highlighting them for the government to take action.

Bekmeier-Feuerhahn and Eichenlaub (2010:349) state that companies use online communication such as websites to positively influence the stakeholders to gain a probable perception and generate trust in the organisation. Based on the discussions above, the discoveries from the group discussion are that the community stakeholders use the website exclusively for job-searching. This concludes that the community members do not use the website for information or even for reading the media releases – they use it for personal gain only. However, findings from the discussion in the three groups indicate that the community stakeholders do not use the media releases on the company website for obtaining information on the organisation's CSI projects. Interestingly none of the participants mentioned these media releases; this, therefore, is an indication that these media are not the main source of information regarding a project, or for promoting actual participation as the researcher might have assumed. The participants listed radio as the second mode of communication that they wish the organisation can use more frequently. Therefore in order for the petroleum company to have a wide reach to all community members, using platforms such as local radio can also be ideal for those that cannot read

In support, Hinson, Avornyo, Kuada and Asante (2015:12) believe that Impression management theory is used through CSR outcomes as a form of companies' communication so as to create a positive impression on their stakeholders. The organisation has published media releases that contain content which is used to develop a positive image towards the external stakeholders. Organisations would not publish news that would potentially harm their image, and the researcher has not come across any negative news in the media releases analysed. Companies can proactively use impression management to influence the perceptions of the stakeholders, and shape their image or grow their core business (Rim & Ferguson 2017:02). The findings in the study indicate how the company has managed to consistently communicate their CSI activities to enhance their reputation. International companies with a strong reputation tread carefully when providing CSR, which is to create a public impression by applying the Impression Management (IM) Theory (Hinson, Avornyo, Kuada & Asante 2017:02).

The corporate social investment (CSI) initiative forms an integral part of disseminating key messages that the company wishes to project to its external stakeholders. Smith (2003:10)

argues that narrative theory is not about disseminating information that generally relates to a person or group, but about telling stories according to the experiences of the narrator. Ambiola and Vallaster (2007:342) state that organisations that have been operating for a long time, have mastered the art of selecting and placing content which relatively strengthens their brand, organisational image, and reputation as compared to small businesses. The narratives found through the media releases are structured in a manner which ensures that the fundamental ideas about the image messages on sustainability and contributing to socio-economic development are addressed from an organisational perspective while influencing the perceptions of the stakeholders. How the oil company communicates its CSI programmes determines whether it maintains a positive image and enhances its corporate reputation.

4.10.5 The influence of CSI on a company's reputation

An increased interest in CSR for developing economies has been observed over the past ten years and stakeholder engagement is at the forefront of the discussion and influence of development (Hinson, Avorny, Kuada & Asante 2017:13). An organisation's CSI influence is to be linked to how well it engages with its stakeholders. Huang-Horowitz and Freberg (2016:198) state that continuous engagement with external stakeholders results in an improved reputation, which becomes more effective to measure reputation messages. In the findings, the analysis of its CSI image, as gathered from the organisation's media releases, focused on increasing community stakeholders' participation in annual events such as the Sasol Marathon. Skinner *et al.* (2008:246) believe that South African (SAn) companies are keen on developing the economy through corporate social investment but lack information on, and understanding of which activities or tools would be best for measuring impact and determining what would be most effective.

Based on the findings, Sasol's reputation, and the image have increased, and the community stakeholders are fairly happy about the organisation's CSI activities. What the stakeholders say about the organisation is mostly influenced by the experience they have with the organisation – this can differ from individual to individual. The study shows that stakeholders understand that the company needs to be socially responsible by giving back to the

community and that it can, in the process, build and maintain relationships with community stakeholders.

If the community's perception of the organisation is positive, it can enhance the reputation of the organisation. If the company receives positive feedback, this can improve its performance and its reputation can serve as a competitive advantage over competitors. The comments and attributes most participants shared when describing what their perception of Sasol's image is, included phrases such as "going an extra mile", "doing more than they should", "I can't imagine what Sasolburg would be without Sasol" and "they are doing great work". A positive reputation can help a petroleum company in times of crisis management, and the community can be supportive when realising how responsible the business is. Organisations should plan and make decisions about using corporate social investment as a business strategy to be socially responsible towards the community in which they operate.

When participants were asked to describe how they felt about the organisation, the majority made positive remarks about the organisation. The researcher can conclude that the organisation has used media releases to present the organisation as being socially responsible and involved with the community stakeholders. According to Xie, Bagozzi and Meland (2015:132) past research prove that a company's reputation is mostly influenced by the stakeholders' beliefs of what they think was important to them or to others, based on their perception of how well-known, respected, prestigious and admired the company may be. Participants were able to provide qualities based on what the organisation's involvement in the community through CSI activities may mean to them, and on how they feel about the organisation based on their past experiences with the oil company.

However, despite the positive views on the social involvement, the company is not perceived to be caring for the environment. One of the organisation's areas of 8 (**Figure 4.2**) in the media release analysis is "environmental conservation" and Figure 4.1 indicates that communication about the environment is very limited. The National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD), formulated in 2008, developed goals for promoting social and economic problems through initiatives of for instance businesses, government, NGOs, academia and other key role-players, in order to address environmental sustainability issues

in South Africa (RSA Environments 2016:178). This strategy indicates the extent to which institutions in our country need to actively fulfill a role in ensuring good practices for sustainable development. The majority of the participants seem to think that Sasol does not care about the environment, and raised concerns about the excessive air pollution created by the organisation. One of the participants (PDG1) spoke about the health implications associated with the pollution from the Sasol plant and emphasised that the organisation needs to do more to improve the situation caused by the pollution produced. The MRel 3 does not seem to address or mention any solution to the air pollution, which was pointed out by the participants, and only mentions funding for research focusing on waterbird conservation.

The impact of business operations on customers, shareholders, employees, communities and the environment needs to be the corporate social responsibility's obligation, and companies' commitment to sustainable development should be upheld (Ako, Obokoh & Okonmah 2009:208). Organisations such as Sasol bear a huge responsibility towards the community and need to constantly ensure that they are protecting the environment. Environmental conservation forms the core functions of the Sasol business strategy to promote a green environment and makes it the organisation's responsibility to attend to complaints by community stakeholders with regard to decreasing the environmental hazards. Their media releases (MRel 3 and 9) indicate that they are responsible for protecting the environment through their 172-hectare Eco-industrial Park (EIP) and other projects such as the Sasol BirdLife Vaaldam Coordinated Waterbird Count (CWAC).

It is recommended that, due to increased demands by community members on oil companies to become socially responsible in developing countries, they should be more accountable in their actions by reporting on the social and environmental performances of their CSR due to the impacts their products have on the environment (Eweje 2007:219). Community members are aware of the environmental pollution the Sasol Company causes on a daily basis; hence there are more expectations from community stakeholders for the organisation to be more socially responsible. Being in the environmental conservation space can be a proactive approach for a company such as Sasol to show their concern about for the environment.

4.10.6 Partnership with the government

In line with the feedback during the group discussions, most participants aired negative perceptions about the organisation and its relationship with the local government. Sasol's oldest plant is located and operates in the Metsimaholo municipality in the Free State province (Fezile Dabi district). Metsimaholo means "big water" in Sesotho. The Metsimaholo local government bears a responsibility to achieve goals which are aligned with the NDP plan, by implementing priorities such as enabling an environment that will promote faster local economic growth, higher investment, and greater labour absorption through continuously developing the municipality to improve lives (Metsimaholo Local Municipality 2017). To achieve these goals, building relationships with the private sector has proven to speed up the process of tackling socio-economic issues.

However, the relationship between the local government and the Sasol firm seems not to be supported by the participants. PEG1 mentioned that Sasol has grown significantly over the years and has good attributes such as experience, commitment, clear vision and mission, which cannot be compared with the local government's failure to act responsibly. Most participants shared the same sentiments, and the findings reveal that the participants viewed Sasol as being more socially responsible than the local government. Ako (2012:15) suggests that to actively bridge the gap or avoid community protests caused by government's underperformance or neglect to fulfill their primary responsibility of developing the community; it is necessary for oil companies to act proactively and assist the government in avoiding community turmoil that can affect the company. A good relationship and working relation between the local government and the private sector can create a stable business environment.

Chatterjee and Mitra (2017:03) state that for the society to reap the rewards of the CSI benefits, the government and the corporations need to maintain a mutual relationship. One of the government's duties is to also ensure that the organisation fulfills its obligation to act socially responsible, while the petroleum company needs to be accountable and to ensure that the monetary investment is effectively used through the assistance of local government.

4.11 SUMMARY

The aim of this chapter was to look at the data presented regarding the primary and secondary analysis. The primary analysis – of media releases – focused on the system of communicating messages concerning the organisation's CSI image. Through Sasol's 13-media release communication, the researcher was able to identify the nature of the CSI initiatives in which the organisation is involved, and developed five key focus areas from its CSI media releases. In the secondary analysis, the data obtained from the focus group interviews presented various aspects with regard to what the perceptions of the community members are of the organisation's reputation. During the focus group discussions, the researcher was able to analyse and determine the gaps that emerged based on the reputation held by the stakeholders of the company's communicated corporate image. The data also revealed the community stakeholders' opinions about the effectiveness of the CSI projects and expressed different expectations from the organisation as to how to improve their CSI initiatives.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the results of the data extracted from the Media release and focus group analysis in detail, and interpreted the data into meaningful information. The findings of the qualitative study were presented according to themes, and the researcher used tables and summarised statements from participants to discuss the results analysed in depth. In this chapter, the researcher draws a final conclusion regarding the overview of the phenomena discussed and makes recommendations based on the summary of the objectives of the study.

5.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

5.2.1 Published media releases on the company website

The main objective of the study was to understand how Sasol communicates its corporate image to its stakeholders through its Corporate Social Investment communication and to analyse how the community stakeholders in the Sasolburg community perceive Sasol's image based on its Corporate Social Investment activities in the area. The researcher analysed media releases of the oil company's method of communicating their CSI image through activities in which the organisation conducts. The findings indicate that 13 articles were published during the period February 2015 to the end of April 2017; the organisation has published on average 5 articles per annum relating to CSI activities performed in the targeted sample area. Out of the 13 articles published, seven reported on the events that had taken place (post reporting) while the remaining six articles appeared prior to announcements about the events that were to take place. The oil company uses the media releases to cultivate relationships with the stakeholders, however the dissemination of the information does not reached the community of Sasolburg effectively.

Image communication is important in informing the key stakeholders about the organisation's focus areas concerning corporate social responsibility. Corporate image communication has

the power to cement a corporate culture about how stakeholders should view the organisation in response to acting socially responsible. The oil company's media release report on CSI does not seem to have reached its full potential for tackling issues that challenge our society. It is therefore recommended that the organisation publish more media releases related to the impact that the organisation's CSI projects have towards community stakeholders. This will position the organisation as an organisation that cares about the community's uplift. Sasol's CSI activities need to demonstrate more action plan or implementation into how their CSI initiatives are contributing to social and environmental changes.

In conclusion, the company's communication of CSI image through media releases has been effective, although there were shortfalls in strengthening community relations. To maintain a strong presence through CSI, the organisation's manner in which they use impression management to influence the stakeholder's image and create a strong reputation has been supported by narratives that indicate how the organisation has contributed to the socio-economic development. In the future, Sasol needs to publish more media releases that detail in-depth content about how they are working with the society to improve their social, environmental and economic challenges.

5.2.2 Themes identified

During the analysis of the sample of the media releases, the findings included identifying key messages communicated by the organisation, which relates to the nature of the different CSI programmes in which the organisation is involved. The interest areas to which Sasol has contributed shape the core capacities with which the organisation seeks to improve the community relations. Projecting a positive image to community stakeholders about the company's positive contribution to areas such as environmental conservation, primary healthcare, active lifestyle, education, skills development and socio-economic development can influence the attitude of stakeholders towards the petroleum company.

Businesses that practice corporate social investment use it as a business strategy or a tool for improving their reputation or as an opportunity for growing the business. The approach can be used as a positioning strategy for the business to attract more investors and shape the public's corporate image. Chatterjee and Mitra (2017:3) believe that businesses should be

robust with their CSR strategy by creating broad-based growth in order to contribute to the plans of developing the nation or to tackle social issues and create opportunities through development efforts. The researcher believes that developing countries such as South Africa face many challenges with the social, economic and environmental issues, and established businesses such as Sasol is pertinent in contributing to the curbing of the socio-economic epidemic.

Furthermore, organisations need to start involving community stakeholders in making decisions which affect the community. South African businesses need to be committed in order to embrace socio-economic challenges and apply working CSI approaches in the community; this process usually starts during the business planning and decision-making process which, if implemented successfully, can bring about social change (Ramlall 2012:285). Identifying appropriate programmes that confront challenges in the community can strengthen the organisation's relationship with the stakeholders, and strengthen the community's trust in the organisation.

Lastly, all the themes identified from the findings actually are aligned with South Africa's national development plan's (NDP) key capabilities which aim at reducing poverty and inequality by 2030. This is an indication that Sasol has a good narrative approach to its image on CSI, which portrays the organisation as caring and socially responsible.

5.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

5.3.1 Research objective 1: How does Sasol communicate its CSI programme with external stakeholders?

The findings indicate that the organisation used various communication channels such as radio, local newspapers, and billboards to communicate their CSI image to stakeholders. However, community members from three group discussions did not mention using the media releases on the website for accessing information about the CSI initiatives. This means that the possibility exists that information accessed through the local newspapers can be related to the media releases published on the organisation's website. Another issue might be that

the community cannot afford to access information using the website due to data costs, or other financial constraints. Media releases are used to inform stakeholders, investors, shareholders and media personnel with any interest in the company. It is recommended that Sasol use various ways to spread their content such as community radio, local newspapers, community meetings, university lectures and public areas such as libraries for notifying the community of their CSI projects, in order to reach to a wide audience and inform the community at large.

The CSI image projected by the organisation reflects the popular CSI activities identified by the participants. Sasol has been able to communicate CSI activities which they perform and have managed to engage with the community stakeholders in the actual projects. The organisation's communication with stakeholders proves to be effective the mediums used to deliver the messages foster community engagement. Lastly, in order to create value and build an organisational reputation, the researcher proposes that organisations such as Sasol must be consistent in how they communicate their CSI image over time. The image of the organisation must be well presented through messages, and this can create a positive reputation among community members.

5.3.2 Research objective 2: How do stakeholders in Sasolburg community perceive Sasol's CSI initiatives?

Based on the respondents, the organisation received good feedback from the community stakeholder – when asked about Sasol's CSI activities. Majority of respondents had a positive image of the petrochemical organisation, and this can strengthen the organisation's reputation. The community members that participated in the study during the three group discussions indicate that they perceive Sasol as a good organisation, which is able to comply with its commitment to acting socially responsible. They commend the organisation's contribution to social change, but also feel that the organisation can do more. Organisations that have a good presence in CSI have a good reputation in the community in which they operate. According to the views from the discussion, Sasol is an organisation that has built a strong organisational reputation over the years. Expectations from the community stakeholders are a sign that although the organisation is contributing to social change, the organisation's CSI activities may not have a strong impact. The CSI activities which the

organisation has performed over the past years have influenced the stakeholders to have a positive reputation towards the organisation, and the activities that the organisation develops are highly supported in the community.

It is therefore advised that Sasol maintains its current reputation amongst community groups in order to cement their trust in stakeholders. The feedback regarding the organisation's reputation was positive; although most participants pointed out that there is room for improvement from the part of the organisation. The researcher recommends that the Sasol organisation must establish a relationship with the community members, and seek advice or advocating before implementing CSI projects in the community. The only negative image with which most participants associate the organisation in all three groups was about the environmental hazard associated with the company. The organisation needs to address the issue of environmental pollution and develop alternative eco-friendly methods of operations; this can create a stable environment within the community so as to protect the organisation from any reputational risks.

5.3.3 Research objective 3: What is the gap between the image projected by Sasol and perceptions of the company reputation held by the stakeholders?

The company's CSI image has been presented through media release narratives, which contain attributes and key messages projected by the organisation to its stakeholders. The CSI initiatives performed by the organisation are linked to the community's development, but a gap seems to exist between the community's expectations and the company's CSI projects. The organisation does not seem to engage the stakeholders in its decision-making process, and this is a barrier to building community relations. Companies need to conduct research on their targeted audience in order to understand the different expectations from stakeholders and not make assumptions based on what they think can develop the community. Lack of dialogue between a petroleum company and community stakeholders can result in the community either boycotting the activities or vandalising the infrastructure. Feedback is important and can assist the organisation in delivering on the community's expectations.

The company's projected image is relative to the CSI initiatives identified by stakeholders, and the visibility of the corporate social investment project has helped in ascertaining the

claims that, to some extent, the organisation acts socially responsible. Another gap identified in the study is that a dysfunctional relationship seems to exist between the organisation and the local government. This barrier creates a large number of expectations and distrust among the community members, whose assumption is that the organisation's responsibilities must go way beyond their CSI obligation. Stakeholders' expectations concerning the company's CSI obligation is created from the view that the local government is underperforming and corrupt. Improving the relationship between public and private partnership can help speed up the process of community development through CSI activities.

Sasol uses its website as part of a communication medium to disseminate information about its image. More mediums which are effective in delivering the messages need to be used frequently which will assist in strengthening the community relations. In support, Ndhlovu (2011:84) echoes that when it comes to CSI activities, South African companies only impact a few people, even when legislation compels and pressures businesses to be involved in socio-economic development. Organisations neglecting to utilise the correct communication platforms can create a communication barrier, or in a worst-case scenario affect the community relations. The company needs to have control over the manner in which it uses mediums for disseminating their image narratives effectively to influence perceptions and create a positive reputation.

Based on this, the researcher proposes that, for the organisation to influence its stakeholders and create a positive image, the content it projects must indicate an impact on societal change. The narratives should not only be about projecting CSI image for enhancing reputation but should look at reflecting the radical impact that the organisation has in building community relations and transforming the standard of living in the communities. The organisation has an obligation to the community, through contributing to their investment in education, providing healthcare, building infrastructure or roads and sustaining the environment. An alternative way whereby Sasol can bridge the image projected to the community is by implementing an essential CSI approach which can be aligned with the community stakeholders' expectations and the organisation's CSI communication.

To conclude, if Sasol's CSI activities can reach a wider public and tackle dynamic challenges that the Sasolburg community faces, which has been identified in the study as low youth employment, lack of job opportunities, and substance abuse, this can strengthen the community relations and lower the community's expectations. The gap between the projected image communicated and stakeholders' perceptions is bridged through social responsibility practices and CSI activities which are centered on the organisation being able to deliver towards meeting the stakeholders' expectations.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.4.1 Recommendations for Sasol

In light of the findings, the researcher has presented the recommendations indicated below for the petroleum company:

- Aligning the organisation's CSI areas with the national government policies and structures such as the NDP 2030 in order to have clear CSI strategies which support the socio-economic development.
- Create more content for media releases, and circulate the information on mediums such as local radio stations and local newspapers which are accessible and have a wider audience reach to community stakeholders.
- Conduct research on the community stakeholders about the CSI expectations and activities which can have a large/positive impact on the society, this will strengthen the community relations.
- Do an evaluation of CSI activities before implementing the programmes.
- Improve the dialogue (two-way communication process) between the organisation and community stakeholders, prior to making decisions about implementing the CSI initiatives; this can provide value in bridging the gap and understanding the community's expectations.
- Educating the community about the various CSI programmes in which the organisation is involved can help create awareness and dispel negative myths about the company not caring about the environment or catering for science students only.

- Sasol needs to communicate the benefits of maintaining a good relationship with the local government for stability while exempting the organisation from any unlawful business practices by reporting on CSI accountability.
- Conduct frequent community evaluations, to ensure that programmes implemented work for the community and take into account the suggestions for improvement by community stakeholders.

5.4.2 Recommendations for future research

The following is a summary of recommendations for the study's future research:

- A larger sample study is required for further research.
- Further research can look at other corporate communication resources such as annual reports, sustainable development reports, newsletters, newspaper clippings, presentations and speeches documents in order to have a complete picture of Sasol's CSI image.
- Research the internal CSI communication practices, to get an insight of the strategy used to communicate the organisation's CSI image.
- Future studies can be conducted on CSI practices in other industries in South Africa

5.5 LIMITATIONS

During the study, the researcher encountered some limitations which might have a potential impact on the findings of the research. The research was conducted with a small size of the population from the Sasolburg community and may not be generalized as the perceptions of the entire community population. During the data collection process for group discussions, the participants' demographics did not fairly represent the entire community of Sasolburg. Data saturation was reached at the end of each session, which resulted in collecting data from three groups instead of four groups as indicated in the methodology.

The study focused on the online media releases and implications on other reports can make future research to have more quality findings of the image projected. The feedback or call-backs from the posters that the researcher had put up on the campus, was very poor and

resulted in the researcher receiving referrals about individuals that matched the criteria. When analysing data from transcripts, the researcher noticed that certain questions posed seemed to have been misinterpreted; they sounded similar which might have caused confusion among participants when answering.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to understand how the Sasol organisation communicates its corporate social investment image which is projected to its stakeholders and to understand how its community stakeholders perceive the organisation's image in relation to the CSI activities performed by the organisation. The findings demonstrate that the organisation's CSI image communication is aligned with the government's National Development Plan, which aims at improving inequality and socio-economic development. In the analysed media releases the oil-company's CSI areas of involvement focused on environmental conservation, primary healthcare, active lifestyle, education and skills development and socio-economic development. All the identified CSI areas of involvement are considered key capabilities in contributing to socio-economic and sustainable development.

Interestingly, the study reveals that Sasol communicates its CSI image constantly, which places it in a good position to influence its stakeholders. Businesses like Sasol that have a good CSI footprint in the community they operate in have a positive perception from their external stakeholders and this creates expectations from stakeholders. Sasol has aligned its CSI image with the national government plan, and the company's CSI activities have promoted community engagement. For community stakeholders to develop a positive perception of the organisation, using CSI agenda to tackle socio-economic issues or to improve lives can build a corporate image which influences the stakeholders' perceptions of the company. This can also ensure that there is stability in the community and that businesses can operate in a peaceful environment.

One of the gaps identified in the findings reveals that the organisation does not seem to make necessary arrangements to involve the community stakeholders in decision-making before implementing their CSI projects. Organisations need to avoid communication barriers so as to

ensure that their messages are directly delivered to the right recipients. This will dispel all the negative myths about the organisation and bridge the gap between the intended image communicated and the image and reputation developed by stakeholders. The value of the study is that petroleum companies can use this as a guide for communicating their CSI image and avoiding reputational risks to influence the stakeholders' perceptions for image building.

In conclusion, communicating CSI image effectively can assist in building a company's image and developing a positive perception from the stakeholders, which can result in a good reputation.

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Vaal University of Technology
Your world to a better future

ANNEXURES



16 October 2017

I, **Ms Cecilia van der Walt**, hereby confirm that I took care of the editing of the dissertation of **Mr Katleho Ralehoko** titled *Communicating a Petroleum Company's Identity through Corporate Social Investment as Image-Building Among Community Stakeholders*.

MS CECILIA VAN DER WALT

BA (*Cum Laude*)

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Language editing and translation at Honours level (*Cum Laude*),

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Vaal University of Technology

Your world to a better future

**Department of Hospitality, Tourism & PR
Management**

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To whom it may concern

This letter serves to confirm that **Katleho Ralehoko**, student number **211045861** is a registered MTECH: Public relations management student at the Vaal University of Technology. As part of his masters' dissertation, the student has chosen to undertake your company as a case study, converging on Stakeholder relations management.

For ethical purposes, it is required of student to contact the organisation for ethical clearance so as to ensure that the company has given the permission for the study to be conducted under its name. The research is solemnly for academic purpose and not for any personal reasons and will take approximately 3 years (2015-2017).

The title of the students' research topic is:

Communicating Petroleum's corporate identity through corporate social investment as corporate reputation building among community stakeholders.

For more information, please feel free to contact the students' co-supervisor Mr Lazarus Maleho (Lecturer & Programme coordinator: Public Relations Management) on 016 950 9733 or e-mail: lazarus@vut.ac.za.

L. Maleho

Prof. J. Kearney



Date: 5 December 2016

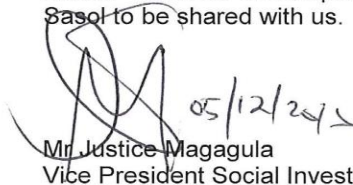
To: Mr Katleho Ralehoko (student/student number: 211045861)
Vaal University of Technology
Department of Hospitality, Tourism and PR Management

Re: Ethical clearance re research topic: Communicating a petroleum company's corporate identity through Corporate Social Investment (CSI) as corporate reputation building among community stakeholders

To whom it may concern

This letter serves to acknowledge and agree that student, Katleho Ralehoko will be conducting independent research regarding Sasol's Corporate Social Investment activities.

We wish to emphasise, he is not representing Sasol Limited nor conducting research on its behalf. However on completion of research project, we would like his findings pertaining to Sasol to be shared with us.


05/12/2016
Mr Justice Magagula
Vice President Social Investment

cc L Maleho
Prof J Kearney

Sasol Limited 1979/003231/06

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Directors: MSV Gantsho (Chairman) SR Cornell (Joint President & Chief Executive Officer)(American) B Nqwababa (Joint President & Chief Executive Officer) C Beggs MJ Cuambe (Mozambican) HG Dijkgraaf (Dutch) VN Fakude (Executive) NNA Matyumza IN Mkhize ZM Mkhize MJN Njeke PJ Robertson (British and American) P Victor (Chief Financial Officer) S Westwell (British)

Company Secretary: VD Kahla



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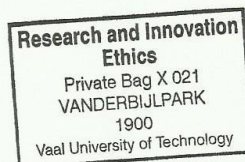
Research and Innovation Ethical Clearance Certificate

Applicant:	K Ralehoko (MTech Public Relations Management)
Project:	Communicating a petroleum company's identity through corporate social investment as image building among community stakeholders
Institution:	Vaal University of Technology
Date Approved:	8 May 2017
Ethical Clearance Number:	ECN32-2017
Approved: Yes/No	Yes

DR SM NELANA

CHAIRPERSON: RESEARCH & INNOVATION ETHICS COMMITTEE

Date: 9 May 2017





VUT

Vaal University of Technology

Your world to a better future



Do you think businesses have a responsibility to give back to the community?

Corporate Social Investment (CSI) has turned out to be a significant subject in businesses environment in the past twenty years, and is perceived as an important element of organisational identity. Corporate social investment communication gives stakeholders information about the company's involvement, which is accountable to society. Understanding of the community needs can be advantageous to corporates in order to create a footprint that will help empower the community with social issues that they face.

The main objective of the study is to find out how Sasol communicates its corporate identity to their stakeholders through its Corporate Social Investment communication, and to establish how the **community stakeholders** in the **Sasolburg community** perceive Sasol's image based on its Corporate Social Investment activities in the area.

To participate in the study, please see if you tick all the boxes below:

- Are you between the ages 19 and 30 years old
- Permanent resident from Sasolburg area (Zamdela or Vaalpark etc)
- University registered student
- Familiar with Sasol's CSI project(s) (e.g Science Expo.; Library building)

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

WE WANT TO TALK TO YOU!

Please note that the focus group discussions are **CONFIDENTIAL** and **ANONYMOUS!**

For more information on how to take part, please contact the research coordinators:

Katleho Ralehoko

Cell: 073 356 741

E-mail:

Katleho.r@gmail.com

L.M Maleho

(Study co-supervisor)

Tell: 016 950 9733

E-mail: lazarus@vut.ac.za

Incentives: Please note that there will be no monetary exchange for taking part in the discussions, but as a good host, you will be provided with refreshments.

VAAI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALITY, TOURISM AND
PR MANAGEMENT

Participants consent form

Dear Participant,

You are invited to voluntarily participate in a study titled “**Communicating a petroleum company’s image through corporate social investment (CSI) as image building amongst community stakeholders**”. The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of corporate social investment used in Sasol’s organisational communication and measure the perceptions of the community about the organisation’s reputation. The information will be used to understand whether there is an intended gap in the corporate image which is communicated by Sasol, and the corporate reputation held by the stakeholders of Sasolburg.

Procedures

If you participate in the study, you will be in a group of 6 people. The interview should take about 60 minutes. There will be a researcher that will ask probing questions and facilitate the discussions, while tape recording the group discussion which will later be transcribed into notes. The researcher will ask questions related to the topic and title stipulated above, and relating to any personal experiences. This may help the researcher in understanding the different perspectives about the reputation held by the community stakeholders of Sasolburg.

Dates: Friday, 31 March (First proposed date)
Saturday, 1 April (Second proposed date)
Time: 12H00 – 13H00
Venue: To be confirmed

Incentives

Please note that there will be no monetary exchange for taking part in the discussions, but as a good host, there are refreshments such as muffins, finger foods, cold drinks, juice, water, tea or coffee available. During the course of the discussion, one may feel free to stand up and self-serve with refreshments provided and continue with the discussion. It is important to also know that Sasol is fully aware of the project, and will be very excited about finding out how you feel. No action will be taken against you for providing any information as part of the

discussion. As part of a benefaction, the researcher will send a short summary of key findings from the final study either by mail or e-mail, to participants who are interested in the results.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Individuals in the focus group are required to sign a consent form before participating in the study. Anonymity and confidentiality will be kept a secret, and a letter from the alphabet to identify participants will be used by the researcher in data collection for the study. As a researcher, no name will be mentioned from all individual and is each going to be given a letter from the alphabet. When collecting data, the individuals were referred to as Candidate A, B, C, D, E or F and numerals to identify the focus groups (e.g Interview 2, candidate C). The researcher cannot guarantee or control what participants are to do outside of the focus group but appeal to the integrity of individuals to not disclose any of the discussions or take matters forward.

Consent:

By signing this consent form, you indicate that you fully understand the above information and agree to voluntarily participate in the focus group.

Name and Surname

Signature

Date

Contact information

The research has been reviewed and approved by The Vaal University of Technology Ethics Board. For more information about the study, please feel free to contact:

Katleho Ralehoko Researcher Cell: 0733564741 Katleho.r@gmail.com	The Supervisor on: Anna Oksiutycz - Munyawiri Tel: 0115592849 aoksiutycz@uj.ac.za
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Focus group discussion guideline

EXPLORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CORPORATE SOCIAL INVESTMENT TO THE COMPANY'S CORPORATE IMAGE AND REPUTATION: A CASE STUDY OF A PETROCHEMICAL COMPANY

Introductions, providing a background of the study, review of ethical issues, explaining the procedure

Opening questions

Icebreakers

Topic 1: Knowledge of Sasol's CSI initiatives

Do you know of any programmes in the community conducted by Sasol?

What are they?

How can you identify which programme is linked to Sasol?

Topic 2: Opinions concerning the effectiveness of these initiatives

What do you think of the programmes?

Have you benefited from any projects?

Do you know people who benefitted?

Which communities should Sasol invest in and why?

Topic 3: Participants' exposure to Sasol's corporate communication

How did you first find out about the activities performed by Sasol that give back to the community?

How does Sasol communicate with people in this area?

Do you read about Sasol in the newspapers? Which ones?

Do you ever check their website? or

Social media?

Have you ever received any direct communication from Sasol?

Do you know of any Sasol representatives in the community?

Topic 3: Participants' expectations concerning Sasol's involvement in the community

What can be done to make the existing projects better?

Please describe any additional community goodwill activities you would like to see Sasol get involved in?

Topic 4: Opinions concerning Sasol's reputation

What do you think about Sasol?

What do you think people in this area think about Sasol?

Describe how you feel about Sasol's work/role in the community?

Do you think the organisation cares about the environment?

Do you have any knowledge about how Sasol treats its employees?

Do you think Sasol works with the local municipality?

Do you think Sasol cares about the community?

How can you distinguish Sasol from other organisation?

Conclusion

THANK YOU!