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A Conceptualization of Corporate Responsibility Activity from The Edge of Malaysia Corporate

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Abstract

Corporate responsibility is one of the new corporate governance mantras that give some credence to stakeholder theory of corporations. Studies have examined the interest in the levels and effects of corporate social responsibility investments on employees, customers, and investors. Therefore, this paper aims to discuss on the history, definition and model of corporate responsibility which derived the various types of corporate responsibility activities. It is imperative among researchers to understand the various definitions and to explore the history of corporate responsibility. From the discussion and the arguments of scholars, this paper acknowledged and defined corporate responsibility as actions that appear to be the extension of some socially accepted manners within the interests of the firms which required by the law. Furthermore, corporate responsibility is beyond obeying the law, hence the need to design corporate responsibility activities as to reflect the stakeholder's expectation.

Keywords: *corporate responsibility, corporate responsibility model, corporate responsibility activities, corporate responsibility definition*

INTRODUCTION

What is corporate responsibility? In order to thoroughly understand the term, it is instructive to go back in time. While corporate responsibility is a recent term, preoccupation with business ethics and the social dimension of business activity however, has a long history. The roles of business in the society seem to have changed for some time in fact, even though there were no absolute agreement among researchers on what corporate responsibility really stands for or where the boundaries lie.

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to discuss on the history, definition and model of corporate responsibility which derived the various types of corporate responsibility activities from Carrol Model (1979), Bursa Malaysia and Peloza and Shang (2011) that are related with the corporate sector in Malaysia.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibilities of companies in developing nations are also defined differently depending on the social context – especially national context (Baskin 2006, as cited by Frynas, 2009). For instance, corporate responsibility among Malaysian corporations is partly motivated by religious notions and Islamic prescriptions of certain business practices (Zulkfili & Amran, 2006); companies in South Africa are forced to address racial inequality as a result of the unique legacy of apartheid (Fig, 2005 as cited by Frynas, 2009), while the companies in Malaysia are focussing in charitable activities, especially around the Muslim communities. Table 1 below explain the different interpretation of corporate responsibility.

Table 1:
Multiple Interpretations of Corporate Responsibility

Interpretation	Relevant authors
Business ethics and morality	Bowie 1998; Phillips 1997, 2003; Phillip and Margolis 1999; Stark 1993.
Corporate accountability	O'Dwyer 2005; Owen *et al.*, 2000.
Corporate citizenship	Andriof and Waddock 2002, Carroll 2004; Matten and Crane 2005.
Corporate giving and philanthropy	Crane 2000; Hussain 1999; Saha and Darnton 2005.
Corporate greening and green marketing	Crane 2000; Hussain 1999; Saha and Darnton 2005.
Diversity management	Kamp and Hagedorn-Rasmussen 2004.
Environmental responsibility	DesJardins 1998; Welford 2002.
Human rights	Cassel 2001; Welford 2002.
Responsible buying and supply chain management	Drumwright 1994; Emmelhainz and Adams 1999; Graafland 2002.
Socially responsible investment	Aslaksen and Synnestvedt 2003; Jayne and Skerratt 2003; McLaren 2004; Warhurst 2001.
Stakeholder engagement	Donaldson and Preston 1995; Freeman 1984.
Sustainability	Amaeshi and Crane 2006; Bansal 2005; Korhonen 2002.

Source: Frynas (2009). Beyond Corporate Social Responsibility, Oil Multinationals and Social Challenges, p.5.

Although previous studies used different terminologies to describe corporate responsibility, Blowfield and Frynas (2005) proposed to think of corporate responsibility as an umbrella term for a variety of theories and practices that each is recognized as the following: (a) that companies have a responsibility for their impact on the society and their natural environment, sometimes beyond that of a legal compliance and the liability of individuals; (b) that companies have a responsibility for the behaviour of others with whom they do business; and (c) that business needs to manage its relationship with a wider society, whether for reasons of commercial viability or to add value to the society (Frynas, 2009).

In a different study, Castello and Lozano (2011) used rhetoric terms as they carried out corporate responsibility among 31 corporations through CEO statements. They argued that the current corporate rhetoric seemed to be "colonized" by the dominant paradigm of positivistic rationality. However, a new form of rhetoric has improved the discursive quality between the corporations and their stakeholders. Organizations consciously or unconsciously used links to institutionalize their structures such as in corporate responsibility, stakeholders'

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engagement and other constructs to *"demonstrate the organization's worthiness and acceptability"* (Oliver, 1991, p. 158). Corporate responsibility can also be understood as motivating principles which are driven by values, stakeholders and performance and process including programs and activities such as sponsorships, codes of ethics, philanthropy activities and stakeholder issues related to the community, customer, employee, suppliers and stakeholders (Maignan & Ralston, 2002).

Mitchell (1989) as cited by Kuznetsov, Kuznetsova and Warren (2009) said that *"corporate responsibility remains businessmen's preferred response to threats to corporate power"* (p.114). According to Heal (2004), corporate responsibility contributes towards economic performance in helping the market by aligning the corporate's profits and its social costs. This contribution may come about in a number of ways, two of which, we believed, are especially relevant to the situation in post-communist countries. These are the projection of the positive image of corporations and, in particular, removing a strain in the relation between the corporations and their stakeholders.

DEFINITIONS OF CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

This section discusses the definition of corporate responsibility from various scholars. Each definition highlights a unique concept that gives more variety pictures about the definitions of corporate responsibility. At the end of this discussion, this study will provide the corporate responsibility a definition that is more practical and represents the corporate responsibility's perspective to examine the trend and patents of corporate responsibility in Malaysia.

Corporate responsibility scholar has discussed and argued the concept of corporate responsibility from many perspectives. Argandona and Hoivik (2009), explained that there was no or probably cannot be, a unique, precise definition of corporate responsibility. They argued that these definitions are lacking in integration due to different views on the corporate roles in the society. They proposed different approaches by refocusing the core elements of corporate responsibility. They came out with a working hypotheses of the definition; Hypothesis 1: corporate responsibility is an ethical concept; Hypothesis 2: The demands for socially responsible actions have existed even before the Industrial Revaluation, and firms usually responded to them; Hypothesis 3: The content of corporate responsibility has evolved over the time, depending on historical, cultural, political and socio-economic drivers and in particular conditions in different countries and also at different points in time (Argandona & Hoivik; 2009: 2).

In Argandona and Hoivik (2009) study, they argued and defined corporate responsibility from three points; first, there is no specific corporate responsibility definition that can fit all, because its content and application will vary from one country to another, will change over the time and will differ among corporate bodies; second, corporate responsibility is the result, implicit or explicit that reflects the nature of a corporate, its roles in the society and its relationships with its internal and external stakeholders; and third, because of a plural, diverse and fast changing world, it is not possible to reach a universal agreement in the concept of corporate responsibility because ideas and facts, philosophy and history, society and the environment are interrelated (Argandona & Hoivik, 2009: 12).

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Wiig and Kolstad (2010) defined corporate responsibility as corporate activities that address the interests of agents other than the owners, which is broadly consistent with the stakeholder's perspective on corporate responsibility. Common definition of corporate responsibility is corporate activities that go beyond what is required by law (Davis, 1960). Sharon's (2012) definitions of corporate responsibility fall into two different schools of thought. First, a business is obliged to maximize profits within the boundaries of the law and minimize the ethical constraints and second, those that advocate a broader range of obligations towards the society. It would appear based on literature that the society generally expects businesses to move away from their limited economic focus and be more socially responsible.

It has also been widely recognised that strategic corporate responsibility can improve competitive advantage because good deeds are beneficial for a business as well as society (Carroll, 1999; Lantos 2001; and Porter & Kramer, 2002). Strategic corporate responsibility is commonly implemented by businesses to create a win-win situation in which both the corporation and one or more stakeholder groups will benefit. Table 2 shows other definitions on corporate responsibility from different scholars.

Table 2:
Definitions of Corporate Responsibility

Author	Definition of Corporate Responsibility
Enderle and Tavis (1998)	Corporate responsibility as "the policy and practice of a corporation's social involvement over and beyond its legal obligations for the benefit of the society at large".
Angelidis and Ibrahim (1993)	Corporate responsibility is "corporate social actions whose purpose is to satisfy social needs".
Lerner and Flyxell (1988)	Corporate responsibility describes the extent to which organisational outcomes are consistent with societal values and expectations.

As a conclusion, from the discussion and the arguments about definition above, this study acknowledged and defined corporate responsibility as actions that appear to be the extension of some socially accepted manners, within the interests of the firms which required by the law. In fact, corporate responsibility is beyond obeying the law.

BRIEF HISTORY OF CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

The following discussion is about corporate responsibility development and growth. In general, Carroll (1979) explained the roadway of developing corporate responsibility and its growth is by showing the development of corporate responsibility which involved in different issues and challenges. In fact, tracking the scholars are significantly important to understand the growth of corporate responsibility skeleton. According to Carroll (1979), the long history of corporate responsibility had begun as early as 1930s when Wendell Wilkie helped to educate the businessman with the new sense of social responsibility. After it was introduced for more than 20 years, the modern era of corporate responsibility was stated by Howard R. Bowen in 1953 publication of *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman*, and had

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become a trend which was then followed by the upcoming scholars. In 1960, Keith Davis (1960) defined corporate responsibility as "businessmen's decisions and actions taken for reasons at least partially beyond the firm's direct economic or technical interest". Furthermore, Eells and Walton (1961) disputed that corporate responsibility is aroused when the corporate is drawn into a social scene, whereby it is bound by the relationship between the corporate and its society. In 1963, the debates about corporate responsibility had attracted Milton Friedman's attention. He emphasized that corporate responsibility had created a free society that accepted the orientation of corporate as profit based. But the argument by McGuire in 1963 has changed the views of corporate responsibility. He mentioned that; "*the idea of corporate responsibility supposes that the corporation has not only economic and legal obligations, but also certain responsibilities to society which extend beyond these obligations"* (p.114) (as cited in Carroll, 1979). Backman (1975), on the other hand suggested that "*corporate responsibility usually refers to the objectives or motives that should be given weight by business in addition to those dealing with economic performance"* (p.2). Both McGuire and Backman emphasized that corporate responsibility should go beyond economic and legal considerations. In line with that, Manne and Wallich (1972) defined corporate responsibility as voluntary behaviour that corporate entity must have.

Hay, Gray and Gates (1976) had simply listed the areas of business viewed as having corporate responsibility. They suggested that corporate responsibility requires the firm to *"make decisions and actually commit resources of various kinds in the following areas: pollution problems... poverty and racial discrimination problems... consumerism... and other social problem area"* (pp. 15-16). Steiner (1975) explained that corporate responsibility is a continuum of responsibilities ranging from traditional economic production to governmental dictated to a voluntary area and lastly to expectations beyond reality (p. 169). Robert Ackerman and Raymond Bauer emphasized that corporate responsibility is related to motivation rather than performance. They further explained that "motivation to meeting the social demands which are much more than deciding what to do. They remain as the management tasks of doing what one has decided to do, and this task is far from trivial" (1976, p.6). S. Prakash Sethi developed a slightly different definition by classifying the adaption of corporate behaviour into social needs; a) social obligation, b) social responsibility and c) social responsiveness. In sum, corporate responsibility has been defined in different ways and by different writers. Below is the summary of various definitions on corporate responsibility:

Table 3:
Corporate Responsibility Development and Growth

Year	Scholar / Author	Views about corporate responsibility
1966 & 1975	Keith Davis & Blomstrom	Going beyond profit making.
1961	Eells and Walton	Concern for the broader social system.
1962	Milton Friedman	Profit making only.
1963	Joseph McGuire	Going beyond economic and legal requirements.
1972	Henry Manne	Voluntary activities.
1975	George Steiner	Economic, legal, voluntary activities.
1976	Hay, Gray and Gates	Responsibility in a number of social problem areas.
1976 / 1975	Robert Ackerman and Raymond Bauer, Sethi	Giving way to social responsiveness.

Source: Carroll (1979). A Three – Dimensional Conceptual Model of Corporate Performance. (p.497 – 499).

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Table 3 implicitly highlights the different views of corporate responsibility involving various issues. From a wider range of corporate responsibility, there are three groups of definition (Carroll, 1979); first, issues of economic, legal or voluntary matters that fall under the purview of a corporate social responsibility. Second, addresses the social issues (e.g., discrimination, product safety and environment) for which business has a responsibility. Lastly, the definition highlights that the social responsiveness which concerns more on the manner or philosophy of response (e.g., reaction versus pro-action).

According to Bronn and Vrioni (2001), a corporate that is socially responsible acknowledges that it exists and operates in a shared environment, characterised by a mutual impact of the firm's relationships on a broad variety of stakeholders, who are affected by and can eventually affect the achievement of an organization's objectives. Thus, managing the stakeholder's relationships lies at the core of corporate responsibility and entails establishment of a sound/functioning two-way communications with stakeholder groups (i.e., understanding the type of support needed from each group, as well as learning their expectations of business and what they are willing to pay for having their expectations met).

Argandona and Hoivik (2009) discussed the term of responsibility as a trait of being responsible or being accountable. These concepts of ethical responsibility reflected the legal and moral obligation embraced by the corporate. The action is subjected to moral obligation and will be evaluated according to their performance. The ethical dimension is normally presented by the majority of corporate responsibility. However, corporate responsibility is not a mechanism of management tool. It begins with "doing the right things" that soon can be translated into "doing things right" and lastly "continuous improvement and innovation". Ethical responsibilities are derived from expectations. Huge responsibility will soon lead to develop high expectation about the corporate behaviours. This is why, according to Carroll (1979), corporate responsibility is a response by the corporate to the society's demands and expectations.

But the concept of corporate responsibility as an answer to the society's expectations and demands can be interpreted differently. The demands from our society are more influenced by the ethical judgments about someone (corporate) being responsible (Strawson, 1962). The judgement is moulded by the societal complexity. The reaction is mostly determined by the rational justification rather than the appropriateness of their (corporate) actions towards the societal needs. In simple words, corporate responsibility is not supported by ethical duties, but by the social practice of holding them responsible (Eshleman, 2004: 8). As a matter of fact, the obligations of corporate towards society are merely relational (the complex relationships in which the corporate participates). But the relationship can be arbitrary, unjust or even immoral because of the nature of what society demands or because society's expectations had placed an unfair burden on the corporate (Argandona & Hoivik, 2009: 6). The social responsibilities view would be accepted either from some kind of social pressures (as an unwarranted cost) or for practical reasons (to avoid blame or social rejection). At the end, there are no more obligatory than the cost-benefit calculation, but a matter of choice whether or not to engage to do what is good.

Therefore, talking about responsibilities can be either retrospective (for previous actions or omissions) or prospective (for future behaviour), and include the disposition to act accordingly. It means that accountability contributes to a more precise description of the scope in which corporate responsibility is exercised; it is owed to some people or

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communities and not to others. It evolves within a community, in accordance with the community's norms. As much as the society concerns, they are demanding in many different ways including the role of the social, cultural, political, economic and ideological environmental in configuring corporate responsibility. Evidence from United States and Europe has been and is different, and is particularly important to understand the social demands (Argandona & Hoivik, 2009). Sison (2009) highlighted some of the characteristic of the European framework of corporate responsibility in comparison with the United States. *"Philosophically, Anglo-American culture may be described as individualistic, legalistic, pragmatist and with an understanding of rights as freedom form state intervention. Continental European culture on the other hand, is more community-oriented, more dependent on unwritten laws or customs, less results-driven or more appreciative of the intrinsic value of activities and with an understanding of rights as freedom to participate in social goods and decisions"* (p. 1).

Bowen (1953), the so-called father of corporate responsibility mentions that *"corporate responsibility as the obligation of businesses to pursue organizational policies and make decisions desirable in terms of social objectives and values"* (as cited in Sharon, 2012). The notion of corporate responsibility was introduced in 1910s. During that time, the concept focused on the roles of corporate leaders greater than the interest of shareholders (Frederick, 1994), and Carroll (1979) stated that in the early 1930s, the corporate responsibility has become expending where the businesses have been exposed on the needs to be socially aware and responsible.

Even though there are a large number of literatures on corporate responsibility, there seem to be no consensus on its exact definition (Campbell, 2007; Lee 2008). However, most scholars agree with the notion that firms have responsibilities towards the society beyond profit maximisation (Carroll, 1999). Other than economic responsibility, numerous scholars proposed that the businesses are accountable to wider range of stakeholders, as well as employees, suppliers, communities, government and the environment (Clarkson, 1995; Donaldson & Dunfee, 1994; Donaldson & Preston, 1995; and Wood & Jones, 1995). It has also been widely recognised that strategic corporate responsibility can improve the competitive advantage because good deeds are beneficial for a business as well as society (Carroll, 1999; Lantos 2001; and Porter & Kramer, 2002). Strategic corporate responsibility is commonly implemented by businesses to create a win-win situation in which both the corporation and one or more stakeholder groups will benefit.

In mapping the corporate responsibility literature, there are three key areas that need to be considered. They are; environmental performance, economic performance and social performance (Roshima, 2009). Firstly, environmental issues including the impact of production processes, biodiversity and human health, products and services on air, land; secondly, economic performance including wages and benefits, job creation, productivity, outsourcing expenditures, investment in training, research and development investments and other forms of human capital. Lastly, related to social performances which include traditional topics such as employee satisfaction and corporate philanthropy, health and safety, diversity of the workforce and supplier relations. Gray, Javad, Power and Snclair (2001), Haniffa and Cooke (2005), Haron *et al.*, (2006) and Mohammad Zain and Janggu (2006) in their studies, noted that corporate responsibility is primarily to create sustainable relationships with the stakeholder groups that are employees, shareholders, customers and suppliers, wider

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community, investors and regulators. It is also highlighted that studies on special interest group (specific stakeholders) are still behind and limited.

Another significant study is from Clarkson (1995). This is based on 10 years of extensive study (began 1983 – ended 1993) on stakeholders in relation with corporate responsibility. The study was divided into three stages; stage 1: 1983-1985 involved 30 field studies, stage 2: 1986-1988 covered 28 studies and stage 3; 1989-1993 engrossed 20 studies. Below are the three stages and focus of discussion:

- Stage 1 (1983 – 1985)
  During this period, very few studies were done on corporate responsibility. Only one significant empirical study was conducted, which was by The Royal Commission on Corporate Concentration in 1977. To develop a methodology in 1970s, a researcher in Canada used the corporate social response matrix developed by Preston in 1977. The Preston's matrix was applied in corporate responsibility studies and it was assumed that a manager followed stages of a process identified as corporate social involvement. The process was described by Preston as follows: a) awareness or recognition as an issue, b) analysis and planning, c) response in terms of policy development, and d) implementation. The studies on corporate responsibility had been slowly developed. In 1979, to conduct an analytical study, the researcher used a survey instrument developed by Kelly and McTaggart in 1979. However, due to lack of proper instrument and evidence, Clarkson in 1983 had identified several human resource issues as important enough for most corporations to regard them as issues to be managed:

  > *"Communications with employees; training and development; career-planning; retirement and termination counselling; layoffs; redundancies and plant closings; stress and mental health; absenteeism and turnover; health and safety; employment equity and discrimination; women in management; performance appraisal; day care"* (Clarkson, 1995: 93).

  Subsequently, Clarkson made the assumptions that if the corporate is evaluated as socially responsible, the corporations and their managers should be concerned about, and responsive to the society. Clearly mentioned in his study, a set of normative assumptions about how corporations should behave and how their performance should be evaluated.

- Stage 2 (1986 – 1988)
  Carroll's (1979) model was comprehensive and integrative (Clarkson, 1995) that attempting a) to reconcile the achievement of both corporate social and economic objectives, b) to reconcile corporate responsibility and c) to focus on the most important elements in corporate social performance. In 1985, Wartick and Cochran Model were developed. Both Carroll and Wartick and Cochran Models recognized and incorporated the elements of social responsibility without excluding other responsibilities which Carroll defined as: legal, ethical and discretionary. Wartick and Cochran had then combined economic (Wartick & Cochran Model) legal, ethical and discretionary (Carroll Model) to give the challenge in collecting the economic data.

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- Stage 3 (1989-1993)
  The data was collected from 50 corporations related to policies, programs and issues concerning social and physical environments, public affairs and government relations, community relations and charitable donations and many more including customer and shareholder relations. The Model and methodology used was meant to show how the company managed their relationships with their employees, customers, shareholders, suppliers, governments and communities. Relevant data was collected and the analysis corresponded with the concepts and models of stakeholder management rather than with the concepts and models of corporate social responsibilities, responsiveness and performance. Obligation and responsibilities to customers, shareholders, employees and other important constituencies are defined by most companies.

Under his study, Clarkson conducted interviews with appropriate executives from 250 companies in Canada (companies listed in the Fortune 500). Clarkson (1995) described the data as follows:

> *"The corporations are asked to provide a descriptive data covering the company itself and relevant stakeholders and social issues. This material is then edited and returned to the company with requests for the performance data identified in the guide. Interviews with appropriate executives are then held in order to check and explore the implications of the performance data that have, and have not, been supplied... Experience shows that corporations find this task worthwhile. Few have hitherto identified stakeholders and social issues so comprehensively"* (p.100).

Based on the 10 years study by Clarkson (1995), three major findings could be observed. They are:

i) It is vital to differentiate between stakeholder issues and social issues due to the fact that corporations and their managers are dealing with their stakeholders not with the society,
ii) It is vital to conduct analysis according to the appropriate level; institutional, organisational or individual, and
iii) It is recommended that a study on social performance and the performance of its managers in managing the corporate responsibility and relations with their stakeholders to be done.

This is parallel with the justification made by Wood (1991) who says that "*broad concern, it would therefore be possible to evaluate the impact of business on society. The impact of a business or corporation on society is a different matter from the impact of business in general on society as a whole"* (p.691).

In Malaysian context, since 2006, the Malaysian Government has required all Public Listed Companies (PLCs) to disclose their corporate responsibility activities. This is important to develop the interest and also as the right of their stakeholders to know about the activities initiated by the companies. In 2007, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development initiated the Prime Minister's corporate responsibility Awards with the purpose to recognise the efforts made by the corporate through their corporate responsibility activities. 70 companies sent their entries for 150 different projects. There are

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three criteria to evaluate the projects, namely; the positive impact of the project, the sustainability of the project and the commitment and involvement shown by the companies. This award shows that the government has long since recognizing and encouraging the involvement of corporate sectors in corporate responsibility.

Corporate responsibility is not about compliance or philanthropy or public relations, it often involves cultural transformation in a company as it integrates corporate responsibility concepts into its operations and decision making (Nalla, 2011). A corporate needs a strong exemplary leadership and passion for corporate responsibility to be part of the organisation’s culture. In fact, corporate responsibility is discretionary. Because of that, there is a need to incentivise companies. This does not refer to business activities that are mandated by law or moral or ethical in nature. As a matter of fact, it refers to a voluntary commitment a business makes in choosing and implementing these practices while making their contributions.

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Table 4:
Prevalent Theoretical Approaches on Corporate Responsibility

	Economic Approach	Instrumental Stakeholder Theory	Porter's Model of Competitive Advantage	Political Approach	Normative Stakeholder Theory	Integrative Social Contract Theory	Managerial Utility Approach	Institutionalist Approach
Indicative publications	Husted /De Jesus Salazar 2006: McWilliams/ Siegel 2001.	Freeman 1984; Jones 1995.	Hart 1995; Porter /Kramer 2002.	Bottomley 2007; Scherer /Palazzo 2007.	Donaldson /Perston 1995; Freeman /Philips 2003.	Donaldson /Dunfee 1994, 1999.	Graafland *et al.* 2007; Hemingway /Maclagan, 2004.	Campbell 2007; Marquis *et al.*, 2007.
Levels of analysis	Individual or organizations.	Individual or organizations.	Organizations.	Organizations or society.	Individual or organizations.	Individuals.	Individuals.	Organizations in their institutional context.
Logic of action	Voluntaristic	Voluntaristic	Voluntaristic	Voluntaristic	Voluntaristic	Voluntaristic	Deterministic	Deterministic
Reason for engaging in corporate responsibility	The firm's long-term economic value.	The firm's long-term economic value.	The firm's long-term economic value.	Moral duty .	Moral duty.	Moral duty.	Managers' preference.	Legitimacy and survival of the corporation.
Basic message	Managers engage in corporate responsibility to the extent that the incurred costs are outweighed by additional revenues.	Prudent managers should care about corporate responsibility as this improves relations with stakeholders.	Corporations should engage in corporate responsibility as this is an important source of competitive advantage.	Corporations should engage in politics to fill the regulatory vacuum in contemporary societies.	Ethical managers should care about corporate responsibility as stakeholders' interests are of intrinsic value.	Contracts should reflect hypernorms and voluntary consent.	Pro-social behaviour is driven by managers' pro-social preferences.	Corporations engage in corporate responsibility activities in order to preserve their legitimacy in the face of institutional pressures.
Limitations	Does not consider non-economic motives for engaging in corporate responsibility.	Does not consider non-economic motives for engaging in corporate responsibility.	Does not consider non-economic motives for engaging in corporate responsibility.	Does not explain why some corporations accept moral duty and other do not.	Does not explain why some corporations accept moral duty and other do not.	Does not explain why some corporations accept moral duty and others do not.	Does not address the interplay between economic and non-economic motivations.	Does not address the interplay between economic and non-economic motivations.

Source: Aaken, Splitter and Seidl (2013). Why do corporate actors engage in pro-social behaviour? A Bourdieusian perspective on corporate social responsibility. p.352.

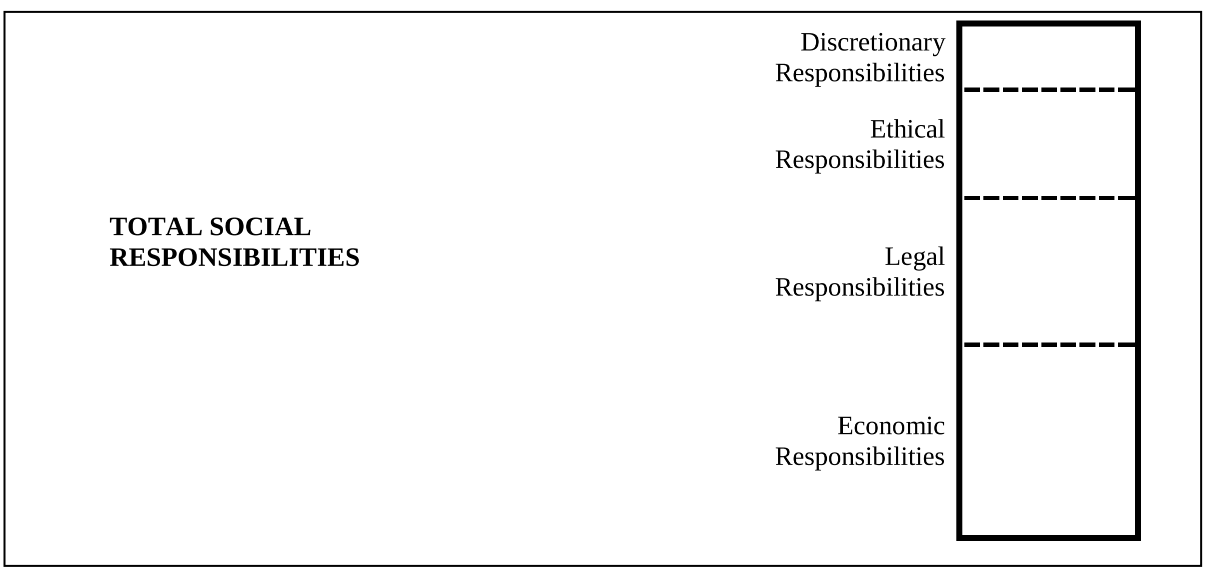
Table 4 shows that most prior studies on corporate responsibility had covered three different levels. The three levels are individual, organizational and society levels (Aaken, Splitter & Seidl, 2013). Most of the studies are focussing on both levels; individual or organization (Husted & De Salazar, 2006; McWilliams & Siegel, 2001; Freeman, 1984; Jones, 1995; Donaldson & Perston, 1995; and Freeman & Philips, 2002). Some studies focus only on single level either individual (Donaldson & Dunfee 1994, 1999; Graafland *et al.*, 2007; Hemingway & Maclagan; 2004) or organization (Hart, 1995; Porter & Kramer, 2002). However, evident shows that there are still very little studies had been conducted on the society level (Bottomley, 2007; Scherer & Palazzo, 2007). Thus, based on the above discussion, studies on the roles of SIGs are poorly developed. With that reason, this study done is to investigate the existence of SIGs in relation with corporate responsibility activities among GLCs.

5.0 CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY MODEL

This section illustrates the model of corporate responsibility which derived the various types of corporate responsibility activities from Carrol Model (1979), Bursa Malaysia and Peloza and Shang (2011). Each type of corporate responsibility activity has its strength and unique characteristics.

i) Corporate Responsibility Activities: Carrol Model

Based on the wide range of social obligation, Carroll (1979) concluded that it can be clustered into four different categories, namely; economic, legal, ethical and discretionary. Figure 1 shows how corporate responsibility can be categorized into the four groups (the proportions simply suggest the relative magnitude of each responsibility);



Source: Carroll (1979). A Three – Dimensional Conceptual Model of Corporate Performance. (p.499).

Figure 1: Social Responsibility Categories

Figure 1 explains the total social responsibilities based on different sub-categories. The proportions indicated that in every social responsibility, there is a different sub-category

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(economic, legal, ethical and discretionary responsibilities). Furthermore, any given responsibilities or actions of business could include economic, legal, ethical or discretionary motives embodied in them. It is noted that if the corporate wants to produce a product, its action may simultaneously involve several kinds of social responsibilities. For example, if car manufacturers decided that they should build a car that is safe, they would be (at the same time) economically, legally and ethically responsible. The motives can be categorized as below (Carroll, 1979):

- **Economic responsibilities** – a responsibility to produce goods and services that the society wants and to sell them for profit. All other business roles are predicated on this fundamental assumption.
- **Legal responsibilities** – to fulfil the "social contract" under which business is expected to operate. The society expects the business to fulfil its economic mission within the framework of legal requirements.
- **Ethical responsibility** – there are activities and behaviours of an organization that does not necessarily codified with law, but still expected by society and perceived positively.
- **Discretionary responsibilities** – happen when the society has no clear-cut message for business. They are left to individual judgment and choice. The roles are purely voluntary and the decision to assume them is guided only by the business's desire to engage in social roles not mandated, not required by law, and not even generally expected of businesses in an ethical sense.

ii) Corporate Responsibility Activities: Bursa Malaysia

To promote corporate responsibility, Bursa Malaysia had launched its Corporate Responsibility Framework for public listed companies in 2006, highlighting that corporate responsibility is more than just philanthropy and community initiatives. The Bursa Malaysia's Corporate Responsibility Framework defined corporate responsibility as "open and transparent business practices that are based on ethical values and respect for the community, employees, the environment, shareholders and other stakeholders" (Bursa Malaysia, 2006: 5). In 2007, Bursa Malaysia had announced that all public listed companies are required to disclose corporate responsibility activities in their annual financial report (Bursa Malaysia, 2011). Bursa Malaysia has always been advocated towards corporate responsibility as being a key to sustainability.

In Malaysian context, corporate responsibility has gained greater significance across the business community. There is a growing demand and expectations from various stakeholders who expect businesses to go beyond their profit agenda and to be socially responsible (Sharon, 2012). Businesses are not just instrumental in producing goods and services; they are affecting an entire society in diverse and complex ways (Epstein, 1999). Therefore, businesses should act ethically to improve the community's quality of life (Sharma & Talwar, 2005). However, despite the growing recognition of corporate responsibility by businesses, the concept of corporate responsibility continues to attract public debates as corporations, who have the powers and resources (Forte, 2004; Drucker, 1993), have been urged to act responsibly for the betterment of our society.

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Table 5 illustrates The Bursa Malaysia CSR Framework for Malaysian public listed companies were categories based on four different types; namely; The Environment, The Community, The Marketplace and The Workplace (in no order of priority):

Table 5:
Bursa Malaysia's CSR Dimensions

Types of CSR Activities		Explanation
The Environment	:	Focusing on environmental issues. They comprised of the energy, how to use it more efficiently and to minimize the damage, bio-fuels, and biodiversity including protection of flora and fauna.
The Community	:	Focusing on community. This type supports local community, education, children, youth development and the under-privileged.
The Marketplace	:	Focusing on stakeholders. This includes shareholders, suppliers and customers, groups, supporting green products and also suppliers and vendors.
The Workplace	:	Focusing on employees. Including the rights and gender issues, quality of work environment, health and safety.

Source: Bursa Malaysia, 2014

iii) Corporate Responsibility Activities: Peloza and Shang

Although prior studies on corporate responsibility activities revealed inconclusive findings, but it is proven that corporate responsibility activities create stronger relationships between corporate and their stakeholders (Pelazo & Shang, 2011; Seul & Lailani, 2011; Emtairah & Mont, 2008; Wiig & Kolstad, 2010; and McWilliams & Siegel, 2001). Bhattacharya, Korschun and Sen (2009) pointed out that despite an extensive attention given to corporate responsibility; little guidance for the implementation of specific corporate responsibility activities do exists. Marketing researchers provided depth understanding in examining the corporate responsibility activities with organizational attractiveness (Albinger & Freeman, 2000), environmental performance (Orlitzky, Schmidt & Rynes, 2003), stakeholder value (Campbell, 2007), relation building (Clarkson, 1995), consumer reactions (Russell & Russell, 2010), revenue and profits (Ilter, 2013), and competitive positioning (Du, Bhattachary & Sen, 2007).

Regardless of the variety in the focus of the studies on corporate responsibility activities, Pelazo and Shang (2011) and Seul and Lailani (2011) defined that there are three types of corporate responsibility activities, namely; philanthropy, business practices and product-related.

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Table 6:
Types of Corporate Responsibility Activities

Focused activities	Types
Philanthropy	Charity supports and donations: *Employee volunteerism, cash donations, employee volunteerism, cash donations, product donation, promotion of social issues, licensing agreements.*
Business Practice	Environmental protection practices, ethical business practices and employee relation policies: *Animal testing, employee relations, environmental protection, community satisfaction, supplier satisfaction, competitors' satisfaction, false advertising, human rights, domestic supply chain.*
Product-related	Products generating pollutants when used, high-quality products, organic products and biodegradable products: *Organic, healthy products, green products, packaging, animal testing, animal by product.*

Source: Peloza and Shang (2011). *How can Corporate Responsibility Activities Create Value for Stakeholders? A Systematic Review, p.123.*

Table 6 illustrates the three types of corporate responsibility activities. Basically, philanthropy activity is referred to as charity supports and donations, business practices activity on environmental protection practices, ethical business practices and employee relation policies, and product-related activity consisting of products that generate pollutants when used, high-quality products, organic products and biodegradable product (Pelazo & Shang, 2011). The following discussions are focusing on the different types of corporate responsibility activities as suggested by Pelazo and Shang (2011) and Seul and Lailani (2011).

i) Philanthropy activity

Philanthropy activity is the most popular corporate responsibility activities (Pelazo & Shang, 2011). The most common philanthropy approach used by the corporate is cause-related marketing. The results from the study showed that philanthropy activity is the dominant type of corporate responsibility activities between business practices and product-related activity. Charity or donation, cash donation as well as product donations are among the most popular activities done by corporate bodies. They claimed that philanthropy is a potential resource and a means of gaining social status and impressing the management. Donations in one form may carry more favourable perceptions than others.

Kuznetsova, Kuznetsova and Warren (2009) discovered that there is a moderate impact of philanthropy and charitable activities towards public perception of the firm. In addition, Seul and Lailani (2011) stated that philanthropy activities have positive relationships with organizational attractiveness but weaker as compared to the other two corporate responsibility activities. They might be influenced from the values and preferences toward experience among their stakeholders (Holbrook, 2006). Carroll (1979) mentioned that philanthropy is the most discretion type of corporate responsibility. He conceptualized philanthropy in "the pyramid of corporate social responsibility" as solely voluntary element (Carroll, 1991). In relation with that,

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society on the other hand, is putting some expectations from the corporate to prioritize philanthropy as routine activities. However, philanthropy is the only activity that Collins (1993) said as “beyond the call of duty”.

Regardless of the fact that philanthropy activity has voluntary components, Gautier and Pache (2013) came out with a justification disputing the act of making profit; firstly, corporate should value philanthropy activity as voluntary that indicated the corporate’s dedication towards a common good. Secondly, to view philanthropy as investments towards the community that will contribute to their competitiveness in the business setting. Thirdly, to used philanthropy as a marketing mechanism to promote corporate existence. These are parallel to the views of societal marketing to enhance the well-being of society (Kotler, 1972). This is also considered as a wise marketing plan, where corporate properly blend with the moral expectations and philanthropy contributions that will lead to improving the corporate image and reputation (Gautier & Pache, 2013).

ii) Business Practice

As Pelazo and Shang (2011) discovered in their research, business practices fell second place as the most popular activity in corporate responsibility (Pelazo & Shang, 2011). In business practice specifically, environmental protection comes as the most popular practice as compared to other elements such as recycle practices and ethical business practices. Their study also proved that business practices have a significant impact to enhance the stakeholder’s values (Pelazo & Shang, 2011). Collins, Steg and Koning (2007), revealed the same consistent results which showed that the business practices are positively correlated with environmental issues that impact the stakeholder’s attitudes. Bauer and Aiman-Smith (1996) showed that business practices activities related to environmental concerns positively affect the perceived organizational attractiveness.

Evidence from prior studies suggested that it is important to establish a relationship between corporate social performance and the relevant stakeholders that will benefit from corporate responsibility activities (Wood & Jones, 1995). This statement justifies the fact that if the corporate fail to identify the right party, then no one can benefit from them. The previous researchers also noted the same point and suggested that corporate should define the benefits that would be expected from them (e.g., Swanson, 1999, Wood, 1991, and Wartick & Cochran, 1985). Peterson (2004) mentioned that positive business practices such as prioritizing on consumers’ preferences, investment and job selection including employee relations will achieve high corporate reputation.

The decision for corporate to focus on business practices activities contribute significantly to the stakeholder’s responses (Podnar & Golob, 2007). This is due to the decision made by consumers who are willing to pay more if the corporate is socially responsible in creating green products. Russell and Russell (2010) suggested that if the corporate is concern about business activities that can benefit their consumers, the consumers will soon become a patronage to that organization. In a different study by Seul and Lailaini (2011), business practices activities are found to have the strongest positive effect towards organizational

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attractiveness. The employee-relation such as benefit plans and conducive working condition, excellent relationship with customers and practicing good business ethics (e.g., product free from animal testing, avoid using child labour, fake advertising) will contribute to a positive relationship between corporate and stakeholders.

iii) Product-related

Product-related activities are found as the less popular activity as compared to the other two types of corporate responsibility activities (Pelazo & Shang, 2011). Among other forms in this category are products that generate fewer pollutions, product quality, organic product, and biodegradable products. The product features itself, have the potential to provide the broadest continuum of value to customer. The awareness of consumer on product/services found to be higher when product/services attributes are related with corporate responsibility brand (Du, Bhattacharya & Sen, 2007). Du and Bhattacharya and Sen (2007) recognized that the role of corporate responsibility positioning is found to be significant due to the important reasons. First, consumers prefer product/services that have more charitable attribute, second, consumers also found to be more sensitive on corporate responsibility brand and lastly, consumers are concern on quality and value when corporate responsibility brand is represented to consumers. This was supported by Punj and Moon (2002) who also mentioned about the significance of brand positioning as “corporate responsibility brand” that consumer can easily engage when specific benefits come together with product experiences.

Trudel and Cotte (2009) in their study addressed two important questions; how consumers react to positive corporate responsibility activities? Do the consumers like the idea of purchasing ethically produced goods? They found those customers are willing to pay a premium price for ethically produced goods, but will demand a substantial discount from companies that produce goods in an unethical manner. They also found that consumers responded to a small degree of ethical production as being “pays off”, as much as a heavy investment in an ethical production. However, some corporation take into consideration and struggle to limit the negative impact of their operations towards the society and environment. The question arose and remains unanswered; are consumers willing to reward companies for their positive actions? The terms of willingness to pay indicates that consumers’ buying behaviour are inconsistent with their positive attitudes toward ethical corporate, and consumer will estimate the value that they had placed on certain features of products’ social.

In the long run, this circumstance will influence consumers’ choice and how much it matters to them. The rule applied, is that people tend to help others because ultimately it benefits them in some ways. An experiment design has been applied and three different groups were involved in their experiment on coffee-drinking. The first group was given the information about labelled ethical (information on fair trade, transparency and respect and equity trade), the second group was given unethical information (the company is criticized for unsustainable farming practices that may be harmful to the environment) and the third group as the control group (no ethical information was given). The results showed that, the decision made by consumers will be influenced by labelled ethical on services or product that the company produced (positive information about company). However, negative (unethical) information will give bad perception

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towards the company and the control group influence the decision on whether the outlet chooses the product over others. A majority of the work on positive-negative asymmetries regarding what consumers are willing to pay is directly influenced by the expectations of the company's behaviour. Significantly, the negative effects of unethical behaviour have a substantially greater impact on consumers' willingness to pay than the positive effects of the ethical behaviour.

Maignan, Ferrell and Hult (1999) postulated that the trends of business have changed. Consumers nowadays are more likely to buy from a company that is socially responsible. There would also be a switch in preference towards the brands or store that are concern about the community. It may be argued that corporate citizenship creates customer values for two main reasons. First, proactive corporate citizens treat customers with utmost respect. They are likely to monitor customers' satisfaction closely, to respond individually to every customer's complaints, product safety standards, and to provide full information about their products and services. Customers may then express their trust in the company and their appreciation of its efforts by continuing to buy its products. Second, customers appear as willing to make an effort to support organizations that show they care for the community through activities such as donations to charities, energy conservation programs, or sponsorships of local events.

In return, Clarkson (1995) added to the point that by meeting stakeholders' demands, businesses generate their support, which in turn leads to greater performance levels. Three characteristics of corporate citizenship may qualify the corporate as a source of competitive advantage. First, corporate citizenship provides superior value for customers by the right treatment and engaging in activities they support. Second, corporate citizenship is difficult to imitate because it deals with different demands from the organization's specific stakeholders. Third, corporate citizenship can have multiple applications. As a potential source of competitive advantage, corporate citizenship may be associated with higher performance levels. The results showed that there is a significant positive relationship between corporate citizenship and customer loyalty. As a conclusion from the findings, Clarkson (1995) suggested that meeting social demands does not come at the expense of performance levels. Instead, it is done through initiatives designed to show their commitment to meeting economic, legal, ethical and discretionary responsibilities, business may generate a sense of loyalty in both customers and employees.

Carroll's (1979) classification of corporate social responsiveness is that a responsive organization may choose to address social pressures by moving to a less demanding environment or by altering social expectations through activities such as lobbying. A proactive corporate citizen ensures that it meets and even acts beyond its assigned responsibilities. Although a corporate citizen is responsive to its social environment, a responsive business however, is not necessarily considered as a good corporate citizen.

As a conclusion for the three types or categories of corporate responsibility activities above, namely; Carroll's Model of corporate responsibility activities, Bursa Malaysia corporate responsibility activities and Peloza and Shang corporate responsibility activities, this study chooses the corporate responsibility activities by Peloza and Shang due to the corporate responsibility activities proposed which are more comprehensive and practical. The elements of

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each type, namely; philanthropy, business-practice and product-related have covered the corporate responsibility activities as proposed by Carroll Model and Bursa Malaysia.

CONCULSION

Evidence from literature has indicated that there is a need for it to be improvised. Corporate responsibility literature has proven that, little has been done on understanding how corporate responsibility activities (Kuznetsov, Kuznetsova & Warren, 2009; Laura, 2014; Nejati & Amran, 2013; Sharon, 2012; Bakar, Sheikh & Ameer, 2010; Md Zabid & Saadiatul, 2002; and Selvarajh, Munusamy, Chelliah & Pandian, 2012) indicate the acceptance levels or “license to operate” from the stakeholders point of view. Furthermore, there is a need to design corporate responsibility activities to reflect stakeholder’s expectation.

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