COMMUNICATING CSR TO CONSUMERS:

A STUDY ON MALAYSIAN GLCS

Esther Teh Theng Yinn

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Communicating CSR to Consumers:

A Study on Malaysian GLCs

By

Esther Teh Theng Yinn

This research project is supervised by:

Phang Fatt Kong

Assistant Professor

Department of Accountancy

Faculty of Accountancy and Management

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that:

(1) This MKMA25106 Research Project is the end result of my own work and that due acknowledgment has been given in the references to all sources of information be they printed, electronic, or personal.

(2) No portion of this research project has been submitted in any support of any application for any other degree or qualification of this or any other university, or other institutes of learning.

(3) The word count of this research report is 20,503 words.

Name of Student: Esther Teh Theng Yinn

Student ID: 08UKM06686

Signature:

Date: July 25, 2011

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And to my father, the apple of my eyes, I dedicate this accomplishment to.

ESTHER TEH

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Abbreviations

1. CSR — Corporate Social Responsibility

2. GLC — Government-Linked Company

3. GLIC — Government-Linked Investment Company

4. GRI — Global Reporting Initiative

5. GTP — Government Transformation Programmes

6. ICR — Institute of Corporate Responsibility

7. ICRM — Institute of Corporate Responsibility Malaysia

8. NGO — Non-Governmental Organisation

9. PCG — Putrajaya Committee in GLC High Performance

10. PLC — Public Listed Company

11. PR — Public Relations

12. RBV — Resource-Based View

13. RO — Research Objective

14. RQ — Research Question

ABSTRACT

This research project explores the approach Malaysian Government-Linked Companies (GLCs) communicate corporate social responsibility (CSR). The focus of this descriptive and exploratory research is important to determine the communication strategy used by GLCs to communicate and engage one of their most important stakeholders, their consumers. Simultaneously, discover whether the engagement deems successful from the perspective of the consumers. Although companies are communicating CSR contents, they were missing out on collecting and communicating relevant and timely information as well as consumers' CSR perception, concerns and expectations. This suggests an information gap that could be strategically taken into consideration in companies' CSR efforts and measures. The theoretical framework in this study, the stakeholder approach and resource-based view, asserts that CSR efforts be seen as a strategic investment and conducted in relation to their company's stakeholders. This research paper adopts the mixed methods concurrent triangulation strategy. The use of both qualitative and quantitative style of research is to allow the quantitative data to verify the predominant qualitative explorations of the study. The data was collected through semi-structured interview with five GLCs senior management involved with CSR and online self-administered survey questionnaire distributed to two hundred GLC consumers. The findings revealed that GLCs are communicating to their consumers, adopting mostly the stakeholder involvement strategy, one of the communication strategies presented by Morsing & Schultz (2006). This research discovered the surge in the use of social media by the GLCs to engage with their consumers in addition to the traditional means of communication. The findings also revealed that although consumers' feedbacks are scarce suggesting an information gap, GLCs do include the limited feedbacks of the consumers towards their business objectives. One prominent uncovering of this study is that the GLC consumers seem to have a bias perception of GLCs and its CSR efforts leading to a perceived unsuccessful engagement. The main implications of the study are for CSR guidelines and quantifiable measures to be produced for GLCs to uptake CSR strategically.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Businesses today are compelled to adopt the sustainable approach due to the conditions of globalisation. Prudent companies are including a corporate social responsibility (CSR) perspective in their business efforts as they recognise the long-term health of the company is inextricably tied to the well being of the society and environment. Studies abroad shows that 60% of companies believed a broader understanding of the world where companies operate sustainably can help companies manage their risks better (The Star, 2006; Economist.com, 2008; Edelman, 2007; Riddleberger & Hittner, 2009). This in turn, lead to improved business performance, profitability, reputation and stakeholder value. Following this, it is crucial for companies to align their company's objective strategically to CSR. The key for companies to understand the balance of doing so, and the reception of different company and stakeholder interests towards this effort is solely by communication (Podnar & Jančič, 2006; Waller & Lanis, n.d.).

CSR in Malaysia

Wright (2008) indicated that there are clear signs of increasing attention paid to CSR at a corporate, investor and government level in Asia. Today, more than ever, companies are focused on environmental and social responsibilities as strategic objectives. This is a shift from the classical free market perspectives advocated by Milton Friedman and Adam Smith, whereby "the social responsibility of business is to increase its profits" (Friedman, 1970; Smith, 1976). In order to be sustainable, businesses are now embracing a new objective: optimising their operations to improve environmental and social outcomes while increasing the company's overall performance (Riddleberger & Hittner, 2009). Malaysia is one of the Asian countries showing particular interest in this area.

Bernama (2009) reported "developing countries like Malaysia are doing relatively well in the area of CSR and averages in overall ranking in the region". This can be attributed partly to the support of state agencies that play a crucial role in adopting and transforming the CSR discourse in line with the development strategy of the state and the interests of the government. Malaysia, among the developing countries and in South East Asia, is one of the leading countries in CSR. This is because CSR in Malaysia is part of the National Integrity Plan and the Government Transformation Programmes (GTP) (Mohamed, 2008).

In an effort to develop and encourage the country's businesses, the government launched "The Silver Book" as part of the Programme. This framework provides Government-Linked Companies (GLCs) with scorecards and guidelines to measure this idea and to gauge how effective their CSR policies are. The CSR emphasis is also due to the fact that CSR and corporate governance are central to the work of the Malaysian Integrity Institute and the National Integrity Plan (Williams, 2007). As a result of the Silver Book, GLCs are better informed on CSR issues compared to other locally owned companies since they refer to the guideline by the Putrajaya Committee in GLC High Performance (PCG), which is a body established by the government to drive and develop the GTP (Tam, 2007; ICRM, 2009).

Over the last eight years, transformation of the CSR landscape in Malaysia is noticed. For one, there is explicit government and regulatory support for CSR. In 2004, then Second Minister of Finance, Mohamed Yakcop, shared the government's position, "…strongly supports the adoption of voluntary CSR reporting and standards" and that communicating CSR activities helped investors identify those with sustainable practices" (Securities Commission, 2004). It was also stated that the government does not favour regulations interfering with the private sector's CSR initiatives that exist within a voluntary framework (Securities Commission, 2004).

Another turning point was in 2006 when CSR reporting became one of the requirements initiated by Bursa Malaysia Berhad to embed the culture of sustainable reporting (Chan, 2008; Bursa Malaysia Berhad, 2009). The Bursa Malaysia Berhad (2009) described CSR as "key to sustainability" and launched the CSR framework for all Malaysian Public Listed Companies (PLCs) on September 5, 2006, providing guides for best practices and (Wright, 2008; Bernama, 2009; Abdul Hamid, Ibrahim & Shah Mohd Ali, n.d.).

The government continued to push for good corporate behaviour and transparency. Even budget speeches from the year 2006 began focusing and emphasising on CSR and it was announced that all PLCs must disclose their CSR activities, in a move to "inculcate the culture of CSR" (Zarinah Anwar, 2006; Bursa Malaysia, 2009; Lopez, 2010). In essence, companies have to report their CSR activities and it was made mandatory for listed companies to have a CSR section in their annual report by the end of 2007.

Awards and monitoring schemes also encouraged the communication of CSR by rewarding and recognising responsible companies, such as the ACCA Malaysia Sustainability Reporting Awards, Starbiz Institute of Corporate Responsibility (ICR) Malaysia Corporate Responsibility Awards and Prime Minister's CSR Awards. As a result of all this efforts, Tan Lay Kuan, secretary of Institute of Corporate Responsibility Malaysia (ICRM) noted that there were noticeable awareness and improvements in the implementations of CSR activities among companies in Malaysia (Chan, 2008).

Research problems

Considering the substantial effort of establishing CSR in Malaysia, this section discusses four issues that led to the undertaking of this research. They are lack of relevant and timely information, biased CSR reporting, lack of understanding on consumers' perceptions, concern and expectations as well as difficulty in communicating with companies.

Lack of relevant and timely information

Riddleberger & Hittner's (2009) worldwide survey showed a significant gap between the business and sustainability goals that companies are setting for themselves. Fundamentally in this time and age, one of the greatest advantages of the new information era is the availability of real time data. Despite that, too often the information being collected and disseminated is outdated. Stakeholders are closely monitoring what companies do and make decisions based on what they see. However, most lack the information required to make these strategic choices. In an annual global survey (researched in 18 countries around the world), Edelman (2007) mentioned that most companies are producing formal printed annual CSR reports in addition to the regularly updated web-based information or email alerts. Yet, nearly 60% of companies are not collecting information about key operations and sustainability objectives on a frequent basis (Edelman, 2007). Thus, sharing with their stakeholders' obsolete information on their company's effort. In fact, according to Bursa Malaysia (2009), less than half of the 200 companies surveyed complied with Bursa Malaysia's requirement to report on CSR activities. Companies that submitted reports often did not include objectives, targets and performance data linked to CSR issues. It is noted that companies are also not collecting and analysing the information they really need or aggregating it often enough. This leads to companies missing out on opportunities to increase efficiency, lower costs, reduce environmental impact and more importantly, improve their reputations with key stakeholders.

Biased CSR reporting

CSR reports are very important and central to a stakeholder's decision to be acquainted with a company. The most important information comes from the company itself. "We frequently heard that the reports are a very useful place to start a dialogue with a company and that they can 'help diffuse some of the more polarised topics in advance'" (Edelman, 2007, p.11). However, Edelman (2007) and Hebard & Cobrda (2009) asserted that some stakeholders do not trust CSR reports since they are perceived to be bias and therefore constituted as unreliable sources. Some stakeholders are more comfortable using more legitimate external sources, such as newspaper articles, as a form of verification to what the companies are saying (and even doing). Otherwise, as Frynas (2006) puts it, "how can we be sure of CSR practices without being transparent and effective monitoring without researching practices of falsification?" Clarity is another important element in boosting a communication material on CSR and it should be clear to the point, with all technical forms minimised and no link to a public relations (PR) exercise (Mahalingam, 2008).

Lack of understanding on consumers' perceptions, concerns and expectations

In the Earthsense Eco-Insights Survey 2008 on American companies, Hebard & Cobrda (2009) detected that companies often miss out key stakeholders in the designing of the company's CSR measures, specifically, the consumers. This is due to a lack of CSR communication and even when there is communication, Morsing (2005) concluded that CSR is a difficult message to convey. Research on CSR sustainability leaders at Fortune 500 companies suggests that companies are reluctant to communicate with consumers due to complaints on companies' unsubstantiated or misleading CSR claims and so, rather play mum about their sustainability efforts (Hebard & Cobrda, 2009). As a result, companies become sceptical consumers are interested, aware or even comprehend their CSR efforts. As for companies who are interested in consumer's views, they had no access to metrics needed to measure and track consumers' perceptions, concerns and

expectations (Hebard & Cobrda, 2009). Overall, two thirds of business leaders in the study admit they do not understand their consumer's CSR perceptions, concerns and expectations and nearly four out of ten companies reported that they have yet to conduct any research on the topic (Riddleberger & Hittner, 2009).

Difficulty in communicating with companies

Edelman (2007) emphasised that stakeholders often find communicating with companies difficult. In reality, companies often neglect important stakeholders (Edelman, 2007). In the corporate world, perception is reality and consumer perception is vital. Gray, Owen & Maunders (1987) viewed stakeholders as having the right to specific information for certain decision and that they should be provided relevant information by companies. According to ACCA Asean and Australasia director, Tay Kay Luan, "reporting means transparency, transparency means communication and communication means that people are well informed" (Mahalingam, 2008).

Research Objectives (ROs)

The research problems suggest that there is a need to study CSR communication geared towards consumers. Hence, this study was designed to assess the current status of CSR communication among a sample of GLCs in Malaysia. The following research objectives were formulated to guide this study:

RO1: Discover the means GLCs use to communicate with their consumers on CSR.

RO2: Explore the communication strategy used by GLCs when engaging consumers on CSR.

RO3: Identify the information gap in the communication process between the GLCs and their consumers.

RO4: Examine whether the collection and communication of relevant and timely information contribute to GLCs' CSR related business objectives and decisions.

RO5: Examine if consumers' perceptions, concerns and expectations are taken into consideration in GLCs' CSR efforts.

RO6: Review the stakeholder engagement process from the perspective of the consumer.

Research questions (RQs)

This study will seek to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the means used by GLCs to communicate with their consumers on CSR?

RQ2: Which CSR communication strategy does the GLCs employ when engaging consumers on CSR?

RQ3: Are there any information gap in the communication process between the GLCs and their consumers?

RQ4: Does collecting and communicating relevant and timely information contribute to GLCs' CSR related business objectives and decisions?

RQ5a: Are the GLCs aware of consumers' CSR perceptions, concerns and expectations and do they understand them?

RQ5b: Are consumer's perceptions, concerns and expectations taken into consideration in GLCs' CSR efforts?

RQ6: Has the GLCs' stakeholder engagement been successful from the perspective of their consumers?

Justifications for research

Review of CSR in Malaysia

CSR has received extensive attention from scholars and people from the field alike. Conventionally, it is assumed that CSR is largely a Western phenomenon, because "there are numerous obstacles to achieving CSR, particularly in many developing countries where the institutions, standards and appeals system, which give life to CSR in North America and Europe, are relatively weak" (Kemp, 2001, p.1). Several observers have noted that Asian countries often lag behind their Western counterparts in many aspects of CSR (Welford, 2004; Chapple & Moon, 2005). Yet, Kimber & Lipton (2005) pointed out that generalisations cannot be drawn on the region as a whole since Asian countries differ substantially in their levels of economic development, political/ legal systems, and cultural norms. Hence, a need for more recent CSR studies on Malaysia, a country driven by globalisation to confront the challenges of behaving responsibly albeit according to their own norms.

Role of Government in CSR

The government can play an important function in shaping a national CSR agenda that not only responds to external pressures such as codes of conduct, but is also in line with local needs. In assessing the opportunities that CSR provides, the challenge is for governments to identify priorities and incentives that are meaningful in the national context, building on the strengths of local enterprises as well as those of foreign multinationals (Twose & Rao, 2003). By doing so, Twose & Rao (2003) stressed that there is a significant opportunity for the government to harness current enthusiasm for CSR to complement public policy goals and priorities. Hence, the focus of this research paper is on GLCs.

Contribute to more CSR communication research on consumers

The overriding interest in choosing this area of study is to investigate the view that companies need to be seen as supportive of the social and environment as well as adapt to their economic realities, particularly to the local communities in which they operate. In short, CSR is important because businesses are part of the wider social and cultural system. Although research on perceptions of GLC's CSR efforts exists, the communication process is still under reported (Abdul Hamid, Ibrahim & Shah Mohd Ali, n.d.). Birth, Illia, Lurati & Zamparini (2006) stated that the concept of CSR is not only theoretically and conceptually lacking and empirically unexplored, the same is also true for CSR communication. In addition, these researches have widely neglected consumer oriented CSR communication although there is a growing interest seen in studies by Brown & Dacin (1997) and Bhattacharya & Sen (2004). Most researchers agree that consumers are the driving forces behind companies' CSR programmes and practices and yet do not engage them to find out (Auger, Devinney & Louviere, 2004; Schrader, Hansen & Halbes, 2006; Hazlett & McKee, 2008). The recognition of consumers within this field has increased with the development of communication via the Internet.

Methodology

The mixed-methods concurrent triangulation strategy is adopted in this study. The purpose of using this strategy is to better understand the research problems by converging both the detail of qualitative research and descriptive data trends from quantitative research. The emphasis of this research will be on the qualitative exploration of the CSR communication process between the GLCs and their consumers. This research collected information on the communication means, strategies and eventualities from GLCs' senior management involved with CSR, through phone and/ or email interview. Simultaneously, a quantitative online self-

administered survey questionnaire targeted at the GLCs consumer is used to reconfirm GLCs practices on their CSR communication efforts.

Scope of study

This research focuses on five GLCs taken from a population of thirty-three GLCs listed on the PCG website. GLCs are thought to incorporate more CSR compared to other companies due to their inclination to provide socially oriented goods. This includes companies that the Malaysian government controls directly as its agencies such as Khazanah Nasional, Employees Provident Fund and Bank Negara Malaysia. As for the consumers, those consuming from the GLCs and are based in the Klang Valley were targeted. The rationale to this scope of study is elaborated further in chapter 3.

Delimitation of scope

This study confined itself to researching GLCs and its' consumers. This is due to the nature and position of the GLCs in Malaysia. Understanding the government's intervening position of CSR in the country, this study assumes that stakeholders may expect GLCs to be more socially responsible more than non-GLCs. Consumers, thought to be one of the most important groups of stakeholders for the GLCs (this is elaborated further in Chapter 2) is approached for this study to test and validate the qualitative explorations on the GLCs CSR communication.

Limitations of the study

Firstly, as this research project only covered several GLCs, limitations and issues will exist with respect to the "status of knowledge" (Tranfield, 2002). The purposive sampling procedure of the qualitative interview decreases the generalisability of findings. This study will not be generalisable to all GLCs due to its different business nature and areas that will require different CSR communication strategies. Even when the findings presented and discussed may seem logical and generalisable, it is important to remember that the knowledge generated is purely "local knowledge". In order to generate "universal knowledge", a further series of studies would need to be undertaken. In addition, as this was predominantly a qualitative study, the findings could be subject to other interpretations. The survey questionnaire may prove to be limiting in the sense that the questionnaire eliminates and disqualifies respondents who have not heard of CSR. These respondents may not have known or heard of the term but am still aware of the phenomenon and therefore, be able to offer opinions on the matter.

Definitions

Consumer according to the Consumer Protection Act of 1999, means a person who acquires or uses goods or services ordinarily acquired for either personal, domestic consumption or acquiring or using the goods or services, primarily for the purpose of resupplying them in trade or consuming them in the course of a manufacturing process. The term "consumer" is preferred to "customer" as the latter suggests some form of legal relationship with the company. "Consumer" on the other hand denotes a relationship with the company that is more diffused and real in its impacts (Bowd, 2003).

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environment concerns in the business operations and interaction with

their stakeholders on a voluntary basis (European Commission, 2009). A more thorough discussion of the term is continued in Chapter 2.

Government-Linked Company (GLC) is defined as a corporate entity that may be private or public listed on a stock exchange; have a primary commercial objective and where the Malaysian government has a direct controlling stake (Khazanah Nasional Berhad, 2009). This means the government has the ability to make designation appointments; make major decisions on contract awards, strategy, restructuring and financing, acquisitions and divestments for GLCs, either directly or through Government-Linked Investment Companies (GLIC).

Information gap refers to a phenomenon which happens when there is no or limited exchange of information and so, contingent is left with no or minimal knowledge on a subject.

Relevant and timely information refers to real time data disseminated in a prompt manner.

Successful stakeholder engagement refers to the ability of the company to connect and get together with the stakeholders to agree on codes of conduct.

Outline of the research project chapters

Chapter 2 explores and analyses the literature on CSR with references made to the GLCs, the scope of this study. The aim of this chapter is to draw insights on the theoretical and empirical aspects of the term CSR and business approach, the stakeholder approach and resource-based view is presented. This is continued with an overview of the CSR communication process, with an emphasis on three communication strategies by Morsing & Schultz (2006). The chapter ends with an insight on consumers' CSR perceptions, concerns and expectations as well as including them into the companies' CSR measures presuming a successful stakeholder engagement.

Chapter 3 explains the methodology adopted for this study. This research paper takes the mixed methods approach. The concurrent triangulation strategy is adopted, meaning the mixing and complementary styles of qualitative and quantitative styles of research run simultaneously. This generates data that results in a fuller and more comprehensive outcome, as both methods offset the weaknesses of the other. The use of both qualitative interview and quantitative survey questionnaire is to allow the quantitative data to reconfirm the predominant qualitative explorations of the study. The qualitative method permits an in-depth exploration of the five selected GLCs, where as the quantitative method provides the opportunity to gather data from two hundred GLC consumers.

Chapter 4 reports the findings following the data collection. This chapter focuses on the findings of the phone and/ or email interview along with the GLCs' consumer survey.

Chapter 5 analyses, discusses and makes comparison of the findings from this study and the literatures reviewed. This chapter also concludes the findings and highlights implications of this study. Lastly, the chapter includes recommendations for future research in this area.

Chapter summary

GLCs today are generally compelled to do CSR and make efforts to commit themselves and apply CSR as an integrated part of their business, especially due to its service orientation. The fact that the stakeholder group of consumers is becoming more and more powerful indicates that GLCs need to constantly keep them informed by communicating their CSR efforts (Podnar, 2008). Hence, this paper sees the need to investigate the efforts of GLCs CSR communication towards consumers as well as to validate the success of this process from the perspective of the consumers.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided into several sections, discussed in sequence to the arrangement of the research objectives and questions. First, a general view of the CSR perspective is presented, with links to the GLCs. As businesses increasingly recognise the broad duties of accountability implied by their stakeholders' (non financial) expectations, the role of CSR takes on increasing importance (Gray, Owen & Adams, 1996; McIntyre, 2003). The following section aims to formulate the theoretical framework of the study with two theories. The stakeholder approach, focusing specifically on consumers and the resource-based view (RBV) is put forth. Then, the following section demonstrates the importance of the communication process, through the means of communicating CSR and emphasis on CSR communication strategies by Morsing & Schultz (2006). Next, the information gap of the communication process as well as collection and communication of relevant and timely information is discussed. This is followed by an insight on understanding consumers' CSR perceptions, concerns and expectations as well as including them into companies' CSR measures presuming a successful stakeholder engagement.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

The concept of CSR discussed in this paper is based on the recognition that businesses are part of society, and that they have the potential to make a positive contribution in ways that are both good for business as well as social and environmental development. The field of CSR is seen as evolving, assuming different names such as corporate social responsiveness (in the 1970s) and corporate social performance (in the 1980s) (Carroll, 1991; Spence, Coles & Harris, 2001; Vos, 2003; Sweeney & Coughlan, 2008). Nevertheless, this research paper does not attempt to elicit a "right" or universal term or definition for CSR although it is acknowledged that all terms come down to a basic notion of a business role in the attempt of doing some "good" for society. On this note, the term "CSR" is purposely and continued to be used throughout this paper as the scope of this study is on the GLCs.

As described in Chapter 1, CSR means going beyond legal obligation and thus is by nature voluntary. Williams' (2007) describes CSR as "responsible businesses going beyond what is required by law to make a positive impact on society and environment through their management, operations and products and through their engagement with stakeholders including employees, consumers, investors, communities and suppliers". CSR Asia's (2007) definition differs from Williams' definition as it implies CSR to be a long-term initiative as it encompasses business decision making related to "operate in a sustainable manner".

The "Silver Book" is published by the PCG and contains the CSR guidelines for GLCs. PCG (2007) offers the official holistic definition:

> The Silver Book takes a strategic perspective on contributions to society. Social contributions are not just about philanthropy or meeting an external set of compliance criteria on CSR. Rather, they are about creating sustainable benefits to society as part of making a business competitive over longer term. Done right, such contributions enhance brand image and increase the ability to attract and retain the best workforce, translating into better client satisfaction, improved customer loyalty and ultimately, stronger financial performance.

Such activities are generally voluntary, although some business may undertake CSR to respond to, or fulfill the demands of stakeholders (PCG, 2007).

Government-Linked Companies (GLCs) and CSR

Being increasingly important as a strategy towards sustainable business development, studies have found that GLCs are a good performer in CSR practices, as they have a significant high policy adopted for workplace, aimed to improve their stakeholder living and to ensure nation development (Siwar & Siti Haslina, n.d.). This means CSR for GLCs is held as the principle of giving back to the society by contributing profits generated for nation enhancement. In this accord, the government should embrace the CSR agenda as it (a) enhances international competitiveness, (b) addresses current gaps in government capacity, (c) creates synergies that use the complementary competencies of government, private and civil society actors to achieve common goals, and (d) ensures that CSR practice is in line with national policy goals (Twose & Rao, 2003).

GLCs are required to incorporate more social responsibility compared to other companies given GLCs proclivity to provide socially oriented or less-than-commercial public goods and not merely focus on profits (Putrajaya committee, 2005; PCG, 2006). This is in accordance to section 4.2 of the PCG policy guidelines, noting that the government is the default provider of such public goods through its GLCs. The majority of GLCs that register positive economic profits, reports their contributions under four core themes: (a) human capital development and education, (b) community involvement, including disaster relief and voluntary support services, (c) environmental protection, and (d) employee welfare (CSR Malaysia, 2009).

The Silver Book

"The Silver Book: Achieving Value through Social Contribution," launched in September 2006, is a guide for GLCs on the methods of clarifying and managing social responsibility (PCG, 2007). It is one of the ten initiatives to drive and enhance the performance of GLCs by the government. GLCs are advised to "develop and implement communications and reporting programmes to communicate their contributions to society on an annual basis" (Lopez, 2010). The book outlines principles and guidelines for GLCs to create benefits to society as an integral part of their corporate strategy and core business.

Theoretical framework

Stakeholder approach

Carroll (1979, 2004; as cited in CSR Quest, 2010) attempted to incorporate the notion of stakeholders popularised by Freeman (1984) into his widely cited four layers labelled economic, legal and discretionary responsibilities (Aupperle, Carroll & Hatfiled, 1985; Crane & Matten, 2004). The stakeholder approach to CSR viewed companies as "a set of interrelated, explicit or implicit connections between individuals and or groups of individuals" (Rowley, 1997) that have a "stake" in the organisation or more clearly "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of an organisation's objective" (Freeman, 1984). Freeman's definition stresses that the influence between different stakeholders and the company is a two-way process, as opposed to the Rowley's definition that suggests stakeholders as merely having an interest in the company.

The business economic approach overlooked the fact that in the effort to maximise profits, companies do affect multiple stakeholders (Freeman, 1984). Company stakeholders could include the government, the labour unions, employees,

shareholders, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the consumers, partners/ suppliers, researchers and the academia. The stakeholder approach distinguishes between primary (such as employees, consumers and suppliers) and secondary (such as the media and NGOs) stakeholders according to their relative impact on the company (Clarkson, 1995). More relevant towards the theme of this paper is a definition by Gray, Kouchy & Lavers (1995, p. 53), asserting that:

> ...The companies continued existence requires the support of the stakeholders, their approval must be sought and the activities of the company adjusted to gain that approval. The more powerful the stakeholders, the more company must adapt. CSR communication through CSR reporting is thus seen as part of the dialogue between the company and its stakeholders.

CSR is intended to be more about how companies conduct themselves in relation to "stakeholders" (Economist.com, 2005).

In this sense, the stakeholder approach assesses the role of actors in the company's environment and companies have come to realise that meeting stakeholder perceptions, concerns and expectations is as necessary a condition for sustainability as the need to achieve overall strategic business objectives (The Free Library, n.d.). Freeman argues that stakeholder management is central to putting any conception of CSR into practice. It advocates that companies are responsible to pursue outcomes that optimise results and address the interests of the various stakeholders, not just those of the owners and/ or shareholders, because they make other, non-monetary investments, albeit at varying levels depending on the companies' objectives (Freeman, 1984; Key & Popkin, 1998; Boehm, 2002).

Consumers.

This paper, leading to the focus of the research questions, takes the stand that when it comes to CSR; consumers typically have strong relationships with companies (Friedman & Miles, 2006), and are thus one of the most important groups of stakeholders of companies (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Podnar & Jančič, 2006). This is confirmed by a survey developed by Nottingham University Business School where Malaysian respondents rank stakeholders in their order of

importance (see Figure 1) (Securities Commission, 2004). The fact that customers come first, followed by shareholders and employees suggests that Malaysian respondents recognise the importance of satisfying customers ahead of shareholders. This fares along the lines of Drucker's (1993) argument that the purpose of business is to create satisfied consumers, and that doing this successfully, will guarantee the long-term future of the company.

Figure 1: Stakeholders Ranked in Terms of Importance
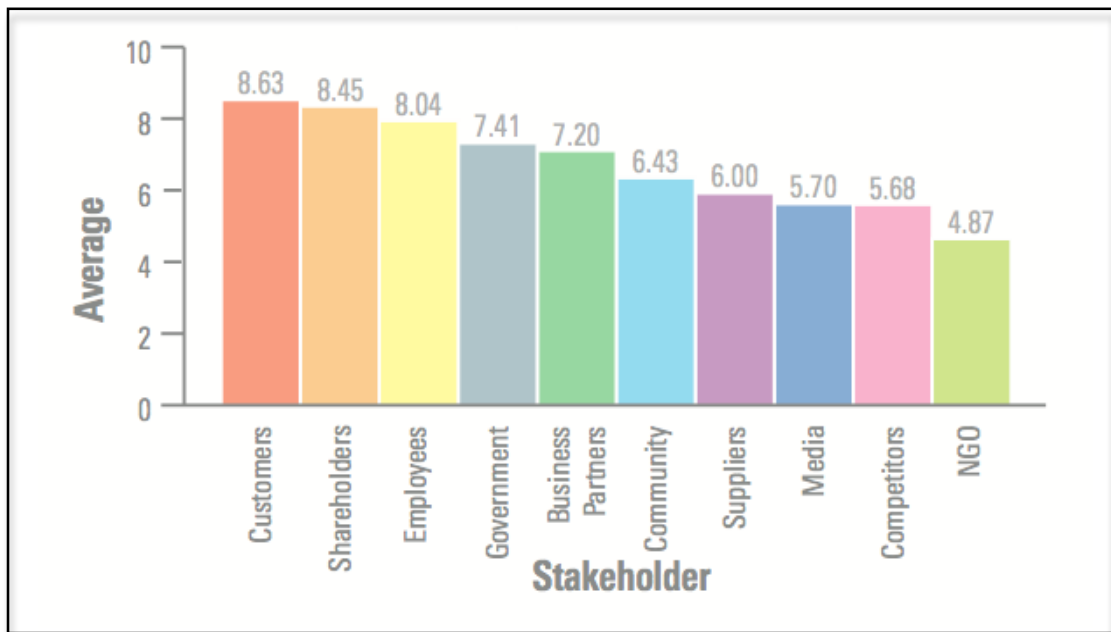
Note. From Securities Commission (2004). The average shown is based on a 10-point Likert Scale.

Given the increasing consumer and stakeholder expectations of CSR as well as the pressures for companies to behave and communicate in a responsible manner, it is important to understand that company's behaviour influences those expectations. Furthermore, Riddleberger & Hittner (2009) also stated that there is a need for companies to understand consumers' specific sustainability concerns to meet their objectives or educate consumers about why the company thinks its objectives should also be theirs. A study by Mohr, Webb & Harris (2001) found that in terms of CSR, consumers could be categorised as: pre-contemplators, contemplators, action group and maintainers. They found most consumers indicated a desire for more information on CSR of companies.

Resource-based view

Companies engaging in CSR strategically can be examined through the resource-based view (RBV), which is at first established by Wernerfelt (1984) and subsequently developed by Barney (1991). Branco & Rodrigues (2006) contends that RBV is useful to understand why companies engage in CSR activities and communication. This theory inferred that companies are a platform of varied resources and capabilities that are mobile across the companies (McWilliams, Siegel & Wright, 2006). Barney (1991) maintains that if these resources are valuable, rare, imitable and non substitutable; they can constitute a source of sustainable competitive advantage. In the same note, Porter & Kramer (2006) too perceives CSR as a source of opportunity, innovation and a competitive advantage (EUMCCI, n.d.).

The first theoretical paper to apply RBV to CSR was Hart (1995), which asserted that CSR be considered a form of strategic investment. From a resource-based perspective CSR is seen as providing internal or external benefits, or both. Since CSR is about how companies manage the business to produce an overall positive impact to benefit people, communities and society, it can be considered a business operating philosophy where company uses its resources and capabilities to benefit of the society within the market it operates to enhance the value of its intangible assets, namely goodwill and loyalty (ISO Strategic Advisory Group on Corporate Social Responsibility, 2004; Baker, 2010). Substantially, the greater the value of company's intangible asset, the higher the value of the brand.

In effect, investing in CSR activities and communication also has important consequences on the creation or depletion of fundamental intangible resources such as corporate reputation (Baker, 2010). Baker (2010) added that companies with good CSR reputation might improve relations with external stakeholders, attract better employees or increase current employees' motivation, morale, commitment and loyalty to the firm. A wholesome CSR strategy reflects well on their reputation and is related to the share price and brand value.

In any case, for companies to successfully operationalise, start and sustain their CSR efforts, companies must align their vision and mission with the CSR policies (Chan, 2010; Nuraihan Hamid, 2010). There must also be continuous perseverance

and commitment to work on CSR, and communicating those CSR policies to stakeholders. Ultimately, companies should identify their CSR initiatives as a natural extension to their core business (Chan, 2010). In the effort of engaging CSR strategically, stakeholders have an important role to play as they are the ones to whom companies should be responsible for. However, as argued by the European Commission (2009) in its communication concerning CSR, if CSR is to continue to serve its purpose, strong lines of communication between companies and stakeholders have to be created.

Means of communicating CSR

Husted (2000) and Economist.com (2008) asserted that the motivation for CSR communication is most typically to influence relevant stakeholders and their expectations as part of maximising their business performance as stated in the RBV. It is expected that being a good corporate citizen results in better reputation. This positive reputation is likely to protect the company in times of crisis (Husted, 2000), since stakeholders will be more willing to trust companies that have already demonstrated social responsibility in the past. All these suggest that companies must communicate to their stakeholders.

One of the few researches on CSR communication targeted on consumers is by Schrader, Hansen & Halbes (2006). Their research on consumer-oriented CSR communications referred to all communication activities that are targeted specifically at consumers and deals with corporate social and/ or ecological responsibility. Traditionally, companies are required to report to their shareholders at least once a year, and the main means to do this traditionally is the annual report (Barsoumian, 2008; Sweeney & Coughlan, 2008). The annual report is the means of communication of messages within independent systems although there is an increasing dissatisfaction with traditional financial reporting and its ability to provide stakeholders with sufficient information on a company's ability to create wealth (Sweeney & Coughlan, 2008; Waller & Lanis, n.d.). Research in this areas

noted that the management controls the process and as such the legitimacy of the communication scope may be biased and often are not based on quantifiable data (Owen, Swift, Humphrey & Bowerman, 2000; Birth, Illia, Lurati, & Zamparini, 2006).

While companies are increasingly using a variety of alternative reporting media to report their CSR activities including stand-alone environmental, social or sustainability reports, newspaper advertisements, company related press releases about CSR and company related CSR communication on the Internet, in most cases, if not all, the annual report is the only document that is automatically sent to shareholders by all companies (Schrader, Hansen & Halbes, 2006; Adam, Hill & Roberts, 1998, as cited in Sweeney & Coughlan, 2008). The annual report remains the main communication method used by companies to disclose CSR information (O'Dwyer, 2003, as cited in Sweeney & Coughlan, 2008), though increasingly this report itself is also spreading via web-based means to communicate their CSR initiatives to their stakeholders (Sweeney & Coughlan, 2008; Pataki, Gaspar & Szanto, 2009).

Schrader, Hansen & Halbes (2006) affirmed that the means to communicate CSR on a company level specifically to consumers through corporate advertisements and participation in CSR ratings is a recent development. Companies have been found using different communication tools such as advertising, public relations, publicity, direct marketing, sponsorship and word-of-mouth as the main methods of communicating their CSR activities. McIntyre (2003) argues that methods typically associated with "puffery" and "spin", that is, advertising and public relations, are the least effective in communicating CSR. Advertising is likely to produce a negative response and gifts to charity may not be perceived as positive. In terms of communicating information specifically about ethical products and services, information needs to be provided in a timely manner, as consumer consider purchase decisions. One of the most effective methods of communicating CSR is through word-of-mouth from community–based programs (Stuart, n.d.).

CSR Communication strategies

This section presents three different types of CSR communication strategies that are used in the formulation of interview and survey questions, data collection as well as data analysis. GLCs' CSR efforts do not fall exclusively under one of these strategies. However, one thing to note is that an important communicator of CSR information are companies itself. The effectiveness of communication between entities and the validity of the message transmission is affected by the following qualities of the message: (a) truth (the objective truth of the propositions made), (b) sincerity (the subjective truth of the propositions), (c) understandability (the comprehensiveness of the propositions), and (d) appropriateness (the extent to which the propositions comply with norms) (Reynolds & Yuthas, 2008).

Morsing & Schultz (2006) categorised CSR communication strategies (see table 1): (a) the stakeholder information strategy, (b) the stakeholder response strategy, and (c) the stakeholder involvement strategy. The different aspects are mainly based on the kinds of relationships companies establish with their stakeholders, and the general manner of engagement as well as the participatory action that ensues. The communication relates to the contribution that on-going dialogue between the two parties can have on the initiation, establishment and maintenance of a CSR programme and as part of a CSR report.

The main differences between the three strategies relate to the direction and symmetry of the flow of information and to the differences of stakeholder-company engagement and interaction. The "sense-giving" refers to one-way public communication, while the "sense-making" refers to a more collaborative and dialogue based interaction where feedback and subsequent reflection on the information is essential (Morsing & Schultz, 2006). To be more precise, sense-making is referred to as "trying to figure out what the others want and ascribe meaning to it", while sense-giving is the "attempt to influence the way another party understand or make sense".

Grunig & Hunt's (1984) public relations theory is also infused in these strategies. These scholars argued that 50% of all companies practiced one-way communication (in terms of public information) to their stakeholders, and only

35% practiced two-way communication (in terms of either two-way asymmetric or two-way symmetric communication). In a nutshell, the "stakeholder information strategy", similar to Grunig & Hunt's public information model, communication is always one-way, from the company to its stakeholders. Communication is basically for informing and disseminating information. Companies adopting this strategy engage in active press relations programmes and concurrently produce information and news for the media, as well as a variety of brochures, pamphlets, magazines, facts, numbers and figures to inform the general public.

The stakeholder response strategy is based on a "two-way asymmetric" communication model, whereby communication flows to and from the public. This model assumes an imbalance from the effect of public relations in favour of the company, and the company does not change as a result of the public relations. Rather, the company attempts to change public attitudes and behaviour. This conspicuously differentiates the two-way symmetric model of the stakeholder involvement strategy, whereby a persuasive dialogue with and from stakeholders is assumed (Morsing & Schultz, 2006).

Table 1: CSR Communication Strategies

	The stakeholder information strategy	The stakeholder response strategy	The stakeholder involvement strategy
Communication ideal (Grunig & Hunt, 1984)	Public information, one-way communication	Two-way asymmetric communication	Two-way symmetric communication
Communication ideal: Sense-making and sense-giving	Sense-giving	Sense-making ↓ Sense-giving	Sense-making ↕ Sense-giving: in iterative progressive processes
Stakeholders	Request more information on corporate CSR efforts	Must be reassured that the company is ethical and socially responsible	Co-construct corporate CSR efforts
Stakeholder role	Stakeholder influence: support or oppose	Stakeholders respond to corporate actions	Stakeholders are involved, participate and suggest corporate actions
Identification of CSR focus	Decided by top management	Decided by top management	Negotiated concurrently in interaction with stakeholders
Strategic communication task	Inform stakeholders about favourable corporate CSR decisions and actions	Investigated in feedback via opinion polls, dialogue, networks and partnerships	Invite and establish frequent, systematic and pro-active dialogue with stakeholders, i.e. opinion makers, corporate critics, the media, etc.
Corporate communication department's task	Design appealing concept message	Demonstrate to stakeholders how the company integrates their concerns	Build relationships
Third-party endorsement of CSR initiatives	Unnecessary	Identify relevant stakeholders Integrated element of surveys, rankings and opinion polls	Stakeholders are themselves involved in corporate CSR messages

Note. From Morsing & Schultz (2006).

Information gap in the communication process

Riddleberger & Hittner (2009) stated that in the Asia Pacific region (scored worst than Western European and North American Businesses) more than half of the companies have yet to conduct any research on understanding consumer's CSR perceptions, concerns and expectations. In the study, nearly three quarter of the companies claim they have a moderate understanding of their consumers' CSR perceptions, concerns and expectations while nearly one-fifth has started researching consumer concern on this topic in 2009 (Riddleberger & Hittner, 2009). This disconnect would mean companies are missing out on knowledge that could improve their businesses and lead to new opportunities (Riddleberger & Hittner, 2009). This information gap between the companies and consumers suggest that most companies are either simply confident of their ability to meet regulatory requirements or guessing what consumers expects (Pohle & Hittner, 2008). Deegan & Rankin (1996, as cited from Chong & Wad, n.d., p. 3) stated that a breach of social contract, which means, the failure to comply with societal expectations might lead to a revocation of the contract. As a result, companies will cease to trade profitably, lose its consumers, destroy its shareholders' wealth, or may even cease to exist eventually if companies do not start to communicate accordingly to their consumers on CSR.

Collecting and communicating relevant and timely information

Due to critical stakeholder attention to CSR issues, companies are required to communicate their CSR actions in response to stakeholder concerns or to involve stakeholders in the "sense-giving and sense-making processes" of CSR (Morsing & Schultz, 2006). Industry practitioner, Thöny confirmed, "companies engage in CSR activities because generally they aim to be evaluated favourably" (EUMCCI, n.d., p. 107). The value of communicating CSR messages to the stakeholders as in

RBV is believed to include a favourable attitude towards their products and services, greater customer loyalty, better corporate reputation and increased protection from the negative impact of a corporate crisis.

Consistent with a stakeholder approach on CSR, findings show that there is a significant difference between how companies in different industries are communicating on CSR (Sweeney & Coughlan, 2008). The case in Malaysia is that communicating CSR has been made compulsory for PLCs (Bursa Malaysia Berhad, 2009). However, there are standpoints that these CSR communication contents may merely be to satisfy the measurements put up by Bursa Malaysia and that companies are not exactly maintaining their CSR initiatives as they have communicated. Fernandez (2009) argued that "while Malaysian companies has started to publicly communicate on their CSR initiatives, our Indonesian counterparts are already implementing and attaining CSR goals". Rahman & Nur Widyasari (2008) asserted that, in Indonesia, the communication motivation in CSR did not only served the interest of the shareholders but also stakeholders such as the Indonesian government, labour union, employees and the surrounding community.

Schrader, Hansen & Halbes (2006) found that the under-represented facilitation to these communication efforts could be due to poor allocation of communication budget, which leads to the poor availability of basic CSR information. As stakeholders depend on companies' willingness to disclose their behaviour voluntarily, they have difficulties in getting the necessary information of these company's activities. Welford (2009) asserted that one of the problems is that companies fail to see CSR as an investment. Therefore, companies fail to think about the returns on investment and real strategic advantage that good CSR practices can bring them if they are effectively communicated.

On a different note, there are companies in Malaysia who undertake a lot of good CSR programmes but do not communicate them effectively (Welford, 2009). Stuart's (n.d.) research found that one of the difficulties in communicating CSR messages primarily is because many stakeholders are suspicious and cynical about the intentions of companies who advertised that they are socially responsible and this affects their receptivity to any planned communication. On the contrary, some did a lot on CSR but did not report it, which meant missing out on great

opportunities to build trust, reputation and brands. Although, a CSR paradox was suggested from Stuart's (n.d.) research that companies already perceived as socially responsible have little to gain from planned communication of this fact, whereas companies that have poor a record in the area of CSR are likely to benefit from a well planned communication plan.

Research also indicated that the companies most active within CSR are also the most criticised, whereas companies doing the least are correspondingly the least criticised (Morsing, Schultz & Nielsen, 2008). Consumer research highlights that consumers may leave if they perceive that corporate CSR initiatives are achieved at the expense of product quality (Sen & Bhattacharaya, 2001). Similarly, consumers may not want to engage with companies if they perceive that its CSR efforts do not enhance its corporate abilities (Sen & Bhattacharaya, 2001).

With regards to communicating CSR, Stuart (n.d.) claimed that there are four outcomes to its company's behaviour, in terms of credibility: (a) if a company says it is socially responsible and behaves that way there will be a positive outcome, (b) if a company says it is socially responsible and does not behave that way there will be a negative outcome, (c) if a company does not say it is socially responsible and behaves that way the outcome will be neutral or positive, and (d) if a company does not say it is socially responsible and does not behave that way, the outcome will be neutral. The implication from this and previously mentioned research is that CSR communication requires consistency.

Consumers' perceptions, concerns and expectations

Following the stakeholder approach, businesses "…do not and cannot treat all stakeholders equally or communicate with them with the same intensity" (Podnar & Jančič, 2006). Jawahar & McLauglin (2001; as cited in Yusoff & Lehmann, 2006) argued that companies are likely to use different strategies to deal with different stakeholders and these strategies may change overtime. On the other hand, certain stakeholder group can be more effective than others in demanding for

CSR information. These stands may inherit Ullman's (1985) argument that the stakeholder engagement depends on corporate strategic approach, which is defined as "the mode of response of a company's key decision makers towards social demands". The corporate strategic approach may either be an active or a passive posture. An active posture seek to influence stakeholders, while a passive posture is when there is no business initiatives on either continuous monitoring activities on stakeholders or stakeholders' optimal strategy (Ullman, 1985).

Understanding consumers' perceptions, concerns and expectations

Generally, consumers could use their power to control, affect or even influence companies CSR direction by rewarding companies with a good CSR performance and punish or ignore companies which perform badly (Gray, Owen & Maunders, 1987; Schrader, Hansen & Halbes, 2006). The power of consumers may take the form of command over limited resources such as (a) finances and labour, (b) access to influence media, (c) ability to legislate against companies, or (d) ability to influence companies' consumption of goods and services. Thus, the more critical the stakeholders' control is, the more likely companies will satisfy stakeholders' demand (Ullman, 1985). In this regards, GLCs are compelled to be aware and must make efforts to understand their consumers.

Including stakeholder perceptions, concerns and expectations in companies CSR measures

Following the previous section, GLCs must develop meaningful dialogues with their consumers, consulting them to determine their expectations, perceptions, concerns and views on the company's performance. This is so companies will be able to work towards meeting those expectations. A sustainable development officer at Shell states "stakeholder engagement is about two-way dialogue and agreed actions. It includes involving stakeholders in the identification of potential

impacts and issues, and collaborative development of possible solutions to these and their subsequent implementation and monitoring" (Hess, 2008). Shell even states that if certain stakeholder groups do not have the capability of interacting meaningfully with Shell, that Shell should support the building of that capacity (Shell, 2009 as cited in Hess, 2008). Podnar (2008) stressed that consumers wants to be informed about CSR practices because they often find it difficult to determine if company's operations meet their standards for CSR.

The exact contribution of CSR to a company as well as to its stakeholders should be measurable in order to be evaluated correctly. The difficult task of measuring the results of CSR has been a matter of significant research both by academics and by practitioners as social aspects are regarded to be too "soft" in nature, making it difficult to quantify (Panayiotou, Aravossis & Moschou, 2009). This is a contributing factor that has deterred companies' from embracing CSR, as there are no fixed formulae to measure tangible results from CSR investments (The Star, 2007). If there were evidences that can prove the assumed links between CSR and the achievement of corporate goals (e.g. profitability, sustainability, reputation or branding), this would be the "best and most effective argument to encourage the uptake of CSR" (Commission of the European Communities, 2002).

Successful stakeholder engagement

It must be remembered that CSR programme is only as good as its ability to connect with stakeholders, that CSR communications must be fine tuned to stakeholder needs and interests if the engagement process is to take root and yield positive results (Edelman, 2007). Economist.com (2008) stressed that stakeholder engagement, a striking trend in CSR is getting together to agree on codes of conduct. While these stakeholder-dependant attributes determine the interaction process and the subsequent established relationship between a stakeholder and a company; on the other side of this relationship, there are certain managerial activities stemming from the companies that can also influence this relationship; participation, dialogue and involvement (see communication strategies). These

three have been outlined as being of key importance in stakeholder engagement and subsequent relationship building, that companies need to undertake and promote in order to achieve long-term stakeholder management related success and successful communication efforts (Morsing & Schultz, 2006).

Yap (2008) stated, "for stakeholders to support a company's CSR initiatives, they must feel that the initiatives meet their personal objectives and interest". Companies must engage with their stakeholders and ensure that its CSR activities are not just in line with the business objectives but also suit the environment it operates in. For example, a company's social and environmental impacts, as well as its treatment of employees across the supply chain, feed directly into stakeholder perceptions, concerns and expectations. This is a matter of trust and over the past few years, it has become increasingly clear that trust is critical to market performance and shareholder value (Edelman, 2007).

Obviously, in bringing about social change in sustainability, mutual accountability between societies and companies is needed. In short, a more collaborative relationship that allows each part to reach a shared understanding and thrive. Kaptein (2007) noted that in these engagements, the importance of transparency is acknowledged and already companies are shown to increasingly take measures to enhance transparency while communicating with their stakeholders about their social performance. Transparency is mentioned as a social responsibility in 55% of the business codes of the largest 200 companies in the world (Kaptein, 2004).

The means of communication is one way consumers can use to decide whether companies are adequately receptive to their concerns. In addition, it can serve as input for dialogue, apart from dissemination of information between company and stakeholders. In a KPMG survey of large companies in the United States, they found that in 2005 only 32% of companies sought feedback from stakeholders on their social report (Hess, 2008). Although, there were attempts to communicate with their stakeholders, only 8% publicly responded to any feedback they received.

Chapter summary

The motivation for the GLCs to communicate CSR information to their most significant stakeholder, the consumers, ultimately can maximise their business performances, as in the RBV. The strategy and means of doing so can prove to be a significant factor in the CSR communication process. This chapter has presented the context of this study in attempt to undertake this research's ROs and RQs.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter provides an idea and understanding of how this research is conducted in order to gather data and information. It discusses the mixed-methods concurrent triangulation strategy of this study, which implies collecting and analysing qualitative and quantitative data concurrently within this one study. This descriptive and exploratory study uses a triangulation of predominantly qualitative methods as well as quantitative methods in an effort to increase the validity of the study by comparing multiple forms of data and seeking convergence in the findings (Denzin, 1978; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Teddlie & Tashakkori (2009) affirmed that mixed methods sampling techniques involve the selection of units or cases for research study using both probability sampling and purposive sampling strategies. The background of this study was formed with a literature review and primary data was collected through semi-structured interviews with GLCs senior management involved with CSR and distributed online self-administered survey questionnaires to GLC's consumer. This mixed methods approach will allow the quantitative data to build on, refine and extend the qualitative findings (Creswell, 2008).

Mixed methods designs

In the last twenty years, more social and behavioural sciences researches have been using mixed methods designs for their studies (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The evolution of the mixed method design arose from the field of psychology and in the multitrait-multimethod matrix of Campbell & Fiske (1959) to interest in converging different quantitative and qualitative data sources (Jick, 1979) and on to the expanded reasons and procedures for mixing methods (as cited in Cresswell, 2003). By definition, mixed methods is a procedure where the researcher collects and analyses data, integrates the findings, and draw inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the research problem (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2003; Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). This study uses Creswell's (2008) guideline on the specific steps typically undertaken by researchers when employing the mixed methods study:

Figure 2: Steps in the Process of Conducting a Mixed Methods Study

Step 4. Develop Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods Research Questions

Step 3. Identify the Data Collection Strategy and Type of Design

Step 5. Collect Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Step 2. Identify a Rationale for a Mixed Methods Study

Step 6. Analyse Data Separately or Concurrently

Step 1. Determine if a Mixed Methods Study is Feasible

Step 7. Write the Report as One- or Two- Phase Study

Note. From Creswell (2008).

The rationale for triangulating both kinds of data, qualitative and quantitative, within this one study is grounded in the fact that all research methods have limitations. This is used as a means to offset the weaknesses inherent within one method with the strengths of the other method. This methodological triangulation as termed by Denzin (1978) will help neutralise the biases inherent in an individual method, thereby enhancing the study's reliability (Sriramesh, Ng, Soh & Luo, 2007).

Concurrent triangulation strategy

Creswell (2003) identified the six major mixed methods model, which include three concurrent and three sequential designs. The concurrent triangulation strategy approach (see figure 3) happening in one phase of the study is the most familiar of the six and is adopted in this study. Ideally, the priority would be equal between the two methods, but in this research the priority is given the qualitative approach due to the nature of the research questions. The quantitative approach is used to confirm or cross-validate the qualitative findings within this single study (Wass & Wells, 1994; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). This strategy integrates the results of the two methods during the interpretation phase. This interpretation can either note the convergence of the findings as a way to strengthen the knowledge claims of the study or explain any lack of convergence that may result.

Figure 3: Concurrent Triangulation Strategy
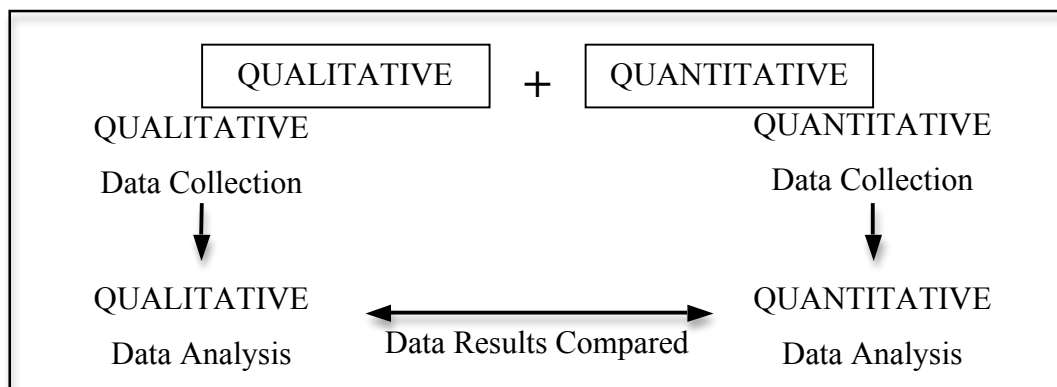
Note. From Creswell (2003). A "+" indicates a concurrent form of data collection; A "→" indicates a sequential form of data collection.

The strengths and weaknesses of this mixed-methods design have been widely discussed in the literature (Creswell, 2003). This traditional mixed methods model is advantageous because it is familiar to most researchers and can result in validated and substantial findings. In addition, the concurrent data collection results in a shorter data collection time period as compared to one of the sequential approaches. This model also has limitation as it requires effort and expertise to adequately study a phenomenon with two separate methods.

Qualitative method

As mentioned, the main type of research undertaken in this paper is qualitative. Generally, qualitative researchers rely extensively on in-depth interview (also known as semi-structured interview) (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). This method is chosen as a means to gather information because they are more appropriate for complex situations; useful to collect in-depth information, the collection information can be supplemented and it enables complex questions to be better explained and expanded during the interview according to the receipt and response of the interviewee (Barsoumian, 2008). This method is used to investigate RQ1, RQ2, RQ3, RQ4 and RQ5. The basic research consisted of gathering information from a variety of primary and secondary sources of data and combining both types leading up to the findings of the study. The research tools utilised for the secondary sources is the literature review, GLCs CSR collateral materials available on the Internet and any other CSR information forwarded by the GLCs.

The semi-structured interview adopted in this study is used to conduct discussions not only to reveal and understand the "what" and the "how" but also to place more emphasis on exploring the "why" (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003). Biggam (2008) observed that in general, quantitative research answers the how questions, whereas the why questions are left to qualitative research. This method is suitable for descriptive and exploratory study such as this one as semi-structured interviews according to Robson (2002, p. 59) can be helpful to "find out what is happening

and to seek new insights" as well as to understand the relationships between variables (Saunders et al., 2003).

Denscombe (2003) noted that this interview method tends to produce non-standard responses understanding the relatively open format. There are disadvantages to this method as well. The quality of the data might not be consistent throughout all the interviews since it depends on the personal interaction achieved as well as the ability of the interviewer to probe for questions and subsequently get answers. There is also the possibility of interviewee bias as well as the introduction of bias from the interviewer (Barsoumian, 2008). Nevertheless, this research method was deemed the most appropriate for the study. Conscious efforts were made to minimise the possible negative outcomes mentioned above, by careful phrasing of questions, and avoiding leading the answers.

Population, sampling frame and the sample

Teddlie & Tashakkori (2009) affirmed that mixed methods sampling techniques involve the selection of units or cases for research study using both probability sampling and purposive sampling strategies. Qualitative research is often, but not always, exploratory in nature as it generates information about unknown aspects of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2003). Teddlie & Tashakkori (2009) stated that purposive sampling is typically associated with qualitative research and may be defined as selecting a relatively small number of units because they can provide particularly valuable information or have experienced the central phenomenon related to the research questions under examination. The best form of purposive sampling, generally preferred by qualitative researchers, is quota sampling but can also include convenience and snowball sampling (Riley, Wood, Clark, Wilkie & Szivas, 2000; Neuman, 2006). This study takes on convenience sampling and this may mean different things to different researchers. Although straightforwardly, convenience sampling means quite literally taking as a sample whoever is available to receive the administration of the interview questionnaire, primarily it is because in a more focused sense, convenience samples are purposive samples

that is selected to focus on particular issues (Riley, et al., 2000). Hence, being convenient as it meets the general parameters of this exploratory study's objectives.

In this qualitative phase, the population of this research is identified as all the thirty-three GLCs, listed on PCG website as at March 13, 2009. The sample of five GLCs is focused on and selected for this research. A sample in this regards is a "subset of the populations that is representative of the entire population" where the population is "a group or class of subjects, variables, concepts or phenomenon" (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). The actual name of the companies are withheld for their privacy and also due to the confidentiality directive set in the research project guidelines. However, a summary of each GLC's company profile including the list of the interviewees' designation (senior management in charge of CSR) in the company is listed in Appendix B. Additional data were provided through company collateral materials produced by the interviewees or retrieved from corporate websites and/ or press reports.

Interview design

The collection of primary data through semi-structured interviews allows for flexibility in terms of structure, contents and questions. There are altogether thirteen working questions (see Appendix C for the interview questionnaire) that were sent to the interviewee beforehand to the actual interview. The development of the interview questions followed suit the arrangement of the research objectives as well as literature and/ or theoretical framework. Attempts were made in the initial part of the interview to gather background information before delving into the study itself. The first two questions were asked to understand the GLCs perspective of CSR and the link of the Silver Book to their company. The following two questions looked into the variable of this study, which is the stakeholder (or stakeholders) of the company. The remaining questions are directly linked and expanded from this study's research objectives. One example where the interview question was formed through the literature discussed in Chapter 2, is whereby stakeholders depended on companies' willingness for voluntary social

disclosure. This led to the formation of this interview question 7e (see Appendix C), "Is the communication done on a prerequisite on voluntary basis?" The communication strategies presented in chapter 2 aided in the construction of question 6. Another example question derived also from the literature was to explore what was being practiced in the industry. The literature mentioned the difficulties in measuring CSR efforts and so prompting the question, "How do you measure the effectiveness of your company's CSR efforts" and "How does your company measure communication efforts in general" (interview question 11a and 11b).

Interview procedure

Interviews are generally pre-arranged and scheduled for a convenient time and location ensuring a high response rate (Denscombe, 2003; Neuman, 2006). In this study, the GLCs were contacted via email, furnished with a background summary on this research study and certification letter to confirm the researcher's position (see Appendix A). The contacts were acquired either through the researcher's personal network or contact found on GLCs' collateral materials as well as through the contact form on the GLCs' corporate website. Research proposals were forwarded to GLCs when requested. Ten GLCs were approached, but only five expressed interest although setting up a schedule to meet was unworkable due to the senior management's busy schedule in early 2011. There was no response from the remaining five GLCs. Due to the senior management's hectic schedules, the researcher resorted to phone and email interviews. These interviews were conducted over a span of one and half months, throughout the months of February and March 2011.

The researcher put up initial statements to GLCs that information collected was only for academic purposes and that company's identity will not be disclosed. For the email interviews (see Appendix D, F and H), the interviewees replied the questionnaire (which was forwarded earlier by the researcher) via email. When clarifications were needed, the researcher followed up via email or phone. In the

phone interviews, the researcher queried the interviewees (see Appendix E and G) following the list of interview questions. The nature of the questions and the ensuing discussion meant that data would be recorded and transcribed verbatim through note taking, along with voice recording of the conversation (with the permission of the interviewee) (Creswell, 2008). This is to ensure all verbal data is captured accurately to create a full record of the interview as a means of controlling bias as well as to produce reliable data for analysis. For the sake of maintaining reliability, the transcript of the conversation was forwarded back to the companies for validation of content conversation and to allow rectification of statements, which could have otherwise been interpreted wrongly due to the technical "noise" of the phone conversation recording.

It is important to note that the flow of interview may have varied from interview with different GLCs, depending on the direction of the answers given by the interviewee. The order of questions may vary or be omitted, modified, expanded and better articulated to the responsiveness level of the interviewee, given the specific organisational context that is encountered in relation to the research topic. This allowed the researcher to uncover the interviewee's views with respect on how the interviewee structures the responses. This method is based on assumption fundamental to qualitative research, that the interviewee's perspective on the phenomenon should unfold as the interviewee views it, not as the researcher views it (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

Quantitative method

Survey research is one of the most commonly used quantitative methods to explain a phenomenon analysed through a collection of numerical data (Mujis, 2004); Bobbit & Sullivan, 2005). Researchers in this aspect seek explanations and predictions that can be used as generalisations to the overall population or subject being studied. Questionnaires in this manner can be used for descriptive research such as this one enabling the researcher to identify and describe the variability in

different phenomena. For this research, this method will be used to investigate RQ6. Wimmer & Dominick (2003) stated that there are two major types of surveys, descriptive and analytical survey. The former type which is adopted is in this study is "an attempt to describe of document current conditions or attitude", while the latter is "an attempt to describe and explain why the situation exist".

Questionnaires are generally economical, comparatively costing lesser to other research methods such as focus groups and allows for distribution to large numbers of respondents in many locations considering the amount of information gathered, collected with relative ease from a variety of people (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). Since, questionnaires supply standardised answers, to the extent that all respondents are posed with exactly the same questions, there is no scope for the data to be affected by "interpersonal factors" (Denscombe, 2003). Pre-coded answers have an advantage for respondents, who, instead of needing to think of how to express ideas, are faced with easy task of picking the answers listed for them (Denscombe, 2003).

This on the other hand can also be frustrating for the respondents, deterring them from answering. This is one of the main disadvantages of the questionnaire, where inappropriate wording and placement could result in bias answers (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). Nevertheless, efforts were made to reduce the biasness through an open-ended question so respondents would be able to fill in comments or perspectives the researcher may have otherwise overlooked.

Population, sampling frame and the sample

Teddlie & Tashakkori (2009) stated that quantitative survey research is a systematic method for data collection and often involve probability sampling, with the goal of predicting population attributes or behaviours. In this regard, each individual has an equal probability of being selected and the sample can be generalised to the larger population. Respondents for this survey were selected via a multiple probability technique, involving a combination of two probability techniques performed in sequential order (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

First, cluster sampling, a type of probability sampling is chosen, as the researcher does not possess the complete list of the population, not feasibly allowing the researcher to select the respondent one at a time. In this case, the researcher wanted to generate more efficient probability sample online in terms of monetary and time resources. Instead of sampling individual units, which are geographically spread over great distances, the samples of GLC consumers are selected from the Klang Valley. This location was targeted to collect data from Malaysians or people in Malaysia who are most likely to be consuming either products or services from the listed GLCs through an online self-administered survey questionnaire (see Appendix I). Any possible sampling bias due to accessibility is also negligible, considering that the urban area i.e. Klang Valley has the highest internet penetration rate in the country of 123 per 100 households as reported in the last quarter of 2010 (Malaysia Communications and Multimedia Commission, 2010). Hence, sampling error is lowered in the sense of how much the sample will deviate from being representative of the population (Neuman, 2006).

From within each of the chosen groups, the researcher then selected stratified random samples (Biggam, 2008). This is to ensure respondents who participate in the survey have knowledge on GLCs and CSR, or otherwise is disqualified from participating in the survey. In this survey research, predetermined questions are presented in a prearranged order to the sample, representative of the said population. This research targeted two hundred qualified respondents that completed the online self-administered questionnaire, which was made available in the whole month of February 2011. This sample size was selected for manageability within the time frame available and in order to ensure that the costs incurred were minimised.

Survey design

Dillman (2000) distinguishes between three types of data variable that can be collected through questionnaires: opinion, behaviour and attribute. Saunders et al. (2003) stated that opinion variable will record how respondents feel about something or what they think or believe is true or false. In contrast, data on

behaviours and attributes record what respondents do and are, and attribute variables contain data about the respondents' characteristics. Attributes are things a respondent possesses, rather than things a respondent does (Dillman, 2000).

The questions in the survey, grouped into five different sections based on the different variables in this study. This is to give the researcher a background on the consumer's knowledge of the topic although all that information led to the focus of the survey, to answer RQ6. The different sections are respondents' background information, knowledge on GLCs, CSR, and GLCs CSR communication efforts as well as perceptions of and reactions to GLCs CSR engagement with consumers.

The section on knowledge of GLCs looks at respondents' knowledge of GLCs and if they consumed from the GLCs. The next section tests the respondent's understanding of CSR, and if respondents have no understanding of it, they are automatically disqualified from further answering the questionnaire and are not included into the data. Respondent's awareness, involvement and opinion of the communication process as well as means of communication are also scrutinised. Lastly, respondent's rates GLCs CSR engagement with them that directly answers RQ6.

Different type of questions styles was adopted although predominantly compromised of dichotomous response questions whereby the response contained yes or no. Other close-ended questions type of survey question is in which respondents must choose from a selection of predetermined categories. This allows for greater uniformity and the answers are easily quantified. The survey respondents can answer close-ended questions quickly just as long as the category they wish to use is on the list. When it is not listed, an option is made available so the respondents can fill in; lessening the imposing nature of the questionnaire.

There is only one open question in the questionnaire although some dichotomous response questions allowed the respondents to justify the reason for their answers. In this sense, the respondents are free to answer in any form of words they choose. One thing to note is that open responses are usually slower to collect and require more analysis that leads to the lack of usage of this question type. However, it is a very good guide to the feelings of audience members.

The items in the survey questionnaires were created just as the interview questionnaires were, taken from the literature. An example would be the literature stating that stakeholders are suspicious and cynical about the intentions of companies who advertised doing CSR, Morsing & Schultz's (2006) communication strategies and factors looked at by Reynolds & Yuthas (2008). This led to survey questions such as question 17 to 26 (see Appendix I). Another literature discussed how companies had to consult consumers to determine their expectations, perceptions, concerns and views on the company's performance as so to work towards those expectations. This led to the formation of questions in Section E of the survey questionnaire (see Appendix I). At the end of the questionnaire, a Likert Scale question type was selected to allow the respondents to position themselves along a spectrum of opinion on the GLCs' CSR communication process. The literature section on "successful stakeholder engagement" saw a few dimensions such as trust, shared understanding and transparency. This led to the questions in section D of the survey questionnaire (see Appendix I).

Questionnaire procedure

The online software used in this study is SurveyGizmo, and was utilised due to its user-friendliness, professional appearance and prompt support system. Here, the questionnaire divided in the mentioned five sections consisted of thirty-seven questions spread over seven web pages. The software allowed the website URL (where the questionnaire is uploaded) to be forwarded either via email or through social media such as Facebook. The initial page of the questionnaire gave a brief account of the research study and request for their consent to participate in the research. Only when the respondents agree, the questionnaire appears. Otherwise, the researcher expresses gratitude for showing interest and this ends the correspondence. For those who responded and completed the questionnaire, a thank you message was forwarded to them. One way to overcome error in a questionnaire is to construct question clearly, precise and short (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). Wimmer & Dominick (2003) also added that biased words and

leading questions, as well as double-barrelled and long questions should be avoided, as it will lead to respondents to answer in a bias manner or confuse the respondents. Clear concise instructions were given to help overcome error.

Pilot testing

Teddlie & Tashakkori (2009) defines a pilot study as a stage of the research paper in which a small amount of data is collected to test the research procedures, identify possible problems in the data collection protocols and set the stage for the actual study. The interview questions were forwarded to a CSR expert and the researcher's supervisor. The interview questions were revised on the basis of their recommendations of the difficulties in term usage and sentence structure that may confuse the interviewees. The questions were reviewed again and restructured accordingly. As for the survey questionnaire, it was disseminated online to 10 Malaysians who are GLC consumers. They were selected on the basis of convenience, access and geographic proximity. Due to the feedbacks given, this led to the questionnaire being disseminated online. This is to minimise the psychology factor whereby the respondents found that there were too many questions, resulting it to be a long and tedious process. Some survey respondents found the questions difficult to understand. Consequently, several items from the questionnaire were deleted and simplified. By uploading the questions online, this eliminated the impression of the questionnaire being too long. The respondents were able to answer questions only according to the answers they gave, as unrelated questions (based on their answers) were not projected. This helped lessen the biasness and mistakes in answering the questions that were not required.

Data analysis and presentation

The next step in research after the collection of data is the data analysis. Miles & Huberman (1994) defined data analysis as "consisting of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/ verification". Yin (2003) also suggested two general strategies. The first strategy is to rely on theoretical propositions and analyse data according to research questions and a frame of reference derived from the literature. The second strategy implies that a researcher develops a case description and a descriptive framework in order to present the data. In this study, the first strategy is used since the research questions and the frame of reference have been derived from theoretical propositions. As a part of data analysis, data reduction also helps researchers to arrange and put the data in order, whereas data display connotes using the reduced data and displaying it in a compact organised manner in order to ultimately draw conclusions about it.

Yin (2003) emphasised that it is crucial important to organise the data as efficiently as possible as in a court case, "maintaining a chain of evidence". When construing different findings and giving them a meaning through observing patterns, regularities, and explanations, the researcher arrives at the last stage of data analysis, which is conclusion drawing and verification. At this stage, Miles & Huberman (1994) encouraged researchers to be both sceptic and open while holding conclusions lightly. Miles & Huberman's three-step suggestion is adopted when analysing the data collected for this study. The last step, drawing conclusion and verification is presented and careful conclusions have been drawn from the different findings of the research, through answering the research questions.

It is understood that mixed methods research questions guide mixed methods investigations and are answered with information that is presented in both narrative and numerical forms. In this sense, the data presentation of this concurrent study refers specifically to the centrality of the research questions. Hence, data is arranged in accordance to the sequence of the research questions. The analysis and interpretation combines the two forms of data to seek convergence among the results.

Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are central issues in all measurement with, validity suggesting truthfulness and reliability meaning consistency (Neuman, 2006). According to Wimmer & Dominick (2003), validity is the most important criterion for evaluating a measurement method. Validity is the ability of a measurement instrument to measure what it was supposed to measure and is concerned with the quality of a research. Yin (2003) suggested three types of validity, including construct, internal and external validity. In order to increase the validity of this study, certain measures were taken. Construct validity involves relating a measuring method to the theoretical framework to ensure that the measurement is logically related to other concepts in the framework (Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). This is seen from the theoretical framework introduced in chapter 2 and later related to in chapter 4 and 5. According to Yin (2003), since internal validity only concerns explanatory studies, where researchers determine casual relationships, it is irrelevant to this research, which is descriptive and exploratory in nature. External validity reflects how accurately the results represent a phenomenon and whether results can be generalised. In order to ensure external validity, triangulation was employed in the research methodology and date resource.

However, Marshall & Rossman (1999) stated that one issue of reliability is that the findings from using non-standardised research method, in the case of the semi-structured interview, is not necessarily intended to be repeatable since they reflect reality at the time they were collected, in a situation which may be subject to change. Wimmer & Dominick (2003) observed that a measure is reliable if it consistently gives the same answer. The value of using methods in this study is derived from the flexibility to explore the complexity of this topic. This means, as Denscombe (2003) stated that this allows the researcher to be flexible in terms of the order in which the topics are considered and more significantly, allow the interviewee to develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised by the researcher. Hence, replication by other researchers would not be realistic or feasible (Saunders et al., 2003, p. 253). Denscombe (2003) stated that the direct contact at the point of the interview means the data can be checked for accuracy and relevance as they are collected, heightening the level of validity.

Ethical considerations

A major ethical issue in the methods employed is the invasion of privacy as well as voluntary participation by respondents (Neuman, 2006). Hence, while partaking in this research, every attempt was made by the researcher to operate with honesty and integrity, respecting the rights and dignity of those who participated in this research project and avoid any harm and dignity to the participants. The following measures were taken. The objectives, issues, risks and benefits of the research project were well conveyed to the participants. The research objectives were made known to them, both the interviewees and survey respondents. Also, consents were been obtained from the participants prior to the start of the interviews or survey. Lastly, the privacy of the participants and the confidentiality of data that were obtained from the participants were strictly maintained in such a manner that the participants cannot be identified in the report or any related publications.

Chapter summary

The research strategy used in this study is the most commonly occurring mixed method combination in the literature, combining predominantly qualitative interviews and the quantitative questionnaires (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). This one-phase concurrent triangulation strategy allows for strengths of each method to be combined in a complementary manner with the strengths of the other. The qualitative interviews are based on a relatively small number of respondents who generate in-depth information in response to queries from the interview procedure. Data gathered using the quantitative questionnaires is used to generate large numbers of responses from GLCs consumers to validate the qualitative findings.

Chapter 4

Research results

This chapter will give an account of data collected through the qualitative interview and quantitative survey. The data is presented in accordance to the sequence of the six research questions in this study. Before delving into the answering the research questions, the demographics of the interview and survey participants are presented. A summary of the GLCs interviewed, through the senior representatives of the company involved with CSR are as in Appendix B. The GLCs' name and activities presented have been modified for anonymity purposes. As for the quantitative survey respondents, the demographics are as below:

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of the Survey Respondents According to Gender and Age Group

	21 – 30 years old	31 – 40 years old	41 – 50 years old	51 – 60 years old	61 – 70 years old	Over 70 years old
Male (n = 93)	55	22	7	7	2	0
Female (n = 107)	72	17	9	9	0	0

Note. The average respondents age is 27.4 years old. Those under the age of 21 years old were deliberately disqualified from participating in this survey questionnaire.

Figure 4: Percentage of Survey Respondents According to the Highest Educational Qualification Obtained
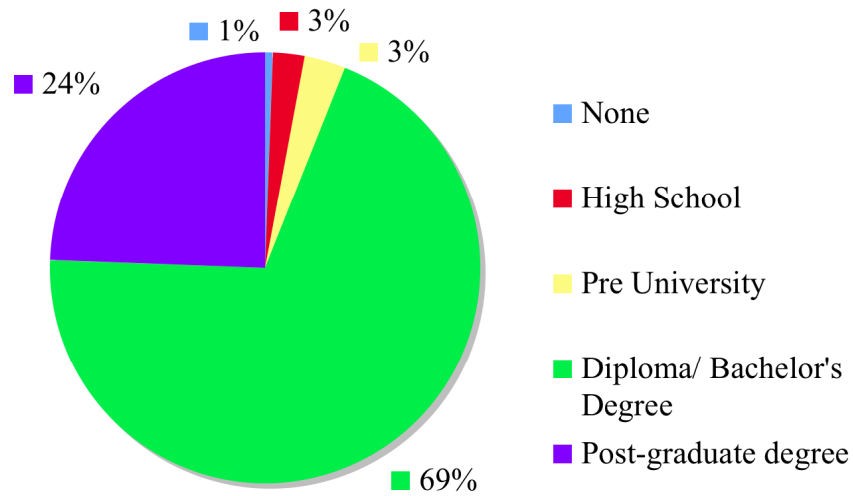
Table 3: Frequency Distribution of the Survey Respondents According to Industry and Job Official Title

	Exec.	VP	Manager	Director	Pro.	Admin.	Others	**TOTAL**
Accounting/Banking	6	1	8	2	11	3	4	**35**
Business/Consultancy	1	0	2	1	7	3	3	**17**
Computers/ IT	5	1	1	1	5	1	2	**16**
Education	1	0	2	0	9	0	13	**25**
Energy	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	**3**
Engineering/ Architecture	1	0	2	0	3	1	0	**7**
Government	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	**1**
Healthcare	2	0	0	0	2	1	1	**6**
Hospitality/ F&B	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	**5**
Manufacturing	5	0	3	1	1	0	1	**11**
Marketing/ Media	10	0	1	0	2	0	3	**16**
Retails/ Sales	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	**4**
Telecommunications	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	**4**
Others	7	0	8	1	4	1	3	**24**
TOTAL	**45**	**2**	**30**	**8**	**47**	**11**	**31**	**174**

Note. The abbreviation used in the job official title in the above table stands for: "Exec." = Executive, "VP" = Vice President, "Pro" = Professional, "Admin." = Administrative. The survey respondents in this research amounted to 200. As noted in the table above, there are only 174 respondents. This would mean that the remaining 26 respondents absent in the table above are either unemployed, retired or homemakers. All survey respondents would have heard of the term "CSR" and have a reasonable understanding of it, or otherwise be disqualified from participating in this survey questionnaire.

Means used by GLCs to communicate CSR with their consumers

The first research question is answered in the table below:

Table 4: Means of Communication Used by GLCs to Communicate on CSR

Company	Means of communication	Updated
A	Corporate website dedicated to CSR	As and when
	Annual report with CSR report portion	Annually
B	Corporate website dedicated to CSR	As and when
	Annual report with sustainable report portion	Annually
	Sustainable report	Annually
	Financial performance quarterly report	Quarterly
	Stakeholder engagement i.e. consumers on products	As and when
	Social media i.e. Facebook	As and when
	Advertisements i.e. print advertisements – flyers	As and when
	Exhibitions/ Events	As and when
C	Corporate website	As and when
	Annual report with CSR report portion	Annually
	Stakeholder engagement i.e. annual general meeting, scheduled sales team training, sealer conferences, ground commercial customers engagements	As and when (AGM – annually)
	Social media	As and when
	Media i.e. television (e.g. news coverage on official events), radio; Media articles (via interviews)	As and when
	Advertisements i.e. television commercials	As and when
	Ground campaigns/ events	As and when
D	Corporate website	As and when
	Annual report	Annually
	CSR report	Annually
	Social media i.e. Facebook/ Twitter	As and when
	News coverage on print and electronic media	As and when
	Press releases	As and when
	Below-the-line media i.e. buntings/ banners	As and when
	Ground events/ seminars/ campaigns/ road shows	As and when
E	Corporate website	As and when
	Annual report	Annually
	Conventional media channels such as television, newspaper, radio but more apparent in print media	As and when

CSR communication strategy employed by GLCs when engaging consumers on CSR

The second research question attempts to identify the CSR communication strategy by Morsing & Schultz (2006) employed by the GLCs when engaging consumers on CSR. The table below portrays the different aspects outlined for each GLC on the different elements of the strategies:

Table 5: Communication Strategies Adopted by the Interviewed GLCs

	Company A	Company B	Company C	Company D	Company E
Communication ideal (Grunig & Hunt, 1984)	Two-way symmetric communication	Two-way symmetric communication	Two-way symmetric communication	Two-way symmetric communication	Two-way symmetric communication
Communication ideal: Sense-making and sense-giving	Sense-giving Sense-making	Sense-giving Sense-making	Sense-giving Sense-making	Sense-giving Sense-making	Sense-giving Sense-making
Stakeholders	N/A	Co-construct corporate CSR efforts	Co-construct corporate CSR efforts	Co-construct corporate CSR efforts	Co-construct corporate CSR efforts
Stakeholder role	Stakeholders are involved, participate and suggest corporate actions	Stakeholders are involved, participate and suggest corporate actions	Stakeholders are involved, participate and suggest corporate actions	Stakeholders are involved, participate and suggest corporate actions	Stakeholders are involved, participate and suggest corporate actions

	Company A	Company B	Company C	Company D	Company E
Identification of CSR focus	Negotiated concurrently in interaction with stakeholders	Negotiated concurrently in interaction with stakeholders	Negotiated concurrently in interaction with stakeholders	Negotiated concurrently in interaction with stakeholders	Negotiated concurrently in interaction with stakeholders
Strategic communication task	Investigated in feedback via opinion polls, dialogue, networks and partnerships	Invite and establish frequent, systematic and pro-active dialogue with stakeholders	Invite and establish frequent, systematic and pro-active dialogue with stakeholders	Invite and establish frequent, systematic and pro-active dialogue with stakeholders	Invite and establish frequent, systematic and pro-active dialogue with stakeholders
Corporate communication department's task	N/A	Build relationships	Build relationships	Build relationships	Build relationships
Third-party endorsement of CSR initiatives	Identify relevant stakeholders Integrated element of surveys, rankings and opinion polls	Stakeholders are themselves involved in corporate CSR messages	Stakeholders are themselves involved in corporate CSR messages	Stakeholders are themselves involved in corporate CSR messages	Stakeholders are themselves involved in corporate CSR messages
Communication strategy identified	Predominantly stakeholder involvement strategy although elements of the stakeholder response strategy exist	Stakeholder involvement strategy	Stakeholder involvement strategy	Stakeholder involvement strategy	Stakeholder involvement strategy

Information gap in the communication process

Following the communication strategies, this section looks at the third research question, "Are there any information gap in the communication process between the GLCs and their consumers?" Most of the GLCs interviewed claimed that CSR communication is carried out principally on a voluntary basis, having operate in the global arena. Nevertheless, the manner of reporting is done in a prerequisite sense, whereby regulatory bodies like Bursa Malaysia or Khazanah decide the structure of reporting, although the contents inserted are not necessarily determined, and that it is a requirement to insert a section on CSR in the companies' annual report. However, Company C established that their company was motivated to communication on CSR not because it is a prerequisite or neither it is voluntary, but rather as part of the company's "nature" to do so.

On the surface, companies like Company D and E is motivated to communicate, as it is a form of recognition to demonstrate their company values to their stakeholders and can become part of a publicity stint. Others like Company A sees it as a need to inform as they consider themselves as "responsible corporate citizens", while Company C sees it as an avenue to "tell their story" and to assert their position as a national company, maintaining "precision of continuity in managing our affairs". Company C also adds that it is not only important to tell, but listen and allow stakeholders to experience for themselves, as a lot of stakeholder involvement is required to "ensure products is aligned with the markets".

Although many means of communication was created and made available to/ with the consumers (as listed in table 4), all five GLCs interviewed were not necessarily receiving communication back from the consumers. Company C and D stressed that the general consumers do not ask for information although the companies are keen to receive request or hear from consumers. Although, communication was received from the investing community, which in one case drove Company D to start producing stand alone CSR reports in 2008 when feedback was given to the senior management in a financial road show. Company E added that more

consumers have recently started to ask for information relevant to "sustainability performance".

Company C held an optimistic view stating that there was perhaps no request for information as "…believe we have provided enough avenues for consumers to obtain them via all types of media." Company A and B acknowledged that there were consumers who had asked for CSR information although infrequently. When information is requested for, it is attended to immediately and communicated through the following means; corporate website, email, official letters, telephone call to customer service departments or write to the media's "Letter to the Editor", an indirect way of demanding for information or getting clarity. "I do not discount that the social media is also gaining momentum and is crucial for connecting with consumers," said Manager of Company B's Group Corporate Affairs.

Collecting and communicating relevant and timely information

On a different note, this next section looks at the fourth research question, "does collecting relevant and timely information contribute to GLCs' CSR related business objectives and decisions?" Here, it is important to note that the collection and communication of information by the companies is done to be a factor in their company's business objectives and decision-making, relating to CSR. Besides, feedbacks from consumers, information on environment related matters as well as best practices (for benchmarking purposes) are also collected. It is worthy to note that the interviewed GLCs collects information and data on sustainability performance indicators according to the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) framework, which is then used to shape strategies for their business objectives and subsequently made known to all stakeholders.

In fact, all interviewed GLCs mentioned that the business objectives are communicated and made available to the consumers, mostly via annual report and/ or CSR/ sustainability report as well as corporate websites. Company D goes the extra length releasing this information via the media and social media. Company C

is reported to optimise the "reach" using all communication tools. In addition, they also engage specialist to assist and adopt contemporary tools, such as an online service portal to provide consumers with direct avenue to provide immediate feedback.

In exemplifying the seriousness of delving into CSR, Company C added that a recent establishment of a "corporate sustainability council" was made to act as a deliberative body on related issues in the Group. "The council was established to identify, evaluate and monitor all aspects of sustainable development trends, issues and concerns that could affect our business activities and performance". Company E made a similar decision setting up a sustainability department in 2008. The GLCs are seen taking extra efforts to be updated with real time information, understanding the constant change of information, especially in this time and age. Company E described that this information is aggregated monthly at division level and reported quarterly internally at group level to assist in the basis of strategic sustainability decisions, as in most other GLCs.

Consumers' perceptions, concerns and expectations

The fifth research question is divided into two sub questions. RQ5a asks if "GLCs are aware of consumers' CSR perceptions, concerns and expectations and do they understand them?" while RQ5b looks into whether "consumer's perceptions, concerns and expectations taken into consideration in GLCs' CSR efforts?"

As to whether GLCs are aware of and understand consumers' CSR perceptions, concerns and expectations, all interviewed GLCs gave a positive affirmation. The GLCs are reported to conduct periodic communication audit surveys, customer satisfaction survey, brand perception and brand audits also carried out periodically as well as fact and perception checking. The latter is used by Company B to measure consumers' satisfaction. The survey known as TRI*M index (a standardised indicator system to analyse, measure and portray stakeholder relationships) suggested that Company C has been seeing improvements in the

level of consumers satisfaction. These efforts are part of the GLC's ongoing effort to look out for comments, perceptions, concern and expectations. In Company C Brand Manager's words, "to track and monitor its Brand health, mindshare and customer's level of satisfaction of our products and services." The customer satisfaction survey is conducted annually by Company C and later assessed by professional third party to maintain objectivity. "The results are then shared at all levels of management to ensure that potential issues are picked up to enable the different business to develop key improvement initiatives", said Company C's brand senior manager. Company D's Chief Sustainability Officer stated that the ongoing audits performed allows them to "map our stakeholders' expectations and current issues in the market".

The interviewed GLCs know that they are performing fittingly seeing the public responses they receive through social media on performances. Company D added, "consumers are within the sector and recognise they are a responsible company" just as Company C is "happy to note that we have met above average level of satisfaction". This on its own is already a form of recognition that the company is performing favourably. Also, the GLCs are receiving media recognitions and awards as well as being compared to best practices.

Another form of feedback is through Company D's CSR efforts of engaging with their consumers through campaigns. A road safety campaign performed by Company D received 250,000 hits on their corporate website with those people signing up to proactively engage themselves with the cause. Another successful response was received when Company D organised a short film competition also on road safety. Company D targeted a 100 entries but instead received over 150 entries for the competition. Company B was seen quoting their company's exemplary television commercials which has not only receive many awards and is widely quoted, but have been verified through many attempts to copy the said commercials.

Saying this, GLCs seems to have it harder with the consumers. The association with/ to the "government", whether through the term "Government"-Linked Company itself, or through the fact that the orientation of the business is thought to be driven by the government may seem to influence the ill impressions of consumers towards the GLCs, their efforts and what is expected of them. Even

situational circumstances happening in the country's political arena can be associated to the GLCs, which causes on the part of the consumers, unrealistic expectations. Company B stated "perception is reality, if it is not corrected, and that is why it is a continuous effort to highlight our contribution" and that is why continuously aims to communicate with their consumers as so their outlooks are being heard. Company B adds, "our communication strategy actually is a part of our conscience aspect to manage or correct some of this perception and also inform some aspects of our operations" and although "it is important for economic performance but at the same time it is equally important to manage the perception". In the same note, Company D is careful about their communication efforts towards consumers and tries not to be too "'in your face' because if we do that there might not be buy-in from a large section of the public who are biased and sceptical about government efforts in road safety. But we want people to know we are the company behind those initiatives."

At the end, all of these efforts are to ensure that "our 'license to operate' is not compromised", as Company E's Chief Sustainability Officer emphasised. Ultimately, as Company C's Senior Manager puts it, "we are mindful of the fact that all our stakeholders play an important role to determine how our business is conducted and the success of our business largely hinge on the level of influence they have over our products and services." When the interviewees' were asked to rate the influence of the consumers on the company, all rated it on the highly influential range. Company C and E who rated the highest, stated respectively that "without consumers there would be no business" and "customers are the only influence on any company; any company that thinks otherwise is kidding itself". Company D's Group Communication's General Manager added, "feedbacks are needed to improve services, facilities and products".

Naturally, in attempt to answering RQ5b, all interviewed GLCs held a consensus view, that, consumers' CSR perceptions, concerns and expectations are to be taken into consideration in their CSR efforts. This is especially in the view of Company E, "when and if these falls within our arenas of business operations and our spheres of influences. We do not try to lobby issues or manage externalities that are beyond our control. Generally we will attempt to include stakeholders' concerns and inputs where they converge with our business objectives." Company

B's Manager states, "Customer expectations and satisfactions are all key to our strategies and so we do include them in our planning and implementations. However, it is not easy to satisfy consumers' demands but we are doing our best to meet the demands. We try to be responsible".

Moreover, CSR is mostly intangible so consumers do not see the long-term benefits or the advantages dawn upon them. So, Company D takes efforts to show the consumers in "dollars and cents" through rebates and discounts to "elevate the inconvenience of their services". These GLCs constantly organise engagements with targeted consumers, and all interviewed GLCs reported that they believed to have successfully engage their consumers although Company E stresses, "although not as successful as hope to be due to prejudices which drown their corporate CSR-related messages".

Stakeholder engagement from the perspective of consumers

Figure 5: Have You Heard of Government-Linked Companies (GLCs)?
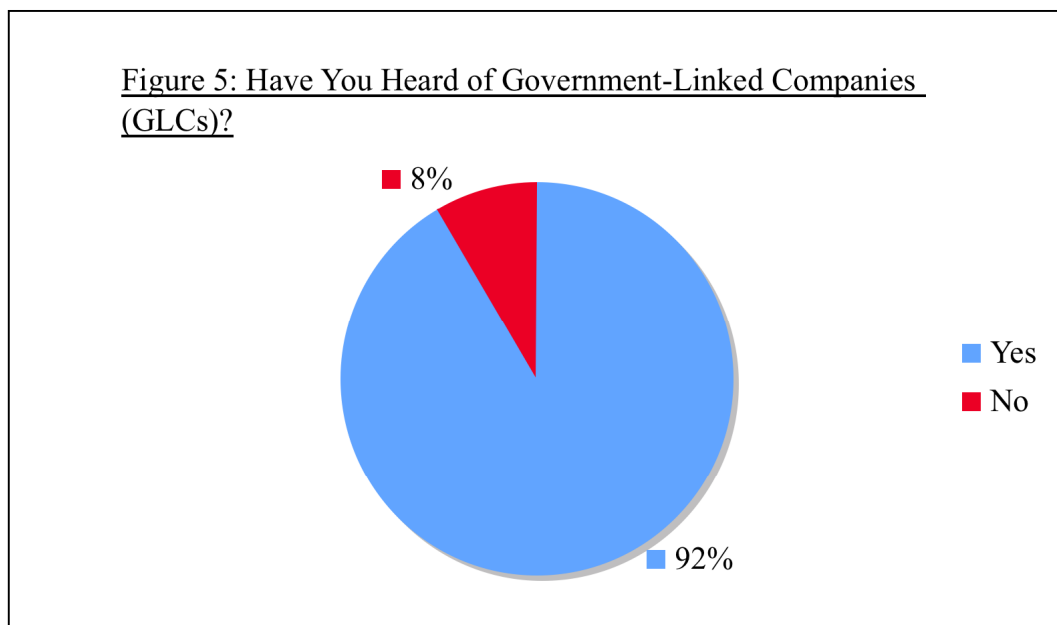
The figure above illustrates if the survey respondents have heard of GLCs. Although, 8% of the survey respondents are reported not having heard of them, it does not mean they are unaware of the companies. However, they were merely

unaware of the term itself as they were still able to identify the GLCs in the subsequent questions (see question 7 in Appendix I).

As described in the earlier chapter, there are altogether 33 GLCs. Table 6 sums up the ten most recognised GLCS by the consumers as well as the GLCs, consumers mostly consumes products and/ or services from.

Table 6: GLCs Most Recognised by Consumers and Consumed From

	Government-Linked Companies			
No.	Most recognised	%	Most consumed	%
1	Telekom Malaysia Bhd	90.9%	Telekom Malaysia Bhd	83.0%
2	Tenaga Nasional Bhd	89.3%	Tenaga Nasional Bhd	77.2%
3	Pos Malaysia Bhd	86.8%	Pos Malaysia Bhd	74.4%
4	Proton Holdings Bhd	85.3%	Malayan Banking Bhd (Maybank)	67.2%
5	Malaysian Airline System Bhd	80.7%	PLUS Expressways Bhd	59.4%
6	Malayan Banking Bhd (Maybank)	79.2%	Malaysian Airline System Bhd	51.7%
7	PLUS Expressways Bhd	77.7%	Proton Holdings Bhd	39.4%
8	Petronas Gas Bhd	77.7%	Malaysia Airport Holding Bhd	28.3%
9	Sime Darby Bhd	77.2%	Petronas Gas Bhd	25.6%
10	Malaysia Airport Holding Bhd	68.0%	Bumiputra-Commerce Holding Bhd	18.9%

Note. The percentage indicated here refers to the number of survey respondents.

In regards to the receipt of CSR information from the GLCs, 42.4% of the survey respondents (who are GLC consumers) came across information on GLCs CSR efforts, mostly through the following means:

Table 7: Means of Communication Consumers Came Across on for Information

Means of communication	Percentage (%)
Newspapers	75.0%
Corporate websites	70.0%
Corporate annual reports	50.0%
Press releases	40.0%
Corporate newsletters/ leaflets/ posters	40.0%

Note. The percentage indicated here refers to the number of survey respondents.

Seventy per cent of the survey respondents happened to come across the CSR information, indicating that the consumers do not play an active role in information seeking. Even when they do seek for information (17.5% of the survey respondents), corporate websites and newspapers are the top chosen means. Seventy-three per cent of the survey respondents claimed that terms used in these contents is not too technical or unfamiliar and is generally able to understand most of the contents presented.

The survey respondents were generally reliant on newspaper and corporate annual report as well as CSR or sustainability report when it came a trustworthy means of retrieving information about GLCs CSR efforts. On the opposing end, they will mostly not trust to get information on GLCs' CSR efforts through the means of word-of-mouth and press releases/ conferences. Social media such as Twitter and Facebook followed suit, as well as advertising campaigns.

Generally, more than majority, specifically 65.8% survey respondents trust the CSR information communicated by the GLCs although do suspect the intentions of the GLCs whom identify themselves to be socially responsible and just a little over half, 57.7% survey respondents think GLCS are not transparent enough in their communication efforts. In fact, 79.6% of the survey respondents think GLCs are not doing a good job engaging them on CSR matters contrary to what the GLCs think (that they were successful in their engagement with the consumers.

In validating the presented qualitative findings earlier, when GLCs were yearning for feedbacks from consumers to improve on their business operations, product and services, the majority of the survey respondents, 90.1% were not providing

feedback to these GLCs on CSR matters or for that matter am actively engaged with the GLCs (83.1%). This could be due to the fact that the consumers perceive the GLCs who claimed to be engaging with the consumers, appear to be not fine tuning efforts to consumer's needs and interest. In fact, only a low percentage of 13.0% rated that the engagement process has been successful and 80.2% thinks GLCs should be more active in consulting interested consumers to determine their expectations and their views on the GLCs performance in meeting those expectations.

When survey respondents were asked in an open-ended question on why they think GLCs should actively consult interested consumers, most replied around the notion that consumers were significant stakeholders to GLCs and that GLCs would be able to improve on their businesses and CSR efforts as indicated in the RBV through their feedbacks. Below are some of the excerpts of the other survey respondents' feedbacks that is worth noting:

> Even if I am not currently a consumer, I may be inclined to be a GLC consumer if I feel strongly enough about a CSR effort I am being made aware of.

> Because it's part of the effort to 'give' back to the consumers… Consumers will value the company more if the engagement is made upfront.

> This will improve consumer confidence in the GLC.

> They are GOVERNMENT-linked companies. It is their responsibility.

> As GLCs are related to government, it is similar to governments role in serving its people, i.e. consumers. Hence, consumers must be satisfied.

> … A very common view people have of the GLCs is that they are lackadaisical, incompetent and money grabbing - there is certainly a lot of truth in it. However, actively consulting consumers is not the answer to everything. They need to DO something about it.

> GLCs should be seeking more long-term, sustainable, transparent effort in their respective CSR initiatives – this is not just visible, but whose impact can be felt by large cross sections of the Malaysian society – and that

which transcends race, religion and politics….as opposed to more lip service and obligatory/ feel good type of PR services.

We are living in a world where communications medium is getting more and more advanced with far reaching audiences....Beyond that, CSR will play an increasingly important role when a consumer has to choose between Company A or B. In Malaysia, we are not quite there yet. GLC's here seem to think they can get away with lethargic service.

GLCs should walk their talk and get the job done. Half the time the failure in their service has been resolved only due to who you know on the top not so much on through the normal customer complaint section....But most GLCs are not keen to listen, hence in the end they produce goods that are either not well received or obsolete to the market.

Honestly, because GLCs are government-backed, they have very little interest in consulting consumers. Profit or loss, GLCs do not need the consumers to back them.

These corporations are semi-governmental organisations which are supposed to support the government initiatives. The government is responsible for the welfare of its citizens and therefore, it is only right that GLCs play an active role in engaging us in their day to day dealings.

To ensure consumers' satisfaction and to provide quality service. GLCs always present a "negative" image to consumers as "government-linked" which lead to compromise in their services. It is very crucial for GLCs to prove themselves.

Chapter Summary

The findings from the qualitative interview and quantitative survey are presented according to the ROs and RQs. In this study, the convergence among the results is discussed more thoroughly in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Discussion and conclusion

This chapter aims to synthesis and conclude the findings presented in the previous chapter. The discussion follows the elements that need to be covered in order to answer each of the research questions. This paper presents the major implications of this study and ends with recommendations for future research.

Discussion

Theoretical framework

The sustainability of GLCs demands the supports stakeholders such as the consumers and so GLCs are compelled to adjust their efforts to gain that approval in line with their business objectives (Gray, Kouchy & Lavers, 1995; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Podnar & Jančič, 2006; Chan, 2010; Nuraihan Hamid, 2010). The term "stakeholder approach" on its own, as defined by Freeman (1984), signifies

that the influence between the consumer (one of the GLCs stakeholders) and the GLC is a two-way process and this is done through communicating CSR.

Although this study did not attempt to categorise the consumers as Mohr, Webb & Harris (2001) have, the quantitative survey found that the GLC consumers could be equated into contemplators or action group (Mohr, Webb & Harris, 2001). This is based on their answered indicating the level of knowledge they have on GLCs CSR (communication efforts) as well as their involvement in the process. The difference between the two groups is that the contemplator evaluates CSR initiatives favourable but do not know much about the companies CSR conducts or the impact. While the action group hold strong and favourable views but find it difficult to learn about such initiatives or are sceptical about these CSR efforts. On these two accounts, CSR does not become a major factor when making decisions or when consuming from the GLCs although this does not suggest that the consumers are not vigilant about the issue or that it could affect their decisions (pertaining to the GLCs) in the future.

The effective management of relationship and communication will allow GLCs to put forth their outlook and influence to ensure satisfied consumers. This can lead to secure non-monetary investments and ensure long-term livelihood of the company through favourable company image, brand and reputation, consumer's goodwill and loyalty (Freeman, 1984; Key & Popkin, 1998; Boehm, 2002; ISO Strategic Advisory Group on Social Responsibility, 2004; Baker, 2010). All this intangible benefits translates to better share price or market value, brand value and may even attract better employees. These benefits constitute a source of sustainable competitive advantage for companies who engage in CSR strategically, as the notion of resource-based view frames.

GLCs' means of CSR communication

The literature and findings in this study established the notion that GLCs has to communicate because companies have a responsibility to do so contrary to Welford's (2009) argument that companies fail to see CSR as an investment. The

quantitative findings also confirmed that Schrader, Hansen & Halbes (2006) assertion of companies not communicating CSR due to under represented facilitations to communication efforts is no longer true. GLCs are now given the liberty to utilise corporate money for CSR activities. The qualitative analyses described in this paper reviews that GLCs continue to communicate with their consumers via the traditional means, annual reports and corporate websites. This finding lends support to literatures by Edelman (2007), Barsoumian (2008) and Sweeney & Coughlan (2008). Although, as Schrader, Hansen & Halbes (2006) and Sweeney & Coughlan (2008) emphasised, GLCs are now using a variety of alternative reporting media such as the stand-alone CSR or sustainability reports, press releases, newspapers, advertisements and even ground events. Ground events are another means used to engage the general product consumers, and allows GLCs to communicate back to them about their product development, technology and technical expertise possessed.

Company B's Manager stated, "We take multiple approach understanding the different consumer demographic. The advent of all this technology development demands us to be on our toes and follow through on our CSR strategies." Today, GLCs are also seen relying on social media to communicate their CSR messages. Company C's Senior Manager gave an account of the social media, "we also receive public responses on our performance via social media and this is now taken as part of our success measurement tool. Social media provides us with immediate, honest opinions on our performance as a company and we certainly appreciate any entry we find online." This does to a certain extent imply the importance of this recently used communication means.

CSR communication strategies

Through the qualitative findings, it is noteworthy to find that the interviewed GLCs are seen to be practicing mainly the stakeholder involvement strategy, with one exception of a GLC also having the elements of stakeholder response strategy. This implies there is two-way communication between the GLCs and their

consumers contrary to Grunig & Hunt's (1984) research that most companies are usually seen practicing the one-way communication. Meaning to say the GLCs were not merely reliant on sense-giving that is disseminating information to the consumers, but also in sense-making. This meant GLCs were taking an active posture to find out what the consumers wanted through dialogue-based interactions (Ullman, 1985). This is a significant point, which differentiates between the stakeholder response strategy and stakeholder involvement strategy identified in this study, whereby the former strategy noting there are attempts on the company to change consumers' attitudes and behaviour and the latter strategy, a persuasive dialogue with and from consumers is assumed. This meant the GLCs were taking all this efforts to find out consumers' perceptions, concerns and expectations through surveys and audits, as presented in the findings. This is so they can truly make progress through those feedbacks, as indicated in the qualitative findings.

The broad range of GLC consumers (not just the general product consumers) noted from the qualitative findings did ask for information from the GLCs, although infrequently. There were attempts from the GLCs to actively communicate back to their consumers or attend to what was communicated back to them. Consequently, the consumers become involved, participate and suggest corporate actions, as in the stakeholder involvement strategy. Understanding the influential power of the consumers (not forgetting the other stakeholders), the GLCs CSR focus can be seen through feedbacks and concurrent negotiations with them. GLCs place importance in engaging and building good relationships with their multifaceted stakeholders (with inclusion of their consumers). Company B's Manager did stressed, "We need to communicate and tell more of our story, and not just listen to our stakeholders but also enable them to find out and experience it by themselves".

The effectiveness of communication is determined through four dimensions: truth, sincerity, understandability and appropriateness (Reynolds & Yuthas, 2008). Seventy-three percent of the survey respondents claimed the terms used in GLCs collateral materials were understandable, indicating the GLCs were communicating effectively to the consumers. About sixty-six percent of the survey respondents trust the CSR information channelled to them. Edelman (2007) emphasised that trust is critical to market performance and shareholder value

(Edelman, 2007). Nevertheless, the consumers suspected the intentions of the GLCs since a little over half of the survey respondents thought GLCs are not being transparent in their communication. Being obscure in this sense can indicate that consumers think GLCs are not communicating and keeping them well informed (Mahalingam, 2008). Although GLCs think they are effectively engaging (and doing all that they can) with their consumers, 79.6% of GLC consumers think otherwise. This marks a disconnect in the flow of the communication as European Commission's (2009) contents as the GLCs think the engagement with the consumers is successful but on the rear end, the consumers may be thinking differently.

Information gap in the communication process

Generally, in order for CSR efforts to be identified by consumers, communication must first and foremost take place (Edelman, 2007). Yet, the quantitative finding described in this paper indicated that 70.0% of GLC consumers who participated in the survey do not play an active role in seeking information or responding to GLCs' CSR efforts. This reconfirms Hess's (2008) research. In fact, most had only "happened" to come across the CSR information. For 17.5% of GLC consumers who actively look up the CSR information "because they were interested to know more about it", corporate websites and newspapers were their top choices of communication means. Hence, this disagrees with the notion that consumers would find it difficult to communicate with the GLCs and the qualitative findings of made available communication means by GLCs to consumers (Edelman, 2007).

It is worth noting here that the consumers are depending on means provided from non-company related sources. Although as reported earlier, GLCs often rely on their corporate websites and annual report, this could suggest that consumers preferred a non-company alternative of communication means, which is communicated via a third-party endorsement such as the newspaper. This is probable to the research that consumers find GLCs legitimately controlling the communication scope (Owen, Swift, Humphrey & Bowerman, 2000; Birth, Illia,

Lurati & Zanpanin, 2006). Hence, the CSR information would be thought to be most likely biased and not based on quantifiable data. This finding is validated when the survey respondents categorised press releases/ conferences, social media, as well as advertising campaigns as means they would not trust to get information on GLCs' CSR efforts since all those listed indicated means of communication in the control of GLCs. This lends support to McIntyre (2003) contention that the advertising can be associated with "puffery" and "spin" and is the least effective in communicating CSR.

As discussed earlier, qualitative findings have shown that GLCs are becoming more visible and attempted to be transparent through all means of communication to communicate with consumers, which is inconsistent to Pohle & Hittner (2008), Hess (2008) and Riddleberger & Hittner's (2009) research stating business leaders do not understand their consumers and have yet to conduct any research on them. Transparent in this sense, (a) denoting a continuous exchange of information to collect information on their business, (b) increasing the amount of information provided and (c) ensuring sufficient information about their products and/ or services is made available to satisfy consumers concerns or those who do not understand the concerns. On its own account, being transparent is also part of being socially responsible (Kaptein, 2004). At the same time, GLCs are also expecting for some form of communication from the consumers, putting in place platforms for consumers to make it convenient for them to convey feedbacks. Nevertheless, 90.1% of the survey respondents are reported not providing feedbacks to GLCs on CSR matters just as in Hess (2008). Or for that matter, actively engaging themselves with the GLCs although 80.2% of them think GLCs should actively consult interested consumers to determine their concerns and expectations.

There are many possible explanations for this lack of giving feedbacks. For one, this could be due to the fact that consumers are not bothered, or thinks that GLCs would not be bothered with their feedbacks. It could also be a case of wanting to provide feedbacks but do not know of the avenue to do so as Edelman (2007) did suggest that stakeholders find communicating with companies difficult. This is an interesting phenomenon understanding through the qualitative findings that the means of communication has been put into place for consumers to provide

feedbacks with. Furthermore, quantitative findings did illustrate consumers should be given the opportunity to do so and when given the opportunity to do so, they do not attempt to communicate back to the GLCs.

Collection and communication of relevant and timely information

The qualitative findings portray that GLCs are collecting and communicating relevant and timely information to (and from) their consumers in order to contribute to their business objectives and decisions. However, communicating CSR information can prove to be difficulty as many stakeholders are suspicious and cynical about the intentions of companies who claim to be socially responsible (Stuart, n.d.). This is confirmed through this study's quantitative findings, whereby more than half the survey respondents perceived the GLCs to be not transparent in their CSR communication. Although Stuart (n.d.) proposed four outcomes in terms of credibility, this could not be determined in this study as this study merely looked at the communication process and not the GLCs conduct. However, the CSR paradox introduced by Stuart remains whereby well-planned communication plan can benefit companies. Even companies already perceived as socially responsible can gain from it, although to a certain extent. The key is to remain consistent in the communication, whether in terms of content or timing.

Consumers' perceptions, concerns and expectation

Positive affirmations were given as to whether GLCs are aware and understand consumers' CSR perceptions, concerns and expectations. Realising that GLCs would require different strategies to deal with different stakeholders, which with strategies may change overtime, just as Jawahar & McLaughlin (2001; as cited in Yusoff & Lehmann, 2006) has suggested with reference to the stakeholder approach. And as consumers' control proves to be more critical, the more likely companies would satisfy consumers' demands (Ullman, 1985). The GLCs knows

this and so proactively conduct audits and surveys to constantly be in the know-how of consumers because they are well verse of the power of consumers. Again, the view that GLCs have no access to metrics to measure is inaccurate (Panayiotou, Aravossis & Moschou, 2009).

The qualitative findings and analysis of the GLCs CSR reports indicated that the GLCs were mostly merely reporting the CSR activities and that quantifiable data seems amiss, although this study does not dismiss entirely that there is no demonstration of it at all. In order to be more precise, this is in reference to communicating CSR messages in a quantitative manner, as to how any financial report would be reported to their investors, stating the exact contribution of CSR to the company. This will allow GLCs CSR efforts to be measureable and so allow consumers to evaluate them correctly and subsequently be able to make decisions about the company based on those numbers. One GLC was seen attempting to quantify their CSR efforts the company's CSR report although precision in the effort lacked. However, this is as Panayiotou, Aravossis & Moschou (2009) had pointed out, that it was a difficult task measuring the results of CSR due to its "soft" nature, making it difficult to quantify. It was also pointed out that this was one of the contributing factors that this has deterred companies from embracing CSR because no fixed formulae to measure tangible results from CSR investments. It can be seen that the interviewed GLCs may not at the moment possess the expertise to quantify the results of CSR and am relying on external parties to do so for them.

Even so, the GLCs are seen communicating to their consumers and working on enhancing the communication process. Although it is suggested for GLCs to seriously look into the study of the consequences for not performing CSR. In addition, come up with measures to allow the GLCs to see the impact of CSR in real numbers. This could then be presented back to their stakeholders such as investors and consumers with concrete numbers. In other words, present concrete and measureable description if the GLCs want to be seen serious about CSR and how these efforts are beneficial towards the company's overall business performance, and not just the bottom line. This is also in line to Bursa Malaysia's standpoint of GLCs, submitting CSR information through their CSR reports that were not including objectives, targets and performance data linked to CSR issues.

Perhaps, this is where the role of government could be prominent. As such, the qualitative findings reported that the GLCs are hardly referring to the Silver Book in their CSR execution but as a mere guide in their communication efforts.

Through this research it is found that the Silver Book is said to be modelled partly one of the GLC's code of conduct. It seems as if there was more influence from the part of GLCs to produce the Silver Book rather than the Silver Book influencing the GLCs, judging from the insignificant impact of the Silver Book towards the GLCs. It seems as if one of the objectives of the Silver Book to "guide the GLCs in evaluating their starting position in contributing to society" remains a redundant move (PCG, 2007). The tools, methodologies and processes provided in the Silver Book remains under utilised, not disregarding is it not being used (the researcher noted the usage in one of the GLCs CSR report) but the interviewed GLCs seemed to be already adopting other reporting framework such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards which were more pervasive in the GLCs communication efforts.

Successful stakeholder engagement

As Morsing & Schultz (2006) elucidated that a successful stakeholder engagement would encompass active participation, dialogue and involvement between the GLCs and their consumers. The interviewed GLCs through the qualitative interview are seen to be keen in undertaking the communication efforts on CSR. Although it is noted that the consumers do not necessarily share the same enthusiasm to be involved and thinks that GLCs should actively engage consumers. In order to decide if the engagement is successful and that both the GLCs and consumers are coming together to agree on codes of conduct, it first and foremost needs to take place. Although it is reported that consumers do engage with the GLCs, the indication from the qualitative findings were infrequent.

As quoted by Shell (2009; as cited in Hess, 2008), even if certain stakeholder groups do not have the capability (for whatever reasons) to interact meaningfully with the companies, GLCs should support the building of that capacity. Depending

on the industry and business as well as targeted consumers, social media is becoming a convenient tool and can be taken advantage of. Although the convenience can prove to be a nuisance if not managed properly. Generally, in a communication process, there is always a probability for the messages communicated to be misconstrued. This could be due to the way it was communicated or level of understandability on the end of the receiving party. On this note, GLCs have a responsibility (if they are bothered at all in determining the success of the engagement) to reconfirm that the messages channelled was as intended. This is one way of improving the accuracy of information, knowing that it has been understood as intended. When it is the reverse, whereby message is misconstrued, GLCs can use this as a leverage to manage those perceptions wrongly due to the miscommunication.

Also to note, while the consumers are keen for the GLCs to engage with them, the feedbacks given through the quantitative findings found that the survey respondents held scepticism about the GLCs CSR initiatives. Forehand & Grier (2003) noted that consumer scepticism about CSR initiatives can be due to their dispositional scepticism or be raised due to situational factors. This can be verified through the qualitative interview findings whereby GLCs (i.e. Company B) quoted several cases occurring in the political and economical realm were associated to their company. Although, in actual fact there was no linkage to their company or their efforts, the consumers were found thinking otherwise. Consequently, perception of the GLC turns into "reality".

Conclusion

This research papers established that communicating on CSR represents by itself a good strategic decision based on the resource-based view and stakeholder approach. As such, as GLCs make progress not just nation-wide but globally too, they will be in a plight of their ability to put up relevant information to the relevant stakeholder using the relevant means of communication at the relevant time. From

this study, the GLCs are seen collecting information and understanding the issues most relevant to their consumers and themselves and actually managing and communicating them. Saying this, communication strategies need to be relevant to consumers' perceptions, concerns and expectations and be strategically communicated and carried out accordingly to the GLCs' business objectives. This research positively affirms the notion that GLCs are engaging consumers to find out and understand their perceptions, concerns and expectations. One thing to note is that consumers are in the position to define the amount and type of information they need. The GLCs are noticeably seen from this study engaging the stakeholder involvement strategy. This study saw a surge of the GLCs starting to engage their consumers through social media such as Facebook and Twitter, a among the other conventional communication means. The findings are inconsistent with expectations drawn from previous literatures observing that companies once were reluctant to communicate about CSR. In any case, GLCs will need to employ structured communications means to facilitate feedback from consumers. Notwithstanding, the information gap remains prevalent only because GLCs consumers are hardly communicating back to the GLCs. It is noted that the survey respondents in this study were not limited to being asked questions of any particular types of GLC businesses, yet differences among industries may exist as well as differences among companies within the same industry. Although one prominent uncovering of this study is that the survey respondents do seem to have a bias perception of GLCs and its CSR efforts and therefore forms mistrust between the two parties. In this sense, the stakeholder engagement process from the perspective of the consumer deems unsuccessful. Perception is reality and on this accord, GLCs may have it harder in convincing the general consumers in its own right, without having been associated to the government for whatever reasons.

Implications of findings

This study's findings concerning GLCs' CSR communication process to consumers have certain implications. For one, the government's efforts in encouraging CSR through the Silver Book could be reviewed especially since the GLCs reference to it seems minimal and futile. As in the literature review, the Commission of the European Communities (2002) elucidated the presentations of evidences or measure that can prove the "assumed links between CSR and the achievement of corporate goals (e.g. profitability, sustainability, reputation or loyalty) to really encourage the uptake of CSR".

This leads to the next implication of this study's findings, quantifying CSR. The main thing is that there should be systematic measures for GLCs to finally put their CSR efforts into quantifiable measures and this can be presented to the stakeholders, whether it is the investors, internal employees or consumers alike. The next point is to put CSR, what used to be an intangible notion into numbers, such as a stakeholder prioritisation mapping system or tangible value chain furnished with tangible processes and outcomes. This can act as an enticement for GLCs to take up CSR because in the business world where figures are everything, GLCs will now want to compete to be the best and remain top in the business and market. This is not thought to be a hypothetical recommendation and in fact has already been started to be cultivated in other Asian countries such as Japan and India (Sawhny, 2008; ET Bureau, 2009; Singh Das, 2010).

The last implication of the findings is for the GLCs to look into managing the communication process in a structured and systematic manner. This is important to assist in accomplishing a more favourable and more importantly, accurate perception of their company. Clearly through the findings, GLC consumers seemed to have unfavourable perceptions and prejudices of the GLCs not from the GLCs own doings but other elements in the environment that is associated to them. On these grounds, in order to obtain the most honest and reliable information, it is recommended there is an independent facilitator or methodology to be used.

Recommendations for future research

This research was based on a sample of GLCs not fully representative of the larger population. It is noted that the GLCs compromised of all industries and businesses, which could instead be categorised more specifically understanding that each category will take on different communications strategies due to its business nature. It is also worth pursuing specific case studies to investigate the communication process, in specifics to the situation, message, medium and relevant contingents. Areas for future research could include further exploring alternative means of communication such as the recent usage of social media, in actual situations of companies' CSR communication to consumers. Subsequent studies should explore the area of consumer feedbacks on CSR matters to the companies that seems was largely lacking from this study's findings as well as previous literatures. Although Stuart (n.d.) proposed four outcomes of stakeholder engagement in terms of credibility, this could not be determined in this study as this study merely looked at the communication process and not the GLCs conduct, presents another area for future research.

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APPENDIX A

CERTIFICATION LETTER
UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN
Wholly Owned by UTAR Education Foundation (Company No. 578227-M)

28th January 2011

To Whom It May Concern

Letter of Confirmation

This is to certify that Ms Esther Teh Theng Yinn is currently a postgraduate student in UTAR. The details of her candidature are as follows:

Name :	Esther Teh Theng Yinn
I/C Number :	820827-10-5112
Student Registration Number :	08UKM06686
Programme enrolled :	Master of Business Administration (MBA)
Date of Registration :	May 2008
Mode of Study :	Part-time

Kindly contact us should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Dr Faidz bin Abd Rahman
Director
Institute of postgraduate Studies and Research

LIST OF INTERVIEWED GLCS' COMPANY PROFILE AND

INTERVIEWEES' DESIGNATION

The company profile (summarised version) below of each GLCs interviewed was retrieved from the respective Company's Corporate website and/ or Annual Report 2010. Please note that the actual name of the companies are withheld and replaced with general labels for their privacy and also due to the confidentiality directive set in the research project guidelines.

Company A

A leading international maritime company based in Malaysia with 9,000 employees in over 40 countries. The principles businesses are ship owning, ship operating, other shipping related activities, owning and operating of offshore floating facilities as well as marine repair, marine conversion and engineering & construction works.

Interviewee: General Manager, Group Corporate Affairs (Email interview); 8.3.2011

Company B

A fully integrated oil and gas multinational company, involved in the entire spectrum of petroleum activities. Headquartered in Malaysia, they have 41,000 employees in more than 40 countries. Besides managing the work of foreign production sharing contractors, they are involved in the nation's oil and gas

resources through its exploration and production activities as well as upstream and downstream businesses.

Interviewee: Manager, Group Corporate Affairs (Phone interview); 21.2.2011

Company C

A principal domestic marketing arm of a multinational oil company. Based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, they have 1,700 personnel in its Head Office. The company markets a wide range of high quality petroleum products through its core businesses, namely Retail, Commercial, Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and Lubricant.

Interviewee: Senior Manager, Brand Department (Email interview); 2.2.2011

Company D

A toll expressway company, the largest in South East Asia. They are involved in investment holding and provision of expressway operation services; operating and maintaining 973-kilometre length of inter-urban toll expressways in Peninsular Malaysia. They have 4,200 employees and have operations abroad in two main focus markets of India and Indonesia.

Interviewee: General Manager, Corporate Communications (Phone Interview); 7.3.2011

Company E

A Malaysia-based diversified multinational with over 100,000 employees operating in over 20 countries. The core businesses in key growth sectors, namely, plantations, property, motors, industrial equipment and energy & utilities, and healthcare.

Interviewee: Chief Sustainability Officer (Email interview); 27.2.2011

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Question 1: What does the term "Corporate Social Responsibility" (CSR) mean to you or your company?

Question 2: Being a government-linked company (GLC), how has the Silver Book affected your company's CSR communication efforts?

Question 3: Who do you think are your company's most significant stakeholders?

Question 4: a. Who does your company view as key stakeholders i.e. those that influence or are influenced by your company?

b. How are they linked to your company's CSR efforts?

Question 5: a. Is your company collecting information that truly helps meet your company's business objectives, and is it communicating those objectives to their consumers?

b. Is the information collected relevant and timely enough to base strategic CSR decisions on?

Question 6: a. To what extent has your CSR communication been incorporated into your main corporate communication strategy (geared towards your consumers)?

b. How does the corporate communications and CSR departments work together?

c. How much of the communication budget is allocated specifically for CSR communication?

Question 7: a. How do you usually communicate with your consumers regarding CSR i.e media used?

b. What sort of CSR information do you disseminate to your consumers?

c. How often is the CSR information updated?

d. What is your company's motivation behind the CSR communication efforts undertaken?

e. Is the communication done as a prerequisite or on a voluntary basis?

Question 8: a. Do you think the communication (information on your company's CSR efforts) reaches the intended audience, namely the consumers? Can you verify it?

b. Do you think you are successfully engaging your consumers on CSR? Why do you say so?

c. In your experience, do you think your consumers read and understand this CSR information? Why?

d. How can you verify this?

Question 9: a. Are you aware of and do you understand your consumer's CSR perceptions, concerns, and expectations?

b. Do you think your company's CSR efforts have met the consumer's expectations?

Question 10: Do you take into consideration the consumers' perceptions, concerns, and expectations when planning and implementing your company's CSR efforts? If yes, how? If no, why not?

Question 11: a. How do you measure the effectiveness of your company's CSR efforts?

b. How does your company measure communication efforts in general?

Question 12: a. Have your consumers actively asked for CSR information?

b. If yes, how do they communicate this demand? If not, why not?

c. How do you respond to this demand?

d. How likely are you to satisfy consumers' demands?

Question 13: How would you rate the influence of consumers on your company on the scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being "very influential" and 10 being "not influential".

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT FOR COMPANY A

Interviewee: General Manager, Group Corporate Affairs

Via email interview on 8.3.2011

*Please note that the GLCs' name and activities presented in this transcript have been edited and modified for anonymity purposes.

Question 1: What does the term "Corporate Social Responsibility" (CSR) mean to you or your company?

Answer 1: In our company, CSR goes beyond philanthropy and public relations. It is infused in our business practices and we are committed to carry out our business in a responsible and holistic manner. Our actions contribute towards the personal development of our people as well as improve the quality of life in the communities in which we operate and also ensuring the sustainability of the CSR initiatives conducted.

Question 2: Being a government-linked company (GLC), how has the Silver Book affected your company's CSR communication efforts?

Answer 2: Being listed on the main board of BURSA Malaysia, we have embarked on CSR and its communication efforts before the publication of the Silver Book. The book works as a guideline in our communication efforts.

Question 3: Who do you think are your company's most significant stakeholders?

Answer 3: Workplace: Staff; Community: Public/ Government Agencies; Marketplace: Customers/ JV Partners

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT FOR COMPANY B

Interviewee: Manager, Group Corporate Affairs

Via phone interview on 21.2.2011 from 3.00pm to 3.54pm.

*Please note that the GLCs' name and activities presented in this transcript have been edited and modified for anonymity purposes.

Question 1: What does the term "Corporate Social Responsibility" (CSR) mean to you or your company?

Answer 1: For our company, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is actually guided by our principle of sustainability. To us, CSR is how our business is governed or how we conduct our business in other words. So it does not just refer to the outreach programmes but it also refers to how we translate our shareholder values meaning the economics or bottom line. It refers to the people, the planet, and the environment.

Question 2: Being a government-linked company (GLC), how has the Silver Book affected your company's CSR communication efforts?

Answer 2: Our company, the fact that it is the national company of Malaysia, how the operations have always been guided by social responsibility as well as CSR. By the fact that, part of the corporate mission is not just to add value to our natural resources but in the process of doing so, we contribute towards the well-being of the people and the nation, in terms of social and economic development. In this sense, the development of the Silver Book itself is modelled partly after our company, for example, based on our Code of Conduct.

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT FOR COMPANY C

Interviewee: Manager, Group Corporate Affairs

Via email interview on 2.2.2011.

*Please note that the GLCs' name and activities presented in this transcript have been edited and modified for anonymity purposes.

Question 1: What does the term "Corporate Social Responsibility" (CSR) mean to you or your company?

Answer 1: Social Responsibility to our company is an inherent, sustainable way of working that is in line with our corporate mission as a business entity. All aspects of our operations are founded and guided by our corporate mission and the principles of our core shared values of Cohesiveness, Loyalty, Integrity and Professionalism. Our commercial success is deeply rooted in social responsibility. Therefore, in improving our business performance, our company is committed to consistently add value to meet the present and future energy needs of our stakeholders and constituents everywhere in a sustainable manner. It is imperative to note that CSR, in this context is not merely "social investments" or "philanthropy" but encompasses a wider range (as indicated in 'answer 2').

Question 2: Being a government-linked company (GLC), how has the Silver Book affected your company's CSR communication efforts?

Answer 2: Since it was incorporated in 1974, our company has always been mindful of other dimensions that have an impact on, or impacted by, our business. From the very beginning, our company has been conscious of conducting our

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT FOR COMPANY D

Interviewee: General Manager, Corporate Communications Department

Via phone interview on 7.3.2011 from 3.27pm to 4.00pm

*Please note that the GLCs' name and activities presented in this transcript have been edited and modified for anonymity purposes.

Question 1: What does the term "Corporate Social Responsibility" (CSR) mean to you or your company?

Answer 1: CSR to us is an important part of the company. We believe that it creates sustainable benefits to society. It also makes our business more competitive over the long term. As such, if it is done right, our CSR contribution will enhance our brand image and increase the ability to attract and retain the best workforce. And hopefully this will translate to better client satisfaction and customer loyalty. Ultimately, what we are trying to achieve from CSR is stronger financial performance.

Question 2: Being a government-linked company (GLC), how has the Silver Book affected your company's CSR communication efforts?

Answer 2: The Silver Book helps a lot. It provides a guide to develop our company's CSR. It suggests the main areas we should focus on which is the seven core areas and the reporting framework itself. Reporting framework of the Silver Book outlines that there is transparency in reporting CSR activities. Our focus point under the Silver Book is on community involvement and education (as stated in our annual report 2009). The emphasis is on these two areas mainly because a

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT FOR COMPANY E

Interviewee: Chief Sustainability Officer

Via email interview on 27.2.2011

*Please note that the GLCs' name and activities presented in this transcript have been edited and modified for anonymity purposes.

Question 1: What does the term "Corporate Social Responsibility" (CSR) mean to you or your company?

Answer 1: Please see 'Policy Statement' and 'Guidelines' on CSR at our corporate website. CSR is managed at two levels at our company – (1) at Corporate Communications for direct/ events-led CSR; and (2) at our Foundation for main CSR activities. As our Foundation was formed only in 2009, several projects previously handled by Corporate Communications were transferred to the Foundation. Group Sustainability was formed in 2008 and has a strict business-operation focus; i.e. develops positions for corporate sustainability based on business-cases for performance improvement, risk management and long-term business strategy. The Sustainability function differs from the legacy Corporate Communications CSR and Foundation functions, which are more philanthropy-orientated.

Question 2: Being a government-linked company (GLC), how has the Silver Book affected your company's CSR communication efforts?

Answer 2: Not significantly. The Silver Book is a sub-set of a government-led transformation programme. It suggests a method of operation and practice for

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Hello there!

I am currently pursuing a Master of Business Administration (MBA) at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR). I am soliciting your cooperation to participate in this research project questionnaire entitled "Communicating Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to Consumers: A Study on Malaysian Government-Linked Companies (GLCs)". Although your response is of the utmost importance to me, your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary.

This survey should take no longer than 10 minutes of your time, with the questionnaire divided into five sections:

Section A: Background information
Section B: Knowledge on Government-Linked Companies (GLCs)
Section C: Knowledge on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
Section D: Knowledge on GLCs' CSR communication efforts
Section E: Perceptions of and reactions to GLCs' CSR engagement with consumers

Please be assured that you will not be identified in this questionnaire report. Information provided by you remains confidential and will be reported in summary format only. Should you have queries about this questionnaire, please email me at estherteh@yahoo.com.

Yours sincerely,
Esther Teh
UTAR MBA student

Would you like to participate in this research?

☐ Yes, I would.   ☐ No, thank you.

Section A: Background information

1. Your gender.

   ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. What is your age?

   ☐ Below 21 years old
   ☐ 21 to 30 years old
   ☐ 31 to 40 years old
   ☐ 41 to 50 years old
   ☐ 51 to 60 years old
   ☐ 61 to 70 years old
   ☐ Over 70 years old

3. What is your highest educational qualification?

   ☐ None
   ☐ High School (e.g. SPM)
   ☐ Pre University (e.g. STPM, A-Level)
   ☐ Diploma/ Bachelor's degree
   ☐ Post-graduate degree

4. What is your official job title?

   ☐ Executive
   ☐ Vice President
   ☐ Manager
   ☐ Director
   ☐ Professional
   ☐ Administrative/ Support personnel
   ☐ Unemployed/ Retired/ Homemaker
   ☐ Others. Please state your official job title:_____

5. What industry does your company belong to?

☐ Accounting/ Banking/ Finance/ Insurance

☐ Business/ Consultancy/ Professional Services

☐ Computers (Hardware, Software)/ Information Technology

☐ Education

☐ Energy

☐ Engineering/ Architecture

☐ Government

☐ Healthcare/ Medical

☐ Hospitality/ Food and Beverage

☐ Manufacturing

☐ Marketing/ Mass Communications/ Media

☐ Retail/ Sales

☐ Telecommunications

☐ Others. Please state the industry your company belongs to:_____

Section B: Knowledge on Government-Linked Companies (GLCs)

6. Have you heard of Government-Linked Companies (GLCs)?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

7. Do you recognize any of the GLCs listed? Please select the GLCs you are aware of. (You may choose more than one)

☐ Axiata Group Bhd   ☐ Petronas Dagangan Bhd
☐ Affin Holdings Berhad   ☐ Petronas Gas Bhd
☐ BIMB Holdings Bhd   ☐ Pharmaniaga Bhd
☐ Bumiputra-Commerce Holdings Bhd   ☐ PLUS Expressways Bhd
☐ Boustead Holdings Bhd   ☐ Pos Malaysia Bhd
☐ Chemical Company of Malaysia Bhd   ☐ Proton Holdings Bhd
☐ CCM Duopharma Biotech Bhd   ☐ Sime Darby Bhd
☐ Faber Group Bhd   ☐ Syarikat Takaful Malaysia Bhd
☐ Lityan Holding Bhd   ☐ Telekom Malaysia Bhd
☐ Malayan Banking Berhad (Maybank)   ☐ Tenaga Nasional Bhd
☐ Malaysia Airport Holdings Bhd   ☐ TH Plantations Bhd
☐ Malaysia Building Society Bhd   ☐ Time dotcom Bhd
☐ Malaysia International Shipping Corp Bhd   ☐ Time Engineering Bhd
☐ Malaysia Resource Corporations Bhd   ☐ UAC Bhd
☐ Malaysian Airline System Bhd   ☐ UEM Land Bhd
☐ MNRB Holding Bhd   ☐ UMW Holdings Bhd
☐ NCB Holding Bhd

8. Are you a consumer of any one of these GLCs?

☐ Yes   ☐ No (Please proceed to Section C – Question 10)

9. Which one of the GLCs listed do you consume products and/ or services from?
   (You may choose more than one)

☐ Axiata Group Bhd
☐ Affin Holdings Berhad
☐ BIMB Holdings Bhd
☐ Bumiputra-Commerce Holdings Bhd
☐ Boustead Holdings Bhd
☐ Chemical Company of Malaysia Bhd
☐ CCM Duopharma Biotech Bhd
☐ Faber Group Bhd
☐ Lityan Holding Bhd
☐ Malayan Banking Berhad (Maybank)
☐ Malaysia Airport Holdings Bhd
☐ Malaysia Building Society Bhd
☐ Malaysia International Shipping Corp Bhd
☐ Malaysia Resource Corporations Bhd
☐ Malaysian Airline System Bhd
☐ MNRB Holding Bhd
☐ NCB Holding Bhd

☐ Petronas Dagangan Bhd
☐ Petronas Gas Bhd
☐ Pharmaniaga Bhd
☐ PLUS Expressways Bhd
☐ Pos Malaysia Bhd
☐ Proton Holdings Bhd
☐ Sime Darby Bhd
☐ Syarikat Takaful Malaysia Bhd
☐ Telekom Malaysia Bhd
☐ Tenaga Nasional Bhd
☐ TH Plantations Bhd
☐ Time dotcom Bhd
☐ Time Engineering Bhd
☐ UAC Bhd
☐ UEM Land Bhd
☐ UMW Holdings Bhd

Section C: Knowledge on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

10. Have you heard of the term "Corporate Social Responsibility" (CSR)?

☐ Yes ☐ No (Thank you – the survey ends here)

11. Do you have a reasonable understanding of the term "Corporate Social Responsibility" (CSR)?

☐ Yes ☐ No (Thank you – the survey ends here)

12. What do you think CSR is? (Please choose only one)

☐ CSR is unnecessary for a business whose primary responsibility is to make profit for its owners; CSR efforts should be left to the government.

☐ CSR is a public relations exercise to enhance corporate image.

☐ CSR is the obligation of businesses to pursue policies, make decisions, or follow lines of actions which are compatible with the objectives and values of the society.

☐ CSR is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns into their business operations as well as their interactions with stakeholders on a voluntary basis.

☐ CSR is _____

Section D: Knowledge on GLCs' CSR communication efforts

13. Are you aware of any CSR efforts initiated by GLCs?

☐ Yes. Please state the GLCs' and its CSR efforts:_____

☐ No

14. Have you come across any information on GLCs' CSR efforts?

☐ Yes   ☐ No (Please proceed to Section E – Question 29)

15. Have you read any CSR reports or other CSR related materials from GLCs?

☐ Yes   ☐ No (Please proceed to Question 25)

16. Which communication tool(s) was used by the GLCs to communicate their CSR information to you? (You may choose more than one)

☐ Newspaper   ☐ Corporate websites

☐ Television   ☐ Press releases/ Press conferences

☐ Radio   ☐ Advertising campaigns

☐ Magazine   ☐ Product packaging/ label

☐ Corporate annual report   ☐ Social media i.e. Facebook, Twitter

☐ CSR or Sustainability reports   ☐ Word-of-mouth

☐ Corporate newsletters/ Leaflets/   ☐ Others. Please state:_____
Posters

17. How did you come across the CSR information of these GLCs? (Please choose only one)

☐ I had read it as the the CSR information was forced upon me by the GLCs. (Please proceed to Question 18)

☐ I had scanned through the CSR information as it was sent to me by the GLCs. (Please proceed to Question 18)

☐ I happened to come across the CSR information of the GLCs. (Please proceed to Question 19)

☐ I looked up the CSR information because I was interested to know more about the GLCs' CSR efforts. (Please proceed to Question 19)

18. How often are you exposed to CSR information from GLCs?

☐ Every month ☐ Every 6 months

☐ Every 3-4 months ☐ Once a year

19. Where did you come across or search for information about the GLCs CSR efforts? (You may choose more than one)

☐ Newspaper ☐ Corporate websites

☐ Television ☐ Press releases/ Press conferences

☐ Radio ☐ Advertising campaigns

☐ Magazine ☐ Product packaging/ label

☐ Corporate annual report ☐ Social media i.e. Facebook, Twitter

☐ CSR or Sustainability reports ☐ Word-of-mouth

☐ Corporate newsletters/ Leaflets/ ☐ Others. Please state:_____
Posters

20. Would you be interested to search for MORE information on GLCs CSR efforts?

☐ Yes. Please state why:_____

☐ No. Please state why:_____

21. Do you have a reasonable understanding of the GLC and its CSR efforts?

☐ Yes ☐ No

22. Are the terms used in CSR contents communicated to you too technical or do the contents seem unfamiliar to you?

☐ Yes ☐ No

23. Does this CSR information come in handy when you make decisions concerning the GLC?

☐ Yes ☐ No

24. Do you trust the CSR information communicated to you by the GLC?

☐ Yes. Please state why: _____

☐ No. Please state why: _____

25. Do you think the GLCs are transparent in their communication efforts?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

26. Do you ever suspect the intentions of these GLCs whom identify themselves as being socially responsible?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

27. Please choose three communication tools you would TRUST to get information about a GLCs' CSR efforts.

☐ Newspaper   ☐ Corporate websites

☐ Television   ☐ Press releases/ Press conferences

☐ Radio   ☐ Advertising campaigns

☐ Magazine   ☐ Product packaging/ label

☐ Corporate annual report   ☐ Social media i.e. Facebook, Twitter

☐ CSR or Sustainability reports   ☐ Word-of-mouth

☐ Corporate newsletters/ Leaflets/ Posters

28. Please choose three communication tools you would NOT TRUST to get information about a GLCs' CSR efforts.

☐ Newspaper   ☐ Corporate websites

☐ Television   ☐ Press releases/ Press conferences

☐ Radio   ☐ Advertising campaigns

☐ Magazine   ☐ Product packaging/ label

☐ Corporate annual report   ☐ Social media i.e. Facebook, Twitter

☐ CSR or Sustainability reports   ☐ Word-of-mouth

☐ Corporate newsletters/ Leaflets/ Posters

Section E: Perceptions of and reactions to GLCs' CSR engagement with consumers

29. Do you think these GLCs are doing a good job of engaging you on CSR matters?

    ☐ Yes   ☐ No

30. Are you providing feedback to these GLCs on the matter of CSR?

    ☐ Yes. Please state why:_____
    ☐ No. Please state why:_____
       (Please proceed to Question 33)

31. Do you think the GLCs are taking your feedback into consideration?

    ☐ Yes   ☐ No

32. Do you think the GLCs have responded to your feedback by taking action?

    ☐ Yes   ☐ No

33. For GLCs that claim to be engaging consumers like you, do they appear to be fine-tuning their efforts to your needs and interest?

    ☐ Yes   ☐ No

34. As a consumer, do you actively engage with the GLCs in any way?

    ☐ Yes. Please state on what matters:_____
    ☐ No

35. How has the engagement process been, from your perspective as a consumer of the GLCs? Please choose one.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Very successful   Successful   Neither successful nor unsuccessful   Unsuccessful   Very unsuccessful   Not Applicable

36. Do you think GLCs should be more active in consulting interested consumers to determine their expectations and their views on the GLCs' performance in meeting those expectations?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

37. Why do you think GLCs should actively consult interested consumers?

_____

_____

Thank you very much for volunteering your time and effort

to complete this questionnaire.