

# Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Models: An Approach to Environmental Perspective

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**Abstract**—Although the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been advocated for decades and is commonly employed by corporations globally, agreement on how CSR model should be defined and implemented remains a contentious debate amongst academia, businesses and society, especially on current issue of environmental concern. In this article, using content analysis method, the author traces the evolution of CSR beginning construction in 1979, which marks the modern era of CSR and the demand on environmental perspective.

**Key Words:** early CSR model, contemporary CSR model.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Abundant research has been conducted on CSR. However, very limited studies have looked at the association between CSR and environmental concern. For example, there were a few studies that examined CSR within the environmental perspectives, but they were conducted to test previous models without looking in-depth particularly at environmental protection [1, 2, 3, 4] and very few linked CSR with a green process in a model [5, 6].

## 2. EARLY CSR MODEL

Literatures indicate that an early CSR model emphasized economic objective. Carroll (1979) developed a well-known ‘Three Dimensional Conceptual Model of Corporate Performance’, which investigated the different domains of CSR (namely, environment, social, legal, and economic), which overlap with each other [7]. Carroll’s CSR model has been the most robust and extensively cited in the literature [8], despite the existence of plentiful definitions/models and CSR substitutes.

However, there have been criticisms on Carroll’s model. Some indicated that; (a) the model is an order of dependence [9] in contrast, it was merely perceived to make the point that the focus is more on economic and ethical obligations [10] without considering the environment protection as the most important objective; (b) the model overlooks the latest development that incorporates the social, economic and environmental aspects of a business’s corporate responsibility [11]; (c)

the model has inadequate contributory because it is not in sync with the increasing trend that companies are likely to engage in ‘sustainability’ or ‘the triple-bottom-line’ approach to describing their recent CSR activities [12]; and (d) the model’s validity in explaining CSR outside the USA is suspect because it was developed in a Western context; this attempt (CSR model in USA context) have been widely argued for problems relating to different cultures and sub-cultures, conceptual clearness and potential conflict, and for lacking to provide sufficient ethical assistance to the businesses and may also allocate distinctive comparative meaning [13, 14, 15, 16]. Despite perceived as being a valid CSR model, Carroll’s model still receives criticisms. (see figure 1)



Figure 1: The Pyramid of Social Responsibility  
Source: Carroll, 1979

## 2. CONTEMPORARY CSR MODEL: ANALYSIS OF THE PATTERNS

Table 1 illustrates the patterns of contemporary CSR models. These models have been critically reviewed for the elements that are lacking.

Table 1: Patterns of contemporary CSR models

No	Author	Model	Description (Summary)
1	Marsden and Andriof (1998)	Ripple Effect Model	This model expands on the concept of Triple Bottom Line by adding ethical and human resource practices to the three goals of economic, social and environmental health [17](Elkington, 1997). However, many of these areas are not separated by strict boundaries. 'Environmental' concerns can be addressed through internal measures such as energy and waste policies and external concerns such as product lifecycle, emissions and overall sustainable development. Again, the model does not explore in detail 'what to do' and 'how to understand' the process of green technology towards environment preservation. While ethical investigation was once considered 'quaint', it now demands more attention and respect as it captures a larger share of the market and often offers enviable returns [18](Kennedy, 2001).
2	Aras and Crowther (2009)	Model of Sustainable Development	To achieve sustainable development it is necessary to achieve sustainability and this can be achieved by four actions: maintaining economic activity as this is the raison d'être of the company [19](Friedman 1970); conserving the environment as this is essential for the maintenance of future generations; ensuring social justice which includes elimination of poverty and ensuring of human rights; and developing spiritual and cultural values, where the corporate and societal values are aligned with in the individual. However, the 'Model of Sustainable Development' also brings a broad view of CSR practices without pointing out specifically 'what to be done' to ensure the environmental protection and sustainability.
3	Visser (2010)	CSR 2.0 Model	Visser proposed CSR 2.0 model, which is about designing and adopting an inherently sustainable and responsible business model, supported by a reformed financial and economic system. Clearly, he was most concerned with profit motive to ensure the viability of the model rather than environmental conservation as the main priority.
4	Kanji and Chopra (2010)	Kanji-Chopra Corporate Social Responsibility Model (KCCSRM)	In the Kanji-Chopra (2010) corporate social responsibility model (KCCSRM) the organisational strategic planning systems provide the foundation for social accountability and investment, environment protection and sustainability, corporate governance and economic responsibility and ethics and human resources. The central objective of the model is to support corporate's financial performance precisely on profit motive. Again, environmental sustainability is only a part of the elements towards business sustainability.
5	Chen (2011)	CSR model with best goodness-of-fit	Chen (2011) presented a procedure for identifying a CSR model with best goodness-of-fit. He constructed a model of which CSR is mainly influenced by four components: accountability, transparency, competitiveness and responsibility. He also suggested qualitative approach to complement his findings and additional insights. However, the study did not include environmental perspective as one of the components. [20]
6	Ketola (2008)	CR-model	Ketola (2008) built a CR-model by integrating utilitarian/egoistic, duty/rights/justice and virtue ethical corporate values with increased consciousness of psychological defences in corporate discourses, in order to achieve responsible environmental, social and economic corporate actions. The CR-model can be tested in companies and executed through corporate strategic and operational management. She also added that corporate responsibility (CR) has become so critical to the well-being of humans and nature that it needs to be closely scrutinized. However the model does not integrate the element of green practice to sustain the present business [21]
7	Daza (2009)	Analytical Model	Daza (2009) developed an analytical model to appraise and measure corporate social responsibility (CSR). The utility function, which is the basis of a company's economic dimension, is analysed in its philosophical and ethical setting, concentrating largely on the Utilitarian and Hedonistic schools and a maximizing agent. The resulting approach permits an analytical explanation of the behaviour of a company and its owners when incorporating both economic rationality and social responsibility. However, this quantitative study did not consider an environmental element as part of CSR contribution to society [22]

8	Meehan and Richard (2006)	3CSR model	Meehan and Richard (2006) developed a model that bridges the gap between CSR definitions and strategy and offers guidance to managers on how to connect socially committed organisations with the growing numbers of ethically aware consumers to simultaneously achieve economic and social objectives. This study offers a critical evaluation of the theoretical foundations of corporate responsibility (CR) and proposes a new strategic approach to CR, which seeks to overcome the limitations of normative definitions. To address this issue, the authors proposed a new “processual model of CR”, which they referred to as the 3CSR model. However the study did not integrate the environmental objectives into the organization’s activities [23].
9	Delai and Takahashi (2011)	Reference Model	Delai and Takahashi (2011) developed a model to measure corporate sustainability (economic, social and environment) that can be used by organizations to integrate sustainability measures into their current performance measurement system, helping them to embed sustainability into daily activities and to forge a sustainability culture. The research found that there was no single initiative that tackles all sustainability issues and no consensus around what should be measured and how. Academics will find the model useful in their research efforts since it presents a broad review of sustainability concepts as well as an analysis of the strengths and shortcomings of each sustainability initiative focused especially in the environmental perspective [24].
10	Bilgin, M. (2009)	PEARL Model	Bilgin (2009) formulated institutional virtues according to sustainable development (SD) criteria to come up with a paradigmatic set of corporate principles. His model aims to answer how a corporation might obtain competitive advantage by combining “going ethical” with “going green.” The PEARL model may be implemented as a proactive positioning to gain competitive advantage because transformation of this model into corporate strategy does not only respond to “stakeholder” claims, but also meets the changing characteristic of “societal demands”. His findings challenged the conventional belief that social and environmental responsibilities mostly create costs and do not contribute to the corporations’ benefit at desirable levels. PEARL responds to shareholder concerns, public demands, and academic standards by offering a framework for concerned activities including environment, locality, social responsibility, governance, cultural freedom, and perception friendliness [25].
11	Agyekum-Mensah et al. (2012)	4Es (project management model) and 4 Poles (poles or factors of sustainability)	Agyekum-Mensah et. al. (2012) proposed a 4Es (project management model) and 4 Poles (poles or factors of sustainability) model as a holistic approach to achieving sustainable construction. In addition, they proposed an extension to the definition of sustainable construction or development, as the existing definitions seem to be vague. The proposed model is new within project management and the environment. It also promotes technology as a core factor in achieving sustainable development [26].
12	Nalband and Al Kelabi (2014)	Corporate social responsibility- Universal model	Nalband and Al Kelabi revisited Carroll’s (1991) CSR pyramid model by including generic elements of beliefs, values and assumptions. The model signifies legal responsibility as the main responsibility. This is in contrast to Carroll (1991), who argued that a company is primarily profit-oriented. Nalband and Al Kelabi’s model postulates that the majority and/or an influential group in a company have the ‘final say’ as to what the key responsibility of the company is when conflict occurs in choosing among various responsibilities to fulfil. In this case, the model does not specifically address how to tackle an ‘environmental issue’ despite the addition of the new elements (i.e. beliefs, values and assumptions).

As shown in Table 1 it is observed that: (a) majority of CSR models put emphasis on the economic motive as the primary priority of a business [27]; (b) the elements of profit motive, social ethics, safety and health, governance, cultural freedom, accountability, transparency, and competitiveness have been proposed with overlapping functions [1, 2, 3, 4, 18, 19, 17, 21, 23] without focusing solely on specific elements such as environment protection; (c) most of the models are concerned with philanthropic objectives. That is, see economic opportunities in preventing pollution [27] which means that social responsibility will be embraced if the idea of going green has economic value [2, 3,4]; (d) most of the findings used surveys among managers or owners of a business to identify the elements that should be included in the CSR model [17, 4] without considering how CSR activities can be integrated as part of a green process; and (e) the latest Universal CSR model by Nalband and Al Kelabi [10] views legal responsibility as the basic responsibility even though Carroll [28], basing on the previous work of Dalton and Cosier [29], disagreed with this idea. Carroll argued that company's social responsibility is not only to obey the basic law. In contrast, this model does not show how a company should act particularly to protect the environment

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Empirical evidence indicates that a wide range of research in CSR model has been conducted, and the focus has evolved beyond the consideration of financial aspects. In sum, even though most of the models propose a broader perspective of CSR elements, they do so without solely focusing on how to respond to the current issue (i.e. environmental protection), which is the problem faced by many companies nowadays.

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