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# **Empirical Evidence of Governance and Disclosure in Charity Organizations**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study is to empirically test if there were any effects between governance attributes and the disclosures of charity organizations. The governance attributes include both the internal and external governance mechanisms. This paper reports on the study of disclosure in annual returns for the year 2009 of 101 registered charity organizations in Malaysia. The extent of disclosure was measured using the ratio of the charity organization's total disclosure score to its total possible disclosure score. Using an unweighted index of disclosure, the results indicated that the external governance mechanism is significantly and positively related to the extent of disclosure. In contrast, both the proxy for the internal governance attributes was found to be insignificant. The findings suggested that the efforts of monitoring through external governance mechanism can lead to a higher disclosure and hence better transparency in charity organizations annual returns. This study examined the annual returns, as this is the only vehicle in which charity information is disclosed. Eventhough the main focus was on the extent of disclosures; such may not imply quality disclosures due to different instrument used to measure the disclosure. The findings of this study could assist regulators to improve governance through charity transparency in annual returns by imposing a mandatory external audit.

**KEYWORDS**: Charity organizations, disclosure, internal governance, external governance, NPOs

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Good governance is essential to increase the likelihood that charity organizations will comply with the regulatory requirements and best serve their multiple stakeholders. To ensure certain level of transparency and governance to gain the stakeholders' trust, charity organizations need to communicate their activities and commitments. In Malaysia, charity governance is best reflected in the annual returns required by the Registry of Society (ROS), through Form 9, that consists of financial statements and governance related matters.

Annual return is one form of communication between the management and stakeholders. It plays an important role in mitigating the information asymmetry between the principal (donors) and agent (management) in a charity organization. By providing information about the financial condition and performance of charity organizations, donors, as the key stakeholders, can make more informed decisions. The informed decisions made by the donors are partly the function of the quality of the annual returns. Therefore, the disclosure quality of the annual returns has to be given a greater attention to enable the donors to make informed decisions. This study provides further empirical evidence on the effect of governance attributes, which include both internal and external governance mechanisms with disclosure in charity organizations. The nationwide survey focusing on large organizations to assess the extent of non-profit governance was conducted by Grant Thornton in 2006. The survey by Grant Thornton [1] indicated a majority (54%) of 960 large not-for-profits have made changes to their governance policies reflecting the need for accountability and transparency.

Organizational accountability and transparency to a certain extent is enthused by the presence of internal governance mechanism and external governance mechanisms. Hyndman and McDonnell [2] provide a dichotomy mechanisms of governance into internal and external forms of governance. The internal governance mechanisms include the board of trustees, internal committees, managers, staffs and the internal audit. Governance in the non-profit literature has included the function of board of directors [3] as an internal governance mechanism. For instance, a few studies address the presence of the board structure, including board size [4-7], board composition [7-9] and board performance [10-15]. The owners of non-profit organizations can be their members, their communities or their stakeholders [16]. Therefore, the board of trustees or the executive committee represents the owners of the non-profit (the members, communities and the stakeholders). In the absence of absolute ownership, the non-profit organizations (NPOs) should improve their governance.

As supported by [17] "board of directors (or trustees) of U.S. non-profit organizations are ultimately legally responsible for the affairs and conduct of the organizations they head." The board's ways of fulfilling their responsibilities can differ from one to another. The literature suggests many ways in which boards should govern their organizations. Meanwhile, the review of empirical research highlights principal areas of governance including board size, board composition, board-staff relationships, board roles and responsibilities, board effectiveness and its association to organizational effectiveness. This study place strong emphasis on board (or trustees) governance, in particular with regards to its size and composition because governance has been considered as an influential role in policy setting and determining direction of an organization [18]. The board of trustees of the charity organizations is ultimately responsible for their organizations. Many researchers emphasize the importance of the board of trustees on the whole organization [4-7, 9, 13, 19-21]. The board of trustees need to attain excellent performance for them to reach its full potential [22]. The Council of Foundations issued the Stewardship Principles in 2010 included board size as an important consideration of a foundation board without mandating the number of members who could serve on foundation boards [23]. Later, Panel of the Non-Profit Sector issued its Principles for Good Governance and Ethical Practices in 2007 recommended that boards should have a minimum of five members [24] when it recommended, "The board of a charity organization should establish its own size and structure and review these periodically. The board should have enough members to allow for full deliberation and diversity of thinking on governance and other organizational matters. Except for very small organizations, this generally means that the board should have at least five members."

One of the issues that accounts in the growth of the non-profits board literature is the composition of Executive Committee. There is a growth in the literature on composition because it is assumed that those who serves on the committee makes a difference [3]. The role of a board is also 'to represent the interests of one or more constituencies or groups the organization serves' [25]. In the literature, board composition is defined as the percentage of outside (or inside) directors on the board [9]. Some studies [4, 9, 26] have examined the relationship between board composition and overall organizational performance. Overall, all these studies have yielded mixed results. Few studies associated non-profits board governance directly to organizational performance. Their findings are all consistent and significant. They found a significant association between the presence of major donors on the board and organizational efficiency. Major donors in this case act to monitor the NPOs, at least the board membership. This is confirmed by [27]'s study who found large donors corporations including foundations and legacies are more sensitive to the quality and efficiency indicators by monitoring the board group. [28] view that the presence of major donors as the external stakeholders of NPOs on board monitor the organization in similar manner to large shareholders in for-profit boards.

Empirical evidence also suggests that efficiency measures are valuable to donors. The efficiency measures can be both financial (objective) and non-financial (subjective) measures. In measuring both financial performance and social performance, [7] found that the proportion of business people on 240 Young Men's Christian Associations (YMCAs) board is either unrelated or negatively related to organizational performance. Other studies indicate several other elements of board composition of having corporate members on the board had an impact on the level of compliance of the provision of Sarbanes-Oxley practices [29]. This finding supports the idea that having corporate members on board serve as one vehicle through which the development of governance practices in the corporate sector are translated into the non-profit governance. [9], in a sample of 108 New York NPOs, find a significant statistical association between the presence of major donors on the board of the organization represented by three classification of expense ratio (i.e. administrative expenses ratio, fundraising expenses ratio and program expenses ratio). It was also found that proportion of major donors is also an indicator of organizational performance. Increased in the proportion of major donors on the board increased the organizational performance by lower proportion of administrative expenses to total expenses and increase the proportion of program expenses total expenses. Even though the board composition has often been related to the organizational performance, the study in 73 Canadian specific health focus charities, however, indicated that the performance and efficiency were not related to the composition of the board of trustees by its status as insiders or outsiders [8].

While much emphasis was given on the internal governance mechanism, the external governance mechanism is still in need and plays important roles. External governance mechanisms do exist in terms of audit committees [6, 30, 31], accounting rules and reporting requirements, and the government regulations. An examination of audit committee composition and the factors associated with the composition in NPOs was conducted by [31]. The survey of 118 chief financial officers of NPOs indicated that many of them have not adopted SOX reforms and 36 percent of NPOs have their audit committee which nonetheless is not absolutely independent. On the audit composition, 88% of non-profit organizations have at least one financial expert on the audit committee. Furthermore, the presence of an internal audit and organizations that received government grants gives impact on the financial expert on the audit committee.

Other studies in audit committees relate audit committee to governance. Audit committee is formed as part of the organizational monitoring mechanisms to improve accountability. With a sample of 145 non-profit hospitals subject to the Single Audit Act for the year 2001 to 2004, [30] investigate whether audit committee improve internal control in the sample. The reported internal control weaknesses are a measure of the organizational accountability in the study. Even though accountability in NPOs is a concern of the public [32], financial reporting accountability can be improved through the establishment of audit committee [33]. However, the result of [30] found no relationship between audit committees and accountability, measured by reported internal control weaknesses. [31] found that audit committees complement other monitoring mechanisms such as the use of Big 4 auditor and the presence of an internal auditing function. Prior research, largely based on private sector studies, suggests that companies with CPAs on the audit committees had significant perceptions differences about financial statement disclosure and accounting procedure choice [34].

Observing the United Kingdom charities, [35] state that "even auditors who consider that they have charity expertise failed to ensure that charities in the United Kingdom were complying with the appropriate charity reporting requirements." Other empirical research has resolved the need for audit qualification in legislation. In certain circumstances, some legislation and standards of charity sector is regulated in the same manner as private sector. The charity organizations registered under the ROS must submit Form 9 that consists of the Statement of Receipts and Payments of the last financial year, together with a balance sheet showing the financial position closely of the last financial year to the ROS within sixty days after holding its AGM. This requirement is in accordance with Section 14(d) of the Societies Act 1966 (Act 335) & Regulations Act 1984. However, the accounts submitted may not necessarily be audited. The other statements that supplements financial statements such a Cash Flow Statement, Statement of Changes in General Fund and Notes, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes are not required by the ROS.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

## 2.1 Development of Hypotheses

A number of studies [4, 5, 36] provide empirical evidence that support the positive association between board size and information disclosure. [19] study proposes that as more members are added to the board, there are better levels of monitoring. Larger size of the board of trustees may also be important because of the increased in the levels of fundraising and improved performance. However, opposing evidence was also found in studies relating performance to board size [4, 9] and disclosures to board size [37]. Further empirical investigation is therefore needed. Given the strong theory to support a positive relationship, it is hypothesized that:

*H*<sub>1</sub>: Charity organizations with strong internal governance (as measured by board size) have greater disclosure.

Previous research has shown that board composition, such as having corporate donors on board of charity organizations are related to the organizational efficiency [4] and influence the compliance of the standards [29]. They will have more power and access to the information to monitor the organizational efficiency because they demand detailed information beyond the financial information such as detailed strategic plans, budget and information on each project that they financed [12, 38, 39]. Nevertheless, some studies showed that having the corporate members on board do not help to guarantee the efficiency of the non-profit organizations [40]. Since studies on board composition consider the relationship between the presence of institutional donors and organizational efficiency, this leads the study to the development of the following hypothesis related to the presence of institutional donors and the disclosure of information:

 $H_2$ : Charity organizations with strong internal governance (as measured by the presence of institutional donors on board) have greater disclosure.

Given the function of an external audit within the non-profit context, [6] argued that the existence of the external audit may improve internal control and thus regarded it as an effective monitoring device for improving disclosure quality. They found that the presence of an external audit is significantly related to the adoption of Sarbanes Oxley Act (SOX) disclosure measures. Similarly, [41] provides support that the presence of an external audit minimizes reporting problems and acts as a tool for more reliable financial reporting that enhances disclosure quality. This leads to the following hypothesis:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Section 14(1) of the Societies Act 1966 (Act 335) & Regulations Act 1984

 $H_3$ : Charity organizations with strong external governance (as measured by the existence of an independent audit) have greater disclosure.

Since large number of studies [4, 9, 30, 31] on disclosure attempted to correlate the extent of disclosure with specific organizational attributes, therefore this study considers the organizational age and size as control variables.

## 2.2 Data Collection and Sampling

NPOs in Malaysia include societies, associations, foundations, clubs and companies limited by guarantee (CLBG). The statutes dealing with the establishment and regulation of NPOs in Malaysia are the Societies Act 1966, the Companies Act 1965 and the Income Tax Act 1967. Other than CLBG which under the oversight of the Companies Commission of Malaysia (CCM), the constitutional form may be in the form of clubs, societies and associations governed by the Societies Act 1966 (Act 335) & Regulations Act 1984, are regulated by the Registry of Society (ROS). The ROS is within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Home Affairs in Malaysia. Its major functions include responsibility for supervising and controlling the activities of NPOs. NPOs are placed under thirteen broad categories of (i) Welfare, (ii) Religious, (iii) Women, (iv) Social and Recreation, (v) Culture, (vi) Mutual Benefits, (vii) Trade Associations, (viii) Employment Associations, (ix) Education, (x) Youth, (xi) Politics, (xii) Sports, and (xiii) General.

Data for NPOs were selected from registered NPOs with the ROS under welfare category. The population under study is all registered charity organizations with the ROS in Malaysia and eligible for tax-exempt status. Initially there were 1,267 tax-exempt registered NPOs as at January 2011. Judgmental or purposive sampling in the form of non-probability sampling was selected in this study to include the organization that of interest to participate and exclude those that do not [42]. As a result, the final sample of 101 charity organizations agreed and participated in this study.

Data on all variables were collected from the annual returns of the participating organizations. Data on board size (LnBSIZE) was measured by natural log of board members. A binary scheme was used to denote the presence of institutional donors on board (INDB) and the existence of an external audit (INDAUD). These dummy variables were coded "1" to indicate existence and "0" to indicate non-existence.

## 2.3 Measurement for Disclosure in Charity Organizations

Disclosure indices have been widely used in many disclosure studies [43-47] on the grounds that the underlying variable is not amenable to measurement [48]. In similar context, the disclosure index has been applied in the not-for-profit disclosure studies. The application of the disclosure index can be found within the diverse setting in the NPOs sector such as in the charity reporting [49-52], college and universities [37, 53, 54] and not-for-profit museums by [55]. In this study, a disclosure index comprised of 88 items of information that were expressed as a ratio of the actual scores of an organization compared to the scores that the organization was expected to earn. It is a self-developed instrument created to measure the extent of disclosure by the charity organizations and the development of the index can be referred to the recently published paper by the authors [56]. The number of information listed for the purpose of this study was categorized into five categories: BBI, FI, NFI, GI and FTI. The disclosure scores have been computed in this study. Since it is an unweighted disclosure score, a dichotomous measure of 1 and 0 is used to count disclosure or non-disclosure by charity organizations. The sum of disclosure score is then computed to show the extent of disclosure made by each organization, giving a total possible maximum score of 88. Table 1 below provides the mean, median, standard deviation, the minimum and the maximum value of the disclosure score of charity organizations based on their types of information.

**Table 1: Unweighted Disclosure Score by Categories of Information** 

Types of Information	Total Maximum Items	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
BBI	13	5.32	5.00	2.054	1	10
FI	30	11.21	11.00	3.648	3	19
NFI	19	2.14	1.00	2.320	0	9
FTI	18	0.90	0.00	1.261	0	5
GI	8	5.09	5.00	1.950	1	10
Total Score	88	24.65	24.00	7.509	10	40

In terms of an overall result, the mean total of disclosure score for the sample was only 24.65 out of a total maximum possible score of 88. This score is well below one-third of the total possible and is a very low result. This study indicates 44 (43.6%) of the organizations disclosed below the mean score. The highest disclosure score (40 out

of 88 maximum score) was obtained by only one charity organization. This organization has long been established (42 years) and is a public-funded organization. With only 32 of the 101 organizations scoring 30 and above, this means that less than half of the organizations scored above 30. This further indicates the overall low level of disclosure practices by the charity organizations based on the year 2009 annual returns. A further analysis of reliability based on Cronbach's alpha was carried out to check the internal consistency of this index. Cronbach's alpha of 0.89, surpasses 0.80 to 0.90 indicates the consistency of the index is very good [57].

#### 2.4 Content Analysis

Content analysis is a well-established research method used throughout the social sciences which utilizes a systematic procedure to make inferences and identify characteristics within text [58-61]. The main problem arising from content analysis is the need for demonstrating the reliability of the instrument used to collect and codify data and the potential of the reproducibility of the instrument that inferences can be drawn from such data [62]. According to [59], content analysis reliability involves stability (ability of a person to code data the same way over time), reproducibility (extent to which coding is the same when multiple coders were involved), accuracy (depending on the assessment of coding performance against a predetermined standard set by a panel of experts, or known from previous experiments and studies). To ensure the reliability of the content analyzed, suggestion by the other previous studies [37, 53, 54], the instrument used in this study for the content analysis was pretested and instructions were expanded to help ensure consistency among scorers. For inter-rater reliability, a preliminary testing was undertaken. Inter-rater reliability is a measure of agreement to test the consistency from rater to rater [63]. Initially, five raters who have knowledge in accounting background independently coded five annual returns selected randomly. The content analysis on each of the annual returns is coded individually into the disclosure score sheet. Next, the annual reports were exchanged between the raters. The score entered by each rater for each of the organization's annual returns were then compared to identify any differences and disagreements. The score has been separately analyzed according to their category of information, and independently examined by five different raters. A very minimal disagreement was found, and an acceptable inter-rater reliability was accepted after all the disagreements and discrepancies were resolved. Most disagreements and discrepancies were errors of omissions, misinterpretations of the terminologies used in the annual returns and were easily traced and resolved. On average, the inter-rater agreement rate was 94.5%. Once the instrument was pretested, the 2009 annual returns, obtained from 101 charity organizations were then analyzed using content analysis procedures to quantify the charity disclosures.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

## 3.1 Univariate Analyses

Univariate descriptive analyses were used in the first stage of data analysis in this study, analyzing the data at hand before more advanced, multivariate analyses in the second stage of data analysis in this study. Table 2 shows the descriptive results, mean disclosure score of the dependent variable and the continuous independent variables and control variables in the model. The mean relative total score disclosure index of the sample organizations was 0.280, with a range of 0.114 and 0.455. Thus, there were large variations in the disclosure practices among the sample organizations. This result was also consistent with the literature that the disclosure practices of charity organizations have great flexibility [49, 64, 65].

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for the Dependent Variable, Continuous Independent Variables and Control Variables

Variables (n=101)	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
<u>Dependent Variable:</u> DISCL (in ratio)	0.280	0.273	0.853	0.114	0.455
Continuous Independent Variables: Board Size (BSIZE)	13.87	12.00	8.294	5	48
Control Variables: Age (LnAGE) Organizational Size - Total Assets (LnSIZE)	24.45 2.854.142.60	19.00 580.165.00	16.642 6,987,765.24	3 1700	61 44,776,180

#### 1.1.1 3.2 Correlation Matrix

Prior to conducting the multivariate tests of multiple regression analysis, the correlation matrix of the dependent variable and all independent variables in the study was performed. The results of the correlation matrix showed a number of significant correlations. Table 3 displays the correlation for the dependent, independent and control variables for the extent of disclosures.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Matrix of Variables affecting the Extent of Disclosure

n= 101		1	2	3	4	
1	DISCL	-				
2	LnBSIZE	071 .479	-			
3	Ln AGE	.164 .102	.478** .000	-		
4	LnSIZE	.327** .001	.079 .430	.352** .000	-	

<sup>\*\*</sup>p<0.01 (1-tailed)

Table 3 above shows the correlation between the extent of disclosure and the independent and continuous variables. The most notable correlation at the 0.01 significance level (1-tailed) is between organizational size (LnSIZE) and the extent of disclosure (r = .327, p = .001). There was also positive correlation between age of the organization, as captured by the LnAGE (r = .478, p = .000) and the board size. This outcome shows that the extent of information disclosure made by charity organizations is influenced by the size and capacity of the organization to enhance the disclosure of information in order to attract donations from donors. In other words, donors want information on whether funds donated are actually utilized for charitable activities and programs. This will further induce them to donate in the future.

## 3.3 Multivariate Analyses

The statistical procedures analyzed in this study are using parametric tests, in particular, the analysis of an ordinary least squares regression method. For a regression model to generalize, it must be ensured that underlying assumptions have been met by conducting regression diagnostics of (i) checking for univariate outlier, (ii) tests of normality, and (iii) tests of multicollinearity.

At first, the regression models were diagnosed to check whether the models fit the observed data well or there are influenced by a small number of cases. Outliers are the cases that differ substantially or extremely differ from the main trend of the data [66]. If not removed, these extreme cases can have a large effect on any conclusions that might be drawn from the data. This is because outliers can skew correlation coefficients and lines of best fit in the wrong direction. Univariate outlier in this study is identified using the Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA) method. In EDA, univariate outlier is identified by converting residuals into *z*-scores (standardised residuals). By comparing the disclosure score variable into a standard score, comparisons can be made to devise general guidelines for what constitutes an acceptable (or unacceptable) value [66]. With the original 102 sample data in this study, there was one case that had a *z*-value outside the acceptable range (id 37: *z*-score = 4.5303). Thus, the outlier is removed from the data set leaving 101 final sample datasets. Next, tests of normality and multicollinearity were conducted before regression analyses were run.

In order to conduct an ordinary least square (OLS) regression, it is essential to first check for non-normality distributed variables. Three prior tests that relate to the behaviors of the residuals were performed. Firstly, the Durbin-Watson statistical test was performed to detect the presence of autocorrelation in residuals. It tests the null hypotheses that the residuals from an OLS were not auto correlated. The Durbin-Watson statistic ranged in value from 0 to 4. A value close to two indicates non-autocorrelation, a value towards zero indicates positive autocorrelation and a value towards four indicates negative autocorrelation [67]. Table 4 shows the Durbin-Watson value of 1.847, indicating no auto-correlation in residuals in the regression model.

Table 4: Model Summarv<sup>b</sup>

Model	R <sup>a</sup>	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson Statistic
Model	.575	.355	.301	.05500288	1.847

a. Predictors: (Constant) LnBSIZE, INDAUD, LnAGE, LnSIZE

b. Dependent Variable: DISCL

After one outlier is removed, total extent of disclosures met the assumption of normality. Further tests of normality, given the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) statistic on the disclosure suggest symmetrical distribution.<sup>2</sup> Other variables such as board size, age and total assets also met the assumption of normality. However, the transformation of data was made to the organizational age and size (total assets) in order to reduce the effect of extremely high and low data values in order to improve the goodness fit of the model. OLS regressions were estimated using the governance attributes as independent variables: board size, the presence of institutional donors on board and the existence of an external audit, whilst controlling for the organizational age and size.

The model estimated for ordinary least squares (OLS) regression in this study is:

 $DISCL = \beta_0 + \beta_1 LnBSIZE + \beta_2 INDB + \beta_3 INDAUD + \beta_4 LnAGE = +\beta_5 LnSIZE + \epsilon$ 

where,

 $\beta_0$  = the intercept

**DISCL** = Charity Disclosure

**LnBSIZE** = Board Size

**INDB** = Institutional Donors on Board

**INDAUD** = Independent External Audit

**LnAGE** = Organizational Age

**LnSIZE** = Organizational Size

 $\boldsymbol{\varepsilon} = \text{Error term}$ 

#### 3.4 Results of Multiple Regressions

The model in this study analyzes the effect of governance on the extent of disclosure. Table 5 presents the regression results.

**Table 5: Multiple Regression Results** 

Table 5. Mult	ipie Kegi ession Kes	uits			
Variables	Beta Coefficient	Standard Error	T-Statistic	P-value (Sig.)	Conclusion Toward Alternate Hypotheses
n = 101					
$R^2 = 0.355$					
Adjusted $R^2 = 0.301$					
F Value = 7.440					
F Significance = 0.000					
Constant	16.397		1.248	.215	
LnBSIZE	.992	1.611	.616	.539	Reject
INDB	2.411	1.354	1.780	.078	Reject
INDAUD	6.123	1.379	4.439	.000*	Do not reject
LnAGE	.312	.948	.329	.743	Reject
LnSIZE	.333	.375	.887	.377	Reject

<sup>\*</sup> significant at 1% level

Table 5 shows the result of the overall model has an F value of 7.440 (significant at the 0.01 level), and adjusted coefficients of determination ( $R^2$ ) of 30.1. All three independent variables and two control variables were entered into the equation in the regression model. The existence of the independent audit was found to be the most important predictors as they obtain the highest estimated beta coefficients of 6.123 and 6.237 respectively (significant at less than the 0.01 level) and in the predicted direction, providing support for hypotheses  $H_3$  that organizations with an independent audit disclosed more information in their annual returns. Organizations that have an external audit tend to have strong internal controls and have greater accountability towards their stakeholders by disclosing information.

Other independent variables of board size (LnBSIZE), the presence of the institutional donors on board (INDB) were found to be insignificant. In relation to control variables, it was found there was no association between the organizational age (LnAGE) and size (LnSIZE) of the organization.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) statistic has a significant value of .20.

## 4. Conclusion

In recent years, the regulatory and oversight bodies of NPOs have promulgated non-profits governance in order to enhance accountability and transparency such as the Sarbane-Oxley Act in the US. In Asia, fraud and financial crisis in NPOs have provided more evidence on the governance and transparency issues. There has been little research relating to disclosure and specific governance attributes in emerging countries. This study uses Malaysian data to analyze whether the organizations disclosed more information when they performed well, have an external audit and are in size.

These results provided empirical evidence to attentive Malaysian regulators to improve NPOs transparency by imposing the establishment of an external audit. It is essential to have a higher accountability to stakeholders through the external governance mechanisms. This study represents an important issue of some routine checked by the regulators to be imposed on charities' annual returns. One limitation in this study worth nothing is even though the main focus of this study is on the extent of disclosures; such may not imply quality disclosures due to different instrument used to measure the disclosure. Although the study found the expected relationship between the external governance attribute and disclosure, the findings show that there may be other factors that influence disclosures in charity organizations.

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