Microscoping Role of Organizational Control in Organizational Effectiveness

John Nkeobuna Nnah Ugoani*

Department of Management Sciences, College of Management and Social Sciences, Rhema University, Aba, Nigeria

Abstract

In attempts to improve their bottom-line by increasing the productivity of the workforce, many organizations use the out-put control system to ensure that output meets quality and standards. Enhancing behavior and interpersonal relationships within the workforce does not only require removing motivation barriers to boost employees' performance, but also requires appropriate organizational learning in terms of training and development to improve skills and knowledge necessary for organizational effectiveness. 102 respondents participated in the study conducted through the empirical research design and the result showed positive relationship between organizational control and organizational effectiveness. Business organizations are often surrounded by complex dynamic economic, technological, political, cultural and other environmental factors. Because of these factors, change is therefore, a permanent phenomenon in organizational management or control. These changes sometimes affect the products, services, or even organizational policies. Without a well, permanently institutionalized monitoring and evaluation device, such changes would not be identified until it starts having adverse effects on the profitability or effectiveness of the organization. This study faced challenges because of lack of current relevant literature, and further study could examine the relationship between target setting and management competence as a measure of improving productivity. Management should always encourage performance improvement activities, employees' empowerment, rewards and discipline as credible measures of improving organizational performance.

1. Introduction

The planning process, including policy formulation, is the beginning of the management process. Controlling is equally very important because without the watchfulness and *elephant* eyes of management and *feedback* of an efficient control mechanism it becomes doubtful whether even the best policy framework will ever work out as expected by management. Organizational control which must be systematic may be defined as the aspect of management process which deals with the keeping of the organization's activity within allowable limits. The limits are identified by the organization's objectives, plans, procedures, or rules and regulations. Control may also be defined as the monitoring and ordering of organizational activities and resource utilization to ensure that predetermined standards and goals are achieved. It is a systematic effort to set performance standards with planned objectives and goals, to design information feedback system, to compare actual performance with the predetermined standards, to determine whether there is any deviation, and to measure any deviation, and to measure their significance and take any actions required to ensure that all organizational resourcesare being used in the

* Corresponding author

E-mail address: John_ugoani@rhemauniversity.edu.ng, drjohnugoani@yahoo.com

most effective and efficient ways possible in attempts to achieving organizational effectiveness, which is defined as the extent to which multiple organizational goals are achieved [1]. To achieve organizational effectiveness, organizational control mechanism must ensure that everything is carried out in accordance with the plan which has been adopted, the orders which have been given and the principles which have been laid down by the organization. According to Mohammed [2] in a more simplistic form, organizational control entails a process through which management ensures that the performance of an organization is in conformity with planned objectives and goals. He states that organizational control could be described as the mechanism for evaluating progress towards objectives and the measures to correct deviant performances. Organizational control, therefore, involves setting standards of comparing performance with standards, determining any variance, investigating the causes of the variance, and taking necessary corrective action whenever the variance is important and significant. Often organizational structure provides an organization with a skeleton, and control and culture give it the muscles, *sinews, nerves*, and *sensation* that allowed management to regulate and govern its activities. The management functions of organizing and controlling are to some extent, inseparable, and effective management must learn to make them work together in a harmonious way. Some forms of control approaches are available to management to control and influence organizational members. A selected five are; (i) output control (ii) behavior control, (iii) clan or culture, (iv) organizational learning, and (v) employees' motivation. These are among the critical measures necessary for organizational effectiveness. An organization is said to be effective only when it achieves its predetermined objectives, while providing maximum return to the society. Organizational structure, whether, tall, short or flat, affects the behavior of people within the organization. Together with organizational culture, it may also determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire organization. According to Agulanna, and Madu[3] organizational culture means the system of shared values, beliefs, and habits within an organization that interacts with the formal structure to produce behavioural norms. They opine that the culture of an organization has tremendous impact on the direction of the organization and the behavior of the people within it. Corporate culture gives people a sense of how to behave and what they should do or not do in an organization. To this extent, organizational culture itself is highly influenced by the economic environment, organizational purpose, critical stakeholders' interests, organizational maturity, as well as ethics and management philosophy. These contribute to improve employees' motivation, behavior patterns, organizational control and effectiveness [4, 5, 6].

Organizational control is easier to achieve in a work environment where there is job satisfaction. To achieve high job satisfaction and high job performance, jobs or tasks should be matched with employees; there should be extrinsic and equitable rewards that can satisfy employees' needs. This is imperative because performance is basically a function of skill, availability of working equipment, attitude, effective leadership, employees' health, good physical working conditions, and good social working environment [7-10].

1.1. Research Problem

Many organizations tend to abandon effective organizational control either out of ignorance or management incompetence which often leads to poor performance. If available organizational resources are not properly and efficiently employed profitability is likely to decline, and where the employees are poorly motivated and disenchanted overall productivity will fall. A motivated workforce is imperative to raise the level of commitment necessary for organizational control and effectiveness.

1.2. Research Objective

This study was designed to evaluatethe relationship between organizational control and organizational effectiveness.

1.3. Research Significance

The result of this study will help in redirecting the attention of students, other researchers academics, policy-makers, management practitioners, and the general public towards the importance of organizational control and organizational effectiveness.

1.4. Research Questions

i. Can quality control enhance organizational effectiveness?

ii. Is it true that organizational learning cannot enhance organizational effectiveness?

iii. Is output control a component of organizational control?

iv. Is behavior control necessary in organizational control?

v. Can clan control influence organizational effectiveness?

vi. Is employees' motivation an ingredient of organizational control?

1.5. Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is the structure of the study and shows the relationship of the major variables with the research problem. It is often expressed in a schematic diagram and also leads to theory building [11]. The conceptual framework for this study is shown in figure 1.

In organizational control, and in attempts to improve

thebottom-line by increasing the productivity of the workforce, many organizations use the *output control* to ensure that output meets quality and standards [12]. Behavior control involves behavior modeling which is an approach in improving interpersonal skills towards performance improvement. The key to behaviour modelling is learning through observation or imagination. Behavior modeling is therefore, a *vicarious* process which emphasizes keen observation. A typical behavior modeling approach starts by identifying some interpersonal problems which employees, especially managers' face. These include: gaining acceptance as a newcomer, handling complaints, delegating responsibility, improving attendance, disciplining effectively, over-coming resistance to change, setting performance goals, motivating average performance, handling emotional situations, reducing tardiness, and taking corrective action. According to Senge [13] learning organization provides the place where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together through organizational learning.

Organizational learning is the process through which managers seek to improve employees' desire and ability to understand and manage the organization and its task environment so that employees' can be motivated and to make innovative decisions that will raise organizational effectiveness. In this context, management must take steps to provide innovation through organizational learning and creating at the individual, team and group levels, the opportunities to improve the quality of decision-making and organizational effectiveness. Jones and George [14] suggest that strong organizational culture and effectively motivating employees often have positive influence in organizational effectiveness. Organizational learning, employees motivation, and organizational effectiveness are closely interrelated because performance level is determined by the individual's ability to do the job, clarity as to what is to be done, and the existence or otherwise of a motivating force. Management thinkers from Frederick Winslow Taylor (1865-1915) for example, have always believed in the motivation of employees in order to achieve higher performance and organizational effectiveness [15-19].
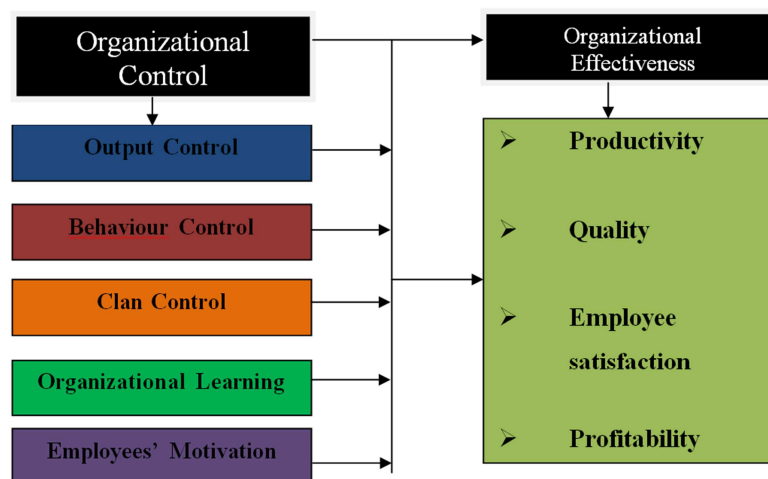

Figure 1. Organizational Control & Organizational Effectiveness Model.

2. Literature Review

Achieving effective organizational control and organizational effectiveness requires sound organizational structure and well-motivated employees to guarantee performance [20-22]. Organizational control involves the process whereby management monitors and regulates how efficiently and effectively an organization and its members are performing the activities necessary to achieve organizational goals. While planning and organizing, management develops the organizational strategy and structure that they hope will allow the organization to use resources most effectively to create value for customers [23]. In controlling, management

monitors and evaluates whether the organization's strategy and structure are working as intended, how they could be improved and how they might be changed, if they are not working well. However, controlling does not mean just reacting to events after they have taken place. It also means keeping an organization on track and anticipating events that might occur. Organization control is primarily concerned with keeping employees' motivated, focused on the important problems confronting the organization and workingtogether to take advantage of opportunities that will help the organization to perform better over a period of time [24-27].

2.1. Importance of Organizational Control

Business organizations are often surrounded by complex

dynamic economic, technological, political, cultural and other environmental factors. Because of these factors, change is therefore, a permanent phenomenon in organizational management or control. These changes sometimes affect the products, services, or even organizational policies. Without a well, permanently institutionalized monitoring and evaluation device, such changes would not be identified until it starts having adverse effects on the profitability or effectiveness of the organization. According to Nwachukwu [28] the control process in an organization is usually described as a cycle. This is because it is a continuous system of information dissemination and receiving and giving of feedback. A control cycle is shown in figure 2. In the model, the control cycle starts from the establishment of objectives, goals, policies or standards of performance. These are either in terms of targets of performance or procedure to be followed in achieving a certain organizational target. He explains that the second stage is the implementation of the set objectives, which involves the actual doing the operation of the system as designed. Then the actual control process starts at the third stage, which entails the measurement of actual performance against the predetermined standards. This is logically followed by evaluation of the performance achieved. Furthermore, he opines that the necessary corrective action may be either to modify plans or modify operations. If any of these is the case, then the implementation plans would haveto be modified also. On the basis of this, employees may need to be sent for appropriate training if they are deficient in certain areas. They may be motivated with appropriate incentives if it is the case of lack of morale. And also, the technology may be changed if inappropriate technology creates problems for effective organizational performance [29-31].

2.2. Planning and Organizational Control

Planning is an imperative for controlling. It is necessary for standards to be predetermined so that performance can be measured against it. However, some of these standards may be unrealistic at some point. Therefore, a good control system should force management to take corrective action. It should be capable of inducing management to review its plans and to modify its operations for organizational effectiveness. Individuals have different aspirations and desires and cultures which they bring to the workplace. According to Charles, et al [32] when organizations design strategies to realize values of different employees, they increase the performance and effectiveness of the organization as a whole. The shared values of employees craft a culture in the organization which impacts positively on organizational effectiveness. According to Gandhi, and Sachdeva [33] organizational effectiveness is more than profitability and includes factors like employees satisfaction, goals integration, and effective group

functioning [34-35]. Planning is highly inseparable from controlling because planning involves the development of an organization's objectives, the determination of methods or procedures and direction for its accomplishment as well as the institutionalization of control measures to ensure compliance with set standards. An understanding of the relationships of organizational planning, organizational control and organizational culture and employees' motivation reveals that it is necessary to consider how they help management to obtain superior *efficiency, quality, responsiveness tocustomers' needs* and *innovation*. To determine how efficiently resources can be deployed, and to measure how many units of inputs are used to produce a unit of output, management also must be able to measure how many units of outputs are produced. An organizational control system contains the measures or yardsticks that allow management to assess how efficiently the organization is producing goods and services. Also, the way the organization produces goods and distributing them.These measures tell management how successful it has been doing. Without a unique control system in place, management will have no idea of how well the organization is performing, and how its performance can be improved, in terms of effectiveness. In the present competitive global business environment, organizational control is important in determining the quality of goods and services because it gives management feedback on product quality and also projects any needs for innovation. Organizational control can help to raise the level of innovation that takes place, when management creates an organizational environment in which employees feel highly empowered to be creative and in which authority is delegated to employees so that they feel free to experiment and take risks. When management delegates authority to employees it must be matched with responsibility for performance and for which management remains responsible. As a result, management has to ensure that the employees carry out the duties efficiently. The only way by which management can determine whether employees are working well or not is by implementing a good system of control. This would enable management to check on the employees, evaluate their performance and advice on corrective measures where necessary [36-40]. While job output and measurement standards are important perspectives on organizational control, giving responsibilities and authority, giving and receiving performance feedback are also critical instruments for employees' empowerment, rewards, discipline and performance effectiveness, because performance effectiveness is centrally linked to organizational effectiveness [41-42].

3. Research Methodology

The qualitative technique of the empirical research design

was adopted for the study. Qualitative research involves collection and presentation of rich data especially through personal interviews [43]. Qualitative research also involves naturalistic and interpretative attitude towards the research problem [44]. The qualitative approach helps the researcher to understand the social dynamics of societies and business alike as he focuses on their traditions, principles, ethics, and philosophies as well as behavioural patterns [45-46]. The population of the study involved the managers and otheremployees in the Nigerian banking sector. The sample was selected through the judgmental method, while the sample size was determined through the sample ratio concept. Data were collected through primary and secondary sources, such as personal interviews, questionnaire copies, books, journal articles, websites and other relevant sources. The mixed method of data collection was used so as to supplement, complement, and validate data through each other, in readiness for analysis. Data were analyzed through descriptive statistical method and result presented in figures and tables. The cut-off point for the acceptance or rejection of responses to research questions was set at 3.00 [47].
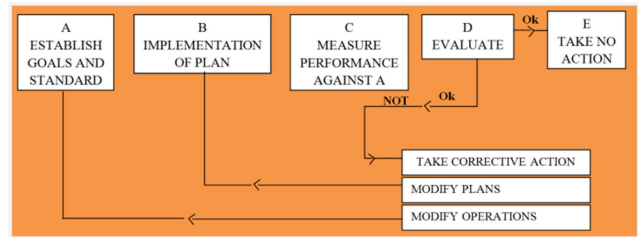

Figure 2. Planning, Execution and Control Cycle.

Source: Fieldwork (2021), Adapted from Nwachukwu [28]

4. Presentation of Result

Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents (n=102)

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents (n=102).

	Description	Category	Total	Percentage
i	Gender	a) Female	42	41.18
		b) Male	60	58.82
ii	Education	a) Certificates	20	19-61
		b) Diplomas	50	49.02
		c) Degrees	32	31.37
iii	Age	a) 18 – 25 years	35	34.31
		b) 26 – 40 years	45	44.12
		c) 41 – 75 years	22	21.57
iv	Experience	a) 5 - 10 years	30	29.41
		b) 11 – 20 years	55	53.92
		c) 21 – 35 years	17	16.67
v	Status	a) Low	25	24.51
		b) Middle	48	47.06
		c) High	29	28.43

Table 2. Analysis of Responses by Frequency and Mean (n = 102).

S/N	Restatement of Research Questions	Scores SA 5	A 4	N 3	D 2	SD 1	Row scores	Sample size	Mean	Decision mean @ 3 points	Grand mean
i	Quality control can enhance organizational effectiveness	40	30	1	2	29	356	102	3.49	True	
ii	Organizational learning can enhance organizational effectiveness	45	50	2	1	4	437	102	4.28	True	
iii	Output control is not a component of organizational control	5	10	3	4	89	162	102	1.59	False	3.69
iv	Behaviour control is important in organizational control	55	35	1	3	80	432	102	4.24	True	
v	Clan control can improve organizational effectiveness	60	25	3	4	10	427	102	4.19	True	
vi	Employees' motivation is an ingredient of organizational control	70	20	1	2	9	446	102	4.37	True	

4.1. Discussion

Organizational control is a strategic management imperative that helps in specifying organizational challenges, the needs, performance gaps and desired outcomes. It is part of choosing solution strategies, designing interventions and developing interventions so as to effectively implement solution strategies.Organizational control facilitates the evaluation of outcomes versus desired outcomes and to keep up the process as necessary. Good organizational control relates to goal setting, performance monitoring and performance improvement activities critical to organizational effectiveness. A good organizational control mechanism should be flexible, and capable of being adjusted to meet changing circumstances in the organizational operations. It is one which is adaptable to new developments, including the failure of the system itself. Organizational control system helps to detect deviation or variance from established norm, so as to raise the alarm when becomes significant. Organizational control should always include a feedback system which makes it possible for

information on past performance to be used in adjusting future action. A functional organizational control system emphasizes that it is only cases requiring corrective action that should be brought to the attention of top management in the form of *exception reports*. For organizational effectiveness, a traditional type of organizational control has always been the budget. A budget is a financial plan of the activities of the organization over a specified period. The budget usually specifies targets to be achieved over the period and the amount of resources expected to be expended in order to achieve those targets. Figure 1 in the conceptual model was used to explain the psychometric relationships between organizational control and organizational effectiveness. For example, it explains that behavior control is necessary in control. Control guides the behavior of individuals in the organization towards useful results. Without control, behavior may be erratic and this may lead to wastages of resources due to inefficiency in the allocation of human, material and other scarce resources. Because of the necessity of control in organizational performance effectiveness, qualified respondents as shown in table 1 were selected for quality input for the investigation. Their responses to the research questions were analyzed in table 2. From this report as in table 2(i) the respondents agreed that quality control can enhance organizational effectiveness. Quality control is the system whereby the quality of output and input are examined and compared to predetermined standards. This may be done by observation, or by mechanical device, as shown in table (ii) it was agreed that organizational learning helps in organizational effectiveness. This cannot be overstated because well motivated and trained employees perform better to enhance overall organizational performance. Organizational learning helps to improve appropriate skills, knowledge or aptitude to raise employees morale. For organizational effectiveness to take roots, employees may need to be sent for appropriate training if they are deficient in certain areas, and they may be adequately motivated with appropriate incentives. However, the respondents thought that output control is not a measure of organizational control. This is contrary to the views of Jones and George [14] that output control is necessary to measure performance standards or targets in terms of efficiency, quality, innovation, employees motivation and responsiveness to customers. Output control leads to the establishment of organizational goals that encourage management to achieve the four building blocks of competitive advantage in terms of superior *efficiency, quality, innovation* and *responsiveness to customers*. The respondents support the idea that behavior control is necessary in organizational control and effectiveness, and also that clan control can help in improving organizational effectiveness. They agreed that motivation is an ingredient of organizational control. Even though it is observed in the management literature that not all motivation efforts are successful, it is however, believed to be

goal oriented, and as an internal psychological process, can only be observed through performance. At a grandmean of 3.69, over the cut-off mean of 3.00, it was found that organizational control has positive correlation with organizational effectiveness. This is the *crux* of the investigation.

4.2. Scope for Further Study

Setting realistic targets is important for effective organizational control and effectiveness. However, it is not oftenthe case, therefore, further study could examine the relationship between business knowledge and organizational effectiveness. This is important because having sound business knowledge will enhance the chances of setting appropriate mechanism for business growth and ultimate profitability.

4.3. Recommendations

i.   Specifying needs and desired outcomes should be part of organizational control architecture to enhance organizational effectiveness.

ii. Management should at all times try to remove motivation barriers so as to raise employees' morale and productivity.

iii. Performance monitoring should be a common feature of organizational control to detect discrepancies early and for management to take corrective measures in the control process.

iv. Performance improvement actions and employees empowerment, rewards and discipline should be part of the control mechanism for performance effectiveness.

v.   Management should always try to modify employees behaviours through control mechanisms like appropriate training and development to enhance skills for improved performance.

5. Conclusion

Organizational control can be affected by many variables such as behavior and organizational learning for it to yield desired outcomes. Organizational structure whether tall or flat affect the behavior of people in the organization and together with organizational culture determines the level of organizational effectiveness. Identifying objectives and setting organizational goals help management to achieve the four building blocks of competitive advantage in terms of superior performance and organizational effectiveness. The empirical research design was adopted in this study and the result showed positive association between organizational control and organizational effectiveness.

Originality

Business organizations have the primary motive of organizational effectiveness measured in terms of profitability. Because of this primary objective, this is one of the few new studies exploring the relationship between organizational control and organizational effectiveness as a contribution to knowledge in this unique area and to encourage more investigations.

Conflict of Interest

This author declares no conflict of interest in respect of the authorship and/or the publication of this paper.

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Author Contribution

John NkeobunnaNnahUgoani, collected, analyzed and interpreted data in respect of this paper. The paper is the intellectual property of the sole author who is therefore, solely, responsible for any omissions or liabilities arising there from.

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Biography

John Nkeobuna Nnah Ugoani is Associate Professor of Management at Rhema University, Nigeria. His research interest focuses on business, management, governance, leadership, and emotional intelligence. John is recognized for presenting the first best PhD Thesis in Management at the Faculty of Business Administration, Imo State University, Owerri, Nigeria. He has over 130 scholarly publications with full paper readership downloads and abstract views of over 8000 and 30000 respectively and ranked among Top Ten Authors by SSRN. Before entering academia, he was a senior manager at First Bank of Nigeria Plc.