

Organizational mechanistic and culture control perspectives

Business



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Introduction Control, or what in simple terms is referred to as management, be it in human organisational activities or even in business areas, is the process of bringing people together so as to see through the accomplishment of certain sought after objectives and goals. Ordinarily, there are four principal schools of management thoughts and these include behaviour management, classical management, modern management and quantitative management approaches (Batool 2011, p.

2223). These four approaches to management can be used in various divergent organisational perspectives, the likes of mechanistic organisation, cultural perspective, organic organisation or even political perspective. This paper therefore, gears towards availing a detailed explanation of how the mechanistic and culture perspectives are employed by organisations in their pursuit to control. Definition of Mechanistic and Cultural Controls The mechanistic perspective is characterised by centralisation of authority and the subsequent formalisation of procedures as well as practices and the specialisation of functions. In addition, employees in this type of structures (the mechanistic structures) are more often than not held back to match the specific descriptions of their jobs.

When it comes to the issue of control, the mechanistic approach is ordinarily tight as a result of the complex control systems which have been laid in place (Reiman & Oedewald 2002, p. 13). Organisational culture denotes the pattern of shared fundamental suppositions that the group is capable of availing remedies to various problems of an outside adjustment, as well as inner incorporation. These suppositions have to be satisfactory enough for them to be factored in as not only suitable, but also reliable in educating new

<https://assignbuster.com/organizational-mechanistic-and-culture-control-perspectives/>

members as the very acceptable way of perception, thought and feeling as relates to the problems. Mechanistic Control In mechanistic structures of control, there are undeniably high degrees of standardisation and formalisation. Besides, there is a tendency of there being a unidirectional top-down flow of information.

It is worth noting that those organisations having embraced the mechanistic perspective of control have six elements within their structures. These six elements include span of control, chain of command, centralised decision authority, formalised communication channels, unbending hierarchical relationships and numerous rules and regulations. The chain of command rule ascertains the existence of stringent hierarchy of authority to the extent that each and every individual within the organisation is not only controlled, but also under the supervision of one administrator. On the other hand, the considerably small span of control (and more especially at higher levels in the organisation) plays a very central role in ensuring the formation of small and impersonal structures (Alvesson & Willmott 2001/2, p. 15). Moreover, owing to the fact that there is too much distance between the top management employees and the bottom level employees, managers in such organisations usually impose rules and regulations to manage the control over the greater percentage- if not all- of processes with ease.

The reason behind this being that it is quite unworkable to take control over the lower level activities via a direct observation. Through literature, it has been contended that in mechanistic organisations, the control process tend to be aptly administered by the management control system because rules,

policies and regulations are already in place and employees are obliged to follow these rules, procedures and regulations to the latter (Martin & Heeren 2004, p. 72335). From the above mentioned characteristics of the mechanistic structure or perspective of organisations, it therefore can be argued out that the mechanistic organisation is likely to adopt the classical approach to management so as to oversee over its organisation. This is due to the fact that the classical management approach happens to be a way which is universally known for coming up with universal principles to be employed in a number of management situations. This approach may entail administrative principles, scientific management or even bureaucratic organisation (Batool 2011, p.

2232). In further elaboration, Fredrick Taylor notes that the scientific management builds up rules of motion, proper conditions of work and standardised work processes for each and every single job. This precisely matches the description of the mechanistic organisation of formal and centralised authority, clarity, the presence of specific tasks and laid down rules and regulations. In this kind of management (scientific management), the selection of workers is solely based on the right job capabilities, which is the same case with the mechanistic organisation; whose focus is specialised skills among staff. As thus, it is right arguing out that the scientific management is the approach that best fits in a mechanistic organisation (Reiman & Oedewald 2002, p.

25). In the past one and half centuries, some scholars did note that mechanistic organizations are more often than not suitable in those

environments which are considerably stable as well as for routine technologies and tasks. According to these scholars, the above mentioned is strongly supported by some of the characteristics of these organisations; including the clear, centralised and well-defined vertical hierarchies of authority, command and control. With both specialisation and efficiency having been assured via formalisation, standardisation and specialisation, the various jobs, technologies and processes within these organisations happen to be rigidly defined. As a result, the roles and processes so availed by the organisational structure solely accomplish that which they have been set for and very little outside such provisions (McAdam & Lafferty 2004, p. 5339). Among the reasons as to why the mechanistic approach has been so embraced by a majority of the organisation is the fact that the same approach is likely to be utilised for purposes of increasing efficiency in the event that both tasks and technologies are considerably stable. The top management employees in a mechanistic organisation are better equipped to set in those production techniques and processes which will minimise waste and as a result lead to the maximisation of output for a given quantity of inputs (Alvesson & Willmott 2001/2, p. 17). This therefore pinpoints out the goal of the mechanistic approach, that of ensuring efficiency.

By virtue of mechanistic structures being highly formalised, it is therefore certain that almost all procedures and processes tend to be administratively authorised. Moreover, the organisation takes into consideration those procedures and processes outside the brackets of these already established protocols to be amounting to variances that ought to be brought under

control with the immediacy they possess. A formalisation of this nature is propelled by efficiency; with reduction in variance increasing predictability and this increased expectedness paving way for stepping up in efficiency (Martin & Heeren 2004, p. 72334). Both technological and environmental stability in a mechanistic structure permit work to be not only clearly defined, but also to be clearly differentiated.

As a matter of fact, the work of the organisation gets to be divided into definite tasks. The specialised jobs- so created from one or more of the precise tasks- thereafter positions inflexibly defined skills required, procedures as well as task methodology to be employed and definite responsibilities and authority. In effect, managers at low levels and other employees have no other alternative other than following the procedures so set (Batool 2011, p. 2245). This may come with it a number of side effects, for instance, of stifling creativity.

Nevertheless, the same is also capable of increasing efficiency of the already established processes. For example, only countable customers would be for the take that the employees in McDonalds make use of creativity in the preparation process of the company's hamburger. Rather, the repetitiveness and stability of those procedures needed in the cooking process of a hamburger tend to be more efficient in the event that the employees of the company unswervingly follow established procedures which will make the customers trust that each and every hamburger they buy will have the same taste (Batool 2011, p. 2255).

Cultural Control Another of the imperative control feature in firms is organisational culture. The general organisational culture ought to be inspiring to the organisation's employees. The same culture ought to motivate the workers to actively involve themselves in risk taking and experimentation as well as failure tolerance. It is the responsibility of the employees of the organisation to see to it that they learn from their failures. This is necessary in helping them improve their individual chances of success in the future since a majority of organisation are more often than not, on-going entities. It is also the responsibility of the firm to see to it that it lays unrelenting emphasis on training and education.

The reasoning behind this training and education is to ensure the improvement of the technical skills as well as the creativity techniques of the employees. It is the responsibility of the managers of the organization to have concern on the way forward of improving the skills of individual employees as well s groups within the organisation (Batool 2011, p. 2259). It also their mandate to see to it that the employees are in a position of not only taking active parts, but also ensures that they are committed to the organisation's innovation. What ought to be ringing in the minds of the employees every now and then is that innovation is neither instinctive nor innate, but a skill as is the case with accountancy or carpentry, and as a result, it has to be learned.

The organisation's set rules and regulations ought to avail support to the idea of management as well as innovation. In addition to the aforesaid, the culture of an organisation is also obliged with permitting teams within the

organisation to seek innovative concepts and ideas outside the boundaries of the firm they are working for (McAdam & Lafferty 2004, p. 53049). This can thus be realised via the establishment of synergies with other like firms or by even posting the research problems inherent in the organisation to the various available electronic marketplaces for purposes of ideas. A perfect example of these electronic marketplaces is InnoCentive.

Likewise, an organisation's innovative culture leverages on cross-pollination and diversity of ideas, not forgetting to mention the cross-functionalism that gets to be born. According to scholars in the field of organisational culture, it is crystal clear that the culture of any organisation is the hub of controlling, supervision as well as making firms more efficient and effective. Among the very primary features amounting to the predisposition of an organisation in to the leading lot is the acknowledgment and consideration of those values which are mutually shared among the members of the organisation (Batool 2011, p. 2300). Markedly, organisational values relay attitude to the kinds of organisational ambitions that the stakeholders of the organisation ought to follow as well as the thoughts as regards to the standards of behaviour that the members of the organisation ought to possess and display so as to see the realisation of the set goals. Through such standards, members of the organisation are better positioned in building up the organisation's guiding principles; norms and organisational potential that will avail a detailed explanation of the acceptable performance by the organisational employees in finicky situations and at the same oversee the deeds of the members towards one another.

In the event that shared morals and culture present a controlling base of dedication, motivation and trustworthiness among organisational members to their areas of work, it can be argued out (from a managerial point of view) that culture is proposed as the organisation's control mechanism. Conclusion Mechanistic and culture approaches are basically used by firms for purposes of control. While mechanistic approach stipulates the roles of each person in the organization, culture plays a very vital role in refining the activities of an organisation. Mechanistic control mechanism is characterised by inflexible chain of command from top down. On the other hand, culture fosters the formation of organizational values that control the working relations within the firm.