Understanding the influence of Strategy control – monitoring and evaluation on strategy implementation success

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Abstract

Background

Although a lot of research has been carried out in the field of strategic management and specifically strategy implementation, very little has been carried out on hybrid (Public-Private mandated) organisations known as commercialised state enterprises in Zimbabwe. Effectively knowing that more than 60% of strategy initiatives fail at implementation stage, there is a need to understand how commercialised state enterprises monitor their strategy implementation activities.

Purpose: The study sought to empirically examine the influence of strategy control-monitoring and evaluation on strategy implementation in Commercialised State Owned Enterprises in the Communication Technology and Courier Services Sector of Zimbabwe (CSOEZ).

Study design/methodology/approach: The inquiry was based on a 5-point level of agreement Likert scale questionnaire distributed to 478 branch managers and employees. Survey data was presented through percentile descriptive statistics and measures of central tendencies of mean, mode and standard deviation whilst ANOVA was used for statistical analysis.

Findings/conclusions: The study's regression analysis confirmed the positive relationship between adequate strategy control (monitoring and evaluation) and the number of unattained objectives during strategy implementation. The study concluded that there are inadequate strategy control (monitoring and evaluation) systems during strategy implementation in CSOEZ. The study recommends formative and summative strategy controls and evaluations as they enables strategy implementers and low-level management to learn and take ownership of the implementation process as well as obtain concurrent performance feedback that enhances implementation success.

Limitations/future research:

The study relied a lot on a structured questionnaire. This instrument may fail to capture the non-quantifiable aspects of strategy implementation especially those related to the behavioural aspects of strategy implementation. Future research may need to make use of mixed methodologies where both the questionnaire and the interview are used to gather data.

Keywords

Strategy, implementation, strategy control; monitoring, evaluation, commerciliased state enterprises, adequacy.

Introduction

The main task of implementation of the strategy is to bring the strategy to life as a part of the everyday decision-making process of the company (Mišanková and Kočišová 2014). Agbejule and Jokipii (2009) direct that there has been growing interest in the role internal control elements play in the effectiveness of a company. Controls are mechanisms that corporations use to ensure that the processes and or outcomes of their business units meet corporate expectations (Seifzadeh and Rowe 2019). Proper detection and control of an upset condition at the right time ensures the quality of the end product, uninterrupted production and also ensures greater safety of the personnel and equipment involved (Das, Maiti and Banerjee 2011). It is necessary to find appropriate indicators characterising company activities and a system for measurement to eliminate deficiencies in the implementation of the strategy (Mišanková and Kočišová 2014). Performance measures have been used at the end of a period to determine if an entity's objectives have been achieved and to aid in adding value (Hass, Burnaby and Bierstaker 2005).

Monitoring and assessment are essential in the measurement of business performance, once sufficient control processes are in place, information is filtered through all the levels of the business which allows timely decision-making when crises occur (Swart and Taylor 2018). Monitoring of a process leading to the detection of faults and determination of the root causes is essential for the production of consistently good quality end products with improved yield (Das, Maiti and Banerjee 2011). The inability to uncover errors and other unpleasant truths arises from faulty organisational learning says this author. Such habits and attitudes, which allow a company to hide its problems, lead to rigidity and deterioration (Argyris 1977).

The 21st-century organisation operates in a rapidly changing environment whilst setting long-term strategic intentions. This creates a strategy implementation dilemma as such strategies are made on the bases of incomplete information. The study presupposes that the main purpose of strategic control is to learn from performance monitoring and evaluation to necessary changes to variables causing poor performance as new information is received and updated during strategy implementation. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategy is conditioned by several decisions concerning its modification and actualisation (Mišanková and Kočišová 2014). It is difficult to conceive of how decision-making processes that include such activities as search, design, and choice could operate effectively without valid information (Argyris 1976). The purpose of this study is to establish the adequacy of strategy implementation monitoring and evaluation adopted by CSOEZ in Zimbabwe.

Mišanková and Kočišová (2014) strategic management, formulation of the strategy and its implementation are important tools of the company for its future development and for maintaining competitiveness. Baroto, Arvand, and Ahmad (2014) argue that although a flexible strategy can improve the strategy implementation within a changing business environment, these changes also necessitate controlling the strategy implementation progress. Strategic management consists of three separate processes which are interconnected together and influence each other, these processes are strategic planning, strategic implementation and strategic control (Mišanková and Kočišová 2014). Management control is regarded as dealing with the total operation of the company; the various stages or processes of the "value creation" of the company, and on various levels of the company (Boström 2008). Das, Maiti

and Banerjee (2011) posit that monitoring has been defined as a continuous real-time task of determining the conditions of a physical system, by recording information, recognising and indicating anomalies in the behaviour.

1.0 Literature review

1.1 Strategy monitoring and evaluation importance

According to Kusek and Rist (2004) monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is a powerful public management tool that can be used to improve the way governments and organisations achieve results. Just as governments need financial, human resource, and accountability systems, governments also need good performance feedback systems. For instance, while long-term strategies may achieve set targets, however, it is prudent to evaluate whether the targets being met are leading to organisational improvement(s). The current study premises that the role of strategic control is to facilitate strategy learning from performance monitoring and evaluation feedback to necessary changes to variables causing poor performance. Argyris (1976) claimed that effective action is more a succession of comparisons between actions and feedback from the environment, which provide information for the next action or decision.

Performance measures tied to strategic plans aid an organisation in a variety of ways, including developing the strategic plan and analysing the achievement of departmental and corporate objectives, monitoring operations by red flagging daily operations that have gone outside acceptable parameters, charting progress towards goals, and evaluating employees and suppliers (Hass, Burnaby and Bierstaker 2005). The management control systems must be able to control the implementation progress while ensuring strategic alignment of all departments (Baroto, Arvand, and Ahmad 2014). Effective controls ensure that decision-makers can learn from their actions and adapt their decision-making and behaviour accordingly upon the availability of valid information from the environment (Argyris 1976). Control is used not only for the review of the process but primarily as a process of regulation and the emphasis is on receiving concrete measures and on adaption to new circumstances (Mišanková and Kočišová 2014). According to Argyris (1976) cause-effect relationships lead to corrective strategic action as the detection and correction of errors produce learning and lack of either or both inhibits learning. Controls are primarily those activities that support management decision processes and actions when implementing business strategy (Boström 2008).

Kusek and Rist (2004) signified that there has been an evolution in the field of monitoring and evaluation involving a movement away from traditional implementation-based approaches toward new results-based approaches. The latter help to answer the "so what" question, in other words, governments and organisations may successfully implement programs or policies, but have they produced the actual, intended results (Kusek and Rist 2004). Organisations' strategic plans are usually long-term oriented. The longevity of strategic plans and the day-to-day pressure of large organisations leads to over-concentration on short-term objectives due to human resource performance evaluation systems. Entrepreneurs easily get distracted away from considering business strategies, once they get caught up in the day-to-day operations of the business (concurrent controls) (Swart and Taylor 2018). Thus the deliberate focus on control strategies and processes assists any entrepreneur to remain disciplined and focused on the business strategy (Swart and Taylor 2018). Once a strategy is implemented the challenge is to control it. In real-time systems, the correctness of the system depends not only on the logical correctness of the result but also on the time at which the results are produced.

Effective controls enable the detection of faults. Das, Maiti and Banerjee (2011) defined fault as an unpermitted deviation of at least one characteristic property or parameter of the system from the acceptable/usual/standard condition. Fault detection results in the determination of the faults present in a system at a particular time, whereas, fault diagnosis determines the kind, size, location and time of detection of a fault (Das, Maiti and Banerjee 2011). Antsaklis and Gao (2005) bestowed that control is used to modify the behaviour of a system so it behaves in a specific desirable way over time. One of the very successful areas in addressing performance in the presence of uncertainty is control theory and the feedback strategy is useful primarily if uncertainty is present and the advantages toward performance far outweigh the associated complexity in implementation (Lin and Manimaran 2003).

1.2   Types of controls

1.2.1   Single loop controls

Single-lop control involves following routines and some sort of preset plan and is both less risky for the individual and the organisation, and affords greater control (Smith 2001). Argyris (1976) also explained that single-loop learning entails that participants in organisations are encouraged to learn to perform as long as the learning does not question the fundamental design, goals, and activities of their organisations. Fürstenberg and Görzig (2020) conferred that while organisations often officially encourage their members to report mistakes, members often refrain from doing so for fear of being punished as the harbinger of bad news. In essence, single loop control does not question underlying strategies as it is just focused on achieving desired results efficiently. The downside is that, if they do not expose an error, they perpetuate a process that inhibits organisational learning (Fürstenberg and Görzig 2020).

Control as a behavioural; strategy can influence a leader, others and the environment in that it tends to produce defensiveness and closedness because unilateral controls do not tend to produce valid feedback (Argyris 1976). Further, especially in changing environments, single-loop learning may lead to long-term ineffectiveness, as well as to a reduced capacity for double-loop learning, the case because, when organisations initiate a process of change to correct errors without addressing existing norms, conflict in the norms themselves can emerge (Fürstenberg and Görzig 2020). Argyris (1999) adds that single-loop learning occurs 'whenever an error is detected and corrected without questioning or altering the underlying values of the system', and double-loop learning occurs 'when mismatches are corrected by first examining and altering the governing variables and then the actions'. Fürstenberg and Görzig (2020) also claimed that because in single-loop learning systems, the governing variables are not questioned, conflicting requirements remain hidden and even may become undiscussable in organisations.

1.2.2   Double loop controls

According to Agbejule and Jokipii (2009) the most innovative and proactive firms (those with a prospector orientation) adopt more flexible controls than the most conservative (those with analyser and defender orientations). Andrews, Beynon and Genc (2017) argues that from this perspective, an incremental strategy implementation style is effective because it acknowledges that the environment of any organisation is too complex to be systematically analysed, predicted, and controlled. This paper assumes the double-loop theory proposed by (Argyris and Schon 1978). The double loop theory as coined by Argyris and Schon analyses gaps between output and outcomes and thus relates to striking a balance between the efficiency and effectiveness of strategies implemented. Strategy monitoring and evaluation

may lead to a review of the organisation's strategy implementation variables, not just the set targets.

Behavioural strategies of double loop controls involve sharing power with anyone who has competence, and with anyone who is relevant in deciding or implementing the action, in the definition of the task or control over the environment (Argyris 1976). When planning the evaluation task, it is crucial to decide on what information the strategy implementation monitoring and evaluation team shall need to be able to make a fair judgment of the business's strategy performance (Swart and Taylor 2018). Das, Maiti and Banerjee (2011) explained that once a fault is detected, it requires further diagnosis to determine the root cause(s) of the fault, and removal or elimination of the root causes helps in maintaining the smooth functioning of a process. For instance, strategy implementers may be keen to evaluate whether the targets they are achieving are making a significant contribution to the overall mission and vision of the organisation as rapid changes in the operating environment may render initial plans ineffective. Dipboye (2018) elucidated that focusing solely on the visible and quantifiable elements of performance not only threatens relevance but also can create conflict, as units or people in an organisation attempt to achieve personal goals at the cost of overall organisational goals there is always a risk of employees adopting an "anything goes" strategy.

Results-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is a powerful public management tool that can be used to help policymakers and decision-makers track progress and demonstrate the impact of a given project, program, or policy (Kusek and Rist 2004). Gavurová (2010) cited in Mišanková and Kočišová (2014) indicated that implementation of effective controls: control is the process of implementation of the strategy necessary and the problem is content and methodology of control, it is necessary to focus not only on control of the implementation of the strategy but also on the relevance of the strategy given by changing internal and external environment of the company.

By their nature CSOEZ are double-mandated institution (private-public) and as such provides a strategy monitoring and evaluation dilemma. In the private sector, objectives are measured essentially in terms of profit, market share and return on equity and assets, and are mostly reported in financial terms, in the public sector, financial reports are also prepared (Guthrie and English 1997). Given that the objectives for government programmes frequently are stated in non-financial terms and the nature and complex array of government activities, conventional financial reporting mechanisms may not easily capture performance measurement (Guthrie and English 1997).

To obtain useful strategy implementation monitoring and evaluation results and outcomes organisations should be able to tackle impediments toward double loop controls. Organisational learning is the ability of an organisation to gain insight and understanding from experience through experimentation, observation, analysis, and a willingness to examine successes and failures (Serrat 2009). Double loop control effectiveness is affected by a myriad of variables. One is the degree to which interpersonal, group, intergroup, and bureaucratic factors produce valid information for the decision-makers to use to monitor the effectiveness of their decisions, and the other is the receptivity to corrective feedback of the decision-making unit, individuals, departments or groups (Argyris 1976).

Fürstenberg and Görzig (2020) explained that single-loop learning to increase the effectiveness of actions is the dominant response to error and is ingrained in routine procedures in any organisation and this results in the paradoxical situation where an increase in effectiveness in relation to one goal can lead to a decrease in effectiveness in relation to

another. Since monitoring and evaluation controls are decided at the strategy planning stage, they may be affected by inbuilt institutional mental models. Fürstenberg and Görzig (2020) claimed that mental models work as frames of reference that determine expectations about cause-and-effect relationships between actions and outcomes.

Typical mental models may include organisational norms, organisational strategies and underlying assumptions about organisational realities and operational processes. Other examples of organisational factors affecting learning from feedback information are partial resolutions of interdepartmental and interpersonal conflicts, ineffective and incomplete search, and avoidance of uncertainty, political exchanges, and annexation of other units (Argyris 1976). Further to that, governance systems (bureaucratic and political factors) of organisations can negatively influence learning from monitoring evaluation information. Examples of bureaucratic and political factors among individuals are competitive games; bargaining, parochial priorities, personal goals, interests, stakes, and stands; use of power; misperception, and miscommunication (Argyris 1976). Lastly, Argyris (1976) posits that learning in problem-solving and decision-making depends upon being able to subdivide problems and upon the actions being repeatable enough so that decision-makers can learn from their actions and adapt their decision-making and behaviour accordingly; also upon the availability of valid information from the environment within realistic time constraints to make corrections.

2   Methodology

Data for the study was collected through random sampling of middle and lower level employees of three Commercialised SOE in Zimbabwe. The study sample size was selected using the monkey survey sample calculator function. A total of 478 respondents completed the questionnaire out of a target population of 836 giving a 57% response rate. The study made use of equal allocation of sample participant from the three case studies under investigation. A total of 15 Likert scale items were adopted to explain the sufficiency of strategy control (monitoring and evaluation). Survey data was presented through descriptive statistics of mean, mode and standard deviation. Data was analysed through regression analysis (ANOVA –p value, mean square, R squared, Adjusted R squared, Root MSE, regression coefficient).

3   Research findings and discussion

3.1   Strategy implementation control – monitoring and evaluation

Strategy implementation achieves better results through effective monitoring and evaluation. The importance of strategy implementation control, as a separate variable from an employee or total corporate evaluation programmes, has been stressed in the literature. Thus the study investigated the adequacy of specific strategy control systems in CSOEZ during strategy implementation. The study made use of 15 likert scale items to interrogate this variable.

Table 1: Strategy implementation control – monitoring and evaluation of strategy implementation

Likert scale item = 15	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Mean	Mode	SD
My organisation use detailed plans for operational activities implementation;	10%	19%	13%	12%	46%	**100**	3.649	5	1.462
My organisation sets concrete and measurable objectives for their actions and strategies;	30%	25%	10%	20%	15%	**100**	2.661	1	1.457
My organisation systematically collects data for every strategy they are involved in;	53%	26%	3%	17%	1%	**100**	1.877	1	1.156
My organisation uses the information they collect to figure out how things work or should work;	31%	26%	15%	23%	5%	**100**	2.452	1	1.277
My organisation makes the information accessible to all who are interested in it;	54%	29%	1%	12%	4%	**100**	1.829	1	1.165
My organisation makes the degree of accomplishment of the objectives transparent all across the strategy;	54%	29%	1%	12%	4%	**100**	1.829	1	1.165
My organisation constantly monitors activities specific to a strategy they are involved in or responsible for ;	37%	23%	5%	18%	17%	**100**	2.548	1	1.539
My organisation makes the expenses and revenues of a strategy they are in charge of transparent throughout the implementation process.	54%	29%	1%	12%	4%	**100**	1.828	1	1.165
In my organisation, there is the existence of at least one employee trained in evaluation	0%	1%	15%	13%	71%	**100**	4.538	5	0.784
In my organisation there is the existence of a person/a department responsible for the design and implementation of strategies, policies, programs, projects;	15%	26%	18%	23%	18%	**100**	3.029	2	1.348
Our organisation checks for strategy consistency	4%	7%	34%	33%	22%	100	3.615	3	1.027

with company policies									
Our organisation checks whether our strategy is in line with business environment changes	7%	12%	16%	36%	29%	100	3.680	4	1.211
Our organisation compares resources used against results obtained	15%	12%	21%	22%	30%	100	3.402	5	1.410
Our organisation's human resource evaluation system is more closely linked to strategic performance monitoring and evaluation output	41%	21%	6%	20%	12%	100	2.410	1	1.478
Our organisation's strategy monitoring and evaluation systems provide adequate and timely feedback during strategy implementation	33%	32%	4%	16%	15%	100	2.479	1	1.462
TOTAL							**2.788**		**1.274**

Source: the authors' research results

Table 1 above presents summary results of survey respondents' views on the influence of strategy implementation control – monitoring and evaluation on strategy implementation in CSOEZ. Strategy control through effective and efficient monitoring and evaluation is influenced a great deal by the availability of detailed plans that encompass all activities. As such the study sought to establish whether CSOEZ develops detailed plans for operational activities implementation that enable strategy learning from monitoring and evaluation of progress. Results from the study by 58% (46% strongly agree and 12% agree) of the respondents indicate that CSOEZ can provide detailed plans for operational activities that facilitate monitoring and evaluation of progress. Neutral views were obtained from 13% of the participants whilst a total of 29% (10% strongly disagree and 19% disagree) of the study members were of the view that detailed plans for operational activities implementation that enable monitoring of progress were not used in their organisations. Descriptive statistics of mean, mode and standard deviation were 3.649; 5 and 1.462 respectively on the likert scale item.

Apart from the use of detailed plans for operational activities implementation that enables monitoring of progress, the study also investigated the ability of CSOEZ to set concrete and measurable objectives for their actions and strategies that assist low-level management and employees to keep track of implementation progress. Study results supported by 55% (30% strongly disagree and 25% disagree) of the survey members indicate that CSOEZ are not able to set concrete and measurable objectives for their actions and strategies. On the other hand, 35% (15% strongly agree and 20% agree) were of the position that concrete and measurable objectives for their actions and strategies were set in their organisations. A total of 10% of the participants were indifferent in their views. The study further computed the mean, mode and standard deviation of the results and the following scores were obtained, mean 2.661, mode 1 and standard deviation 1.457. These results may thus lead to the inference that strategy

implementation measurability is affected by the lack of concrete and measurable objectives for actions and strategies, meaning that CSOEZ may be failing to keep track of progress.

Effective control of strategic initiatives during implementation in a complex operating environment requires the adoption and utilisation of systematic data collection technics that allows for quick corrective actions to be exerted on the strategy or its implementation methodology. To this end, the study obtained that CSOEZ are not operating with systematic data collection methods that have given them concurrent and immediate feedback on strategy implementation progress as expressed by 79% (53% strongly disagree and 26% disagree) of the respondents. In contrast, a total of 18% of the respondents were of the view that systematic approaches are used to collect data on strategy implementation progress whilst 3% were neutral in their views. Mean score of 1.877, mode of 1 and standard deviation of 1.156 were obtained from descriptive statistics data analysis. Accordingly, the study results lack of systematic data-gathering systems in CSOEZ during strategy implementation negatively affects strategy implementation through delayed feedback and reactions thereby leading to the potential failure of adopted strategies.

Strategy implementation is facilitated by the effective use of feedback information from the implementation activities. As a follow-up to the utilisation of systematic approaches to strategy performance data gathering the study also investigated whether organisations use the information they collect to figure out how things work or should work as part of strategy implementation reviews. From the study, a total of 57% (31% strongly disagree and 26% disagree) of the respondents were of the position that their organisations were not inputting feedback into strategy improvement initiatives implying that corrective action is not always taken. However, 28% (5% strongly agree and 23% agree) were of the position that their organisations used the information they collect from periodic reviews to figure out how things work or should work during strategy implementation. A total of 15% of the respondents were indifferent. The computed descriptive statistics obtained a mean score of 2.452, mode 1 and a standard deviation of 1.277. In addition to that the study investigated if organisations constantly monitor activities specific to a strategy, they are involved in or responsible for. Study results expressed by 60% (37% strongly disagree and 23% disagree) against 35% (17% strongly agree and 18% agree) of the respondents further attest to the general lack of adequate strategy control systems in CSOEZ during strategy implementation. Only 5% of the respondents were neutral. The computed mean, mode and standard deviation with regard to organisations constantly monitoring activities specific to a strategy they are involved in or responsible for were 2.548; 1 and 1.539 respectively. Lack of effective use of feedback from action activities may entail that there exist rigid strategy implementation processes and thus some strategies may be outdated or missing their implementation targets without the knowledge or corrective action being taken, possible causes may be the influence of strategy inertia caused by sunk costs, escalation of commitment of political pressure as a result of ownership structure.

CSOE in Zimbabwe implements strategies with the help of highly educated management and subordinates as already presented in the study participant demographic information and as such these strategy implementers exert strategy reporting pressures on management to provide progress information. Hence the study sought to establish if organisations make the information accessible for all who are interested in it during and after strategy implementation. The views of 83% (54% strongly disagree and 29% disagree) of the study participants were that organisations do not make the information accessible for all who are interested in it. In contrast, only 16% (4% strongly agree and 12% agree) were of the view that information is made accessible for all who are interested in it whilst 1% were neutral.

Furthermore, descriptive analysis of the results using mean, mode and standard deviation obtained the following scores respectively, 1.829; 1; 1.165.

In addition to making strategy information accessible, the study interrogated the levels of transparency towards the degree of accomplishment of objectives across the strategy. A total of 83% (54% strongly disagree and 29% disagree) were of the notion that the degree of accomplishment was not very transparent for all to see whereas 16% (4% strongly agree and 12% agree) had opposition notions. Neutral views were expressed by a total of 1% of the study participants. Computed descriptive scores on this likert scale items were a mean score of 1.829, a mode of 1 and a standard deviation of 1.165. Strategy implementation progress requires some unit of measurement to ensure success, the study thus interrogated if organisation make the expenses and revenues of a strategy they are in charge of transparent throughout the implementation process. From the study, a total of 83% (54% strongly disagree and 29% disagree) of the participants were of the view that information related to expenses and revenues was not transparent. In contrast, 16% (4% strongly agree and 12% agree) of the respondents expressed that expenditure and revenue information was made transparent in their organisations whereas 1% of the respondents were neutral. Further analysis carried out through mean, mode and standard deviation computation obtained the following scores respectively, 1.828; 1 and 1.165. The study results thus indicate that most low-level management and employees who do not attend high-level strategy briefing meetings are not aware of the overall performance of the strategies that they are implementing after the amalgamation of all national branch reports. Further to that, CSOEZ are on record for not publishing audited financial statements and thus outside interested stakeholders may also not be in a position to ascertain the performance of strategies adopted by CSOEZ. Furthermore, the study results may be indicative of the budgetary deficiencies in CSOEZ whereby branch-level operations may not have key input into the budget process planning and monitoring due to the high degrees of formalisation and centralisation that characterise CSOEZ.

In addition, the current study examined if organisations compare resources used against results obtained at some point of a particular strategy implementation exercise. Study participants on the likert scale items expressed that their organisations were comparing resources used against results obtained as supported by 52% (30% strongly agree and 22% agree). On the other hand, 27% (15% strongly disagree and 12% disagree had opposing views whilst 21% were indifferent. These study results from a descriptive statistics perspective obtained a mean score of 3.402, a mode score of 5 and a standard deviation of 1.410. The study, therefore, acknowledges the attempt to report resources used against strategy implementation and thus directs that there is a positive influence on strategy execution due to monitoring assuming the exercise is carried out effectively, especially in cases where indivisible resources are shared between multiple strategies, departments and or branches.

Effective strategy monitoring and evaluation requires the assistance of individuals and teams that are trained in evaluation methods and technics. The study, therefore, investigated whether CSOEZ had branch employees trained to monitor and evaluate the performance of strategies under execution. From the study, a total of 84% (71% strongly agree and 13% agree) of the respondents expressed that there were employees trained on evaluation methods and techniques. On the other hand, 1% of the respondents were of the position that there were no trained employees on evaluation whilst 18% were indifferent. The computed mean, mode and standard deviation scores were 4.538; 5 and 0.784 respectively. Furthermore, the study investigated whether there is the existence of a person/a department responsible for the design and implementation of strategies, policies, programs and projects in CSOEZ. Respondents constituting 41% (18% strongly agree and 23% agree) were of the position that

there existed a person or a department responsible for the design and implementation of strategies, policies, programs and projects in their organisations. However, 41% (15% strongly disagree and 26% disagree) were of the view that such positions did not exist in their organisations whilst 18% were indifferent. The computed mean, mode and standard deviation on the likert scale items obtained were as follows, 3.029; 2 and 1.348 respectively. The study guided by study results notes that although trained personnel and department are present, the manpower structures at the branch level entail that the branch manager is the key resource person for each strategy. Thus it is a key management responsibility to make strategy implementation monitoring and evaluation programmes within their branches and failure to do so entails that employees will not have adequate guidance.

The current study investigated whether organisations check for strategy consistency with company policies during monitoring and evaluation. Study results indicate that CSOEZ do check for strategy consistency with company policies as supported by 55% (33% strongly agree and 22% agree) of the respondents. A total of 34% were indifferent whilst 11% (4% strongly disagree and 7% disagree) of the respondents expressed that there was no checking for strategy consistency with company policies. Computed mean, mode and standard deviation were 3.615; 3 and 1.207 respectively. Strategy monitoring and evaluation is facilitated at the the planning stage where strategies formulated are in line with company policies. When strategies are in line with company policies, monitoring and evaluation may get the necessary support that it deserves through, management and employee facilitation, access to information and resources amongst them most required control inputs. The study however also notes that strategy consistency with company policy may stifle strategy flexibility upon changes in the operating environment especially when the host organisation's policies are not evaluated for strategic fit regularly. Thus it is imperative that a three way fit is achieved between strategy, company policy and operating environment. To buttress this view, the study thus gathered data on whether CSOEZ strategy implementation monitoring and evaluation took into consideration environmental changes. Survey results indicated that CSOEZ organisation checks whether their strategies are in line with business environment changes. This view was expressed by 65% (29% strongly agree and 36% agree) of the respondents whilst 19% (12% strongly disagree and 7% disagree). A total of 16% of the survey participants were indifferent. The computed descriptive statistics of mean, mode and standard deviation were, 3.680; 4 and 1.211 respectively. It is imperative that timely/concurrent monitoring and evaluation is carried out to ensure strategy, policy and environment congruency.

In strategy implementation human behaviors play a key role in fostering success. subsequently, the study sought to establish whether CSOEZ linked human resource evaluation systems to strategy performance monitoring and evaluation output. Results from the study indicate that 62% (41% strongly disagree and 21% disagree) were of the position that the organisation's human resource evaluation systems were not closely linked to strategy performance monitoring and evaluation output. On the other hand, 32% (12% strongly agree and 20% agree) of the study members were of the view that their organisation's human resource evaluation system is more closely linked to strategic performance monitoring and evaluation output whilst 6% were indifferent. Descriptive statistics for analysis were mean score 2.410, mode 1 and standard deviation of 1.478.

The last likert scale item interrogated the strategy monitoring and evaluation construct was an examination of organisation strategy monitoring and evaluation systems' capability to provide adequate and timely feedback during strategy implementation. Study results show that 65% (33% strongly disagree and 32% disagree) of the study participants were of the position that CSOEZ organisations' strategy monitoring and evaluation systems did not

provide adequate and timely feedback during strategy implementation processes. A total of 4% of the study members was neutral whereas 31% (15% strongly agree and 16% agree) expressed that they received adequate and timely feedback on strategy implementation. Data analysis with the help of descriptive statistics obtained, a mean score of 2.479, a mode of 1 and standard deviation of 1.462. The lack of timely and adequate feedback with regards to strategy implementation entails that CSOEZ may be affected by delayed reactions to situations as implementers are not aware of mistakes they may be making and thus do not take corrective actions on time.

The global review of all 15 likert scale items under the strategy monitoring and evaluation construct retained a mean score of 2.788 and a standard deviation of 1.274. Inferential statistics through regression analysis ANOVA was adopted to examine the relationship between strategy control adequacy and the number of unattained objectives in CSOEZ. The following hypothesis was preset and subsequently examined:

> H0: Adequate strategy implementation controls do not reduce the number of unattained objectives in CSOEZ
>
> H1: Adequate strategy implementation controls reduce the number of unattained objectives in CSOEZ

Table 2: Statistical relationship between strategy control effectiveness and objective attainment

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs = 478
Model	704.208821	1	704.208821	F(1, 476) = 3327.24
Residual	100.745154	467	.211649483	
Total	804.953975	477	1.68753454	Prob > F = 0.0000
				R-squared = 0.8748
				Adj R-squared = 0.8746
				Root MSE = .46005
TOOMANYUNA~S	Coef.	Std. Err. t	P>[t]	[95% Conf. Interval]
RESOURCEAL~N -cons	.7968992 1.115812	.0138153 57.68 .0441018 25.30	0.000 0.000	.7697526 .8240458 .1.029154 1.20247

Source: the authors' research results

Regression results presented in table 2 above on the relationship between adequacy of strategy implementation control (monitoring and evaluation) obtained a p value = 0.000 to further support descriptive mean and standard deviation results. Basing on the statistically significant p value the study rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternate hypothesis implying that effective strategy implementation controls reduce the number of unachieved objectives. Auxiliary analysis through ANOVA depicted that 704.2088 out of 804.9540 observations were being explained by the regression model and thus support the rejection of the null hypothesis. Additionally, ANOVA extrapolations of R-squared (0.8748), Adjusted R-Squared (0.8746), Root MSE (0.46006) attested to a goodness of fit between the independent variable (strategy implementation control) and dependent variable (number of unachieved objectives) variables. More so regression analysis observed a low standard error of 0.1381 further showing high prediction power that effective strategy implementation

controls will reduce the number of unattained objectives and thus advocating for the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis. Subsequently the model coefficient entailed that for every 1 point improvement in strategy implementation control effectiveness there shall be a 0.79690 improvement in number of attained objectives.

These results explain the inadequacy of strategy implementation monitoring and evaluation systems in CSOEZ. Such inadequacies may undermine strategy implementation efforts as strategy monitoring and evaluation is a key facet of effort success. Both monitoring and evaluation are meant to influence decision-making, including decisions to improve, reorient or discontinue the evaluated intervention or policy (UNICEF 2003). Projects are monitored to ensure; stakeholders understand the project; to minimise the risk of project failure; promote systematic and professional management; and assess progress in implementation whereas evaluation is a process which determines systematically and objectively the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of activities in the light of a project/programme performance, focusing on the analysis of the progress made towards the achievement of the stated objectives (Biwott, Egesah and Ngeywo 2017).

Monitoring is generally based on targets set and activities planned during the planning phases of work that are later to be implemented, it also helps to keep the work on track, and keep management informed on when things are not perfect so that appropriate measures can be taken to avoid the project or program failure or avoid deviations to planned activities (Channa and Vijaya 2003). Monitoring and Evaluation helps project managers in keeping track the implementation of the projects and its prudence in the utilisation of the resources, it provides decision makers with a strategy to plan for sustainability of the projects and guidance for future endeavors (Biwott et al 2017). Monitoring, if done properly is an invaluable tool for good management and practice, and it provides a useful base for evaluation thereby enabling the management to determine whether the resources that have been made available are sufficient and are being utilised properly, whether the capacity that the organisation or its staff have is sufficient and appropriate, and whether the work done so far is in accordance with what has been planned earlier (Channah and Vijaya 2003).

Conclusion and recommendations and areas for further study

Obtained mean = 2.788 and standard deviation = 1.274 over 15 likert scale items corroborated by p-value = 0.000, R squared (0.8748), Root MSE (0.46006), and regression coefficient (0.79690) leads to the conclusion that there are inadequate strategy controls (monitoring and evaluation) in CSOEZ that results in low levels of strategy implementation success. Strategy control supports both strategy formulation and strategy implementation and to a large extent deals with both the long and short term and supports not only tactical, but also strategic and operational decision-making (Nilsson, Petri and Westelius 2020).

The study concluded that there are poor levels of strategy monitoring and evaluation systems during strategy implementation in CSOEZ. As such the study recommends the establishment of formative and summative strategy monitoring and evaluation systems that are deployed timely and gather accurate performance information that enables management to take corrective action. As a rigorous assessment process designed to identify potential and actual influences on the progress and effectiveness of implementation efforts, formative monitoring and evaluation can identify at an early stage whether desired outcomes are being achieved so that implementation strategies can be refined as needed (Stetler et al 2006). The study recommends formative strategy evaluation as it enables strategy implementers and low-level management to learn and take ownership of the implementation process as well as obtain concurrent performance feedback. Further summative evaluation is recommended as a post-

mortem tool that informs strategy implementation personnel on their over performance and set the tone for future references and skills gap analysis.

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