

**THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CONTROL FUNCTION OF SOCIAL WORK  
MANAGERS**

by

**BONGIWE CYNTHIA NAILE**

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**SUPERVISOR: DR CC REYNOLDS**

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**DECLARATION BY STUDENT**

I declare that “The assessment of the control function of social work managers” is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....  
**SIGNATURE**  
**(MRS B C NAILE)**

.....  
**DATE**

## **SUMMARY**

### **The assessment of the control function of social work managers**

**Bongiwe Cynthia Naile**

Master Diaconiology (Social Work)

Supervisor: Dr CC Reynolds

The purpose of this research study was to assess the control function of social work managers. The basic focus of the study is on how they perceive this management function of control as they exercise it, as well as how it is exercised to them.

Out of two research methods that one can choose from, namely quantitative and qualitative, the quantitative was chosen as the relevant one to use because of the specific close-ended questions that were to be answered by respondents regarding the exercise of control as a management function. Out of twenty five (25) questionnaires, an analysis of data was done on twenty (N = 20), because that was the original target and the five were just distributed in case some could not answer for whatever reason.

The findings and responses from the respondents were analysed and interpreted to meet the main objectives of the study.

#### **Key terms**

management; manager; social work manager; supervisor; control; planning  
organising; leading; Non-governmental Organization; Community-based  
Organisation

## **OPSOMMING**

**Die evaluering van die kontrole funksie van maatskaplikewerk-bestuurders**

**deur**

**Bongiwe Cynthia Naile**

Magister Diaconiologiae (Maatskaplike Werk)

Studieleier: Dr CC Reynolds

Die doel van hierdie studie was om vas te stel wat die kontrole funksie van 'n maatskaplikewerk-bestuurder is. Hierdie studie is gefokus op hoe die bestuursfunksie beleef word soos dit beoefen word.

Van die twee navorsingsmetodes waaruit gekies kan word, naamlik kwalitatief en kwantitatief, is daar besluit dat die kwantitatiewe metode meer relevant sal wees omdat dit spesifieke geslote vrae vra wat ingestel is op die bestuursfunksie van kontrole.

Uit die 25 vraelyste is die data van 20 (N = 20) vraelyste ontleed, aangesien dit die aanvanklike teiken was. Daar is 5 ekstra uitgedeel net ingeval daar persone sou wees wat nie die vraelys kon voltooi nie.

Die bevindinge en reaksie van die 20 ondervraagdes is ontleed en geïnterpreteer om die basiese doel van die studie te bereik.

### **Sleutelsterme**

management; manager; social work manager; supervisor; control; planning  
organising; leading; Non-governmental Organization; Community-based  
Organisation

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Weinbach (2003:5) argues that social workers functioning as managers are trying to create and to maintain a minimum inside job environment conducive to the efficient delivery of effective services to clients. He even refers to management as always misunderstood. For example, it is sometimes used as a proper noun “the Management”, referring collectively to feared individuals who occupy the highest positions in the organogram. On the other hand, it may be used as a verb to refer to a wide range of truly unrelated activities that consist of virtually anything except direct treatment services to clients (Weinbach 2003:5). The word *management* is sometimes used interchangeably with the term *administration* within social work literature. Attempts to differentiate the two have not been successful. But management can be conceptualised as different ways of moulding and exercising an influence over the work environment. Management is seen primarily as a proactive rather than a reactive activity. It employs different methods to create sources of support for good service delivery (Weinbach 2003:5).

Social work management functions are obtained by conscious awareness of the need for better services to the customers. A work environment with such resources and many internal and external political realities limits what can or should be done (Weinbach 1994:11-12). A manager’s function is sometimes described as creation of surplus. The output of an organisation should exceed its input; thus the idea that the resources required to produce its products or services should be generated by it. Even within more traditional clinical practice, there may be the assumption that a well-managed treatment can produce a kind of surplus (Weinbach 1994:12).

Kroon (1995:4) and Brevis, Vrba and De Klerk (2002:9) mention four basic management functions, namely planning, leading, organising and controlling.

Sometimes a fifth is added, namely staffing, and sometimes other management functions are listed by some authors.

Control can be defined as a management function that ensures the co-ordination and effective functioning of all activities so that the formulated objectives are implemented and followed according to plan. It is the final step in management function. All management functions may be carried out, the manager may plan, organise and give guidance, but he/she cannot ensure that the plans are carried out without exercising control. Therefore, control is used to ensure satisfactory progress in attaining the organisation's objectives and to make sure that the resources are used effectively (Brevis et al. 2002:390).

The purpose of control can be summed up as follows:

- ✚ Control provides opportunities for continual monitoring and revision of plans, as changes in the environment makes it necessary.
- ✚ Control directs action in the organisation at the level of the needs of the organisation.
- ✚ It ensures the efficient use of resources.
- ✚ It focuses the attention on factors that are important in reaching the organisation's effectiveness.
- ✚ It encourages the action that is necessary to maintain performance.
- ✚ It enables managers to make decisions.
- ✚ In social work the contributing public would like to know what progress is being made with the programmes and what the results are.

Control is important and an organisation needs the control process because even the best plans may go wrong. Control is exercised to ensure that, at all levels of the organisation, service delivery takes place according to plan. It is exercised to ensure that the organisation's resources are distributed in a way

that the organisation's goals are reached. Finally, a control function results in better quality management and enables it to cope with change and uncertainty (Brevis et al. 2002:392).

Formal performance evaluation of workers usually takes place once a year. It can be a measure of control that influences workers' behaviour. For instance, in a welfare organisation where supervisors are appointed, informal assessment of the social workers' abilities and skills regularly occurs (at least weekly) through supervision. Performance standards are acceptable to directors, supervisors and staff. Welfare organisations need a well-developed management information system that can provide systematic information on various aspects of ongoing programmes. Therefore, establishing a standard of performance at strategic points is the first step in management control. A performance standard is a projection of expected or planned performance (Brevis et al. 2002:393-396).

Budgeting is an important instrument in management's control process. When a budget is approved it can be accepted with a reasonable degree of certainty that the amount budgeted for can be spent. Budgeting is one of the most important activities that take place in a welfare organisation because it concerns planning for acquiring resources with which to carry out the organisation's future programmes. It is the major issue in all organisations. The control process narrows the gap between planned performance and actual performance by setting performance standards in the right place. It is the final step in the management process and the starting point for planning (Robbins 2000:177).

## **1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION**

Brevis et al. (2002:393-396) and Weinbach (2003:218) remarked that the control function is the final step in the management process and is an important connection in the cycle of the managing process. Control includes inter alia both the assessment of staff performance and the setting of tools to amend behaviour that is not contributing to the achievement of objectives. It is

often seen as an unpleasant process, by both managers and those whom they must control.

Control may lead to resentment and strained interpersonal relationships, though it is an important part of the job of a manager. It is sometimes exercised simultaneously with other management functions such as planning, leading and organising. It can be exercised with any of the other mentioned management functions. It is rather unpleasant for both managers and those who have to be controlled. Control is one of those functions that are mostly relished by many social workers (Weinbach 2003:217).

Management is sometimes described as emerging from the need to integrate individual and organisational goals (Weinbach 2003:218). Control is sometimes seen as an infringement of autonomy of the individual worker and is basically designed to do that. It is universally resented, especially by mature professionals whose functions are to guard their autonomy and their right to exercise professional discretion (Weinbach 1994:237). It is sometimes interpreted as little more than essential evil. Control exercises that are selected and practiced with tact and sensitivity need not to be hated and are usually welcomed by staff. Such control has the potential of enhancing the morale of both staff and staff manager (Weinbach 1994:237). This means that, even though control brings great resentment, it has to be practised. There is no excuse not to practise control. Therefore, Weinbach (2003:219) provides the option of a control menu that is made available for managers as part of a solution to this resentment. He further indicates that once the manager is employed to occupy a certain position in an organisation's chart, he/she is granted power to control some work-related activity of certain individuals who appear in subordinate positions on the chart.

Problems are usually encountered during the various steps of the control process, namely the setting of performance standards and key performance areas (KPAs), the measurement of the actual performance, the evaluation of deviations and rectifying deviations, and taking decisions about corrective measures. Social work managers also find it difficult to exercise the focal

points of control, which are: control physical resources such as building, vehicles, equipment, and stationery; control human resources; control information sources such as registers and filing, and controlling financial resources.

It is clear from the above that control systems exist in all spheres of the operations of any organisation, therefore also of welfare organisations, and are a necessary part of the process of management (Mullins 1993:543). Control is a general concept which is applied to both individual behaviour and organisational performance (Mullins 1993:543).

**The research problem can be stated as follows:**

*Out of the entire management functions writers like Weinbach (2003) stated that control is the one management function where managers experience the most problems. Both in assessing staff performance and with setting out vehicles to amend behaviour that is not contributing to the attainment of objectives, they are challenged . It is clear then that managers have problems in exercising control (Robbins 2000:175). The researcher also experienced in the field of social work practice that managers are hesitant to exercise their controlling responsibilities and sometimes grossly neglected this responsibility. These are the factors that motivated the researcher to investigate control as a management function with social work managers in the field of social welfare.*

**1.3 GOAL, RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

A goal is what a researcher wants to achieve at the end of the study, whereas an objective is the step that one has to take in order to accomplish this goal (Fouche` 2002:107).

The **goal** of this research is to explore and describe the exercise of control as a management function as perceived by social work managers.

The achievement of this goal can be guided by a **research question**. A research question is primarily how one obtains evidence to make conclusive conclusions. The following question can be formulated in order to guide this research:

*What are the perceptions of control function by managers when exercising their management control function?*

This research questions leads to the formulation of the following **objectives** in order to achieve the goal of this research:

- ✚ To do a literature study on control as a management function.
  
- ✚ To do a survey in the Eastern Cape and to involve 20 managers of welfare organisations. A survey will be conducted because the sampling size is reasonable to yield reliable and valid results; surveys are useful in describing the characteristics of large populations; the study can be descriptive or exploratory or explanatory; standardised or self-administered questionnaires have an important strength in regard to measurement as they are uniform to all respondents (Bailey 1994:86-87; Rubin & Babbie 1997:236).
  
- ✚ Recommendations on the whole aspect of control as a management function will be made to the social work fraternity and social work management in the Eastern Cape.
  
- ✚ An article will also be submitted to a professional journal on the research, and the findings will be disseminated to welfare organisations in the Eastern Cape.



## **1.4 FEASIBILITY OF THE STUDY**

One of the most difficult challenges in research is how to make the study feasible without making the research question so narrow that it is no longer worth doing, or without sacrificing too much methodological rigour or inferential capacity. The scope of the study, the time it will need, its fiscal costs, ethical considerations, and cooperation it will need from others are the common issues that determine the feasibility of the study (Rubin & Babbie 1993:101-102).

This research project is feasible on account of the following reasons:

- The researcher is a qualified, full-time employed social worker. She is thus familiar with the social welfare fraternity.
- All ethical aspects were considered before the undertaking of this research.
- There has been arrangement made to ensure no time or financial constraints in the undertaking of the research process will be incurred.

## **1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.5.1 RESEARCH METHOD**

The research method generally covers two types, namely quantitative and qualitative research paradigms. The quantitative paradigm covers aspects of social reality, which are measured quantitatively (in quantities) by means of variables, while checking errors on the other side. The aim is to explain the incidence of social phenomena and to indicate why the incident occurred. For this purpose, sophisticated measuring and analytic instruments have been developed. This tradition and paradigm give preference to the deductive procedure (Rubin & Babbie 1997:38).

Rubin and Babbie (1997:26) define qualitative methods of research as methods that emphasise depth of understanding and the deeper meanings of

human experiences; it is used with the aim of generating theoretically richer observations. Qualitative research involves fieldwork. The researcher physically goes to the people, setting, site, or institution to observe or record behaviour in its natural setting. It is descriptive; that is why the researcher is interested in the process, and in the meaning and understanding gained through pictures or words. The process of qualitative research is inductive in that the researcher builds abstractions, concepts, hypotheses and theories from the words or narratives from the participants.

The researcher opted for using both the quantitative and qualitative approaches. The reason was that there were specific closed-ended as well as open-ended questions which she intended to ask the respondents about the exercising of control as management function. It was also felt that a better picture of the status of control as management function could be explored and could be described by means of both the quantitative and qualitative approaches. This quantitative research will be conducted by means of a survey, as stated in the objectives. The criteria for choosing respondents in this research will be qualified Social Workers who are in a managerial post.

### **1.5.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Research design is a stage when a researcher has to decide not only on a group of people to test the hypothesis or research question on, but also on the number of people she is going to use as participants or respondents. There are basically five types of research designs, namely: the experimental design, survey design, participatory research, ethnographic studies and social programme evaluation (Babbie & Mouton 2001:76). As explained under the objectives of this research, a survey design will be followed in this research.

Social work research also serves many purposes. There are three most common and useful purposes of research. These are exploratory, descriptive and explanatory (Rubin & Babbie 1993:106).

**Exploratory studies** hint at answers to research questions and give insight into research methods that could provide definite answers. They tell us whether a topic exists or not, for example, a need assessment of an unfamiliar community. Exploratory research is appropriate when problems have been identified, but our understanding of them is quite limited (Rubin & Babbie 1993:106). It is used to begin the process of knowledge building about the problem and/or question (Rubin & Babbie 1993:106).

**Descriptive studies** provide an accurate and precise picture of what has been observed. The variables to be investigated are defined before the descriptive study begins. They tell us what exists or occurs, for example, the exact population within a clearly defined community (Babbie & Mouton 1998).

**Explanatory studies** explain why something exists or occurs, for example, the reasons for attendance or lack of attendance at a community centre (Rubin & Babbie 1993:106). Explanatory studies' main purpose is to indicate causality between variables or occasions. The number one requirement in a causal relationship between two variables is that effect follows the cause in time. The second requirement is that two variables be empirically correlated with one another. The third requirement for a causal relationship is that the observed empirical correlation between two variables cannot be explained in terms of some third variable that causes both of them (Babbie & Mouton 2001:81-82).

The researcher will undertake an explorative strategy of enquiry as she wants to explore the exercise of the control function by managers of the welfare organisations in the Eastern Cape. The purpose is to explore and will hopefully lead to the improvement in the exercise of control within those organisations.

A descriptive approach will also be used as part of this research as a design that will assist the researcher to look closely at the exercise of this control function from the managers' perspectives. She will also get an opportunity to

describe how the social work managers describe their implementation of control as a management function.

### **1.5.3 POPULATION, SAMPLE AND SAMPLING STRATEGY**

A population is defined as the sum of all possible cases that the researcher is ultimately interested in studying (Babbie & Mouton 2001:173-174; Marlow & Pitts 1998:134). The population in this research were all the organisations funded by the Department of Social Development, Provincial Office of the Eastern Cape. These organisations include old-age homes, children's homes and different types of service providers.

The sample is the group of individuals who are selected from within a larger population by means of the sampling procedure, and who actually generate the data for research (Babbie & Mouton 2001:189). Dyer (1995) and Mouton (2002:132) further explain that the purpose of the sample is to 'stand in' for the population from which it was taken. Therefore, a researcher is not so much interested in the sample data itself, but in what it can tell about the population from which the sample was taken. In other words, the aim of sampling in social research is to produce a representative selection of population elements (Mouton 2002:132). Population is the theoretically specified aggregation of study elements (Rubin & Babbie 1993:224).

Babbie and Mouton (2001:189) indicate that there are two types of sampling, namely, probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling occurs when the probability of including each element of the population can be determined, while non-probability sampling refers to the case where the probability of including each element of the population in a sample is unknown (Babbie & Mouton 2001:189).

Probability sampling includes the following techniques: simple random sampling, systematic selection, stratified sampling and multi-stage cluster sampling. non-probability sampling techniques include convenience sampling,

quota sampling, dimensional sampling, purposive sampling, snowball sampling and strategic informants (Babbie & Mouton 2001:166-168).

The researcher used a non-probability sampling technique, namely purposive sampling. The purposive sampling technique was employed as this method of sampling gave the researcher access to special characteristics, conditions or experiences of social work managers (the unit of analysis) – aspects that were hoped to be understood in the research (Yegidis & Weinbach 1996:122).

#### **1.5.4 UNIT OF ANALYSIS**

The unit of analysis is the specific object whose characteristics we wish to explain and about which we will collect data (Monette, Sullivan & De Jong 2005:86). According to Monette et al. (2005:87) and Rubin and Babbie (2005:130-134), the unit of analysis could be an individual, a group, an organisation or a social artefact like books, poems, paintings.

The units of analysis in this research are social work managers who can be either a Head of a welfare organisation or a supervisor who is in control of two or more social workers.

It is assumed that the name of the position of Head of a welfare organisation or department in such an organisation may differ from organisation to organisation. There was no discrimination concerning language, ethnicity or gender of the respondents. There was also no time limit for them to have been in such a position.

#### **1.5.5 DATA COLLECTION**

Data collection simply means gathering information that will prove your hypothesis or research question – whether wrong or right – and that will depend upon the information one obtained during data collection (Mouton 2002:141). That is, people observe what is happening around them, which means that one has observed some behaviour for instance, and made some

conclusions based thereon. One will therefore need to collect data in a formal way to prove the reality of one's conclusions so that other people may know and learn through one's findings and develop knowledge out of that. Collins (in Mc Kendrick 1990:270) refers to data collection as involving answering the following question: which measuring instrument or tool shall I use to collect my findings for this study?

Monette et al. (2005:158) and Blaikie (2000:233) state that there are two basic ways in which data is collected in a survey, namely by means of questionnaires or interviews. The researcher constructed a questionnaire (see Appendix B) in order to collect relevant data for this study because it is less expensive and it offers greater anonymity. Greater anonymity increases the likelihood of obtaining accurate information. The data was then interpreted and presented by means of graphs, tables and percentages.

#### **1.5.6 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

Reliability is a matter of whether a particular technique applied repeatedly to the same object would yield the same results each time under comparable conditions (Babbie & Mouton 2001:119). Reliability is about consistency in measurement. On the other hand, validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration (Babbie & Mouton 2001:122). A valid measurement measures what it is intended to measure. That is, it measures the concept in question and not some other concepts, and it measures the concept accurately.

Based on the purpose of the study, the questionnaire was used as measuring instrument. The questionnaire's validity is based on the fact that the questions were based on the theory as presented in Chapter 2. It was a structured questionnaire and close- and open-ended questions were included.

### **1.5.7 ETHICAL ISSUES IN SOCIAL RESEARCH**

Ethics is a set of moral principles that is suggested by an individual or a group. These principles are subsequently widely accepted and offer rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students (Strydom, in De Vos et al. 2002:62).

Social research intrudes upon people's private lives. It demands time and personal information from people. In this process people are not to be forced to provide it to researchers. Participation in social research must be voluntary and people should not be forced (Rubin & Babbie 1997:77).

The respondents in this survey were provided with good motivation and accurate and complete information about the research, what the goal of the investigation was, the procedures that would be followed during the investigation, the possible advantages, disadvantages and dangers to which respondents may be exposed, as well as the credibility of the researcher.

The researcher also ensured that the respondents were competent to give an informed consent. That is, that they were in a sound state of mind to make independent decisions. Informed consent is at the heart of efforts to ensure that all participation is truly voluntary (Strydom, in De Vos et al. 2002:62-65). Therefore, respondents were provided with sufficient information about the study and an informed consent form was completed by each respondent. Confidentiality was ensured in all respects.

## **1.6 KEY CONCEPTS**

### **Management**

Management is the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups, accomplish efficiently selected aims. The basic management tasks are planning, leading, organisation and

control. In simple terms management can be defined as the process of planning, organising, leading and controlling the work of organisational resources to achieve stated organisational goals (Weinbach 2003:218).

### **Manager**

A manager is a person who has been appointed to a leading position in an enterprise, and who is responsible for specific tasks. It is a person who is responsible for directing the efforts aimed at helping the organisation to achieve its goals (Brevis et al. 2002:11).

### **Social work manager**

A social work manager is a manager of a welfare organisation who had undergone training and has experience in social work, and is executing the managerial tasks (Weinbach 1994:327).

### **Supervisor**

A supervisor is a person who is at the lower level of management but superior in rank to other employees. She is a person who is directly involved at operational level but makes sure that work is done well as the most experienced and better performing employee who is in authority at the operational site. She is a leader who has the right to give orders and demand action from subordinates. She supervises the work of others (Lewis, Packard, & Lewis 2007:141-143).

### **Control**

Control is a process that involves a systematic process through which managers can compare real performance with plans, standards and objectives and take corrective action if deviations occur (Mullins 1993:44-45).



## **Planning**

Planning includes selecting missions, objectives and the actions to achieve them; it needs decision-making, which means choosing future courses of action from among various alternatives. It is the management function concerned with the purposeful consideration and visualising of what the organisation should achieve within a certain time span (Brevis et al. 2002:88).

## **Organising**

Organising is the process through which work is arranged, subdivisions created and relationships set up. This means that the work is subdivided and then combined once more in order to achieve the organisation's objectives (Brevis et al. 2002:190).

## **Leading**

Leading is a process of influencing human behaviour in order to achieve some specific goals. There are different styles of leadership (Lewis et al. 2007:246).

## **NGO**

The abbreviation "NGO" stands for Non-governmental Organisation. NGOs are organisations that often render developmental services to address challenges faced by communities ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-governmental\\_organization](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-governmental_organization)).

## **CBO**

"CBO" stands for Community-based organisation. Community-based organisations are those organisations that are often initiated by community members to address their own challenges and developmental needs (<http://www.all-acronyms.com/CBO>).

## **1.7 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY**

The research report is presented as follows:

CHAPTER 1: Introduction and background of the study

CHAPTER 2: Control as management function: a literature review

CHAPTER 3: Research findings and analysis of data

CHAPTER 4: Conclusions, recommendations and summary of the study

## CHAPTER 2

### CONTROL AS A MANAGEMENT FUNCTION: LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Research is generally defined as a systematic investigation and study of material, sources and other stuff in order to establish facts and reach conclusions (*Oxford Dictionary* 1996). It is usually used to test theories and to investigate new information on some realities in life. The literature review is one of the most important steps in research, not only in problem formulation but also in the process of designing the study. Taking some theories on general management or business management will make this study sound. The major emphasis will be on addressing the problems that managers experience in executing their control activities in their organisations.

The stage of literature review is a stage where one has to find information about something. That is, the researcher has to find out what other researchers say or have said, or has to inquire whether there is anyone who has done any kind of research based on the identified problem. If there is some information available, one has to find out exactly what the information is about. Collins in Mc Kendrick (1990:254) says,

*“A literature search acquaints the researcher with previous inquiries into the subject.”*

Reviewing literature simply means to examine the present information about a certain issue or focus in a specific problem (Hart 1998:16), that is, researching to avoid repetition of results. Therefore, it enables the researcher to build on other researchers' recommendations. It is very important to start with a literature review. Every researcher should start with reviewing the existing or the available body of knowledge to see how other scholars have investigated the research problem that one is interested in (Mouton 2004:87).

Whatever decision one makes, in referring to the previous research must not necessarily mean that one's work will duplicate or depart from previous work. That is, one has to follow one's own judgement but not ignore the previous work by other authors. Rubin and Babbie (1993:104) say,

*“Another benefit of the literature search is the identification of the alternative conception of the problem or of variables that had not occurred to you.”*

There are several reasons why reviewing the literature is necessary. These are:

- ✚ Avoiding duplication of a previous study;
- ✚ Discovering the recent and authoritative theories about the subject;
- ✚ Finding out the most accepted empirical findings in the field of the study;
- ✚ Identifying an available instrument that has proven validity and reliability; and
- ✚ Ascertaining what the most accepted definitions of the key concepts in the field are (Mouton 2004:87).

There are many concepts surrounding management but very few surround the management function of control. Specifically, the interest is on problems experienced by managers when exercising the control function and on what other theorists or authors say about it. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the management control function and determine where problems are mainly experienced. This will include topics on inter alia general information on the control function; conceptualisation of the concept control; the purpose of control in a welfare organisation; the relationship between planning and control; the importance of control; types of control – preventive and corrective; levels of control; the control process; areas of control; the focus of control; as well as the advantages and disadvantages of control.

## **2.2 GENERAL INFORMATION ON CONTROL AS A MANAGEMENT FUNCTION**

Control ensures that the organisation progresses toward its goals and that its resources are used properly and productively (Cronje, Du Toit, Motlatla & Marais 2004). The process of control is at the centre of the exchange between the benefit that the individual derives from membership of an organisation and the cost of such benefits. It is the function of control to bring about conformance to organisational requirements and achievement of the ultimate purposes of the organisation. The control system is also concerned with the regular behaviour of workers. Control is a means of exerting pressure and maintaining discipline amongst workers. Thus, control is basically a general concept which is applied to both individual behaviour and organisational performance. Control as management function can also stand for reliability, order and stability in any organisation. The entire purpose of management control is the improvement in performance at both the individual and organisational level (Mullins 1993:44-45; Harrison, McKinnon, Panchapakesan & Leung 1994:242). It should be understood and be kept in mind that control objectives is frequently seen by managers as the most valuable contribution that organisation behaviour makes towards their effectiveness on the job. Control can also be seen as mediator between the input and output processes in the organisation (Mullins 1993:546).

Control means to have power or authority over or to direct or guide authority or direction. There is a tendency that when people use the word control, they tend to think about limits (Weinbach 2003:217). The need for control is an important feature of the relationship between the people and the organisation (Mullins 2005:841). The control process is at the centre of the exchange between the benefits that the individual develops from membership of an organisation and the costs of such benefits. It is the responsibility of control to bring about conformance to the organisational requirements and to achieve the purpose of the organisation (Mullins 1993:543).

It is the role of a manager that carries with it the responsibility to control (Weinbach 1994:254). It also has power to constrain and control activities of others in the organisation. The need for control should come from organisational needs and not solely from the needs of the manager. Also, restrictions are usually associated with control, which is a good place to start, as all the people's and the organisation's conduct and activities are subject to restrictions and limits (Weinbach 2003:104).

### **2.3 CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE CONCEPT CONTROL**

Organisational control has many meanings and has been interpreted in many different ways. Control has been interpreted as the sum of interpersonal influence relations in an organisation. On the other hand, it is also treated in organisations as equivalent to power. Control is also seen or treated as a problem in information flow, as a problem in creating and monitoring rules through a hierarchical authority system (Dent & Ezzamel 1995:15; Mullins 1993:543, 564; Ouchi 1979:833).

Control can also be defined as the management function that ensures the coordination and effective functioning of all enterprise activities so that formulated objectives are implemented and pursued according to plan. Enterprise activities include the following: management by objectives, policy making, development or crafting of vision and mission, and all activities that are carried out by employees to meet the set objectives (Carrell, Elbert, Hatfield, Grobler, Marx & Van der Schyf 1999:419). Control is a measurement and correction of performance in order to make sure that the enterprise objectives and the plans devised to attain them are accomplished (Kroontz, O'Donnel & Weihrich 1984:490; Mullins 2005:837).

Management control is a systematic effort to set performance standards in line with planning objectives, to design information feedback systems, to compare actual performance with those predetermined, so as to determine whether there are any deviations and to measure their significance, and also to take any action required to assure that all corporate resources are being

used in the most effective ways possible in achieving organisational objectives (Stoner & Freeman 1992:600).

Most organisations use control procedures to ensure that they are progressing toward their goals and that their resources are used productively. It is a final step in the management process and is an important link in the cycle of the management process. It also implies that the behaviour of individuals can be influenced in the course of activities and events (Brevis et al. 2002:390; Mullins 1993:543).

The control process helps to outline or lay down the opinion about people's behaviours, and to keep them conformant to the rational plan of the organisation.

Control is the action taken to determine whether the objectives have been achieved or whether the organisation is functioning according to plan (Weinbach 2003:221). Control is one of those management tasks that most social workers often do not get pleasure from, for it requires that one assumes a kind of "parental role" in relation to one's colleagues. This is sometimes not comfortable with social workers or with other senior workers (Weinbach 1994:236).

Control is a normal and a positive force. Results of the controlling function are evaluated and feedback is given to employees by those who can do something with the information. This happens through communication. Without communication the control function would fail (Lepoutre et al. 2007:392-397). The results of the controlling process can be positive or negative. But, all the results are essential to the manager or person who is accountable; he/she has to know the progress being made so that corrective measures can be taken if necessary. The focus should be on anything that would make for improvement. The basic aim of control is improvement or better service. In some organisations, control is seen as a necessary evil (Weinbach 1994:237). That is, people who are the recipients of the control

function do not see it as necessary; they rather see it as being in place just to punish them.

Successful control is aimed at the future and is dynamic as well. The future is uncertain and control measures must provide adaptation when the unexpected happens. These uncertainties should be dealt with in an effective manner that will be beneficial to all parties involved (Lepoutre et al. 2007:392). The evaluation of performance takes place during the execution process of the plan so that forecasts can be made and corrective action can follow. This is also called Total Quality Management [TQM], which refers to the total client satisfaction management quality (Pycraft, Singh, Phihlela, Slack, Chambers, Harland, Harrison & Johnston 2002). Therefore, the social work managers must take care of Total Quality Management as it can achieve positive results (Carrell et al. 1999: 115; Brown 2006).

Lastly, conducting a SWOT analysis, that is evaluating strengths and weaknesses inside the organisation and the threats and opportunities outside the organisation, as part of a strategic planning process instituted by an organisation, is another way of planning and identifying measures or things that may affect the control process in the organisation (Data Monitor 2007:5-8).

Total Quality Management or Total management control of the overall process can help the director to streamline systems, integrate processes and direct all the personnel towards the same goal (Scesny 1991:12). For example, the study of conflict is well summarised by Silverman (in Weeks 1975:25), referring to a policy designed to improve efficiency in the firm which meant the replacement of the indulgency pattern by stricter forms of control. Therefore the hostile reaction to this change by the workers led to the vicious circle of increasing control and increasing resistance. This means that, the stricter control is, the more hostility develops among the employees, which is a problem that faces anyone's application of a control function. In the field of Social Work, TQM means that at every point of interaction, the customers must be delighted and must understand in the broader sense – in a case



conference for instance – that most parties are customers of each other (Taylor & Vigars 1993:75).

## **2.4 THE PURPOSE OF CONTROL IN A WELFARE ORGANISATION**

The main purpose of management control is the improvement in performance at both the individual and the organisational level (Mullins 1993:544). Brevis et al. (2002:391) see the aim of control as keeping deviations from planned activities and performance levels to a minimum so that the mission and goals of the institution can be achieved with as few problems as possible. This means that the control function is the regulatory task of management in that it correlates everything in the institution as a whole. It is supervisory in nature. It supervises and measures the progress that has been made towards obtainment of a particular goal (George 1982:259).

It is the role of management to earnestly try to make planning and performance occur at the same time, thus bridging the gap between goal formulation and goal attainment, and to make sure that all activities are done according to plan. It is a continuous process and is interwoven with other tasks of management such as planning, organising and leading. It is regarded as the most important link in the management cycle. This management cycle informs management of:

- ✚ Activities if they are continuing according to plan – continuity of the existing plan ensured;
- ✚ Things if they are not continuing according to plan – adjustment of existing plan is done; and
- ✚ The circumstances change – meaning that, a new plan has to be made (Brevis et al. 2002:391).

Still dwelling on the purposes of the control function, Weinbach (2003:219-220) provides us with a summary list of these:

- 1) Control provides the opportunity for the continual monitoring and revision of plans, as it is necessitated by changes in the environment which make it impossible to carry out the activities according to the original plans.
- 2) Control directs action in the organisation according to the needs of the organisation. Without control, the activities could easily deviate from the plans.
- 3) Control ensures the efficient use of resources; since all undertakings use resources, one of the goals of control is to evaluate and measure how efficiently these resources are being employed.
- 4) Control focuses the attention on features that are important in reaching organisational effectiveness; in other words, not everything is controlled because it is unnecessary and in any case, would be too expensive. Only the major organisation functions that have to be controlled are identified and controlled.
- 5) Control encourages action that is necessary to maintain performance. Often, what is actually taking place deviates from the original plan. Control makes it possible to identify this deviation and adaptations can be made.
- 6) Control helps with decision-making and enables managers to make better decisions. Through control, we are kept up to date with the progress being made, with what deviations there are, and control enables us to make decisions on what corrective actions should be introduced.

- 7) In social work, the contributing public would like to know what progress is being made with the programmes and what the results are. This is done by means of programme evaluation to determine to what extent a certain programme has achieved its set objectives. Organisations can persuade sponsors to make more funds available by announcing results, on the grounds of which a decision could be made or a bigger contribution justified. Organisations could also use performance evaluation to decide what amendments to make to the service rendering system, the organisational structure and the methods of treatment to improve the quality of the service. This means then that control is quality improvement oriented (Cassam & Gupta 1992:24).

Problems also exist with the purpose. That is, the very same purpose of control that was meant to have good results, may lead to uncertainty on the part of the employees. They can reject it, interpreting it to be too strict and expecting too much from them. The same measure of control that was made in good purpose can be a trigger for conflict between the line manager expected to exercise control and the one who has been controlled.

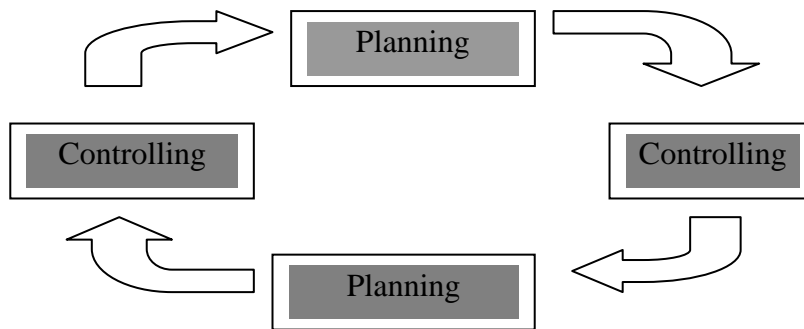
## **2.5 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PLANNING AND CONTROL**

There is a link or relationship between planning and control. Planning forms the basis of control. This means that you control what you have planned. Without planning, there will be no control. It is a process in terms of plan – implement – and control (Weinbach 2003:220). Control has many different meanings as indicated by (Weinbach 2003:217), such as:

- 1) Control is a normal positive force.
- 2) Management control is only effective if it determines someone's behaviour.
- 3) Successful control is aimed at the future, and is dynamic.

The main aim of control is to keep deviations from planned activities and performance levels to a minimum, so that the mission and goals of the

organisation can be achieved with as few problems as possible (Brevis et al. 2002: 391). Planning and control occur at the same time. Control completes the management cycle of planning, execution of plans and attainment of planned objectives. If the control process is not exercised, it is possible that the best-made plans may go wrong (Brevis et al. 2002:391-392).



**Figure 2.1 Relationship between planning and controlling**  
**Source: Koontz and Wehrich (1988:60)**

Control is greatly facilitated if good planning precedes it. It is sometimes essential when correcting variations from standards and plans. Planning sets standards that make it possible to evaluate and to make necessary corrections (George 1982:259). The plan is designed to severely restrict and to control by its nature. One of the objectives of planning is not to allow events and behaviours to simply happen naturally or at the whim of the actors involved. Plans make it possible to shape behaviour in some destined direction. They are the required precondition to other kinds of control (Weinbach 1994:236-238). Thus, with reference to Figure 2.1, control consists of verifying whether everything occurs in conformity with the plan adopted, the instruction issued, and the principles established.

There are four basic functions of management, namely planning, organising, activating and controlling (Kroon 1995:4). This alone indicates a link or a relationship between planning and controlling. Planning is the first task and controlling is the last. They are both functions of management and are performed to fulfil the general purpose of management, which is viewed as an open system that interacts with its environment to transform inputs

(information, technology, raw material, labour, capital, facilities) through the transformation process to output (products or services) (Kroon 1995:4). Control can be seen as a mediator between the input and output processes (Mullins 1993:546). Control also complements planning because it shows when deviations are encountered, that plans and even goals need to be revised (Brevis et al. 2002:391).

Management has to be allowed to state clearly what it expects the workforce to achieve, and that staff are only employed to deliver services in line with those directions (this is planning). It is also management's attitude that can determine whether staff does what is expected through a process of enabling, support and encouragement, or whether they are prevented from doing wrong things by a system relying on policing, checks and referral upwards on minor decisions (this is control). These undoubtedly lead to the problem of defensive work, based on a fear of making mistakes (Cassam & Gupta 1992:24-25). There is also resistance to change. Planning often implies something new or future change. People normally resist change. Planning should include an awareness of change, an ability to predict it and an attitude of acceptance. This also requires control (Weinbach 2003:73).

The warning repeated by Cassam and Gupta (1992:25) is about dependence on inspection as a most important method of control. They say inspection by itself does little to improve the quality of service delivery. Inspection is another form of control. On the other hand, control techniques are often described as inadequate. Therefore, plans can only be effective if people who carry them out know how good their performance is. Control should therefore be built into planning (Weinbach 2003:221).

Plans should also display the planned input, output and queue levels for the short-term future. These contain information on planned and actual input, planned and actual output as well as planned and actual queue levels (Correll 2007:144). The control process should actually be a mirror of planning just because plans indicate goals and set standards or norms that are necessary for control exercise (Brevis et al. 2002:393).

## 2.6 THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTROL

Any institution, welfare or business, needs a control process because the best plans may go wrong, according to Brevis et al. (2002:392-393). The control process is important in an institution for the following reasons:

- ✚ Control is exercised to make sure that, at all levels, all activities of the institution are according to institutional goals (George 1982:259).
- ✚ It is applied to make sure that the organisation's resources are distributed in such a manner that it reaches its goals, because if there is no control, the organisation's resources can be misused or improperly applied.
- ✚ Better quality (work) is usually the result of control.
- ✚ Control enables management to cope with change and uncertainty. Control is necessary if an institution wants to reach its goals according to plan. The organisation is not usually able to realise its goals according to plan due to the variables to which an institution is exposed. For example, union disputes in a school setting may delay learning (production) and the examinations may cause staff to work extra hours to complete the syllabus.
- ✚ Another factor is the complexity of the institution. The greater the number of people joining the organisation, the greater the need for coordination, the greater the chance of mistake and the greater the need for control. In such complex organisations, a small error may be very costly.
- ✚ Control can help to minimise cost and limit the accumulation of mistakes.

- ✚ Delegation and teamwork are also facilitated by control. Managers always worry that subordinates will not do the job properly. They always try to avoid delegation and do the job themselves instead. It is only by means of a control system that the manager can be in a position to determine whether subordinates are going to perform tasks delegated to them successfully.

## **2.7 TYPES OF CONTROL – PREVENTIVE AND CORRECTIVE**

Control consists of ensuring whether everything happens in conformity with the plan adopted, the issued instructions and the established principles. The main objective of control is to identify errors in order to correct them and to prevent recurrence. Control is to be applied to humans, material and activities or services. Effective control is based on prompt action followed by sanction if necessary. Control has been seen as impartial and for that reason Fayol (source??) advises separation of the inspector from those being inspected to insure independence of the control element. That is, by nature, control's main objective is to note and correct mistakes and to prevent them from occurring again and again.

Now that is where the problem lies. Some people do not like to be corrected, or to be identified as having performed an error. But we all know the saying that says. "we learn by mistakes". It is through mistakes that we learn and perform better. Sometimes it is said, "practice makes perfect". During practice then, mistakes will be made and they are supposed to be corrected. That is where the control function has to play a role. We cannot make mistakes forever. One needs to develop and grow and overcome making some mistakes (Weinbach 2003:217).

Brevis et al. (2002:407-409) list four types of control methods, for the purposes of prevention and correction in practise. Lewis et al. (1991) support them in this regard. These are:

### **2.7.1 PRE-ACTION CONTROL OR PRELIMINARY CONTROL**

This can also refer to controls made before the execution of a plan. Pre-action control is the most desirable type of control since the intention is to prevent problems. Ensure that the required human, material and financial resources are set aside before the activity is started or is done by these control strategies. The intention is to prevent problems before they occur rather than solving them as they arise. For example, the financial budget is one example; the agency budgets for expenses that are associated with a project and allocate the funds needed to ensure its completion. Another example can be the establishment of standards (e.g. the requirements that foster parents must meet before the child may be placed in their care (Brevis et al. 2002:407-408; Du Brin 2009:511)).

### **2.7.2 SCREENING CONTROL**

Screening control is also known as yes/no or preventive control. It gives a selection process during which a specific aspect of the procedure must first be approved or certain requirements must be fulfilled before proceeding to the next step in the process. It is a safety measure basically, because the outcome would be very serious if, for instance, there were deviation from the quality standards. For instance, before someone can be appointed in the position of a social worker, he/she must have successfully completed a four-year degree in social work at a recognised University and must be registered with the Council for Social Service Professions as a social worker. If it then happens that he/she does not meet the minimum requirements, he/she cannot be appointed. On the other hand, this ensures that clients receive help from personnel who are well qualified and who are subject to the control of a professional body (Brevis et al. 2002:409; Du Brin 2009:511)).

### **2.7.3 STEERING CONTROL**

This concept originated from the action which drivers carry out when they drive cars. The motorist makes adjustment to make sure that the car remains



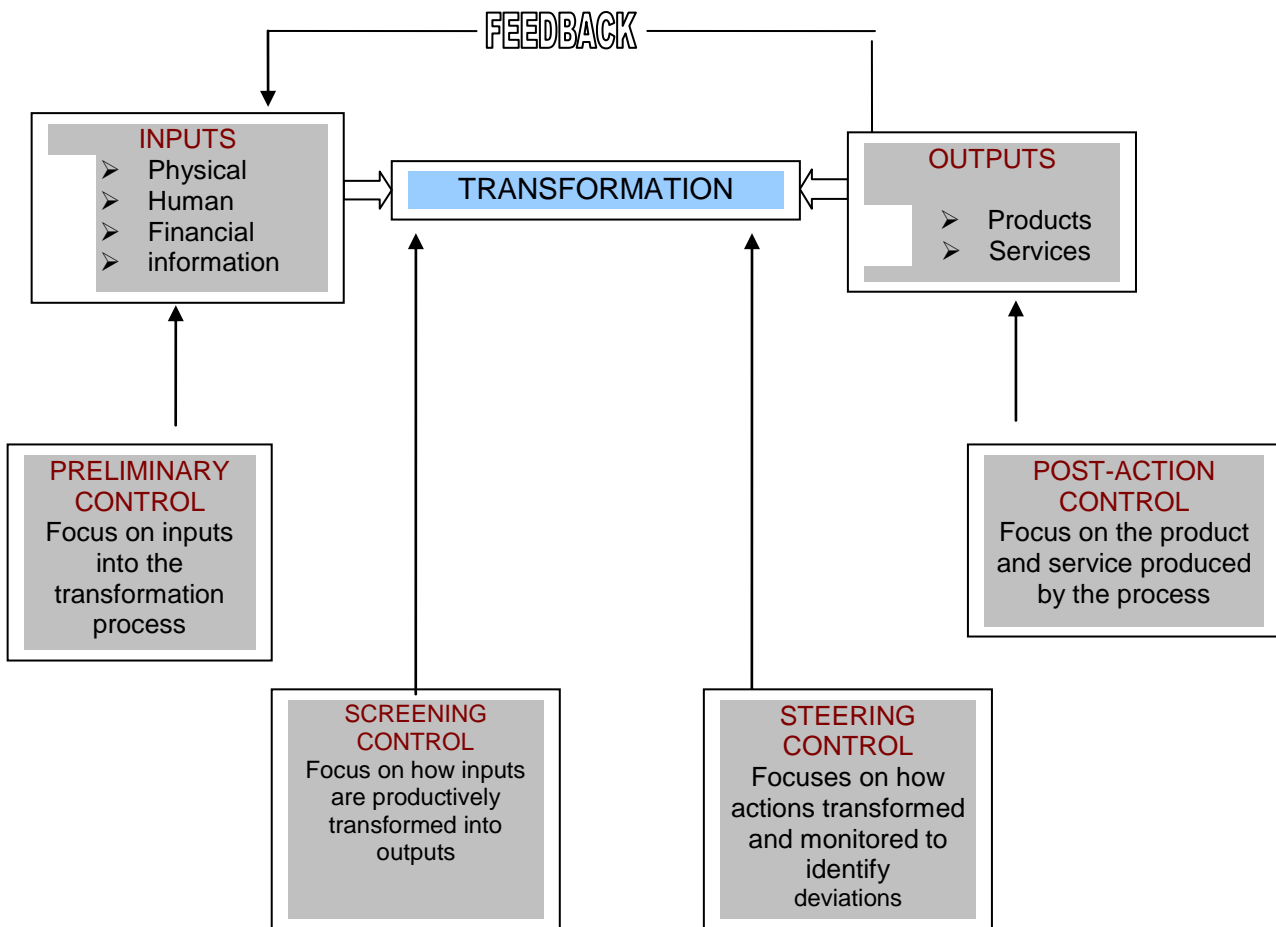
on the left-hand side of the road, with the speed limit kept in mind, having enough petrol, ascending the slope and many more. Steering control is designed to identify deviation from the purpose or from the standard and to make corrections or adjustments before a particular sequence of action is implemented (Du Brin 2009:511).

For instance, in a welfare organisation a project can be planned (for example, a presentation at an annual general meeting or a recruitment programme for foster parents) and a PERT schedule can be used to identify tasks, to estimate the time required for implementation and to indicate the target date for implementation (Makondo & Van Biljon 2005: 179; Du Brin 2009:511).

#### **2.7.4 CONTROL**

After the action has been completed, this type of control comes into play. From plan or standard, the effects of any deviation are established and these findings are used when planning similar activities to run more smoothly in future. Post-action control focuses on results. This type of control takes place too late to have any effect on that particular action, but can help similar activities run more smoothly in future. Post-action control focuses on results. It can also be used to as a basis for rewarding good work that has been done. For example, a poor student report cannot be changed after an examination, but can help to alert the teacher, the parents and the child to the fact that something is wrong so that the necessary steps can be taken for improvement of the next report (Brevis et al. 2002:409-410; Du Brin 2009:511).

The above-mentioned types of control can schematically be presented as follows:



**Figure 2.2 Types of control (Adapted from Brevis et al. 2002:409)**

Inputs entail engagement or utilisation of physical and human resources, finances as well as relevant information with regard to achievement of a particular goal. That is, they are being transformed into outputs. Transformation in actual fact means execution of the formulated plans. On the other hand, the results (achieved goals) are referred to as outputs, referring to the products or services.

During the process of input transformation and generating the outputs, four kinds of control will be observed, namely:

- ✚ Preliminary control focuses on inputs into the transformation process.

- ✚ Screening control focuses on how inputs are productively transformed into outputs.
- ✚ Steering control focuses on actions transformed and monitored to be able to identify deviations (from plans).
- ✚ Post-action control focuses on the product and service produced by the process.

Finally, the feedback process flows from output to input. Therefore the different types of control will indicate if changes should be done or made at the input level (Du Brin 2009:151).

## 2.8 LEVELS OF CONTROL

Brevis et al. (2002) mention only two levels of control, namely strategic control and operational control. The popular terms have been strategic planning and operational planning in the workplace (Brevis et al. 2002:405).

***Strategic control:*** This type of control is exercised at the top management levels and constitutes a close study of the organisation's total effectiveness, productivity and management effectiveness. Total effectiveness means determining the extent to which the organisation attains its mission and goals, and that is the major concern. This encompasses an examination of the extent to which the organisation has reached its goals and the way in which the goals have been realised. Productivity on the other hand is defined as the relationship between product and services (output) and the resources (input) used to generate these outputs, in an effort to provide an indication of the effectiveness with which the organisation's resources are being developed (Kiyoshi 1987:7-25). Measuring of management effectiveness is the third dimension of strategic control. In fact, this can be regarded as a management audit of an organisation's main success factors. This approach identifies ten critical success factors which includes profitability, the organisational structure, research and development, financial policy, as well as market share

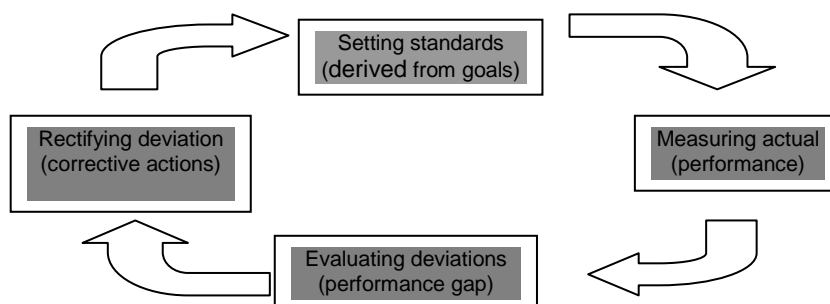
– to mention but a few. An external consultant could measure these factors every year and feedback is received by management so that it can take necessary actions (Brevis et al. 2002:406-407).

**Operations control:** Operations control is concerned with the organisation's processes that entail transforming resources into products and services. For example, funders and suppliers (inputs) evaluate the organisation's ability to pay them and look at how their funds have been utilised for the programme they were intended for, while in the production or services delivery (transformation), quality control is exercised. Lastly, clients evaluate product performance or services rendered (output) when making purchasing decisions or decisions to use the services (Brevis et al. 2002:407; Kroon 1995:4).

## 2.9. THE CONTROL PROCESS

Correll (2007:144) mentions that planned input is the input into a work centre that is required to meet the material requirement plan and maintain the planned queue within a pre-determined tolerance. As it was mentioned in the conceptualisation part, control is the process through which management ensures that all the organisation's resources are meaningfully deployed so that the mission and goals of the organisation can be achieved. Four steps can be identified in the control process. These include setting of standards against which the actual performance can be measured, measuring actual performance, evaluating any deviations that might occur, and corrective action.

The control process is illustrated in Figure 2.3.



**Figure 2.3 The control process. Source: Brevis et al. (2002:393)**

## **2.9.1 STEPS IN THE CONTROL PROCESS**

### **2.9.1.1 Setting standards of performance**

Mabey, Salaman and Storey (1988:125) mention that performance management entails strategic management of human resources, which is also a process of managing people and is related to the wider goals of the organisation. Therefore, performance management refers to the entire set of tools that management can apply to guide, control and improve the performance of their employees (Muller, Bezuidenhout & Jooste 2006:334).

The first step in management control is the establishment of standards of performance at strategic points. A performance standard is a projection of expected or planned performance (Brevis et al. 2002:394). A standard can be described as a qualitative or quantitative index that indicates a desired quality, quantity and/or frequency. The gist of the controlling function is evaluation. Even though it is like that, control becomes equally complicated when we are dealing with activities that have thinking, therapy, or the improvement of the quality of life as objective, that is, objectives that are intangible. But then, there have to be standards. Without standards we would not know whether we have achieved our goals or not (Carrell et al. 1999: 267).

### **2.9.1.2 Actual performance measuring**

Data collection and reporting on the actual performance are ongoing activities. That is, the measurement of employees' performance should not be a once-off event, but should be done continuously. Use of data that has already been collected for another purpose is preferred, for instance monthly reports or statistical data (Brevis et al. 2002:394; Weinbach 2003:218).

How much information should be fed back and to whom is an important aspect of observation, measurement and reporting on the organisation's activities. Only the important or exceptional differences between actual

performance and planned performance are communicated to the top management, and subordinates deal with less significant deviation on their own. For example, management may be more satisfied with a report that shows that the number of clients' services in a year is 10% higher than the previous year (Brevis et al. 2002:395). In all, this means that objectives makes task clear and unambiguous with measurable results (Booyens 2002:70).

### **2.9.1.3 Evaluating deviations**

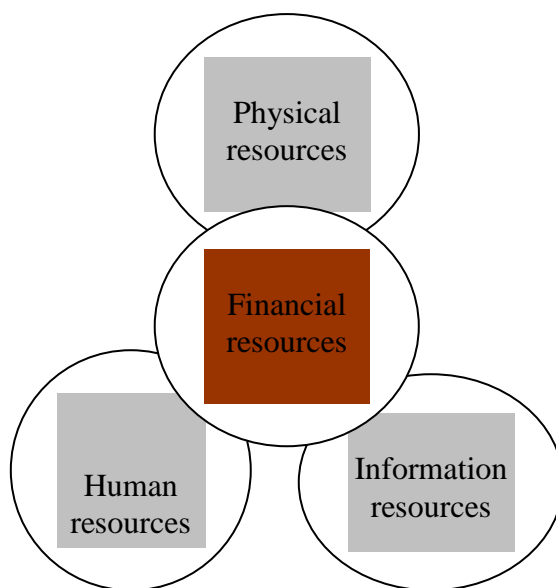
This is the easiest step if the previous one has been carried out properly. If the performance meets the set standards, everything can be said to be under control. Brevis et al. (2002) consider it as important to know why a standard is almost equal and not exceeded, or why the agency has done better than the standard. There are several causes of deviation. Therefore, it is impossible to make generalisations about the causes of disparities between actual performance and set standards. On the other hand, management has to decide whether differences are significant enough to merit further attention. Then it comes to a point where decisions are about future actions; that is the final step to be taken.

### **2.9.1.4 Corrective action**

Corrective action must be taken so that the objective can be realised if there is any departure from the proposed plan. All other management functions come into operation during this step of control function. For example, there is re-organisation by re-distribution of work, the appointment of more staff, the dismissal of personnel if appropriate, carrying out the management function of leading or activating, introducing training programmes or providing other types of leadership, such as introducing a remuneration system that leads to increased motivation. Planning can be improved so that correct or additional information can be passed on to the responsible members of staff, or goals and objectives may be reformulated, or the plan of action modified (Brevis et al. 2002:395-396; Carrell et al. 1999: 508).

## 2.10 AREAS OF CONTROL

Management should identify the key areas to be controlled. This can also be influenced by the nature of the organisation, its activities, size and structure. These are areas that are responsible for the effectiveness of the entire organisation. There are four basic types of resources that are defined as areas of control. They are human, physical, financial and information resources (Brevis et al. 2002:396).



**Figure 2.4 Key areas of control. Source: Brevis et al. 2002:397**

### 2.10.1 THE CONTROL OF PHYSICAL RESOURCES

This covers factors such as inventory control, quality control and the control of equipment. These are tangible assets of the organisation, and include buildings, office equipment and furniture, vehicles, work in process and finished products etc. There is a need for various control systems of administrative nature to control these. Such systems are inventory control and quality control.

🚦 **Inventory control:** According to Brevis et al. (2002:397-398), the term *inventory* refers to the four basic kinds of reserves and stock, namely

raw material, work in process, components, and finished products, but does not have to relate only to manufacturing. In terms of social work management, inventory control will refer to the client system (raw material), social work intervention (work in process), resources (components), and the rendering of services (finished product). Organisations keep inventories mainly for the purpose of satisfying the needs of customers, that is, to keep uncertainties in the delivery and availability of service to a minimum so that the production process or service delivery process is not interrupted. The main purpose of inventory control is to keep the costs of service delivery as low as possible. (Brevis et al. 2002:397-398; Gerber, Nel & Van Dyk 1999:79).

✚ **Quality control:** The issue of quality in production or service is one of the major factors in management. It refers to the total client satisfaction (management quality) as this forms part of performance evaluation in the case of social services. The social work managers must take care of the total quality management as it can achieve results (Brevis et al. 2002:399; Brown 2006; Weinbach 1994:67). Quality is the responsibility of everyone in the organisation. That is, from the chairperson of the board of directors down to the people at grassroots level (Brevis et al. 2002:399).

#### 2.10.2 THE CONTROL OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Management of people (human resources) is equally important in an organisation's management of its physical and financial resources. But then the control of human resources forms part of human resource management. Performance management is the main instrument used to control an organisation's human resources. This includes evaluation of employees and managers in the performance of their work in the organisation. Individual and group performance is assessed and compared with pre-determined standards. The actual performance can be measured against these standards for feedback to management and consequent action. It is also normal that when a group of people work together on a regular basis, they develop norms



that lay down guidelines for the behaviour of the group. These norms include quality of products, speed of production, and reliability; they are commonly not written down or have nothing to do with the formal organisational structure. This can be the vice versa and instead of producing good results produces negative (Brevis et al. 2002:410).

### **2.10.3 THE CONTROL OF INFORMATION RESOURCES**

Weinbach (2003:224) indicates that lack of knowledge and misinformation can lead to staff being engaged in undesirable behaviour.

Undesirable behaviour can possibly be extinguished by a manager, by disseminating information either face to face or in writing. Information is also considered another type of plan as well as a type of control. On the other hand, simple things like cultural diversity may lead to staff conflict because employees come from different cultural backgrounds. It is therefore important in a situation like that for the manager to clarify those cultural diversities by informing staff and encouraging employees to respect one another and be considerate of those differences in cultures (Weinbach 2003:224-225).

When people have not been sensitised even illegal behaviour can occur or perhaps people may operate on the basis of being misinformed. Forbidding unacceptable behaviour without the necessary information being provided is not enough to prevent it from occurring. It is the responsibility of a manager to provide the necessary information to staff in order to enable them to behave responsibly. Therefore, providing staff with the necessary information may not completely prevent negative behaviours from occurring within the organisation. But when those happen, they must be dealt with appropriately, perhaps through disciplinary procedures (Weinbach 2003:224-225).

### **2.10.4 THE CONTROL OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

Financial resources form the second group of resources that management must control. At the heart of the control process there are financial resources

and abilities that are vital to the success of the organisation. They are also central to the control of other resources of the organisation. The control of resources as they flow into the organisation are concerns of the financial control (this includes revenues, returns and investing financial resources that are held by the organisation (like working capital, cash), and the financial resources flowing out of the organisation. Controlling outgoing funds such as salaries and expenses, which are also areas where fraud and serious errors can occur, is essential. Two instruments of financial control will be examined, namely the budget and financial analysis.

### **The budget**

Management allocates financial resources to different departments of the organisation in order to enable them to attain certain goals. They do this by implementing certain strategic activities and allocation of funds to specify activities. The budget is done as part of the planning process. It is a formal plan that indicates how resources are to be allocated to various activities, departments, or divisions of an organisation and is expressed in financial terms. It forms the basis for controlling financial resources and is referred to as the budgetary control process. It provides the foundation for a financial control system because of its quantitative nature (Brevis et al. 2002:401; Mullins 1993:563).



These budget controls are usually set by a budget committee consisting of top managers, and it is here that top management also implement their strategies. This is done by allocating financial resources to the areas or divisions which must lead the organisation's strategy. To my view, this may be problematic, because people on the ground know exactly what they want in terms of tools or resources. Not only top management should budget but both management and employees at operational level should be represented in the budgeting committee. Budgets have their strengths and weaknesses as instruments of control. They sometimes limit flexibility and that is a challenge (Brevis et al. 2002:402).

## **Financial analysis**

Managers can learn a lot about an organisation's affairs by using financial analysis. Financial analysis can be used as an instrument of control by management. Management is enabled by certain financial ratio and analyses can supply an indication of the organisation's financial performance. That is also a reflection of the organisation's total performance in the attainment of its goal. The worst performers spend the most on control and cost management, and still spend some time on planning and financial performance (Mc Cafferty 2007:24). An international financial audit and a formal external audit can also be used for control purposes. Usually, these are conducted by chartered accountants and auditors (Brevis et al. 2002:402- 403).

### **2.11 FORMS OF CONTROL**

The exercise of control is seen as an expression of management's systems of management styles. While the need of control is stable, the manner of control is variable. Control is viewed as an essential feature of the formal organisation and the hierarchical structure of authority. There are three main forms of control, as stipulated by (Mullins 1993:549). These are:

-  ***Direct control by orders, direct supervision and rules and regulations in a crisis situation and during training:*** It is said that direct control may be essential and more acceptable in a crises situation and during training. But in organisations where people expect to participate in decision-making, such forms of control may be unacceptable – and that is a problem in control. Rules and regulations which are not acceptable as reasonable or at least not unreasonable, will offer some people a challenge to use their ingenuity to find ways around them (Mullins 1993:549).
  
-  ***Control through standardisation and specialisation:*** Through clear definition of the inputs to a job, the methods to be used and the required outputs, this form of control is achieved. Bureaucratic control

makes clear the parameters within which one can act and paradoxically makes decentralisation easier. They can increase a sense of freedom, provided the parameters are not unduly restrictive. For example, individual managers can have the freedom to do the job as they wish, but still within clearly defined limits. Although this ensures that one retail chain store looks like another, individual managers can have the freedom to do the job as they wish (Mullins 1993:550).

✚ ***Control through influencing the way that people think about what they should do:*** This is often the most effective method of exercising control. It can be achieved through selective recruitment of people who are likely to share a similar approach. The training and socialisation of people into thinking the organisation's way and through peer pressure is the best route. People who do not fit in where an organisation has a very strong culture, or do not learn to adapt, are likely to be pushed out, even though they may appear to leave of their own volition (Mullins 1993:550).

## **2.12 CONTROL MEASURES IN A WELFARE ORGANISATION**

Control in a welfare organisation has two important aspects: control over what personnel do (by way of personnel evaluation or performance evaluation) and control that is exercised over the organisation's service (by way of programme evaluation).

### **2.12. 1 PERSONNEL EVALUATION THROUGH SUPERVISION**

Managers appoint social workers, place them within the structure of the organisation and provide supervision as well as in-service training in the service of their professional. However, the manager is also responsible for the evaluation of his/her personnel. In social work, supervision is used among other things for the purpose of control. Supervision fulfils three main functions: administrative, supportive and educational (Nel, Van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner 2004:453).

- ✚ The administrative function consists of guiding, coordination, directing, controlling and evaluating the worker. Evaluation can be used as an aid to administrative decision-making or to introduce corrective actions in an existing programme. The result of the evaluation will determine whether the programme should be expanded, continued or discontinued, or whether the existing programme and the staffing of the programme should simply be modified.
  
- ✚ The educational function focuses on the transfer of knowledge, skills and values.
  
- ✚ The supportive function is associated with increasing the workers' feeling of security when trying out his/her task (Carrell et al. 1999:105; Makondo & Van Biljon 2005:186).

The purpose of the supervision function is to enable the social worker to provide the best possible service to the client. In welfare organisations where supervisors are appointed, informal assessment of the social worker's abilities and skills regularly occurs (at least weekly) through supervision. Formal performance evaluation of workers usually takes place once a year. Performance evaluation can be a measure of control that influences the worker's behaviour. Performance evaluation should contribute to the employee's growth and to the achievement of the organisation's goals. In such evaluation, attention is paid to the worker's strong points and weak points and to ways of improving performance. Short- and long-term goals are set by the worker and the supervisor together, along with the standards that must be maintained in realising these goals (Mullins 1993:550-553).

Aspects such as the worker's performance will be covered by performance evaluation regarding achievement of the objectives of those parts of the welfare programme for which he/she is responsible, relations with management and colleagues, the results that are obtained in interventions, and the extent/quantity of output. It also ensures that the worker's task and job

description tally with each other and that the extent of the task is established to determine whether the work is evenly distributed in the organisation and whether the worker is not expected to carry an unrealistic case-load. At the same time, attention must be paid to the question of whether the worker has been offered the necessary support service such as clerical staff, typing facilities, good and regular supervision as well as training (Mullins 1993:550).

Therefore the whole picture must be taken into consideration so that the worker's performance is not evaluation in isolation. Attention is also paid to the social worker's productivity by means of checking time-cards, diaries and statistics that must be kept by the workers. In this way it can be established whether the worker meets the organisation's standards of effectiveness and productivity. If the member of staff performs well, formal evaluation gives the evaluator the chance to reinforce positive behaviour. If the performance is not good enough, it provides the opportunity to indicate areas where improvement and change is required and the staff member can be given the necessary support to do so (Mullins 1993:551).

#### **2.12.2 OTHER METHODS OF CONTROL**

Other methods of control are instruments that can be used by a manager in order to exercise control over the behaviour of workers. Usually more than one means of evaluation are used so that there is no over-reliance on just one instrument.

- a) **Graphic evaluation scale.** Number characteristics that are considered important for carrying out the tasks are selected, such as initiative, cooperation, flexibility, knowledge and perseverance.

These characteristics are defined. A number of evaluations are then given, such as:

Exceptional    good    acceptable    unacceptable

**Or** a numerical value is attributed to each one:

- 1 = excellent
- 2 = good
- 3 = acceptable
- 4 = unacceptable

Each member of staff is evaluated accordingly and the data is processed (Carrell et al. 1999: 268).

b) **A checklist.** The checklist consists of several questions based on the member of staff's work or behaviour, and are answered with a simple "yes" or "no", or ticked. It is difficult to compile these questions because they will be different for each post (Carrell et al. 1999:275).

c) **Critical incidents.** These are descriptions of personnel's behaviour that the supervisor finds either exceptionally effective or ineffective. After the list has been compiled, it is evaluated according to a scale

that measures the contribution to the organisation. Another possibility is that incidents are noted that indicate a pattern, for example that the member of staff shows poor cooperation. (For instance, it may appear from the list of incidents that he/she does not make information available to colleagues on request). This method is usually used to supplement other scales of measurement (Carrell et al. 1999:274).

d) **Behaviour-anchored evaluation scale.** This instrument is similar to the first one, except that the individual's behaviour is described in detail (Carrell et al. 1999:275). Brody (1993:162) gives the following example of criteria relating to the member of staff's "knowledge of the job" (Wolmarans 1983):

- **Outstanding:** Employee has exceptionally thorough knowledge about all facets of the job and its relationships to other jobs.
- **Good:** Employee has above average knowledge about most aspects of the job; requires only limited supervision on more complex tasks.
- **Average:** Employee knows the necessary elements of the job to meet the requirements of the job; requires periodic supervision.
- **Poor:** Employee's knowledge of job is limited; needs additional training or experience in several phases; makes frequent mistakes and requires extremely close supervision (Carrell et al. 2000: 274 & Wolmarans 1983).

The advantages of this method are that it reduces biases because the definitions of desirable behaviour are specific.

e) **Management by objectives.** An evaluation method that is highly relevant if it is used in conjunction with the welfare programme. Description is the evaluation of the degree to which the member of staff has achieved the objectives that have been formulated for his/her programme. The organisation supervisor must decide together with the member of staff which are critical areas and which objectives should be realised during that particular year. The standards that the objectives must meet should also be specified (Brody 1993:162-165; Weinbach 2003:77).

f) **An interview/discussion.** Over and above the evaluation scales and instruments that are used for evaluation, it is desirable that the supervisor and member of staff have a discussion or interview on the evaluation (Brody 1993:162-165).

Questions such as those given below (Brody 1993:166) could serve as the basis for discussion to give the member of staff opportunity to think about the way in which he/she can contribute to his/her growth and the productivity of



the organisation, and he/she can air their opinion on aspects that are unclear or where he/she disagrees with management.

- What has the employee done to improve performance since the last evaluation?
- What specific performance areas should receive special attention in the coming year?
- What can the employee do to enhance his/her job performance?
- What are the employee's highest priorities for the coming year?
- What career goals does the employee have?
- What additional training does the employee need to achieve these goals?
- What does the employee think the organisation should do to improve itself?

Weinbach (2003:220-223) suggests a diverse collection of methods that a manager could implement in order to control the behaviour of employees, inter alia planning, in-service training, information, advice, directives, and professional values and ethics.

**Planning:** Planning is one of the best management strategies, that is, plans are very powerful control vehicles. For example, "the budget of an organisation can be regarded as primarily a planning and control system" (Weinbach 2003:221).

**In-service training:** In-service training plays an important role for the standardisation of staff behaviour through a mixture of didactic instruction and structured experiences. This means that training makes the members of staff look and act the same way. It creates a sense of uniformity. It helps all the staff members to act as managers even if the real manager is not there. Training is one of the most expensive methods of planning and control but it is always appreciated by employees. It gives confidence to those who are going

to be trained as far as their job is concerned and they usually favour the manager who provides training to them (Weinbach 2003:223).

**Information:** Information is knowledge given or received, of some fact or circumstance like news, through reading, listening, and researching about something. On the other hand, knowledge is what one knows or represents a range of information. Therefore information means what a person knows. Knowledge applies to the understanding of an organised body of facts and principles. Information also applies to things one has learned through being told by people or from books or through observation, and often suggests isolated or unrelated facts (Weinbach 2003:224).

Information sharing is planned, designed to assist staff to understand what constitutes undesirable behaviour. Most of the time, staff members are involved in certain undesirable behaviours because they lack knowledge or are not properly informed. A manager can disseminate information in different ways. For example, in writing or face to face: "Information can be considered a type of plan since sometimes it is designed to keep a behaviour from occurring or re-occurring " (Weinbach 2003:224). It might be thought of as a special form of staff development and type of control.

Information also controls undesirable behaviours such as cultural insensitivity, for example, a staff member may not show proper respect to a co-worker from a different cultural background because of a lack of awareness. Managers should do all they can in order to prevent certain behaviours like sexual harassment. All the staff members should know which behaviours are acceptable and which are not. Therefore, severely negative behaviour by the staff should lead to termination for misconduct.

**Advice:** Advice is an opinion about what should be done, a suggestion or a recommendation. It can further be described as an opinion given by one person for the guidance of another (*World Book Dictionary*: 32). Advice is designed to change behaviour in a relatively insinuating manner from a superior to a subordinate.

*“Between peers or persons of comparable power, advice is available to be heeded, ignored, or even never heard” (Weinbach 2003:225).*

Advice may be a vehicle of control. Therefore a piece of advice to a teenager is likely to carry less expectation of compliance or of the advice being heeded. Relationships between managers and their subordinates are clearly unequal. The advices offered to a subordinate have much more explanations of and potential for control than advice passed between and among peers. It is done with the aim of shaping and controlling the behaviour of the staff members.

**Directives:** These are the orders or overt instructions that are given verbally or in writing and that are designed to communicate clearly and unequivocally what a subordinate must do. In management, sometimes staff control through the use of advice and information just does not work. Directives take the form of orders, overt instructions, or other specific demands (Weinbach 2003:227). They are used to exert control over different types of behaviours.

Social workers are not in favour of directives because they are socialised to be non-directive with their clients. They have little experience in telling others what they must do. Subordinates on the other hand regard directives as a form of humiliation. Staff do not like directives because they view them as a reminder of the manager’s authority. Directives are used when necessary and appropriate; they are very efficient methods of control. In social work there are very few autocratic managers who relish the use of directives. A more common problem is managers who do not use this valuable method of control sufficiently (Weinbach 2003:227-228).

**Professional values and ethics:** Through a process of education and socialisation, professional values can help to control much of staff behaviour on the job and off the job. For instance, with regard to the primacy of client needs, professional values may keep the social worker in the office until late in the evening to deal with an emergency, even though he/she should have left work in the early afternoon. Professional values do not only govern the behaviour of subordinates but also of managers (Weinbach 2003:230-231).

Professional values can be a mixed blessing for the manager seeking to promote organisational goal attainment because of their capacity to control other employees' behaviour. A human service organisation's goals are usually supported by them. Also, occasionally a manager can appeal to them to promote desired behaviour and to constrain the undesirable behaviour. Therefore, it is the responsibility of a good manager to promote organisational goals that are consistent with professional values. Staff members sometimes find that their professional values are in conflict with the goals of the organisation, especially when the human service organisation has to function as a business as well (Weinbach 2003:231).

As part of socialisation in the profession, professional ethics and values are acquired. What is considered ethical and unethical with regard to professional conduct in relation to a client is specified by SACSSP Policy Guidelines for Course of Conduct, Code of Ethics and the Rules for Social Workers (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). This covers for instance issues such as confidentiality and record keeping. This also deals with how the social worker is supposed to relate with colleagues, covering the aspect of respect as well as professional obligation to report colleagues' impairment, incompetence or unethical behaviour which forms part of peer evaluation with regard to performance evaluation. Professionally, social workers are not supposed to participate in, condone or be associated with dishonesty, fraud or deception or any problematic behaviour (Weinbach 2003:230).

### **2.12.3 INSTRUMENTS OF EVALUATION**

In order to be fair and reasonable, all evaluation instruments should be at least partially based on objective criteria. Every organisation is unique and has its own methods relating to the means of evaluation. Brody (1993:16) recommends that the following questions should be asked about the instruments of evaluation, before deciding whether the methods are appropriate or not:

Are the organisational values and goals embraced by it?

Are qualitative or quantitative standards or both applicable by it?

Is it used primarily for analysing performance or for such other purposes as salary determination, promotion, reassignments, disciplinary action, or layoffs?

Are the performance standards acceptable to directors, supervisors and staff?

Is the method easy to use?

Is it reliable (i.e. consistent over time and across the unit or organisation) and valid (i.e. does it actually measure what it is intended to measure)? Is it likely to motivate appropriate behaviour?

## **2.13 PROGRAMME EVALUATION AS CONTROLLING INSTRUMENT**

Weinbach (2003:221) describes plans as very powerful control vehicles. Plans inform us how the programme is going to take place, that is, when, where and by whom. Now, in order for one to be sure that the set goals have been achieved, the above should have taken place. The control function comes in where one exercises power to control work-related activities (Weinbach 2003:219). It is only by means of the control function where one will be able to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme. The relationship between planning and control assists in making this exercise of evaluation a success. It is for that reason also that Bruyn, Gericke, Kriel and Malan (2003:152) indicate that performance standards that are set makes the control function easy. Deviation can be evaluated to indicate reasons. Monitoring as well as evaluation is part of the control exercise.

### **2.13.1 DEFINITION AND DESCRIPTION**

The planning, organisation and implementation of welfare programmes and service are only worth the trouble and expense if the programmes produce the desired results. We can only decide if this was effective if we can measure or

establish whether the programme achieved the goals that were set. This measurement and evaluation form part of the control process. We can also refer to this as process evaluation (Weinbach 2003:288).

Programme evaluation can be defined and described as follows:

- ✚ A process of making reasonable judgement about programme effort, effectiveness, efficiency and adequacy
- ✚ Based on systematic data collection and analysis
- ✚ Designed for use in programme management, external accountability and future planning
- ✚ Focused especially on accessibility, acceptability, awareness, availability, comprehensiveness, continuity, integration and cost of services (Bruyn et al. 2003:151)

### **2.13.2 THE PURPOSE OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION**

What follows are ways of collecting data in order to evaluate the programme:

- ✚ Evaluation can be used as an aid in administrative decision-making or to introduce corrective action in an existing programme. Based on the result of the evaluation it can be decided whether the programme should be expanded, continued or ended, or whether the existing programme and provision of personnel for that programme should simply be modified (Weinbach 2003:289; Lewis et al. 2007:217).
- ✚ When the programme is compared with the standards and criteria that were specified during the planning phase and a discrepancy is found, modifications and corrections can be made to either the service or the way in which the programme is carried out. This therefore indicates the difference between the plan and the results (Weinbach 2003:289).

- ✚ The communities that receive the services and also those who support the service have this right and could be motivated positively if they are informed of the results of the organisation's services. Evaluation is also useful for the purposes of accountability. Welfare programmes are presented to the sponsors, who are entitled to know the results of the programmes on which they have spent their money (Weinbach 2003:290).
  
- ✚ Obtaining funding for effective programmes can be made possible by programme evaluation. If the organisation reports on its effectiveness, the community's support can be obtained for the continuation of the programme. This could be made possible only through financial support or personal input from, for example, volunteers (Weinbach 2003:290; Lewis et al. 2007:218).

### 2.13.3 DIFFERENT TYPES OF EVALUATION

Programme evaluation is the process of establishing whether a programme or service has attained the desired results. This involves **measuring** changes in the client's circumstances and in the community and establishing the degree to which this change can be ascribed to that particular programme or service (Garner 1989:94). The information that is collected in this way is incorporated in the organisation system and becomes part of the planning for the enterprise's services and programmes.

- ✚ **Statistical information:** It is important to do a statistical analysis and present data clearly. The data can be presented by means of a chart or a table. It must, however, be presented in comparison with a standard. For example the following must be answered: Is 10 per cent deviation very significant or not? (Makondo & Van Biljon 2005:187).
  
- ✚ **Charts:** A simple type of chart may be used, for example a milestone chart or a PERT chart on which progress and the process are indicated (Du Brin 2009:511).

- ✚ **Computer printouts:** These can be used if the information is simple and available in time. Use what has been loaded on the computer in the form of a report or process note; any information that proves interaction with the client and which can be retrieved or downloaded and printed (Makondo & Van Biljon 2005:187).
  
- ✚ **Forms:** The management of an organisation often prescribes forms for completion by members of staff. For example, for a survey, the documentation for case records, services rendered and kilometres travelled. If a form is compiled, it must be easy to complete and it must be possible to tabulate the results. It should not include unnecessary data and items must not overlap. There must be a clear definition of concepts because information will be meaningless if staff members enter it under different categories. All items for which data is collected must be determined beforehand because it is impossible to try to win back lost data (Makondo & Van Biljon 2005:187).
  
- ✚ **Written reports:** The purpose of these reports will determine their nature. Financial records are very important and financial transactions must be correctly documented and reported. Process, summary and composite reports about service to clients can be used as a control system. One could look at the process, the content and the result. Standards can be determined on the basis of which report will be evaluated, and it must be clear who should revise them and how feedback will be given (Makondo & Van Biljon 2005:188).
  
- ✚ **Data sampling:** Instead of examining every client, one client in a 100 is examined from the time of intake until discharge. A lot can be learnt from doing this, for example about procedures, forms, and ways of reporting in this selected random test, which examines different phases of an activity. All records can be examined weekly or monthly at fixed times. Programme activities can be controlled by determining the quantity of the activities:



- The amount of time spent on the client.
- The number of contacts with a total case load.
- The units of the service (for example, a lecture to prospective foster parents is equal to one unit, which does not take the number of persons attending the lecture into account; one trip can be a unit and the distance is not taken into account) (Makondo & Van Biljon 2005:188).

✚ **Client satisfaction studies:** These can give an indication of the quality of service. Consumer evaluation could be carried out by way of questionnaires, for example (Makondo & Van Biljon 2005:188).

✚ **Personal visits or inspections (site visits):** The value of personal observation should not be underestimated. After a visit one can compile a structured report or reflect on one's subjective impressions. A visit by say the manager of a welfare organisation to the children's home of the undertaking could produce much more than reports, statistics or computer printouts about the institution. The climate of the undertaking can be evaluated in this manner (Makondo & Van Biljon 2005:188).

✚ **Staff meetings:** These meetings can be a way of revising the progress towards objectives. Selective reports can be submitted to the meeting and statistics and charts provided (Makondo & Van Biljon 2005:188).

✚ **Periodic progress reviews:** Such reviews are held at predetermined times (weekly or monthly). During these meetings the manager is brought up to date with all the objectives, progress, deviations and delays. The overall work performance of the undertaking is then examined (Makondo & Van Biljon 2005:188).

✚ **Control by exceptions:** There is a mutual agreement between manager and subordinates that the manager will only be informed

when plans have been deviated from: “No news is good news.” This kind of control requires a great degree of trust, experience and expertise (Makondo & Van Biljon 2005:188).

✚ **Evaluation research design:** A variety of these controls is used, for example an experimental design, a time-series design and a single-system design (Makondo & Van Biljon 2005:188).

The manager should deliberately set up information networks in order to evaluate a programme and thus exercise control, for instance networks of financial experts, client interest groups, the government, the press, the public, leaders from other organisations, supervisors, colleagues on the same level, and subordinates.

Welfare organisations need a well-developed management information system that can provide systematic information on various aspects of ongoing programmes, an improved capability to evaluate programme achievement, and a greater ability to analyse information and extract it for internal and external use.

## **2.14 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF CONTROL AS MANAGEMENT FUNCTION**

There is a common Xhosa phrase that says, “akukho nzwana ingenasiphaku” – meaning that a person can be good, but at the same time has a bad element. This is similar to a common English saying which says “nothing is completely good”. Advantages are the benefits of control as a management function (positive side or favourable condition of it) and the disadvantages are the unfavourable circumstances (negative side) of it. Control has both good and bad elements to it. These have to be discussed or listed in this part, for both advantages and disadvantages cause problems for the management during the exercise of control.

Advantages will be discussed separately from disadvantages in an attempt to make them clearer. "Control systems can have positive as well as negative effects," (Mullins 1993:564).

## **Advantages**

- ✚ If information is seen as a means to learn about and improve performance, if it is used to facilitate the development of staff and better serve consumers, there are good reasons for professionals to participate (Patti 2000:14).
  
- ✚ Better means of predicting certain facets of the organisation's behaviour are provided by control systems than the classification of technology (Mullins 1993:546).
  
- ✚ Planning and measurement are pre-requisites of control and without them there can be no control (Mullins 1993:547).
  
- ✚ Control can stand for reliability, order and stability (Mullins 1993:544).

## **Disadvantages**

- ✚ Command and control accountability mechanisms are unlikely to produce reliable information, especially if service providers believe that the information is going to be used for performance evaluation (Patti 2000:14).
  
- ✚ Control is always associated with restrictions. All people's conduct and activities are subject to restrictions and limits at times. For example, we all know what a speed limit is, and know what the penalty is, but we often do not keep to it! (Van Biljon 1994:229).

- ✚ Control is seen as suggesting close or constant supervision or as an organisational constraint on freedom or action by the individual (Mullins 1993:246).

## **Summary**

Control can be defined as a management function that ensures the coordination and effective functioning of all activities so that formulated objectives are implemented and followed according to plan. It is the final step in the management function. Control provides opportunities for continual monitoring and revision of plans that is necessitated by changes in the environment. Control is important and an organisation needs control processes because even the best of plans may go wrong. Performance evaluation of workers and programme evaluations form the basis of control and are common aspects in our day-to-day organisational environment.

There is strong relationship between the control function and planning. Without planning there will be no control, and without control, planning can also be impossible. Human resources as well as financial resources form part of the control function and the budget can be made possible by engaging the two, but considering the goals of the organisation as well. The control function is a crucial function of management in general, despite its perception that it is meant to police people. Basically, it is only through control that we are able to ensure monitoring and evaluation that may lead to the sustainability of the programme. Without control, management as a whole would be a disaster.

## CHAPTER 3

### DATA PROCESSING

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to interpret or quantify the data (Blaikie 2000:233) which was collected by means of the questionnaire (see Appendix B) on the control function of social work managers. The control function is the last step of the management function and the manager has to exercise it. Findings will be presented in tables and figures (Rudestam & Newton 1992:88-120).

The objectives of this research study were: i) to investigate the present understanding of control; ii) to determine how best control as management function can be effectively utilised, and iii) to do a literature review on control as a management function in welfare. These objectives were formulated in order to achieve the aim of the study, which was to assess the problems in the exercise of control as a management function, as perceived by social work managers, in order to make recommendations to them.

This chapter therefore sets out the results of the study undertaken with social work managers of the non-governmental organisations around the Eastern Cape Province.

Twenty five (25) questionnaires were distributed to non-profit organisations in the Eastern Cape. Twenty (20) questionnaires were returned.

The data that was gathered will be presented and discussed in terms of the five categories of the questionnaire. These are:

- ✚ Biographical information;
- ✚ Control as a management function;

- ✚ Forms of control;
- ✚ Personnel evaluation; and
- ✚ General questions about evaluation as a control measure.

## **3.2 THE BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

The biographical information was organised into four questions, relating specifically to the organisation and the person who is managing it.

### **3.2.1 TYPE OF ORGANISATION**

All 20 of the organisations that were selected were Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The names of the organisations that were selected were taken from the list of NGOs obtained from the Department of Social Development, as they are also funded by it. The selection was done means of a purposive sampling strategy.

### **3.2.2 THE NAME OF THE POST**

The name of the post is important for it gives one an idea of the seniority of the position held. Therefore, Table 3.1 shows the names given to these management positions.

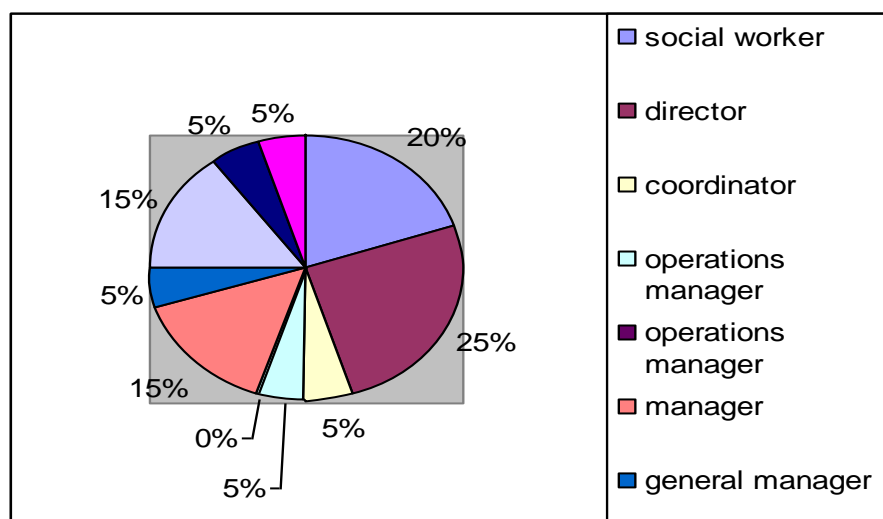
**TABLE 3.1: THE NAME OF THE POSITION**

<b>POSITION</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Senior social worker	7	35
Director	5	25
Manager	3	15
Coordinator	1	5
General manager	1	5
Operational manager	1	5
Programme manager	1	5
Supervisor	1	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

**N = 20**

The above-mentioned data can be presented as follows in a pie-diagram:

**FIGURE 3.1: THE NAME OF THE POSITION**



According to Table 3.1, there are various names for a social work manager in the NGOs which formed part of this survey.

It seems that the name “Senior Social Worker” is the most popular name for a social work manager. The Table above indicates that 35% of the managers were labelled as senior social workers; 25% were labelled directors in their organisation, and (15%) as managers. This shows that the name of social

work managers' positions is the prerogative of each particular organisation. The varied names of posts indicate the difference in views of what social workers in management should be known as.

It can thus be inferred from Table 3.1 that NGOs have different names for their social work managers. It is interesting that 35% of the respondents were named senior social workers, although they performed the duties of a social work manager. It seems that the name "Director"; "Manager" and "Senior Social Worker" are the predominant ways in which social work managers are labelled. There is no clear specification as to when one becomes a social work manager. Table 3.1 shows that it depends on the organisation as to how that particular position is referred to.

### 3.2.3 NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE POST

The respondents were requested to indicate the number of years that they were in the post as managers. Their responses are tabled in Table 3.2.

**TABLE 3.2: TOTAL YEARS IN THE POST**

Period	Less than 1 year	1 to 3 years	4 to 6 years	7 to 9 years	10 years and more	Total
Respondents	2	6	5	5	2	20

N=20

The Table above shows that the majority, namely 12 respondents, had 4 years and more experience in the post as social work managers. The period in which the managers occupied the post as social work manager ranged from 6 months to 25 years. It can thus be inferred that most of the social work managers in this survey had extensive experience as managers.



### 3.2.4 GENDER OF RESPONDENTS

It was necessary to check the gender of the respondents for one to know better who dominates the management field in social work in the area where this research was undertaken. The gender of the respondents is reflected in Table 3.3.

**TABLE 3.3: GENDER**

	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Female	15	75
Male	5	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

**N = 20**

In general, woman in South Africa dominate the field of social work and it is not surprising that there are more females in management positions. Fifteen (75%) of the respondents were females and five (25%) were males. This indicates that the majority gender that chooses social work as a profession is female, and reflects the same profile as in most helping professionals where females are the majority, for example nursing and teaching. The literature proves social work to be a female profession. For example, in Finland 96% of social workers are women (Cavanagh & Cree 1996). Rauch (1989:336) states that "Social work is generally described as a woman's profession". According to Morales, Sheafor and Scott (2010:45), the majority of social workers in America are women.

## 3.3 CONTROL AS A MANAGEMENT FUNCTION

### 3.3.1 DESCRIPTION OF CONTROL AS A MANAGEMENT FUNCTION

The main purpose of management control is the improvement in performance at both the individual and the organisational level (Mullins 1993:544). Hellriegel, Jackson, Slocum, Staude, Amos, Klopper, Louw and Oosthuizen

(2004:6) define control as the process by which a person, group or organisation consciously monitors performance and takes corrective action.

The respondents were asked to explain in their own words what the controlling function of a manager entails. The viewpoint of the respondents on this question can be summarised as follows:

The respondents in the study viewed the controlling function of a manager in five broad themes, namely:

1. As programme evaluation where one ensures that the organisation is effectively achieving progress regarding the implementation of set goals, plans, the use of resources as well as staff performance.
2. As continuous assessment of programme implementation;
3. As performance appraisal, where staff are assessed according to whether they are carrying out their duties as planned, as well as guiding and supporting the staff in their performance;
4. As overall management of the organisation in terms of ensuring that there are proper management systems such as Executive Board Management as well as local management;
5. As management of the organisation's resources, such as staff and budget.

Weinbach (2003) confirms the controlling function of a social work manager inter alia as endeavouring to ensure the effective functioning of all the activities of a welfare organisation in order to accomplish the formulated objectives of the organisation. The finding concerning control and performance appraisal is in accordance with Weinbach (2003:234), who

states that “staff performance evaluations can exert a considerable amount of control over the future behaviour of staff members”.

### **3.3.2 IMPORTANCE OF CONTROL BY MANAGERS**

The respondents were asked to state the importance of control by social work managers, as they saw it.

The responses of the respondents in this study show that they saw the control function of managers as important for the smooth running of the organisation. Their responses can be categorised in the following three broad terms:

- ✚ The control function gives structure and direction to the organisation as it assists with staff and volunteers of the organisation to know what is expected of them.
  
- ✚ The control function ensures the effectiveness of the organisation as it helps with meeting of goals and objectives of the organisation, thus ensuring accountability and proper use of organisational resources.
  
- ✚ Maintaining proper standards of practice within the organisation through feedback, where changes in job descriptions, plans and implementation are informed and made accordingly.

These viewpoints are in accordance with Brevis et al.'s (2002) statements about the importance of the controlling function in management. They emphasise that important segments of control are to ensure that all activities in the organisation lead to goal attainment; that resources are equally distributed in the organisation; and to ensure a high standard of work quality.

For example, some respondents responded as follows:

*“As indicated, it gives direction and ‘back up’ to decisions made by the manager, as she is involved in the day-to-day running of the organisation (in our case both disabled clients and staff).*

*“Certain standards need to be maintained in social service rendering, therefore the manager needs to assure that they seek ethics and standards in social work practice.”*

*“Controlling working standards ensures the effectiveness of the society and provides the opportunity to identify needs for staff training.”*

The above statements prove Brevis et al. (2002:390) right when they state that control as a management function ensures the coordination and effective functioning of all activities so that formulated objectives are implemented and followed according to plan.

### 3.3.3 CONTROL AS A MANAGEMENT FUNCTION

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements. The results are shown in Table 3.4.

**TABLE 3.4 CONTROL**

	Agree		Disagree	
	f	%	F	%
<b>CONTROL AS MANAGEMENT FUNCTION:</b>				
provides the opportunity for continual monitoring and revision of plans	20	100	0	0
directs action in the organisation	19	95	1	5
ensures the efficient use of resources	19	95	1	5
improves performance at individual level	19	95	1	5
improves performance at organisational level	20	100	0	0

**N = 20**

The majority of the respondents agreed with the statements presented in Table 3.4. Without doubt they agree with Brevis et al. (2002:390), who state that control can also be defined as the management function that ensures the

coordination and effective functioning of all enterprise activities so that formulated objectives are implemented and pursued according to plan. The main purpose of the management control is the improvement in performance at both the individual and the organisational level (Mullins 1993:544).

### **3.3.4 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PLANNING AND CONTROL**

Hellriegel et al. (2004:408) state that control helps to ensure that plans are implemented as intended and therefore that objectives are reached. Gibson, Invanicevish, Donnelly and Konopaske (2003:18) describe the relationship between planning and control as follows: “The controlling function includes activities that managers undertake to ensure that actual outcomes are consistent with planned outcomes.”

The respondents were asked to explain in their own words how they saw the relationship between planning and control.

The respondents in this study overwhelming saw a vital relationship between planning and control, which is in line with the theory concerning control and planning (Hellriegel et al. 2004, Gibson et al. 2003; Weinbach 2003). The majority viewed control and planning as being integrated and not separable from each other. That is, the one cannot happen without the other. In their responses they indicated that planning was about setting goals, objectives and action plans for the organisation that needed to be carried out, and control was then a means to ensure that these plans were implemented as planned. Control therefore monitors the implementation of the plans, assesses the progress made and the achievement of the goals set during planning, and helps with improving standards as corrective measures are taken from the feedback of monitoring.

One of the respondents made the following statement to stress the essential relationship between planning and control:

*“Planning is a vehicle for control; without planning first, what are you going to control, how will you measure the work, against what? Planning guides monitoring; you control what you have planned for and make sure that deliverables are carried, and if not, what needs to happen.”*

### **3.3.5 MANAGING OF PRELIMINARY CONTROL IN ORGANISATIONS**

The social work managers were asked to explain how they executed preliminary control in their organisation. Preliminary controls, also referred to as preventive controls, are mechanisms implemented by the manager in order to minimise the need for corrective action (Hellriegel & Slocum 1996:586).

In this study it was found that various methods of control were used by social work managers in their execution of preliminary control as management function. The following are the ways in which respondents executed their own preliminary control:

- ✚ Monthly meetings (both staff and supervisory meetings) to ensure accountability of all staff members;
- ✚ Yearly plans or from three- to five-year strategic planning where all staff members are involved in identifying goals and objectives of the organisation in order to understand the stated objectives as well as the expectations for performance and implementation;
- ✚ Using organisational policy, rules, regulations, service level plans, contracts as well as training and development of staff;
- ✚ Needs analysis through interviews with individual staff members and staff appraisals to ensure both accountability as well as clear identification of needs;
- ✚ Communication to all staff members prior to implementation of plans and programmes and through team decision-making;

- ✚ Ensuring of implementation by linking resources to plans (both human and financial).

Hellriegel and Slocum (1996:586) concur with these findings when they state that "...rules, regulations, standards, recruitment and selection procedures and training and development programmes function primarily as preventive controls. The controlling factor lies in these actions or activities in that they direct (control) the behaviours of employees and managers."

### **3.3.6 QUALITY CONTROL**

Quality control is one of the essential functions of a manager to ensure that the organisation is delivering a quality service to its clients or community (Hellriegel & Slocum 1996:660).

Respondents in this research were asked how they ensured quality control, as part of their management function. The estimation of client satisfaction and their responses showed that a number of tools were being used to realise this function. Below the means are listed by which quality control was exercised by the respondents:

- ✚ The majority of the participants used client/public surveys or client satisfaction questionnaires and community feedback reviews to measure whether the performance of the organisation's implementation was according to set standards;
- ✚ Continual monitoring and evaluation of progress and implementation of set standards and constant review of systems and procedures through consultations with various stakeholders (that is, staff, clients, managers);
- ✚ Report writing and evaluations through individual supervision;

- ✚ Making use of proper planning, monitoring and evaluation methods;
- ✚ Yearly written job appraisals of staff;
- ✚ Weekly quality control meetings;
- ✚ Pre-project assessments and continual and periodic reviews of progress; and
- ✚ Ensuring that trained staff implement planned activities through running capacity building and training and development of project staff.

It seems that the most frequently used quality controls measures used by the social work managers were surveys, meetings, implementation of strategic planning, and continuous monitoring and evaluation of performance of workers and training of staff.

### **3.3.7 BUDGET AS CONTROLLING SYSTEM**

According to Hellreigel et al. (2004: 419), budgeting has three purposes, namely i) to assist managers to plan work effectively, ii) to assist them in locating resources, and iii) to assist managers in controlling and monitoring resource utilisation during the budget period. Cronje et al. (2004:257) state that budgets form a plan according to which resources are allocated in order to achieve the organisation's objectives. Welfare organisations also depend on external funding to implement their planned programmes and projects, and have to adhere to strict financial management systems (control), that is budgets, for sustainability and accountability (Weinbach 2003: 281-283).

In this study respondents were asked how their organisations used their budget as a controlling mechanism. Responses from the respondents



revealed the following main categories in which budgets were used as a control system:

- ✚ Annually planned budgets with projected costs for all planned activities, ensuring that all the operational items as well as project activities have sufficient funds and that budget informs plans and vice versa.
- ✚ Sticking to the planned budget and monitoring the use of funds through daily control of expenditure by keeping track of expenditure.
- ✚ Monthly meetings, which could be either at management committee or board management level, where expenditure is compared to the budget by reviewing money used, and doing monthly reconciliations of all financial records.
- ✚ Using budget as a guide to avoid over-expenditure for all planned activities.
- ✚ Doing a situational analysis of all needs and task and costing these to link with available funds, and then use funds accordingly.
- ✚ Preparing and submitting monthly reconciled financial reports to funders (Dept of Social Development) and auditors.

It seems that social work manager's used various strategies to implement the budget as controlling mechanism, inter alia annual budgeting, monthly meetings, and daily monitoring.

### **3.4 FORMS OF CONTROL**

According to Mullins (1993:549-550), there are three main avenues, as mentioned in Table 3.5, through which control can be exercised. The respondents were asked to indicate which form of control they gave

preference to. The responses of the social work managers are given in Table 3.5.

**TABLE 3.5 CONTROL PREFERENCES**

<b>FORMS OF CONTROL</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Direct control by orders	7	35%
Control through standardisation of activities	17	85%
Control through influencing the way that people think about what they should do	13	65%

A high percentage (85%) indicated that they preferred to use control through standardisation of activities and through influencing people (65%), rather than direct control by orders. The latter is less favourable by the look of things, though it is used by at least 35%. This proves that the preferred form of control was seen as standardisation of activities.

### **3.5 PERSONNEL EVALUATION**

In question 14 of the questionnaire (see Appendix A) the respondents were asked to indicate which method they implemented when they undertook personnel evaluation. Table 3.6 shows the responses of the respondents.

**TABLE 3.6 METHOD OF PERSONNEL APPRAISAL**

<b>METHOD</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
An interview / discussion	16	80%
Management by objectives	13	65%
Critical incidents	8	40%
A checklist	6	30%
Behaviour-anchored evaluation scale	3	15%
Graphic evaluation scale	3	15%

It seems that the most preferred method of personnel appraisal was an interview or discussion, followed by management by objectives, and lastly critical incidents. As Table 3.6 shows, these have been confirmed by 16, 13 and 8 respondents respectively. An interview and discussion were preferred above the evaluation scales and instruments that are used for evaluation. It is desirable that the supervisor and member of staff have a discussion or interview on the evaluation. Management by objectives is an evaluation method that is highly relevant if it is used in conjunction with the welfare programme. It is the evaluation of the degree to which the member of staff has achieved the objectives that have been formulated for his/her programme (Brody 1993:162-165).

### 3.5.1 CONTROLLING INSTRUMENTS FOR PROGRAMME EVALUATION

Organisations use a number of different controlling instruments for programme evaluation. Based on the responses of respondents in this study the following instruments were used:

**TABLE 3.7 PROGRAMME EVALUATIONS**

<b>METHOD</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Written reports	19	95
Staff meetings (Periodic progress reviews)	19	95
Statistical information	17	85
Client satisfaction	14	70
Personal visits (site visits)	12	60
Forms	10	50
Computer programs	8	40
Data sampling	4	20
Control by exceptions	3	15
Evaluation research design	3	15
Charts	2	10

By virtue of the information presented in Table 3.7, it is clear that the common or main controlling instruments for programme evaluation are written reports and staff meetings (95%), followed by statistical information (85%) and client satisfaction (70%), and personal visits or site visits (60%). Both control by exceptions and evaluation research are used less frequently (only 15%).

Theory says that it is important to do statistical analysis and present data clearly. The data can be presented by means of charts or tables. On the other hand, client satisfaction studies entail giving an indication of the quality of service. Consumer evaluation can be carried out by way of questionnaires (Makondo & Van Biljon 2005:187). The purpose of these written reports will determine their nature. Financial records are very important and financial transactions must be correctly documented and reported. Process, summary and composite reports about service to clients can be used as a control system. Staff meetings can be a way of revising the progress towards objectives. Selective reports can be submitted to the meeting and statistics and charts provided (Makondo & Van Biljon 2005:188).

### **3.5.2 ADVANTAGES OF A MANAGER'S CONTROLLING FUNCTION**

The respondents were asked to give their opinion on the advantages and disadvantages of a manager's controlling function. Their responses can be categorised as follows:

- i) Advantages for the efficient functioning of the organisation. This is ensured through monitoring that goals and objectives of the organisation are implemented as planned and that the smooth running of the organisation is ensured by following up staff through supervision and monthly reviews. Brevis et al. (2002:292) emphasise that first and foremost, control is exercised to ensure that all the activities of the organisation are in accordance with the organisation's goals.
- ii) Advantages concerning the staff. Control ensures accountability of staff and their progress and increased accountability by contact, regular

monitoring with them and using feedback for addressing identified problem areas and needs. This will in turn have a positive spin-off and create a positive “work force”, as one of the participants stated in their answer. Brevis et al. (2002:392) also state that control usually results in better work quality.

iii) Advantages concerning organisational resources. Control ensures proper and efficient use of resources and prevention of costly errors. This is achieved when a manager conducts regular monitoring of the implementation of plans as well as the use of resources, through monthly meetings where any errors identified can be addressed in time. This advantage is also important according to Brevis et al. (2002:392), because if there is no control the organisation’s resources could be wasted or misapplied.

iv) Advantages concerning staff relationships. Proper follow-up procedures and corrective measures will lead to good relationships between staff and managers, and also to the organisation maintaining a good relationship with funders by being accountable.

This is in line with what is mentioned by Burkey (1993:24), namely that managing people-centred or participatory programmes (welfare programmes) is not about bossing people around but is about coaching them. Also, a turn-around manager must provide a safe working routine and ensure that everyone who is employed on the event is properly briefed on that routine before they work on the site (Lenaham 2006:135).

### **3.5.3 DISADVANTAGES OF THE CONTROLLING FUNCTION OF A MANAGER**

In the previous question, the advantages of the controlling function of a manager were explained. In this section, the disadvantages were identified according to the following aspects from respondents’ responses:

a) Disadvantages for clients. If the controlling function is too strong it can lead to the voice of the client not being heard; thus service can become inflexible. This would mean that customers will be unable to express themselves freely as to how they feel about a service. It deprives them of spontaneous and genuine response (Weinbach 2003:38).

b) Disadvantages concerning organisational relationships. Control can cause a negative impact on the relationship between managers and staff. This can happen when staff perceive managers as too controlling or policing their work. Too much control can also result in staff feeling constrained in their creativity and inhibited in their ideas which might have helped improve the functioning of the organisation. As one of the respondents stated:

*“If rigid and autocratic, staff performance, morale and initiative or creativity can be negatively impacted.”*

c) Control can have an impeding influence on the functioning of the organisation, as two of the respondents stated:

*“[There is a] risk for the development of resistance to authority and formation of negative or destructive cliques.”*

*“Depending on the individual’s personality, it could lead to anarchy, superiority, and uncompromising dominance if the person is not monitored (negative force in the organisation).”*

d) The controlling function might have a disadvantage for the organisation because it can lead to inflexible administration procedures that could hamper progress due to too much red tape created by the controlling function. It can also lead to dissatisfaction among staff, which in turn could lead to poor performance and thus no proper implementation of activities.

Control is always associated with restrictions. All people’s conduct and all enterprises’ activities are subject to restrictions and limitations at times. For

example: we all know what a speed limit is, and know what the Control is seen In the sense that it suggests close or constant supervision or as an organisational constraint on freedom or action by the individual (Mullins 1993:246).

### **3.6 GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT EVALUATION AS A CONTROL MEASURE**

#### **3.6.1 EVALUATION AS CONTROL MEASURE**

The respondents were asked to explain what they as managers evaluated in the controlling process. Table 3.8 gives the responses of the managers.

**TABLE 3.8 EVALUATIONS**

<b>OPTIONS</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
The performance of staff	20	100
The administration of one's organisation	18	90
The initial goals of the work	14	70
The cost of work against the effect	14	70
The need for work	10	50

Social work managers seemed to evaluate different aspects of their work, but the performance of staff (100%) and the administration of the organisation (90%) seemed to be the most important aspects that were evaluated.

Staff performance evaluations are regular, periodic, and structured feedback vehicles designed to offer positive reinforcement for desirable behaviour, and to discourage "undesirable behaviour" (Weinbach 2003:221). Managers of welfare organisations use performance evaluation as a method of control, but they do it in such a way that it is perceived by staff as a useful aid to job performance (Weinbach 2003:224).

#### **3.6.2 REASONS FOR EVALUATION**

The managers were asked to indicate why they evaluated at all. They were given five options to choose from. They have indicated more than one option.

**TABLE 3.9 REASONS**

<b>OPTIONS</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
To refine, revise or develop the work	18	90
To demonstrate efficiency	15	75
To demonstrate effectiveness of a new technique	15	75
To determine the course for the future	14	70
To demonstrate effectiveness of a long standing practice	11	55

The majority of the respondents evaluated in order to refine their work and to demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness in the work situation.

Evaluation can be used as an aid in administrative decision-making or to introduce corrective action in an existing programme. Based on the result of the evaluation it can be decided whether the programme should be expanded, continued or ended, or whether the existing programme and the provision of personnel for that programme should simply be modified.

### **3.6.3 NATURE OF DATA COLLECTION FOR EVALUATION PURPOSES**

The respondents were asked to indicate how they went about to collect data for the purpose of evaluation. Table 3.10 gives the managers' replies to this question.

**TABLE 3.10 DATA COLLECTION**



<b>OPTIONS</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Monthly statistics	19	95
Interviewing personnel	14	70
Observation	13	65
Questionnaires	10	50
Document search	9	45
Other	6	30

The three main options that the respondents used in order to collect data were monthly statistics; interviewing personnel, and observations. Other methods were the following:

- reports from other organisations and departments,
- score cards completed,
- the use of a suggestion box,
- regular reports,
- weekly staff meetings, and
- feedback from the community.

The management of an organisation often prescribes forms for completion by members of staff, for example for a survey, the documentation for case records, services rendered and kilometres travelled. If a form is compiled, it must be easy to complete and it must be possible to tabulate the results.

#### **3.6.4 FEEDBACK TO STAFF**

The respondents were asked to explain how they went about giving feedback to their staff concerning their controlling function. Their responses can be summarised as follows:

- ✚ Through weekly, monthly or periodic meetings and interviews with staff which could be in a form of staff meetings, or individual supervision / dialogue sessions as well as group sessions,
- ✚ Monthly written reports and staff meetings,
- ✚ In-service training, as well as
- ✚ Ongoing dialogue followed by mid-term reviews and annual appraisals of staff.

According to Makondo and Van Biljon (2005:188), periodic progress reviews can be held at predetermined times (weekly or monthly). During such meetings the manager is brought up to date with all the objectives, progress, deviations and delays. In-service training can also play an important role for the standardisation of staff behaviour through a mixture of didactic instruction and structured experiences (Weinbach 2003:223). It can be inferred that the respondents gave feedback to their staff through generally accepted channels in an organisation.

### **3.6.5. COMMENTS ON THE CONTROLLING FUNCTION OF A MANAGER**

The respondents were asked to give any other comment on the controlling function of managers, and their responses can be summarised according to how they saw the implications of this function for themselves as managers, as well as for the organisation.

#### **✚ *Implications for themselves***

For managers the implications varied from being in control of one's own work, thus ensuring smooth running of the organisation, to the negative perceptions of staff of this function that lead to strained relationships and "*lots of headaches*" for the managers, as one of the participants aptly

stated. However, there are positive implications too, namely: that the manager is aware of progress with the implementation of policies, and with objectives and goals. If these are done properly, the controlling function can result in the effectiveness of the organisation as it helps to ensure that the organisation works according to plans.

### **Implications for the organisation**

The controlling function has positive results for the organisation as the manager who is implementing this function ensures efficient use of organisational resources. If applied correctly, it can also create dedication and cooperation in staff where an open and transparent process is followed and staff form part of the decision-making process. If used correctly, it can become a preventative measure; thus regular monitoring of staff can lead to early identification of challenges and prevent costly errors in the future of the organisation. The respondents in this study made it clear that for this function to be beneficial to the organisation, it needed to be applied appropriately and not be used to exert force on one's staff. To stress the point, one participant responded to this question as follows:

*“Have to be careful to adequately and appropriately balance control as opposed to autocratic repression of staff.”*

## **3.7 SUMMARY**

South Africa is facing a big challenge of transformation today due to its new status of being a democratic country. These transformation processes are informed by a democratic dispensation that has played a significant role in foregrounding the management responsibility. Successful management depends on maintaining good relations with people inside and outside the organisation with whom managers deal frequently (Hellriegel and Slocum 1996:53). Chester Barnard (source??) saw organisations as a social system that requires employee cooperation if they are to be effective. Now, where one

strikes the balance between these is very important, as the respondents indicated in their responses.

The purpose of this chapter was to present the data and to interpret the data, in order to present the conclusions and recommendations of this research in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the study was to assess the problem of exercising control as a management function, as perceived by social work managers, in order to make recommendations to them. This chapter therefore serves to complete the research process by providing a summary of points in the previous chapters, drawing conclusions and making recommendations based on the main findings.

#### 4.2 CONCLUSIONS

##### *Conclusion concerning data collection*

Prior to delivery of questionnaires, telephone calls were made and appointment dates and times were secured between the researcher and the respondents for receiving and returning the questionnaire. However, in the process of distributing the questionnaires, it was found that respondents reacted differently to the request of completing the questionnaire. In order to uphold the ethical aspects of confidentiality and anonymity the researcher asked the respondents to complete the questionnaire on their own within a given time. But it transpired that some respondents requested that the researcher be present when they completed the questionnaire in order to seek clarity where necessary; some respondents requested the researcher to leave them for an hour or two and then come back and collect the questionnaire; and some requested the researcher to come back the following day. Many of the respondents did not meet the time lines which they allocated to themselves.

It can be concluded that the distribution and collecting of the questionnaire can be a very strenuous exercise for the researcher. Researchers are advised

to plan carefully how they are going to distribute the questionnaire and to clearly communicate to the respondents the receiving and returning dates of the questionnaire.

In the study of how social workers managers experienced and implemented their controlling functions, the following conclusions can be made:

- ✚ Firstly the name of the post in which social workers must exercise the controlling function as managers varies according to employer; this in itself can create confusion in the social work fraternity as well as for the staff.
- ✚ Social worker managers view the controlling function as helping their work by ensuring the effective functioning of organisations. For them the control function is a continuous process of assessment and also a process to ensure effective staff performance.
- ✚ The study also showed that social workers acknowledge the value of control by managers in their work because it results in good performance by staff and volunteers as it clarifies expectations. It also helps with assisting organisations to realise their goals and to make good use of resources and be accountable to their funders. The control function is also important because it contributes to good standards of practise for organisations.
- ✚ It is concluded that social work managers cannot exercise their control function without linking it to planning. Thus, for the controlling function to work best it is vital that it must be linked to planning.
- ✚ The control function is executed by making use of various processes, for instance weekly, monthly or quarterly meetings, interviews with staff, on-the-job observations, as well as submitted reports and staff appraisal. It is very important to executing the controlling function of

staff appraisal that it should be linked with opportunities for staff development.

- ✚ The control function is also implemented by managers in order to exercise quality control in their organisation, to ensure that services offered are relevant to the needs of their clients and that they meet the standards required.
- ✚ The organisational budget is also seen as a controlling mechanism in that it follows the systems set by the financial guidelines of particular organisations and funders.
- ✚ The control function has some advantages and disadvantages for the manager as well as for the organisation, and it is vital that these be kept in mind by managers who execute the controlling function of the organisation. Though there are disadvantages, it is important to highlight that respondents in the study did acknowledge that without proper control, organisations would fail to meet their objectives. What is important is that the manager who is executing the control function must be cautious not to be too rigid, which would hamper development and progress with the implementation of control, but also not too flexible, which would confuse staff in terms of monitoring work performance. Therefore, managers need to find a balance and have confidence in their staff that they are capable of doing their work.

#### **4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations concerning the controlling function of a manager can be made with regard to the management of the welfare organisations:

- ✚ The management board of welfare organisations need to standardise the name of social work managers in management positions, to ensure that the incumbents of the post are clear about the powers associated with their controlling function in the post.

- ✚ Social work managers, when they are executing their controlling functions within their organisation, need to be sure that systems are in place to exercise their authority. This means that the staff reporting to the social worker manager should be clear about what is expected of them so that they do not perceive the controlling function as a means of policing. This can be insured by clearly formulated job descriptions for both the social worker and the social work managers.
  
- ✚ Effort must also be made to standardise the sources of feedback that managers use for implementing their controlling function. To ensure a smooth process for monitoring and evaluation of work done by staff reporting to managers, tools for feedback need to be minimised. It is recommended that the feedback should be done by means of a written report and an interview with the employee.
  
- ✚ Social work managers need to put more effort into addressing the disadvantages and negativities associated with their controlling function, so that social workers can find it easy to accept this function of the manager. This can be done through regular in-service training sessions where the purpose and aim of control as management function are explained to the staff. Also, the importance and benefits of the control function to the overall functioning of the organisation should be emphasised.
  
- ✚ More capacity building, through workshops by experts in the practice of management, is needed for social workers in management positions. This would enable them to be comfortable with applying the powers within their duties and would ensure effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes as well as work performance of the staff.



- ✚ More information sharing, through the establishment of a social work manager's forum, around management control and management in general should be encouraged among social work managers in the welfare sector as a whole.
  
- ✚ Social worker managers are also encouraged to advance their skills or further their education with more management-oriented university courses, in order to be able to be more at ease with exercising the control function as the vehicle for quality assurance in the organisation.
  
- ✚ All institutions of higher learning that train social workers should include management as one of the major modules, and promote it as an important method of social work along with case work, group work, community work and research.
  
- ✚ During practical work sessions done by student social workers, the method of role-playing can be used to teach the students the underlining principles of control as a management function. They can role-play the position of a supervisee as well as of a supervisor.
  
- ✚ It is recommended that more research be done on the control function, especially with regard to social work management and the new systems that are in place, such as the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS), and also on how this system affects and applies to the social work profession in terms of staff performance appraisals.

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**APPENDIX A**

**LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Enquiries:** Dr CC. Reynolds

**Tele:** 021 873 1181

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: Assistance with participation in the research process on completion of the study on the assessment of the control function of a social work manager**

My name is Bongiwe Cynthia Naile and I am a Master's student in Social Work at the Huguenot College of Wellington. As part of the requirements for my degree I am expected to undertake a research project and for this reason, I have chosen to assess the control function of a social work manager in the Eastern Cape NGOs.

In order to realise this research I need to interview by means of a questionnaire social workers who are in management positions in the Eastern Cape. I need at least twenty minutes (minimum) to one hour (maximum) of each manager's time to be able to complete the questionnaire. I am also available to give clarity where necessary.

Your assistance in this regard will be greatly appreciated as the information that will be yielded by this research may contribute towards better service delivery to this particular target group. For more information and clarity you are welcome to contact Dr Reynolds, my Supervisor, at the contact number listed above, and myself at 047-5311 962 / 072 651 1583.

Thank you.

.....

B.C. Naile

Researcher and Social Worker

**APPENDIX B**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

1. State the type of organisation

Government		Non-Government	
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2. Name of the post

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3. Indicate the number of years that you are in this post

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4. State your gender

Male	Female

**CONTROL AS MANAGEMENT FUNCTION**

5. In your own words, what does the controlling function of a manager entail?

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6. State the importance of control by managers in their organisation.

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7. Indicate with which of the statements below do **you agree or disagree**:

**CONTROL:**

	Agree	Disagree
Provides the opportunity of continual monitoring and revision of plans		
Directs action in the organisation		
Ensures the efficient use of resources		
Helps with decision making		
Improves performance at individual level		
Improves performance at organisational level		

8. In your own words describe the relationship between planning and control.

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9. If preliminary control entails control before the execution of a plan, please describe how you as manager execute preliminary control in your organisation.

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10. If quality control refers inter alia to the estimation of client satisfaction explain how you as manager execute quality control in your organisation.

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11. Explain how your organisation utilises the budget as controlling mechanism.

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**FORMS OF CONTROL**

12. Which of the forms of control mentioned below do you give preference to:

Direct control by orders	
Control through standardisation of activities	
Control through influencing the way that people think about what they should do	

## PERSONNEL EVALUATION

13. Indicate which of the methods of personnel evaluation mentioned below does your organisation utilise as a controlling instrument:

Graphic evaluation scale	
A checklist	
Critical incidents	
Behaviour-anchored evaluation scale	
Management by objectives	
An interview / discussion	
Other: Specify.	

14. Indicate which of the methods of programme evaluation mentioned below does your organisation utilise as controlling instrument:

Statistical information	
Charts	
Computer program	
Forms	
Written reports	
Data sampling	
Client satisfaction	
Personal visits / inspections (site visits)	
Staff meetings (periodic progress reviews)	
Control by exceptions	
Evaluation research design	
Other	

15. In your own words what advantages do you see in a manager's controlling function?

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16. In your own words what disadvantages do you see in a manager's controlling function?

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**GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT EVALUATION AS A CONTROL MEASURE**

17. When you as manager evaluate, **what** are you evaluating?

The need for work	
The performance of staff	
The administration of your organisation	
The initial goals of the work	
The cost of work against the effect	

18. When you as manager evaluate, **why** are you evaluating?

To refine, revise or develop the work	
To determine the course for the future	

To demonstrate effectiveness of a new technique	
To demonstrate effectiveness of a long standing practice	
To demonstrate efficiency	

19. How do you go about collecting data?

Monthly statistics	
Document search	
Questionnaires	
Interviewing personnel	
Observation	
Other: Specify	

20. Explain how you would go about giving feedback to your staff concerning your controlling or evaluating exercise?

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21. Any comments on the controlling function of a manager?

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