



Internal control practices and financial performance of selected non-profit organizations in South Sudan

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Abstract

The research question was whether the internal control practices had any influence on financial performance of the selected NPOs in the Eastern Equatoria state of South Sudan. It was steered by three objectives and the constructs supported like the main two theories that are the principal and the Agency theories. The study used a cross-sectional research design on a sample size of 237. Findings of the research reveal the impact of risk assessment measures; control environment; and monitoring on the financial performance. It was concluded that internal control measures like risk assessment control environment and monitoring are essential in the operation of NPOs as far as the financial performance is concerned. Thus, the risk assessment which has been applied was found significant affecting financial performance. This is true where application of risk assessment is significantly explained 80% of the financial performance. Secondly, control environment influences financial performance. Lastly, monitoring explained financial performance. Although the three internal control tools have influence on financial performance of the selected NPOs operating in South Sudan, monitoring which is a strong aspect of internal control has lower influence hence organizations are advised to employ monitoring frame work to strictly know how to measure objectives, who is responsible and how data should be processed, stored, and used. Monitoring has to be taken serious hand in hand with other elements of internal controls to achieve perfect financial performance. The NPOs are also encouraged to employ integrating risk management framework to continuously identify, assess, treat, and monitor risks to consistently achieve high financial performance.

Keywords: Internal control practices, financial performance non-profit organizations, South Sudan

Introduction

The Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and the UN agencies are non-profit organizations that are not under the control of the governments, although in most cases, governments may require them to execute their duties inside their territories. They are interested in helping vulnerable communities in times of crisis and supplement the

government in areas like education, health, water, and infrastructure.

After South Sudan seceded and launched its independence in 2011 after seceding Sudan, NGOs and UN agencies started operating to support both communities and the government. Nevertheless, they have been defeated by financial mismanagement that is

associated with poor internal control policies, particularly in the Equatoria region where most of them have their bases (Ott & Valero, 2016). The independent variable and dependent variable are the internal control practices and financial performance respectively. According to Mrima and Ronald (2022), internal control practices are the procedures developed and designed by the people in charge of progressive accountability who are the managerial staff and other support staff. They consist of control activities, risk assessment and information and communication and financial performance.

Through conceptualization, this research applied the definition by Gokoglan and Sitki (2022) stating that internal control is a collection of policies, procedures and practices that are practiced in an organization to protect its assets, give proper financial reporting and adherence to the legislations and regulations. Applications of such procedures have long extending intentions that are largely intended to be applied to specific purposes by the employees and established targets or objectives of the organization or institution.

Conversely, this paper employs this word financial performance as per Mkhwimba and St (2024) as the capacity of an organization or an institution to perform efficiently, profitability, survive grow and respond to the environmental opportunities and threats. It is the degree to which an organization utilizes the resources to meet the objectives of financial sustainability as well as operations. It is associated with financial sustainability, capacity to manage operations in the long term, budgeting and planning, financial resources allocation and forecasting capability, utilize funds, efficiency in allocating the given funds to the intended program, revenue collection, accessibility of financial resources based on various sources, financial reports and cost control among others. This is adopted as a dependent variable. The connection between the financial performance and the internal control practices is a well-recognized element among various

types of organizations, such as the private businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations (Samuel and Akinola, 2024). Internal control systems are critical in assisting organizations to deliver their strategic goals, improvements in performance and effective delivery of services. They have significant roles in avoiding waste of resources, protection of resources, and ensuring financial reporting reliability (Frank et al., 2023).

Additionally, internal controls are turning out to be a pillar of corporate governance as it enhances adherence to the formulated norms, policies, and rules (Alfartoosi and Jusoh, 2021). The presence of internal control systems is not always an assurance of better efficiency or effectiveness, even though they are very important. Research indicates that poor implementation, insufficient monitoring, and low capacity continue to be a challenge to many organizations at the local government level and non-profit level, thereby compromising their financial performance (Aikins et al., 2024). This underscores the importance of critically focusing on the application of internal control practices in non-profit based organizations and how much they can have an impact on financial performance. Besides having the internal control measures, non-profit organizations (NPOs) frequently supplement these measures with additional measures and systems including departmental policy and guidelines which oversees the use of resources by staff and other service providers. These are in most cases supported by instructions of Chief Executive Officers and donor conditions to facilitate accountability and good financial administration. Irrespective of such attempts, there are indications that most of the NPOs in South Sudan still experience major problems associated with financial misuse. There have been reports of fraud cases, wasteful resource use, inefficiencies, spending of amount of money above the allocated budgets, dire liquidity situations. As an example, there was a striking case of the loss of finances in the Cord Aid office in Eastern Equatoria state in

2024. Such incidences indicate the inefficiency of the internal control mechanisms in their complete protection of organizational resources and financial accountability. In this light, it is very imperative to investigate the level at which internal control practices affect the financial performance.

This research paper, therefore, seeks to evaluate how internal controls have an impact on the financial performance of the selected NPOs operating within Eastern Equatoria State, South Sudan, and the aim of the study will be to identify the gaps and give recommendations on how the accountability and operational effectiveness can be improved. The general objective of this study is to investigate the effect of internal control practices on financial performance of selected NGOs operating in Eastern Equatoria state of South Sudan.

Research hypotheses

HO1: Risk Assessment does not have significant effect on financial performance

HO2: Control environment does not have significant influence on financial performance

HO3: Monitoring does not have significant effect on financial performance

Review of Literature

Internal control practices

The NGOs must be economically sound and responsible and the internal control practices are significant in ensuring this (Muriithi and Muigai, 2024). Organization issues, like limited resources, donor demands, and complexity in operations, continuously hinder the performance of non-profits organizations, in which powerful control systems are necessary to protect their assets and guarantee their financial success. The study conceptual framework thus incorporates elements in control environment or internal control practices, risk determination, and monitoring and associates them with financial performance measures, including accountability, asset management and financial sustainability (Musah et al., 2022).

This literature review forms a foundation on which the interdependence between internal control indicators and financial performance of the chosen NGOs in South Sudan can be comprehended. The internal control practices depend on the framework of the committee of sponsoring organizations that comprises the internal controls as processes designated to ensure reasonableness in the accomplishment of objectives in operation, reporting, and compliance (Nana & Otoo, 2023).

All of these elements have their own performance to the general efficiency of internal controls. Taken as the foundation, the control environment displays organizational culture, the tone of leadership, and ethical values that direct operations (Otoo et al., 2021). Risk assessment encompasses the identification and assessment of risks that can influence financial goals hence proactive measures have been taken. The policies that are aimed at mitigating risks include control activities like segregation of duties and approvals. Information and communication guarantee that the appropriate financial data are spread to all organizational levels, whereas monitoring assures that the internal control system is working according to schedule by performing frequent assessments (Sheikh and Avutswa, 2023).

Financial Performance

The term financial performance is used to describe how financial health of an organization is, and its performance to meet its objectives in an efficient and effective manner. It also reveals the extent to which an organization handles its resources in such a way that they bring about the expected outcomes, such as sustainability, profitability (in the case of businesses), and value creation among stakeholders (in the case of non-profits, this is service delivery and resource utilization) (Atrill, 2022). Financial performance, in a short cut, assesses the financial resources of an organization to determine whether it is utilizing such resources efficiently, fulfilling its liabilities and targets, as well as attaining its strategic objectives. In

the case of non-profit organizations (NPOs), financial performance is not concerned with profit maximization but the sustainability of the resources, accountability, and efficient service delivery to beneficiaries (Oketch, 2021).

Risk Assessment

The term risk assessment refers to an approach for ensuring that an organization identifies, measures and ranks the possible events or factors which are likely to impact negatively on its capacity to attain its objectives (COSO, 2013). It is one of the essential elements of the internal control and risk management systems, developed to make organizations actively controlled with the threats and uncertainties. Risk assessment is also a necessary component in the context of the non-profit organizations (NPO) to secure resources, a sense of accountability to the donors, and the efficient provision of programs and services (Samuel & Akinola, 2024). Risk identification and assessment enable business organizations to devise proper control to reduce financial losses, operational disturbances, and reputation information.

Control Environment

The control environment is a symbol of the tone at the top by the management and the board of directors on integrity, ethical values and adherence on effective internal control (Muriithi and Muigai, 2024). A robust and effective internal control environment makes sure that the policies, procedures, and organizational structures are in consonance with organizational objectives and risk management practices. The control environment is essential in non-profit organizations (NPOs) as it determines the perception of accountability, compliance, and ethical behavior shown by staff, the management staff, and volunteers. Financial mismanagement, fraud, and inefficiencies are common to a weak control environment as opposed to transparency, responsible utilization of resources, and enhanced organizational performance, which prevails in a strong control environment (Samuel and Akinola, 2024).

Monitoring

One of the important internal control systems in an organization is monitoring. It entails recurring or regular evaluation of the internal control procedures to ascertain that they are functioning correctly and that they are achieving their targeted purposes (Imbuye & Miroga, Phd, 2023) Surveillance will assist the organizations in pinpointing the shortcomings or flaws which are operating well or not and allow correction before they become big issues. Monitoring is also highly valued in the non-profit organizations (NPOs) since these organizations tend to depend on the donor investments and grants. Monitoring is important to ensure that the resources are utilized in a manner that complies with the approved budgets, the programs would demonstrate the intended outcomes, and the levels of financial reporting are accurate and transparent (Nunkwe, 2024).

Theoretical Review

The study was guided by two theories as theorized in the first chapter of this of this report agency and institutional theories. This assumes that a combination of the two theories is essential towards the concepts discussed in this study.

Agency Theory

This theory elucidates the connection between principals (the people who supply resources, i.e. donors, grant providers, and recipients) and agents (the people who use the resources at the bequest of their principals, i.e. board, managers and workers of NPOs). Jensen and Meckling (1976) suggest that this relationship can also turn out to be accompanied by the agency problems that may arise when interests between the principals and the agencies may clash resulting into the moral hazard, misappropriation of resources, or fraud. This issue is also compounded by information asymmetry as the principals cannot directly monitor the actions of the agents all the time. Practicing internal controls is thus an important tool of bringing the interests of the principals and the agencies in line. These are segregation of duties, internal audits,

approvals, financial reporting as well as monitoring systems. Through good internal controls, NPOs can: Improve Accountability: To ensure the use of donor funds as intended purposes. Minimize The Risk of Fraud and Mismanagement: Conduct frequency audits and checks will deter resource misappropriation and Maximize Transparency: Donors and other stakeholders will trust financial statements and results as they will be trusted by reliable reporting.

The mechanisms minimize agency costs the expenses to monitor, regulate and coordinate agent actions in the process of enhancing financial performance (Jensen and Meckling, 1976; Eisenhardt, 1989). The higher the perceived financial discipline and transparency of a donor of an NPO, the more he/she would be willing to persist in funding it, and this helps in achieving financial sustainability and impact of a program (Fama and Jensen, 1983).

Institutional Theory

Mayer and Rowan 1977; as well as DiMaggio and Powell 1983, further developed the theory (Goncalves and Silva, 2021). It presupposes that companies embrace systems and management practices that are legitimate among others in the industry. That is why, this makes organizations less different as they can easily compare and contrast at any given period of time (Franco, 2022). Indeed, the process of introducing a system or any form to a given organization, is either a direct or an indirect control by the environment that other organizations have been functioning in. Therefore, comparison with other organizations is the solution in case of risks or acting differently by managers. This comparison is systemic-based and entails the performance in terms of finances. This implies that the presence of numerous internal control mechanisms used by organizations is negatively correlated with the current environment with regard to financial performance in the Eastern Equatoria State of South Sudan. Institutional theory presumes a more present and robust elements of social organization prevailing expectation theory that

places importance on rational myths, isomorphism as well as legitimacy, which are highly accepted theoretical stance. It consists of schemes, rules, norms, and routines, become the binding authorities in social behavior so that worker can have a point where they anchor themselves in their daily story (Chain et al., 2022). The institutional theory describes many aspects with which these systems are made, diffused, and modified over space and time; and how systems decay and are disused. When this situation occurs, it becomes negatively impacted on financial performance.

The Institutional Theory has two prevailing trends: Old institutionalism; and New institutionalism (Franco, 2022). Old institutionalism can also be used alongside Historical Institutionalism that deconstructs the trend in financial performance or, indeed, any other performance of the institution or organization. Old institutionalism describes processes, including the infusion of values by leaders, the action of the people who limit the other people and organizations to specifications of the institution exteriority. The central issues in the old institutionalism problems of influence, coalitions, competing values are in place, as well as power and informal structures. The main focus can be concerned with financial performance, and such set of system can be associated with internal controls.

Within the new institutionalism, a limited set of institutional concepts has largely dominated the literature on application of the institutional theories in the management of international economies mainly of new-institutionalism. According to Macedo and Thompson (2024), there is a new vision in the organization theory and sociology, which they refer to as the new institutionalism. This facilitates comparison on such benefits as financial performance and institutions setting finalized.

Effect of risk assessment measures on financial performance

Risk assessment measure is one of the internal control practices that has been implemented in numerous institutions and organizations in an effort of mitigating risks in organizations. Nigeria, and other countries around the world have also reported that risk assessment measures enhance effectiveness, responsiveness and transparency of the system that is of significance to financial and services delivery to the people (Sathyamoorthi et al., 2020). This was among the questions to be used in establishing whether the NPOs in the Equatoria Province of South Sudan carry out such an assessment with the primary emphasis on performance. As a fact of the matter, such organizations engage in risk assessment and their findings are elaborated in chapter four of this thesis.

The results of the impact of monitoring and evaluation on financial sustainability of the NGOs in Kenya show that financial sustainability of NGOs were related to the financial monitoring and evaluation (Chelangat and Sang, 2018). Similarly, in similar research undertaken on the organisation structure and educational sector within Kenya, result indicates a significant and positive association between organisation structures and monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation were however found to be positively correlated with the performance of projects in the education sector but weakly (Rumenya & Kisimbi, 2020). Chowdhury (2021) measured the role of internal control on the financial performance of the Bangladeshi commercial banks. As per this study, monitoring system and information and communication process positively influence the financial performance of commercial banks; however, the environment, risk quantification and control activities and influence them negatively.

Regardless of the results, Osekeny et al. (2021) have reported the existence of a limited connection between risk management and financial performance. This claim was arrived at after conducting a study that embraced the

longitudinal panel design of Nigeria on 27 listed consumer goods of different firms of Nigeria Stock Exchange, who were selected using purposive sampling method. With the period of secondary data of 2012 - 2021 analyzed through the descriptive statistics and panel regression implemented in STATA version 13, it was discovered that there is no significant impact of operation risk (OR) and liquidity risk (LR) on the financial performance. The researchers recommended the use of various measures and other control strategies in case financial performance would be attained in such organizations or organization using internal controls.

Effect of Control environment on financial performance

The Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO) published its revised Internal Control - Integrated Framework (2013) that stipulates that, the environment of control is a grouping of standards, processes and structures wherein internal control is conducted in the organization. Board of directors and senior management set the tone at the top with respect to the significance of internal control and how standards of conduct should expect to be. Integrity and ethical values; commitment to competence; board of directors or audit committee; philosophy and style of management; organizational structure; delegation of authority and responsibility; and human resource policies, are all seven factors on the 1992 Framework that are associated with an effective control environment. The five principles presented in the 2013 Framework of the Control Environment allow capturing these factors which include:

- 1) The company can be said to be committed to integrity and ethical virtues; 2). Board of directors is seen to be independent of the management and oversight the design and performance of the internal control; 3). One of them is the establishment by management with board supervision, structures, reporting lines, and the rightful authorities and responsibilities towards the objective achievement; 4) The

organization is known to be keen on attracting, developing and retaining competent individuals towards the achievement of objectives; 5) The organization is also known to hold the individuals accountable of their internal control accountability towards the achievement of the objectives. Control activities form a subset of the environment and are the activities that are set by policies and procedures that aid in ensuring that the instructions given by the management reduce the risks towards the accomplishment of the objectives. Control activities play the role of regulating the accomplishment of the goals being that of an entity and they are inextricably linked to the actions through which an entity attempts to realize its objectives. Their existence is not merely unto themselves or because it is right or proper to have them. Control activities may be aligned to one of the regular operations, reporting, and compliance goals of the entity.

Effect of monitoring and evaluation measures on financial performance

Monitoring and evaluation is vital ingredient to the achievement of business, organization and the company. Evaluation is what makes managers know that they need to improve or find a new narrative to achieve desired performance that complies with goal and objective. Workneh and Aga (2024) employed a descriptive cross -section design by qualitative and quantitative methods to determine the effect of monitoring and evaluation on the performance of commercial banks. A sample of 42 banks in which informants were identified as a sample of 5432 simple random sampling was employed as the study design. The research has found out that management monitoring and evaluation of the organization is critical to its performance. This is the power of managers of NPOs in South Sudan through the managers and it is primary concern of this study.

Marion (2019) examined the impact of monitoring and evaluation of performance in Kenya on a case of Transmara Sugar Company.

The study focus was made such that, it determined the impacts of monitoring and evaluation practices on performance; the impacts of monitoring and evaluation practices on organizational performance; and the impacts of planning monitoring and evaluation practices on performance. The design adopted included a case study design on 120 persons chosen based on a simple random sampling and purposive sampling. Conclusion showed that, all actions undertaken in terms of monitoring and evaluation have some implication on the performance of any organization. This was based on the fact that monitoring is an everyday activity that is accompanied with reports on success or working outside the goals and objectives. It was thus established that all operations within an organization must be under monitoring and evaluation in order to have the needed performance at all times. On the same note, this research aims at ascertaining whether managers realize any financial performance with NPOs in all steps undertaken in monitoring and performance.

In their study, Titus et al. (2021) selected NGOs in the Nyeri Province of Kenya with the basis of global health solutions. The research took place under a scenario where the managers of health organizations were interested in maximizing performance of health organization in order to minimize monitoring and evaluation practices. By so doing, the study set out to study the impacts that M and E practices have on the performance of the projects. In particular, the paper has reviewed the impact of planning of M and E of health project; importance of capacity building of M and E teams and the impact of quality maintenance of M and E data regarding performance. Based on the program theory, the selection of the 71 participants was made in a proportion of 19 health record officers; 18 clinicians; and 25 social workers to answer the tools. Primary data were collected through the use of closed-ended questions and interview guide whereas desk review was used on the secondary data. The normal coefficient (0.84) was determined by

Cronbach Alpha; content analysis of the results evaluated using qualitative data indicators and the use of SPSS tools, primarily inferential and descriptive tests, were made. It was determined that performance of health organization was dependent on M & E practices, M and E team and maintenance of M and E data quality that were independent variables investigated through regression and correlation analysis. Planning, Teambuilding and capacity has to be grounded in organization objectives that should take place to ensure that desired performance is obtained. It also observed that M and E is the best practices that may bring the intended results in any organization.

Methodology

The research design is a guideline used to gather, quantify, and examine data in order to answer certain research questions (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Out of the many research designs available including lengthy study, experiment, case study, cross-sectional is the most common research design known to be the simplest yet quite effective in the research result outcomes. It entails the observation and gathering of information at one moment, also it is rather of the nature of giving a snapshot of the phenomenon being studied. This design is most applicable with a descriptive research study since it helps to conduct cross-case comparisons over a specific period of time.

The cross-sectional studies may take several weeks and are typically applied in the social and business research to examine the phenomena at a particular moment. Therefore, the research design used was cross sectional with Eastern Equatoria State in South Sudan as a target to NPOs.

Population of the study

The study entities were seven (7) NPOs and their population or employees in Eastern Equatoria state of South Sudan. These NPOs have been selected through a multi-stage purposive sampling technique which ensured that selected organizations have similar and related problem that must be studied. The investigators also selected the organizations and their employees after knowing that needed information could be obtained from them. These include ACTED (22), AVSI (31), NCA (16), Johaniter International (JI -48), UNFAO (21), PLAN International (17), and United Nation Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS – 424). Thus, a total population was 579.

Sample size determination and sampling technique

Ajay and Micah (2014) believe that researchers have different approaches and equations they apply in the determination of the sample size. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) established this by resorting to a tabulation technique. Among the total number of 579 of the population represented by selected NPOs, 237 employees were selected and interviewed.

The reason why the tabulation approach has been adopted has been because it is less challenging and provides the right estimates when the target population is specified, and the employees were being interviewed because they were striving to involve internal checks to ensure that their organizations were performing as per the financial requirements of their managers. The sample size per organization is presented in Table 1 by the formula as

Table 1: NPOs of study and total number of employees

No.	NPOs	Total employees	Sample size
1	ACTED	22	9
2	AVSI	31	13
3	NCA	16	7
4	Johaniter International, JI	48	19
5	UNFAO	21	9
6	PLAN International	17	7
7	UNMISS	424	173

Total	579	237
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Sampling techniques / procedure

A simple random sampling technique was used in all the organizations with the view that it is the best technique to enable the selection of the needed samples in a given period from the already established list of target group (Etikan & Bala, 2017). It also gives the population equal opportunities to be selected into the study (Taherdoost, 2020).

Data analysis techniques

Following the data collection, the answers were filtered in the completeness and usability mode and then the analysis was done. The data was set and coded to be evaluated systematically. The package of Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, version 26 was used to perform statistical analysis. Since this research is based on establishing the relationship between variables using quantitative data, both univariate and bivariate methods of analysis were used.

To sum up the data using uni-variate analysis, frequencies, percentages and the like were used. The inferential statistics involved in the bivariate analysis consisted of regression analysis about the relationships between the variables and the establishment of the predictor variables. The analysis guaranteed the objective comprehension of the data, which is in line with the descriptive and inferential research objectives (Ryan and Bernard, 2000).

Results

Table 2: Response Rate

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Total number of questionnaires delivered	237	100%
Total questionnaires returned	218	91%

Data collection instruments

The study used only two data instruments to collect data. These were survey questionnaire in order to get quantitative data and documentary review for both quantitative and qualitative information.

Survey questionnaire

The survey questionnaires were designed to survey the participants of seven NGOs that are operating within Eastern Equatoria state that were selected. They were formulated in an exact, brief, and pre-determined form so that they could give responses that would be quantitatively analyzed. The nature of the survey would be organized in a way that would enable the participants to answer questions without the investigator present and thus gave the participants independence to give details as required.

The questions were structured on the grounds of the Risk Assessment Measures (RAM), Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as applied in life, Control Environment, and M and E measures with the discrimination of a five Likert Scale. Consequently, the tool comprised four parts, the background part that assessed the overall specifics of the respondents. The section whose information required in the risk assessment was the activity relating to risk measures implemented and questions regarding the previous three objectives were also drawn up. The software was applied bearing in mind that it would allow corrections of information in a relatively short time.

Total questionnaires not returned 19 9%

Source: SPSS. (2025). output survey data [Unpublished raw data]. IBM Corp., Version 26.

Table 2 indicates that out of 100% (n=237), returned responses made 91% (n=218) while 9% (n=19) was of the responses not returned. Therefore, information from a high percentage of the respondents was used to write this section. The study established that respondents

whose data was not returned had been sent on different missions abroad to attend conferences, approve quarterly reports and seeking funding from the donors, some on field missions, and leave as well.

Table 3: showing the Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Sex	Males	122	56.0%
	Females	96	44.0%
Age	18 – 24	7	3.2%
	25 – 34	22	10.1%
	35 – 44	158	72.5%
	45 – 54	20	9.2%
	Above 55	11	5.0%
Marital status	Single	11	5.0%
	Married	192	88.1%
	Divorced	10	4.6%
	Widowed	5	2.3%
Level of education	Masters	53	24.3%
	Degree	94	43.1%
	Diploma	71	32.6%
Period working with NGOs	2 - 5 years	111	50.9%
	6 - 10 years	56	25.7%
	11 - 15 years	31	14.2%
	Over 15 years	20	9.2%

Table 3 shows that sex was one of the background characteristics of the participants in which 56.0% (n=122) were males and 44.0% (n=96) were females. This form of data attribution was due to the sampling technique used rather than anything else. It also indicates that both sexes were represented to explain the use of internal control measures in relation to financial performance among the selected NPOs in Eastern Equatoria state of South Sudan. Results indicate 72.5% (n=158) had the age group between 35 - 44 and they were followed by 10.1% (n=22) between the age 25 – 34. Other age groups had 9.2% (n=20) within 45 – 54 while 5.0% (n=11) was above 55 and 3.2% (n = 7) was between 18 – 24. The age group indicate that participants were adults and not young persons. They have ability to

make decisions that would make internal control measures work effective in their respective NPOs.

Most of the participants were married and these constituted 88.1% (n=192). They were followed by 5.0% (n=11) who were single, 4.6% (n=10) had divorced and 2.3% (n=5) were widowed. This composition indicates that majority participants could make predetermined decision for effective use of internal control measures in order to achieve financial performance. It also indicates that they were fathers and mothers who can also take fuller responsibilities for the operations of the organizations just like their families. Participants had undergraduate level of education as represented by 43.1% (n=94)

with degrees, while 32.6% (71) had diploma and 24.3% (n=53) had masters. The education level of participants portrays their ability and knowledge to use internal control measures for a particular purpose like financial performance. The study established that such level of education is one of the perquisites towards recruitment and signing contracts with such organizations. Lastly, participants had enough experience working with the NPOs

whereby 50.9% (n=111) had worked for 2-5 years, while 25.7% (n=56) worked for 6 – 10 years and 14.2% (n=31) worked for 11 – 15 years. There was 9.2% (n=20) that had worked for over 15 years and above in the organizations. Experience distribution is a justification that participants had enough information about the use of internal control measures towards financial performance in selected NPOs.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of Internal control practices and financial performance of selected non-profit organizations in South Sudan

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.663 ^a	.439	.431	.43373	1.746

a. Predictors: (Constant), Risk Assessment, Monitoring, Control environment

b. Dependent Variable: Financial Performance

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	31.500	3	10.500	55.816	.000 ^b
	Residual	40.258	214	.188		
	Total	71.759	217			

a. Dependent Variable: Financial Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Risk Assessment, Monitoring, Control environment

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	1.703	.208		8.193	.000	1.293	2.113
	Monitoring	.177	.066	.216	2.684	.008	.047	.307
	Control environment	.277	.072	.317	3.872	.000	.136	.418
	Risk Assessment	.158	.046	.223	3.410	.001	.067	.250

a. Dependent Variable: Financial Performance

The regression analysis results, as presented in the Model Summary, show that Risk Assessment, Monitoring, and Control Environment collectively explain 43.9% of the variation in financial performance, as indicated by the R-square value of 0.439. This implies that internal control practices make a substantial contribution to improving the financial performance of non-profit

organizations. The Adjusted R-square value of 0.431 further confirms that, after adjusting for the number of predictors in the model, approximately 43.1% of the variation in financial performance is still accounted for by the three internal control components. All in all, the results will show that the Risk Assessment, Monitoring and Control Environment have a substantial effect on the

financial performance whereas the other 56.1% percentage variation has been explained by other variables not incorporated into the model. According to the ANOVA table, the internal control practices are statistically significant with effect on financial performance of the selected non-profit making organizations in South Sudan, as the F-value is 55.816 and the significance level is $p = 0.000 < 0.05$. This is indicative of the fact that the regression model has been fitting and the independent variables Risk Assessment, Monitoring and Control Environment in concert with each other contribute significantly to the prediction of the financial performance of these organizations. Thus, the results indicate that internal control practices are important in boosting financial performance of non-profit organizations in South Sudan.

The coefficients table demonstrates the effect that each inner control aspect Monitoring, Control Environment and Risk Assessment has on the Financial Performance of the chosen non-profit organizations. The positive and statistically significant contributions of all the predictors ($p < 0.05$), suggest that the enhancement of these internal control practices is the reason of increased financial performance. Monitoring ($\beta=0.216$, $p = 0.008$). The positive and significant effect of monitoring on financial performance is positive. The standardized coefficient ($\beta=0.216$) indicates that organizations that have high monitoring practices that include frequent evaluations, internal audits and constant supervision tend to keep accountability and utilize their resources appropriately. This will help in better financial-performance. Though Monitoring is the least predictor with the smallest standardized effect of the three predictors, it is still significant.

Control Environment has the most impact on financial performance. Its standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.317$) means that a healthy control environment developed based on ethical leadership, integrity, company culture, and definitive policies significantly improve financial stability and performance. An

environment that is well controlled will provide a base upon which good governance will be achieved, fraud will be reduced and it will also result in efficient operations. Risk Assessment other-wise also demonstrates the positive and significant effect on financial performance. Having a standardized coefficient of 0.223, this is to show that organizations that constantly recognize, examine and control financial and operational risks are in a better position to avoid and reduce losses and enhance accountability.

Proper risk evaluation enhances the decision making processes and protection of organizational resources which results in improved financial performance. It is the anticipated score of the financial performance when all the predictor variables are assumed to be zero. It is not technical and only in the end when the financial performance analysis involves internal control factors can it be seen that the performance initially begins at a positive base point. Monitoring, Control Environment, and Risk Assessment are also found to be significant predictors of financial performance as suggested by the regression results. Control Environment affects most of the standardized impact and then comes Risk Assessment and finally the Monitoring. This proves that the financial performance of non-profit making organizations can be significantly improved by strengthening internal control systems. This finding is consistent with the previous research that has highlighted internal controls as one of the major cause of organizational performance and financial health. Aboramadan (2021) has observed a positive correlation between the good internal control systems and efficiency of operations, accountability and practical utilization of resources which ultimately leads to better performance of the organization. On the same note, Bjurstron (2020) stated that good monitoring and control procedures in institutions enhance compliance, eliminate irregularities, and facilitate good financial management. Also Atiso, et. al (2020) noted that well-formal risk assessment procedures enhance the adaptability, transparency and

accountability of the organization which results in the achievement of improved financial results. Similarly, UNESCO (2021) emphasized that effective governance and control mechanisms lead to financial discipline and sustainability of the institution and Adedeji and Olaniyan (2022) confirmed that high quality internal control practices will improve the quality of decisions, mitigate fraud risk and better financial results.

Discussion

Risk identification

The findings indicated that more financial shocks were experienced in NGOs that systematically uncover potential risks like lack of sufficient funding, overreliance on a donor, fraud, and inefficient operations. The correct identification enabled NGOs to foresee difficulties and define the mitigation measures, which consequently stabilized cash streams and boosted the trust in donors. The discoveries in the given study indicate that the risks and probability are systematically examined and prioritized. This is because they wish to avoid some of the challenges that would shadow the organization without the prioritization process. The same happens with the study of Rafindadi and Olanrewaju (2019) concerning the influence of the Internal Control System (ICS) on the financial responsibility of the non-governmental organizations in Nigeria.

Risk Analysis and evaluation

It was found that the NGOs, which continuously assess the probability and the severity of identified risks, managed to prioritise resources more efficiently. Transparency in budgeting, enhanced the necessity of distributing funds to genuine activities and reduced the wasteful spending were enhanced through risk analysis. The practice was linked to excellent indicators of financial performance including cost efficiency and program effectiveness. The results indicate that the majority of NPOs positively invest in reducing risks that have high priorities depending on the impact of such risks. This is primarily achieved by beginning with strategic planning that is one of the initial points of all programs in the organizations. Winarto and

Chariri (2022) conclude that in Indonesia, resource allocation is a planned activity in an organization that is carried out in a systematic manner depending on the predetermined goals.

Risk Monitoring and control

The findings revealed that NGOs that had continuous monitoring systems including the internal controls and audits and review on compliance had a higher level of financial accountability. Onwubuya (2023) states that periodic oversights minimized instances of mismanagement and enhancing preciseness of reporting and strengthening the credibility of stakeholders. This impacted positively on retention of donors and inflow of funding that is very important in NGO financial sustenance. The results created a great positive correlation between the variability of risk assessment and the financial result of NGOs.

Those NGOs which embraced systematic risk assessment undertakings indicated greater degree of fiscal steadiness, less losses in operations, and greater trustworthiness through the beneficiaries and donors. On the other hand, organizations that had poor or informal risk assessment procedures experienced frequent financial deficits, loss of donors and a restricted expansion prospect. Finally, findings reveal that the organization has comprehensible measures regarding the management and mitigation of the identified risks.

The research paper finds that healthy risk assessment criteria by systematic identification, analysis, monitoring and control become critical to enhance the financial performance of NGOs. With the risk management implemented into their operations, NGOs do not only improve their financial standing, but also their capacity to attain a long-term sustainability and fulfill their social missions in a successful way Winarto and Charira (2022).

Conclusions

Risk assessment measures have been identified important on the financial performance of the selected NPOs in South Sudan. These tests

serve as intervening variables in the due process of operation. It is also noteworthy that risks occur everywhere and these NPO entail the strategies to counter any losses that might occur which translates to enhanced stability and profitability. The approach to risk management is inclusive of assessment that will result in more efficient decision making, can optimize investments, and increases efficiency. This however depends on the successful implementation of the integrated systems, comprehensive frameworks, and continuous reviews with varying impacts which are dependent to specific NPOs, not general. From the South Sudan context, it is been revealed that there is a effective control environment measures applied by the NPOs. The control measures have provided a platform of ethical behavior, qualified personnel and good management that minimizes risks and consequently enhances efficiency of operations. In most cases, a sound control environment of this nature is critical in meeting financial objectives as there exists improved resource management particularly accountability. Finally, monitoring has been seen to maximize financial performance, efficiency, fraud detection, regulatory compliance, and thus, better decision-making. Actually, the methods result into increased profitability and minimization of losses. What it comes down to though is the fact that the measure of monitoring success rests upon proper strategies, effective systems, the participation of stakeholders and cost benefit, among which have been addressed in the findings.

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