A MULTIPLE PARADIGM APPROACH TO ORGANIZATIONAL CONTROL

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The literature on the nature of organizational control processes is dominated by the four broad perspectives of cybernetics/goal, power/authority, culture, and evolution. Arguing against subscribing to any individual perspective, this paper proposes a multiple paradigm perspective, employing the three sociological paradigms of social fascism, social behaviorism, and social definitionism. This multi-perspective approach is then applied to an evolutionary conception of organizational control.

A considerable literature exists on the subject of the nature of organizational control. In broad terms, three perspectives have been adopted in the study of organizational control processes, namely, cybernetic/goal, power/authority, and culture. However, these well-known perspectives by themselves do not seem comprehensive enough to assimilate or explain the newer insights into the nature of organizational control (Das, 1989). Specifically, certain aspects of organizational control that cannot be accommodated within these traditional perspectives need to be recognized and incorporated into a more holistic approach. For example, the garbage can model of decision making seems to militate against the cybernetic/goal perspective.

The purpose of this article is to put forward a new approach to understanding the essence of organizational control processes, based on the idea of simultaneous adoption of three sociological paradigms. Specifically, it is proposed that the control phenomenon should be studied by looking at different aspects of a hierarchically conceived "controlling" cycle (Das, 1989) in terms of the paradigms of social fascism, social behaviorism, and social definitionism. It would be useful to adopt the perspective of each of the three paradigms in our attempt to understand (as distinguished from "proving the truth of") the organizational control processes. As Pondy and Boje (1980, p. 93) explain:

Competition and survival of the politically fittest, in Kuhn's view, often determine which perspective is best. Yet if we follow a different track, that of allowing multiple views of a phenomenon to be compiled so that more total information is obtained, then two things become possible. First, we can gain insights into the phenomenon that could not be obtained from one perspective alone. Second, we can focus upon compatibility rather than integration. Tolerance of numerous ways of viewing the phenomenon, which means tol-
erance of other paradigms, can lead to accepting differences with the aim of understanding the phenomenon better rather than survival of the fittest paradigm.

This multi-perspective approach to studying organizational control processes is, as it happens, eminently appropriate if we take the cue from Ritzer (1975, p. 164), who observed: "Each of the paradigms, standing alone, is inadequate. Each needs insights from the other paradigms in order to fully explain any social phenomena."

Organizational Control Perspectives

The subject of organizational control has been addressed by authors with diverse disciplinary predilections, with occasional attempts to develop typologies (Pennings & Woiceshyn, 1987) and integrative models (Flamholtz, Das, & Tsui, 1985). The major perspectives may be grouped under the rubrics of cybernetic/goal, power/authority, culture, and evolutionary. Each of these perspectives has substantial literatures. In this paper, however, a very brief mention of some selected contributions will have to suffice, in order principally to convey a general idea of the traditional thinking on organizational control. The object is only to sketch the backdrop against which the proposal for adopting a multiple paradigm approach can be appreciated.

Cybernetic/Goal Perspective

According to Sherwin (1956) the essence of control is action for adjusting operations to predetermined standards. Lawler (1976) used the thermostat model in his analysis of how people respond to a control system. Early on, Haberstroh (1960) found that in certain ways human organizations can be visualized as self-regulating cybernetic systems, especially regarding the information feedbacks utilized by managers in achieving organizational objectives. Downs (1967) found that the control mechanism was essentially built around information feedback loops as in a cybernetic model (Beer, 1959, 1966). In his later work, Beer (1969, 1972) has extended the traditional cybernetic model to discuss the concepts of self-referencing systems and autopoiesis. Other authors have suggested the application of the control system model to organizational motivation (Campion & Lord, 1982; Lord & Hanges, 1987).

However, as Hofstede (1978) has noted, most control systems are based on the cybernetic model, which basically consists of (a) a standard or objective, (b) a means of measuring performance, and (c) feedback channels. The cybernetic model of control, though very prevalent, would seem to lead to various dysfunctional behaviors due to deficiency in any one of the three components mentioned by Hofstede (1978). Hofstede also suggests a modified model, which he calls homeostatic control. This model employs no division of labor between the controller and controlled, as when all the activities of measurement and feedback are accomplished within, say, a group. For homeostatic control processes, though,
the controller has to appreciate the social-psychological processes of group members.

There is, however, nothing like "a goal" according to Simon (1964), who suggests that organization members try only to overcome a set of constraints. Specifically, depending on the position of the member and the problems he or she faces, certain kinds of decisions or actions will be taken. These decisions may or may not be directly related to the views of the majority of the members. Dysfunctional behaviors could thus result (Birnberg, Turopolec, & Young, 1983).

Ouchi and Maguire (1975) proposed two distinct modes of control based on personal surveillance (behavior control) and output (output control). A manager would typically use output control when he required some tangible evidence of performance. Otherwise, he would resort to behavior control to the extent that he had the skills. One interesting finding was that output control was often used under circumstances which made it difficult to implement, such as in complex situations.

The phenomenon of control loss has been researched by Evans (1975) and Ouchi (1978). Evans found that dual hierarchies in organizations (such as line and staff, product, and regional divisions) make for better control. Ouchi found that behavior control is not transmitted through hierarchical levels, while output control is consistently transmitted with loss at each level.

Flamholtz (1979) has proposed a psycho-technical systems paradigm in which the objective of organizational measurement goes beyond numerical representation of objects and incorporates the ultimate end as the influencing of behavior. Thus, the measurement system itself is expected to influence the behavior in an intended manner, apart from producing a numerical output. The measurement process influences behavior in the following four ways: (1) by defining goals operationally, (2) by prompting systematic planning, (3) by influencing managers' perceptions through relevant information, and (4) by affecting the degree of motivation. Flamholtz also proposes the notions of behavioral validity and reliability to evaluate the effectiveness of various measurement systems.

Lawler (1976) has surveyed the literature and found five types of behavior—bureaucratic, resistance to control system, falsification of data, intrinsic motivation, and extrinsic motivation. Some of the dysfunctional behaviors produced by control systems are resistance (due to automation, displacement, performance evaluation), resort to bureaucratic behavior (rigid rule observance), and furnishing incorrect data (covering up poor performance). Randall (1976) found that the attitudes of managers towards a policy in a state employment agency were an important source of resistance to organizational control. Kerr (1975) has documented a number of instances typifying the dysfunctional effects of reward systems which foster the wrong kind of behavior. Overall, the cybernetic perspective needs to be revised due to the "illusion of control" it implies (Dermer & Lucas, 1986; Dunbar, 1981).
Power/Authority Perspective

Max Weber's discussion of bureaucratic authority is perhaps typical of this perspective. In more recent times, though, other authors have made significant contributions. For instance, Tannenbaum (1968) refers to control as a process by which a person or group intentionally affects what another person or group will do. He visualizes this influence process as a cycle consisting of an intent of person A, leading to an influence attempt, which results in a specific behavior of person B, which fulfills the original intent of person A. Adopting this power perspective, Tannenbaum has shown through his control graph how the total amount of power can be increased in an organization. Briefly, this could be done by increasing exchange of control and compliance, including members in a fuller manner than usual in a bureaucratic organization, and ensuring greater orderliness in an organization (less entropy). Tannenbaum has also discussed some interesting propositions about control and how individuals adjust to it. He mentions that control has symbolic meaning for members in terms of perceptions of superiority or reprimand. It has also some desirability, for it gives power. Ironically, control also results in being controlled, in the sense that the controller must necessarily conform to norms.

Within this power perspective, Pettigrew (1972) found that information channels were a power resource, so that those members who work in positions with multiple channels can and do increase their power by being selective in directing or suppressing information. Hofstede (1978) has proposed that it is political control that prevails in many organizations like schools and hospitals. This is because cybernetic controls cannot work due to the absence of clear objectives, measures of performance, and feedback information in such organizations. He explains that the decisions in these organizations have mainly to do with the policies which are the outcome of negotiations between people and groups. Hence he recommends that we should talk of control as a structure and not a process. A control structure can better explain the power-based negotiations of members.

Another set of propositions has been put forward by Etzioni (1965) under the power perspective. He classifies organizations as coercive, utilitarian, and identitive, according to the ways they employ control means which are physical, material, or symbolic. With careful selection of members, the need for control decreases. Also, identitive organizations have to depend on personal qualities much more than coercive organizations.

Cultural Perspective

The work of Johnson and Ouchi (1974) and Ouchi and Johnson (1978) postulates two ideal types of organizational control, which they name as Type A and Type Z. Type A is represented by the following broad characteristics: short-term employment, individual decision-making, formal evaluation, frequent promotion, specialization, and a limited concern for people. In Type Z, the polar opposite factors are evident, such as long-term employment and a holistic concern.
for people. The proposition is, depending on societal values about individualism and the extent of labor mobility, that organizations would tend to have the characteristics of one of the above two ideal control types.

In another stream of research, Ouchi (1980) has proposed an organizational control typology based on an efficiency criterion derived from transaction costs (Alchian & Demsetz, 1972; Coase, 1937, 1988; Demsetz, 1988; Williamson, 1975, 1988). The costs are those involved in mediating exchanges between individuals in regard to the degree of goal incongruence and performance ambiguity. Briefly, when goal incongruence is high and performance ambiguity is low, the market form is most efficient. Bureaucratic forms are efficient when both factors are present in moderate degree. However, when low goal incongruence and high performance ambiguity are present, the clan is the efficient form.

Evolutionary Perspective

Recently, a model of organizational control adopting an evolutionary perspective has been proposed by Das (1989). The idea of an evolutionary "controlling" cycle essentially modifies the basic organizing cycle of enactment, selection, and retention (ESR). As explicated by Weick (1979), the ESR cycle operates at a single level. However, as Das (1989) has shown, the ESR cycle is fundamentally of a hierarchical character, with two interacting components. The first consists of the retention segment, which sets the rules of operation. The second component is comprised of the twin processes of enactment and selection and is the actual game that is played according to the set rules. Fashioned from this two-level, hierarchically-conceived ESR cycle, the controlling framework has been applied to the basic control modes informing markets, bureaucracies, and clans (Das, 1989). It may be noted here that the temporal, and hence also evolutionary, aspects of organizational phenomena are receiving increasing attention in the literature (Das, 1987, 1991, 1993). In keeping with that emerging emphasis, we will, later in the paper, use the above framework of an evolutionary controlling cycle to illustrate the advantages of the multiple paradigm approach that is being proposed here.

Need for a Multiple Paradigm Approach

The perspectives sketched above continue to dominate the literature on organizational control processes. However, developments and insights into the control phenomenon cannot be easily accommodated within these conventional perspectives. Hence, as this paper suggests, there is a need to consider a different approach. Ideally, such an approach should enable us to comprehensively study all aspects of organizational control processes without subscribing to any particular orthodox perspective.
The advantages of an epistemological orientation that accommodates the simultaneous appreciation of multiple perspectives have been stated well by Pondy and Boje (1980):

Under a multiparadigm approach to inquiry, . . . the function of theory shifts from that of "truth proving" to "insight seeking." Since theories will no longer be competing for a single prize of being most nearly true, the simultaneous acceptance of several incompatible theories will no longer be problematic. What will matter is how much insight and understanding can be extracted from the entire constellation of theories generated from the several paradigms in use (p. 84).

There are four particular areas in which this discussion seems to indicate a need for further investigation.

First, the logic of goal-oriented, cybernetic organizational control needs to be examined and revised. This has become important after the "garbage can" (Cohen, March, & Olsen, 1972; March & Olsen, 1976) and resource dependence (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977) formulations of organizational functioning. The garbage can model, in particular, portrays a situation in which the conventional cybernetic approach would seem to make little sense.

Second, more research needs to be undertaken to understand how organizations are controlled by their environments through exchange relationships (Jacobs, 1974; Nelson & Winter, 1982; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Williamson, 1975). This is because most organizations are dependent on their environments.

Third, the fact that organizations are often loosely coupled (March & Olsen, 1976; Weick, 1976) would imply that control mechanisms may not be fully understandable through formal structures (Cooper, Hayes, & Wolf, 1981; Ingersoll, 1993). Meyer and Rowan (1977) have argued that organizational structures are, at least partly, reflections of the myths of institutional environments. To the extent that this prevails, it is necessary to study the dynamics of control processes in institutionalized organizations in this new light.

And fourth, attention needs to be paid to the very real possibility that there may not be, in many organizations, a monolithic control mechanism. Rather, there could be several different control mechanisms within the same organization, operating at different locations in the organization. The implications of this possibility in terms of conflict and performance evaluation are obvious.

In the remainder of the paper, we will develop a multiple paradigm framework that should be more effective in addressing these and other concerns in understanding the organizational control phenomenon.

Three Sociological Paradigms

There are many paradigms and typologies of paradigms in the organizational theory and related literatures. Most have some useful insights to offer in understanding the essence of organizational control. Most, though, are not fully
relevant to our present purpose, either because they cover broader phenomena or are pertinent to a specific epistemological issue. For example, the excellent work of Burrell and Morgan (1989) encompasses the functionalist, radical structuralist, radical humanist, and interpretive paradigms. Dermer and Lucas (1986) have proposed that we need to move from a "unirational" to a "multirational" conception of control, which would include the political perspectives and multiple control linkages that exist within and between various organizational units or interest groups. Dermer (1988) has suggested that control should be re-conceptualized to incorporate the autonomous activity of managers. One could also mention the dialectical approach, the levels of analysis (individual, organizational, and environmental), and the different forms of action (rational, situational control, and emergent processes).

While any of the above frameworks may suffice to make a case for a multiperspective approach, the analysis of Ritzer (1975) seems to be the most suitable for the present purpose. He has suggested that most sociological research can be classified as adopting one of three fairly distinctive paradigms. He defines a paradigm as "a fundamental image of the subject matter within a science" and goes on to discuss the three paradigms of sociology: social factist, social behaviorist, and social definitionist. For each of these, Ritzer lists the exemplars (Kuhn, 1970, p. 175), the image of the subject-matter, the theories, and the methods which are typically associated with them.

Briefly, the social factist paradigm views individual behavior as constrained by social structure and institutions. The kinds of phenomena treated as social facts include roles, norms, values, groups, institutions, and social systems. As such, the theories of structural-functionalism, conflict, systems, and macrosociology are included as part of this paradigm (see Buckley, 1967; Dahrendorf, 1959; Etzioni, 1970; Merton, 1968).

The social definitionist paradigm treats man as "an active creator of his own social reality," and the theories within it include action theory, symbolic interactionism, phenomenology, and ethnomethodology (Blumer, 1969; Garfinkel, 1967; Schultz, 1967; Weber, 1947). The social definitionist is interested in the mental processes of individual actors and how the actors create or define their own situations. Pondy and Boje (1980), besides clarifying the various areas of work within organization theory into the three paradigms, have also discussed critically some exemplars of the social definitionism paradigm, namely, March and Simon (1958), Weick (1974, 1979), and Silverman (1971). Recently, Das and Boje (1993) have demonstrated how the social definitionist approach can be fruitfully applied to a meaning-based study of interorganizational networks, employing such qualitative methodologies as phenomenological typification, domain analysis, componential analysis, and conversational analysis.

The social behaviorist paradigm denies the autonomous man, who is deemed subject to contingencies of reinforcement. The operant conditioning of Skinner...
(1971) is the original inspiration for this paradigm. The point of interest is how the individual actor relates with his or her environment, and how, in turn, the environment impacts on the behavior of the individual actor. Exchange theory and behavioral sociology are part of this paradigm (see Blau, 1964; Burgess & Bushell, 1969; Homans, 1961).

With this brief description of the three paradigms as the basis, we will discuss in the next section the manner in which each of these paradigms has particular relevance to the distinct aspects of the organizational controlling framework that we will propose.

Multiple Paradigm Framework of Controlling

Construction of Control Reality

Let us start by viewing the individual organizational member as a social being who both constitutes and is constituted by the organization or external environment (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). In this sense we may say that, while the individual and the organization could be considered as two aspects of the same reality, it would perhaps be more appropriate to consider them as two co-existing realities which are not in competition or conflict. According to Watzlawick (1977, p. xi), "traditional ideas of reality are delusions which we spend substantial parts of our daily lives shoring up, even at the considerable risk of trying to force facts to fit our definition of reality instead of vice versa. And the most dangerous delusion of all is that there is only one reality." It might be said that there is, at any point in time, a dynamic amalgam of the two interacting realities, and that this amalgam, the nature of the interactions, and the two realities are all of a changing kind.

In this manner, we can visualize the individual enacting his reality, even as he is subject to the structuring influences of sociohistorical circumstances (social structure and institutions) in the organizational arena. Such a conception of the control dynamics in relation to the individual perhaps explains why enactment processes do not, through successive iterations of the organizing cycle (Weick, 1979), lead to a run-away situation, degenerating ultimately into a complete dream-world of enacted environments. It is, we suggest, the sociocultural factors (social structure, values, norms, etc.) that impinge most potently upon the retention segment of the Enactment–Selection–Retention (ESR) cycle to keep the cause maps and templates evolving along configurations which maintain, on a continuous basis, some definite relevance to the other (external, social, cultural, institutional) reality. This other reality of the organization is thus a co-determinant of the (control) reality construction process. Rosen and Astley (1988) have analyzed how the control mechanisms of language and social drama in the setting of an advertising agency operate in the social construction of order and structure. What is being stated is that the construction of (control) reality is the product of the joint activities of the individual organizational member and the social (including organizational) structures and institutions.
This view, we should note, is almost heretical in the context of the separate distinctive viewpoints of both the social factist and social definitionist paradigms. If, in addition to this, we propose that there is a certain linkage area between the relevant domains of the two paradigms which is neatly provided by the social behaviorist paradigm, our break with traditional ways of viewing organizational phenomena would be nearly complete.

Hierarchical Nature of the Controlling Process

The hierarchical nature of the controlling process is a significant attribute, and a brief discussion should help clarify point.

According to an interesting paper by Pattee (1976), most models of control in complex organizations neglect to include what he calls the creative mode of evolution of hierarchical organizations. This creative mode, he says, is "a necessary complement to the more commonly accepted optimization mode of evolution." He explains the roles of the creative and optimization modes in the following manner:

These two modes are complementary in the sense that both are necessary for understanding the origin and evolution of control hierarchies, and yet the two modes are mutually exclusive if one tries to combine them into a single description. In other words, the two modes have contradictory assumptions. In particular, the optimization mode is essentially continuous and rate-dependent, whereas the creative mode is essentially discrete and rate-independent (p. 171).

Pattee goes on to demonstrate that at a basic organizational level, certain dynamical optimization processes are subject to failures or "instabilities" caused by or directly ascribable to the "inadequacy of syntactical structure, e.g., a model or a policy, at some essential decision point" at a different, higher (or deeper) organizational structural level. The syntactical structure is like the rules of a game, somewhat like a program (March and Simon, 1958), while the dynamical optimization process is the game. "Optimization can account for improved techniques for winning a game, but it cannot at the same level account for the rules of (the) game" (Pattee, 1976, p. 179). The crucial need for the syntactical element in organizational control processes (hierarchically related, by the nature of things, to the dynamical optimization element) is explained by Pattee in the following manner, by contrasting the control mechanisms of physical systems, such as computers, and social organizations:

The computer as well as most of man's other artifacts has the dynamical machinery and syntactical controls lumped in separate compartments. When failure occurs in any compartment of such an open or loosely connected hierarchy it is necessary to add a new level control—the repairman—who provides external policies and parts. Living systems and social organizations are characterized by closure of their dynamic and syntactic modes so that a local failure at any level leads to the transfer of control or function to an
adjacent level. The units of biological and social organization, namely the cell and the individual, are incredibly coherent in the closure of the internal hierarchies and hence resilient to external stress and to local, internal failures. Both units possess the ultimate repair mode, self-replication, which itself requires a closed network of dynamical and syntactical structures (1976, p. 181).

As control processes in organizations are intrinsically no different from any other organizational processes, it is only logical to adapt the organizing cycle (Enactment—Selection—Retention) for the purpose of describing the basic process of the evolutionary controlling cycle proposed by Das (1989). We thus have an organizing-type model, *a la* Weick (1979), instead of the mechanical or cybernetic models so prevalent in the literature. However, we need to note that the model proposed by Das (1989) considers the ESR cycle as a two-level, hierarchically constituted cycle.

As explained above, the essence of the controlling process is its hierarchical nature. The process has been explained by Das (1989) in terms of the ESR cycle as follows:

The initial postulation is that the "controlling" cycle needs to have two basic kinds of interacting parts or elements, one of which provides the syntax or rules or programs of objective criteria or "premises of decision making" (Perrow, 1979, p. 150) for the operation of the other. The first of these interacting components is that of retention. This retention segment of the ESR cycle provides the cause map, and is qualitatively akin to the creative mode in evolutionary hierarchies (Pattee, 1976) mentioned earlier. The second component of the "controlling" cycle consists of the two processes of enactment and selection (considered together). This particular component is the actual game as it is played out in conformance with the cause map or template or "rules" of the first component. What is being stated, in effect, is that the retention process is at a "structural" level adjacent (higher/lower) to the other two processes of enactment and selection (p. 466).

The above conception of the controlling cycle will be the principal basis for suggesting in the next section the multiple paradigm framework for understanding the control phenomenon.

The Framework

Based on the above discussion of (a) the three paradigmatic inquiry approaches, and (b) the hierarchical, evolutionary controlling model, we propose the contingency framework represented in Figure 1. The key point to note about the figure is that it not only represents the basic controlling cycle but also, most importantly, stipulates the appropriate paradigmatic perspective of inquiry so as to best understand organizational control processes. Thus, the framework provides
that each specific part of the hierarchical controlling cycle is peculiarly appropriate for being studied from a particular paradigmatic perspective, as indicated below:

**Segment of Controlling Cycle**  
Retention (R)  
Enactment (E) and Selection (S)  
Linkages between R and ES

**Appropriate Paradigm**  
Social Factist  
Social Definitionist  
Social Behaviorist

**Figure 1**
Multiple Paradigm Controlling Framework

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We now turn to an examination of some of the ways in which the distinctive paradigmatic inquiring frameworks could be useful in gaining greater insights into specific segments of the controlling cycle.

**Social Factist Paradigm**

The usefulness of the social factist paradigm lies in areas where the notion of social facts, as proposed by Durkheim (1938), could be most profitably employed. These would include the phenomena of social structural and institutional changes.

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(Blau, 1960) which impinge on organizational functioning. Indeed, the nature of
organizational structure has been found to be associated rather closely with certain
characteristics of the industry in which the organization operates (Stinchcombe,
1965). Jacobs (1974) has explained how organizations are controlled by their envi-
ronments through exchange relationships.

Baumgartner et al. (1976) have proposed that the morphostatic and mor-
phogenic processes of social systems can be said to comprise four sets of mutually
interacting variables:

i. environmental, technological, and other material forces;
ii. social structural factors (political–legal, economic and social class rela-
tionships and structures, in particular);
iii. cultural or ideational factors (e.g., ideology, socialization, education, and
related information and evaluation processes);
iv. social action and interaction.

The latter are partially constrained and changed by the former three sets
of factors, but they also constitute the fluid and dynamic factor supporting or
undermining the given institutional structure. That is, while the collective
actions of individuals and sub-groups are partially shaped and regulated by
material, social structural, and cultural factors, they in turn constitute the
driving force for the preservation or change of social structural and cultural
conditions, as well as of the material conditions of life (p. 216).

It can be seen from the above particulars that the first three of these variable
sets could be considered as forming the retention segment of our model or the
syntactical level of Pattee's (1976) model discussed earlier in the paper. Similarly,
the fourth variable set would constitute the enactment–selection segment of our
controlling cycle or Pattee's dynamical, optimizing level. The above description of
the dynamics of the interactions between the first three sets of factors and the last
set give us a fairly cogent idea of how the controlling phenomenon itself can be
viewed as an instrument of social structural change as much as it is forged by
macrostructural forces. The description captures succinctly, in its own wider con-
text, the essential dynamics of the controlling cycle in the forward sweep of evolu-
tionary organizational control processes.

In order to understand such phenomena as the way organizations give com-
pliance to their most critical dependencies (Blau, 1964), a social factist paradigm is
clearly the most appropriate. The character of the control structure in an organiza-
tion is, moreover, not static, but changes as social and institutional changes occur.
Changes in the system of power relations will also occur, consequent upon changes
in organizing modes (such as when technological innovations occur). Also, the
nature of control of organizational members differs in terms of their status and the
extent of informal relations in the organization (Ghidina, 1993). Meyer and Rowan
(1977) have shown how the institutional contexts, with their rules functioning as
myths, condition the formal structures of organizations. The social factist paradigm
captures the more traditional view of organizational control.
Social Definitionist Paradigm

The social definitionist paradigm, as we have suggested, would provide the appropriate inquiring framework when it comes to the dynamical level (Pattee, 1976) of the controlling cycle, which includes the organizing processes of enactment and selection. Considering that the focus of this segment is on the individual (as opposed to the macrostructural), a framework is obviously needed which allows the study of the activities of the principal actor (man) who has been characterized as "an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun" (Geertz, 1973, p. 5).

Given this inquiring framework, we can easily appreciate certain aspects of organizational control processes, such as how subordinates attempt to evade or counteract the control efforts of superiors, or what Downs (1967, p. 147) has called the Law of Counter Control. Crozier (1964, p. 185) also notes: "Subordinates tacitly agree to play the management game, but they try to their own advantage and to prevent management from interfering with their independence." People have a desire for exerting personal control (Greenberger & Strasser, 1986). The subordinates go to great lengths to feed the upper, syntactical level (Pattee, 1976) of decision making and performance rules with distorted information, problems, discontinuities, instabilities, and conflicts, in an attempt to amend (favorably), and even partially forestall the application of, the ubiquitous rules of bureaucratic behavior and performance requirements.

Also, when the organization is treated metaphorically as an individual, certain insights into the behavior of the organization as an entity in an interorganizational network can be obtained by adopting the inquiring framework of the social definitionist paradigm. Unlike the social factist world, the social definitionist world is the existential outcome of human activity, which is given a certain kind of objective factual reality by system actors when their social world is intersubjectively externalized through acts of cultural elaboration and re-internalized as fact through acts of member socialization (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). However, this is not the objective factual world as conceived by Durkheim, existing out there and impacting on the actors, but rather a world which is objectified by the actors in the process of perceiving and interpreting (principally through the medium of language). In order to investigate this world, it is necessary that the researcher employ methods which take the actor's meaning constellation as the principal focus of inquiry (Das & Boje, 1993).

In the course of social interaction, this apprehending of the social world sustains the "social facts" accomplished by the routine activities of the actors. A subjectively enacted world becomes reified into a more objective reality for the actors involved and into objective fact for the social factist researcher. Yet it is the act of social construction, rather than its outcomes, which the social definitionist approach seeks to understand.
Social Behaviorist Paradigm

Shifting our attention now to the linkages between the retention and enactment–selection segments of the controlling cycle, we note that these linkages are of a relatively "loose" nature (recall the nature of the ESR cycle), so that the rules and programs emanating in the former segment do not ensure the complete compliance in the latter segment. Yet the effort to attain as much faithful adherence as possible to the control directions remains undiminished.

March and Simon (1958), without using the controlling framework suggested here, have comprehensively analyzed the diverse control mechanisms which do not fall within the conventional categories of directives, rules, supervision, etc. They discussed programs, communication channel usage, standardization of materials, etc., covering notions such as habits, routine, socialization, and so on. As Perrow (1979, p. 150) has observed: "By moving back from the actual process of decision making to the premises of decision making, March and Simon have begun to fill in a significant gap surrounding organizational behavior." Clearly, the social behaviorist paradigm, with its central concern for contingencies of reinforcement and behavior modification, would provide a suitable perspective for investigating the manner in which organizational control mechanisms, both the subtle and the not-so-subtle, are operated and their effectiveness in varying conditions.

It is the subtle forms of organizational control that are of importance, for they have major impact. Perrow (1979, pp. 150–152) has classified controls into three types—(1) direct, fully obtrusive (rules, orders), (2) fairly unobtrusive (bureaucratic specialization, standardization), and (3) fully unobtrusive (control of cognitive premises underlying action). In exploring the subtle, unobtrusive control mechanisms, the social behaviorist orientation should prove especially fruitful if it is remembered that the object of control, the individual, functions predominantly in the social definitionist mode.

Concluding Remarks

The paper has discussed the process of controlling as an organizing cycle, consisting of the enactment, selection, and retention segments. It then contended that no single paradigm is appropriate for all three segments. For proper understanding of the essence of the controlling process, it suggested that different sociological perspectives need to be employed to different segments. The paper then examined how each perspective is suited to a specific segment of the controlling cycle and argued that the multiple perspectives yield complementary understandings that would not emerge from any one perspective. Finally the paper presented some significant insights which can be derived from the application of the multiple perspectives.

The model proposed in this paper makes possible the simultaneous balancing, conceptually speaking, of other paradigms (Das, 1984). Hence, investigations car-
ried out within the boundaries of, say, the social behaviorist paradigm, do not ignore the fundamental fact that the controlling cycle is a constant interaction, in a spiralling sense, between the social factist and social definitionist worlds. The coexistence of paradigms is an essential element of the proposed model.

Following, therefore, the injunctions of Ritzer (1975), Pondy and Boje (1980), and Das (1984), it would appear that the multiple paradigm approach proposed here should be of help in developing a better understanding of the essence of organizational control.

References


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