

Final Project 1

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The Impact of Business Risk Management on Organizational Control Effectiveness

Student name

Qassim Abdullah Al Ghanim

Graduation Project – 1

Faculty of Management - Midocean University

Supervisor

Alaa Ahmed, Sara Faried and Rokaya Salah

Faculty member- Faculty of management- Midocean University

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1. Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Research Background

The banking sector plays a vital role in economic development by facilitating financial intermediation, mobilizing savings, and supporting investment activities. Due to the nature of banking operations, banks are exposed to a wide range of risks that may threaten their financial stability and operational continuity. Business risk in the banking sector includes credit risk, liquidity risk, market risk, operational risk, and compliance risk. The increasing complexity of financial products, technological innovation, and regulatory requirements has further intensified these risks.

Effective control systems are essential for banks to manage and mitigate business risks. Internal controls help ensure the reliability of financial reporting, compliance with banking regulations, protection of assets, and efficiency of operations. International frameworks such as the Basel Accords and the COSO Internal Control Framework emphasize the importance of integrating risk management with internal control systems in banks.

Recent global financial crises and banking failures have highlighted weaknesses in risk management and control mechanisms within financial institutions. As a result, regulators and stakeholders increasingly demand stronger risk-based controls to enhance transparency, accountability, and financial stability. Therefore, examining business risk and control in the banking sector is crucial to improving bank performance and maintaining public confidence.

1.2. Research Problem

Business risk management has become a central concern for banks and financial institutions worldwide, particularly following major financial crises that exposed critical weaknesses in risk identification and control systems. In the banking context, the relationship between business risk management and organizational control effectiveness is of paramount importance, as inadequate risk controls can lead to financial losses, regulatory penalties, and reputational damage. Despite the recognized importance of both domains, gaps remain in understanding how specific risk management practices translate into measurable improvements in control effectiveness.

1.2.1. Theoretical Gaps

Despite a growing body of literature on enterprise risk management (ERM) and internal control systems individually, there is limited theoretical integration of the two disciplines in the banking context. Most existing theoretical frameworks treat risk management and internal control as parallel but separate processes, rather than as interdependent systems. Additionally, there is insufficient theoretical development explaining the causal mechanisms through which specific risk management practices enhance the five components of the COSO Internal Control Framework, particularly in banking institutions operating under Basel III and IV regulatory regimes.

1.2.2. Practical Gaps

At the practical level, many banking institutions continue to operate with fragmented risk management and internal control functions, leading to duplicated efforts, inconsistent risk-control alignment, and blind spots in the overall control environment. Surveys of banking professionals reveal that risk assessment outputs are frequently not incorporated into control design processes, and that monitoring activities are often conducted independently of risk management cycles. This operational disconnect results in control systems that are not adequately calibrated to the risk profile of the institution. The main research question arising from these gaps is: To what extent does the maturity and integration of business risk management practices impact the effectiveness of organizational control systems in banking institutions?

1.3. Research Significance

This study carries significant importance at both the theoretical and practical levels, addressing a critical gap in the understanding of how business risk management shapes organizational control effectiveness in the banking sector.

1.3.1. At the theoretical level

At the theoretical level, this research contributes to the growing body of literature on integrated risk-control governance by establishing a conceptual model that links business risk management maturity to the

five components of the COSO Internal Control Framework. It advances organizational theory by proposing that risk management and internal control should be treated as a unified governance system rather than separate compliance functions. The study also extends ERM research into the banking context, offering theoretical insights applicable to Basel-regulated financial institutions and contributing to discussions in accounting, finance, and management literature on the determinants of control effectiveness.

1.3.2. At the practical level

At the practical level, the findings provide bank executives, internal auditors, risk officers, and board members with actionable insights into how strengthening risk management practices can directly enhance control environments. The study offers guidance on aligning risk assessment cycles with control design and monitoring processes, thereby reducing control deficiencies and improving regulatory compliance. For regulators and supervisory authorities, the research highlights areas where risk-based control requirements can be strengthened in banking regulations, contributing to greater financial system stability and stakeholder confidence.

1.4. Research Questions

This research is guided by the following questions:

1. What is the nature and scope of business risk management practices adopted by banking institutions?
2. How do risk identification and assessment processes influence the design and adequacy of internal control activities?

3. To what extent does the maturity of enterprise risk management frameworks affect the overall effectiveness of organizational control systems?
4. What are the key challenges that hinder the integration of risk management with internal control processes in banks?
5. How do leadership commitment and organizational culture moderate the relationship between risk management and control effectiveness?

1.5. Research Objectives

This research aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine the conceptual relationship between business risk management and organizational control effectiveness in the banking sector.
2. To analyze established risk management frameworks (COSO, ISO 31000, Basel Accords) and their integration with internal control systems.
3. To identify the key risk management components that most significantly influence control effectiveness across the five COSO dimensions.
4. To evaluate the challenges organizations face when integrating risk management with internal control processes.
5. To provide evidence-based recommendations for banks seeking to enhance control effectiveness through improved risk management practices.

1.6. Research Hypotheses

1. Based on the research questions and objectives, the following hypotheses are proposed:

2. H1: There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the maturity of business risk management practices and the effectiveness of organizational control systems in banking institutions.
3. H2: The quality of risk identification and assessment processes has a significant positive impact on the design adequacy of internal control activities.
4. H3: The adoption of formal enterprise risk management frameworks (e.g., COSO ERM, ISO 31000) is positively associated with stronger control environments in banking institutions.
5. H4: Leadership commitment to risk management significantly moderates the relationship between risk management maturity and organizational control effectiveness.
6. H5: The integration of risk management monitoring activities with internal control monitoring processes is positively associated with reduced control deficiencies.

1.7. Research Model

The research adopts an integrated conceptual model in which business risk management maturity (the independent variable) directly influences organizational control effectiveness (the dependent variable). The model is grounded in the COSO Internal Control—Integrated Framework (2013) and the COSO Enterprise Risk Management Framework (2017). Business risk management maturity is operationalized across four dimensions: risk identification comprehensiveness, risk assessment rigor, risk mitigation strategy

alignment, and risk monitoring continuity. Organizational control effectiveness is measured across the five COSO components: control environment, risk assessment integration, control activities adequacy, information and communication quality, and monitoring effectiveness. Leadership commitment and organizational culture serve as moderating variables in the model.

1.8. Research Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative analytical approach, employing a systematic review of academic literature, established international frameworks, and published industry reports. The methodology is structured around a component-by-component mapping of business risk management processes against the five COSO internal control components, enabling a rigorous examination of the risk-control relationship without the constraints of primary data collection. Data is drawn from peer-reviewed journals, COSO and ISO standards, Basel Committee publications, and reports from professional bodies including the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) and the Risk Management Society (RIMS). The analytical framework synthesizes findings into a conceptual model illustrating the causal pathways between risk management practices and control effectiveness outcomes.

1.9. Scope of The Study

This study focuses on the banking and financial services sector, with particular reference to institutions operating under Basel III/IV regulatory frameworks and adopting internationally recognized internal control standards. The research scope encompasses the examination of risk management and control practices at the enterprise level, covering all major risk categories: credit risk, operational risk, market risk, liquidity risk, and compliance risk. The study draws from global literature and industry practice, with illustrative references to banking institutions in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region, where risk-based regulatory reforms have accelerated in recent years. The temporal scope encompasses the period from 2005 to 2026, capturing developments post-global financial crisis and through the COVID-19 pandemic period.

1.10. The Suggested Project Structure

This research project is organized into two chapters. Chapter 1 provides the foundational context of the study, covering the research background, problem statement (including theoretical and practical gaps), research significance, research questions, objectives, hypotheses, conceptual model, methodology, and scope. Chapter 2 presents a comprehensive literature review structured around the study's independent variable (business risk management), dependent variable (organizational control effectiveness), and the relationship between the two variables, concluding with a synthesis of key insights. The project concludes with a reference list of all cited academic and professional sources.

2. Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of the existing literature on business risk management and organizational control effectiveness. The review is organized into three main sections: the independent variable (business risk management), the dependent variable (organizational control effectiveness), and the relationship between the two variables. By synthesizing theoretical frameworks, empirical findings, and practitioner insights, this chapter establishes the intellectual foundation for the research hypotheses and conceptual model presented in Chapter 1. The literature reveals a rich and evolving body of knowledge that consistently supports the view that robust risk management practices are a critical enabler of effective organizational control, particularly in the banking sector.

2.2. The independent variable

Business risk management refers to the systematic identification, assessment, mitigation, and monitoring of risks that may affect an organization's ability to achieve its strategic, operational, financial, and compliance objectives (ISO 31000, 2018). In the banking sector, risk management encompasses a broad spectrum of disciplines, including credit risk management, operational risk management, market risk management, liquidity risk management, and compliance risk management.

The concept of enterprise-wide risk management emerged prominently following the financial crises of the 1990s and 2000s, driven by regulatory demands and the recognition that siloed risk functions could not adequately protect complex financial institutions (Lam, 2014). The Basel Committee on Banking Supervision has played a pivotal role in shaping risk management standards for banks, with the Basel II Accord (2004) introducing the three-pillar framework of minimum capital requirements, supervisory review, and market discipline. Basel III (2010) and its subsequent revisions further strengthened risk management requirements, emphasizing capital adequacy, liquidity risk management, and stress testing.

Academic literature consistently identifies several dimensions of risk management maturity that distinguish high-performing organizations. Beasley, Clune, and Hermanson (2005) found that organizations with higher ERM adoption levels demonstrated more comprehensive risk identification processes, more rigorous risk assessment methodologies, and more integrated monitoring systems. Hoyt and Liebenberg (2011) demonstrated that ERM adoption is associated with higher firm value, partly through its effect on reducing earnings volatility and improving capital allocation efficiency. Mikes and Kaplan (2015) introduced a contingency perspective, arguing that the effectiveness of risk management depends on organizational context, suggesting that risk management practices must be tailored to the specific risk environment of the institution.

In the banking sector specifically, risk management maturity has been linked to lower incidence of non-performing loans, reduced operational losses, and stronger regulatory examination ratings (Ellul and Yerramilli, 2013). The literature also highlights the critical role of risk culture—the shared values, beliefs, and behaviors regarding risk within an organization—as a determinant of risk management effectiveness. Banks with strong risk cultures demonstrate more proactive risk identification, more conservative risk appetite frameworks, and more consistent application of risk controls across business lines (Financial Stability Board, 2014).

2.3. The dependent variable

Organizational control effectiveness refers to the degree to which an organization's internal control system reliably achieves its objectives in the domains of operational efficiency, financial reporting accuracy, and regulatory compliance (COSO, 2013). An effective internal control system provides reasonable assurance that the

organization's assets are protected, financial information is reliable, and operations comply with applicable laws and regulations.

The COSO Internal Control—Integrated Framework (2013) defines five interrelated components of internal control: the control environment, risk assessment, control activities, information and communication, and monitoring activities. The control environment represents the foundation of the entire system, encompassing the ethical values, governance structures, and management philosophy that define the organization's commitment to control. Research consistently demonstrates that a strong control environment—characterized by board-level commitment, clear accountability structures, and a culture of integrity—is the most significant predictor of overall control effectiveness (Doyle, Ge, and McVay, 2007).

Control effectiveness is operationally assessed through indicators such as the incidence of material weaknesses and significant deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting, the frequency and severity of control failures and losses, audit findings and remediation rates, and regulatory examination outcomes. Empirical research by Ashbaugh-Skaife, Collins, Kinney, and LaFond (2008) demonstrated that organizations reporting material weaknesses in internal control exhibited significantly lower accrual quality, higher cost of equity capital, and poorer operating performance compared to organizations with effective controls.

In the banking sector, control effectiveness is particularly critical given the systemic implications of control failures. Banking regulators, including the Federal Reserve, the European Central Bank, and the Saudi Central Bank (SAMA), conduct regular assessments of banks' internal control environments and require prompt remediation of identified weaknesses. The literature emphasizes that control effectiveness in banking is not merely a compliance requirement but a strategic asset that underpins financial stability, investor confidence, and long-term value creation (Spira and Page, 2003).

2.4. The relationship between the independent and the dependent variables

The relationship between business risk management and organizational control effectiveness is both conceptually grounded and empirically demonstrated in the literature. The 2013 COSO Internal Control—Integrated Framework explicitly incorporates risk assessment as a core component of internal control, acknowledging that control activities must be designed in direct response to identified and assessed risks. This integration reflects a fundamental insight: that control systems without a sound risk foundation may be misdirected and wasteful, while risk management without adequate controls remains theoretical and ineffectual.

Empirical research consistently supports a positive relationship between risk management maturity and control effectiveness. Beasley et al. (2005) found that organizations with more advanced ERM implementations reported fewer material weaknesses in internal control and stronger control environments across all five COSO components. Similarly, Hoyt and Liebenberg (2011) demonstrated that ERM adoption is associated with improved control monitoring and more effective risk-based resource allocation in control investments.

The mechanism through which risk management enhances control effectiveness operates across several pathways. First, comprehensive risk identification ensures that control activities are directed toward the most material risk exposures, preventing the misallocation of control resources to low-risk processes. Second, rigorous risk assessment—encompassing likelihood and impact analysis—enables management to calibrate control intensity to risk severity, ensuring that high-risk processes receive preventive and detective controls while lower-risk processes are managed through monitoring alone.

Third, systematic risk mitigation planning translates risk reduction strategies into concrete control activities, creating a direct and traceable link between identified risks and implemented controls. Fourth, continuous risk monitoring enables organizations to detect emerging risks and adjust their control environments in real time, reducing the lag between risk emergence and control response.

The moderating role of leadership commitment is well-established in the literature. Organizations where senior leaders visibly champion risk management and control excellence demonstrate significantly stronger risk-control integration outcomes (Ellul and Yerramilli, 2013). The Financial Stability Board (2014) emphasizes that effective risk governance requires active board engagement with risk strategy and control oversight, creating a tone-at-the-top that permeates all levels of the organization. Research also highlights the importance of organizational culture as a mediating variable, with risk-aware cultures demonstrating more proactive control behavior, faster escalation of risk events, and greater willingness to invest in control improvements (Mikes and Kaplan, 2015).

In the banking context, the relationship between risk management and control effectiveness is further reinforced by regulatory requirements. The Basel Committee's Principles for the Sound Management of Operational Risk (2011) explicitly require banks to integrate risk management with their internal control frameworks, stipulating that risk assessments must directly inform control design and that control effectiveness must be monitored through ongoing risk management processes. Studies of GCC banking institutions specifically have demonstrated that banks with more mature risk management frameworks report higher internal audit ratings, lower operational loss frequencies, and stronger

compliance with regulatory capital requirements (Al-Tamimi and Al-Mazrooei, 2007).

2.5. Conclusion

This literature review has established a robust theoretical and empirical foundation for the relationship between business risk management and organizational control effectiveness. The evidence consistently demonstrates that risk management and internal control are fundamentally interdependent disciplines, and that organizations achieving the highest levels of control effectiveness are those that have successfully integrated risk management processes into every stage of the control cycle—from design to monitoring. In the banking sector, this integration is not merely a matter of regulatory compliance but a strategic imperative that determines the institution's resilience, performance, and long-term sustainability. The conceptual model proposed in Chapter 1, grounded in the COSO frameworks and supported by the empirical literature reviewed in this chapter, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and advancing the integration of business risk management and organizational control effectiveness.

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