

Chapter 2

Review of Literature on TQM and National Culture

Abstract This chapter reviews literatures on international construction, quality and quality management concepts, and culture and conflicts as well as the relationships that exist among these concepts, which are appropriately supported with relevant case studies. Through these reviews, this chapter establishes the relationship between national culture and potential impacts on total quality management (TQM) implementation.

Keywords Conflicts • International construction • National cultural dimensions • National quality awards • Quality management systems

2.1 International Construction

Weber (1947) has long identified competition as focusing on wealth, power, and prestige. With globalization, competition has now expanded to covering strategic business undertakings involving multiple parties from different cultural backgrounds. Technological innovation, economic internationalization, and the hegemony of neoliberal ideology are the three primary movers of globalization (Lubbers and Koorevaar 1999: 17). As a result, some authors (Gunhan and Arditi 2005: 273; Mead 1998: 13) have posited that globalization has eroded exclusive rights to the domestic market.

The construction industry is one of the top four economic sectors in terms of inter-sectoral linkages (Riedel and Schultz 1978). Its important role has spanned a complex set of interrelationships (Ofori 1990) composing several interrelated subentities, each with its own set of activities is attributed (United Nations 2009). The role of the construction industry to a country's economy has been construed as backward and forward linkages (Riedel and Schultz 1978), as bidirectional causal relationships (Chan 2001) and as layers of benefits (PricewaterhouseCoopers 2011).

An international construction project is one in which the contractor, the lead consultant, or the employer are not of the same domicile, and at least one of them is

working outside its own country of origin (Stebbins 1998; Ofori 2003: 381). Construction is one of the world's biggest industries estimated to account for 13.4 % of world output and 14.6 % of global gross domestic product by 2020 (BDO 2010). With globalization, international construction firms embrace new opportunities (Gunhan and Arditi 2005: 273), plausibly, through lowered barriers for increasingly fierce competition (Lu 2010).

2.2 Quality Management and Quality Management System

2.2.1 Quality Management

The quality experts, Crosby (1979), Deming (1986), and Juran (1988), defined quality as “conformance to requirements,” “by the agent, i.e., customer,” and “fitness for purpose,” respectively. It is the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy implied or stated needs (ANSI/ASQC 1987). It is the degree of congruence between expectation and realization (Lock 1994: 5). Quality has become the organizational equivalent of truth (Stupak and Leitner 2001: 4) and moved beyond an act to becoming a habit (Fung 2008: 22).

Since subjectivity is associated with quality, quality management (QM) is what an organization does to ensure that its products conform to the customer's requirements (ISO 2000). QM is the process of identifying and administering the activities needed to achieve the quality objectives of an organization (Stupak and Leitner 2001). The QM system (QMS) establishes guidelines for proactive approaches to achieving quality and overall business success (Taormina and Brewer 2002: 61).

In 1946, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) came into existence to develop standards to facilitate, among other things, international trade. The ISO 9001 standards provide the requirements for QMS, which is now the globally implemented standard for providing assurance about the ability to satisfy quality requirements and to enhance customer satisfaction in supplier–customer relationships (ISO 2009). ISO 9001 prescribes the following eight QM principles: (1) *customer focus*; (2) *leadership*; (3) *people involvement*; (4) *process approach*; (5) *system approach to management*; (6) *continual improvement*; (7) *factual approach to decision making*; and (8) *mutually beneficial supplier relationships*.

2.2.2 Total Quality Management (TQM)

Quality applies not just to the products and services provided but also to the people and processes that provide them and the environments in which they are provided (Goetsch and Davis 2006: 5). Once a QMS is in place, firms should implement a

total quality management (TQM) system that is aimed at changing a company's culture, since TQM offers a plan to manage and improve the quality system continuously (Abdul-Rahman 2008: 8). Simply, TQM is the art of managing the whole system to achieve excellence (Besterfield et al. 1995: 1), and a TQM organization is one that has the capacity to change itself to adapt to the environment it operates (Mead and Andrews 2009: 263).

Long implicit in the ISO 9000 QMS is TQM; however, TQM has hitherto remained fraught with short-termism from survival because of other more pressing needs (Love and Holt 2000). Complacency with the ISO 9000 certification (Zairi and Baidoun 2003: 7) due in part to shunning by the majority of the firms (Yusof and Aspinwall 2000: 234) has also limited TQM implementation. Other TQM challenges include not wanting to subject employees to the cultural shock of TQM implementation (Low and Teo 2004: 10) and organizations' difficulties with measuring TQM (Arumugam et al. 2009: 49). Implementation of TQM involves a change to the culture (Pun 2001) and a strategic planning process of a commitment to change (Stupak and Leitner 2008: 15).

TQM is a set of systematic activities carried out by the entire organization for the purpose of effectively and efficiently achieving the organization's objectives so as to provide products and services with a level of quality that satisfies customers, at the appropriate time and price (Deming Prize Committee 2012: 2). It then follows that the degree of involvement of the total organization serves as the key difference between TQM and ISO 9000 (Goetsch and Davis 2012: 237). Nevertheless, ISO 9000 is compatible with and can be viewed as TQM since the two are not in competition as expounded in the detailed review carried out by Goetsch and Davis (2012: 236–239).

2.2.3 ISO 9000 and TQM

Human behavioral attributes should be considered when implementing and maintaining a QMS for effective TQM (Low 1998: 44). ISO 9000 QMS is an excellent first step toward TQM (Besterfield et al. 1995: 241; Kemp 2006: 199; Texeira-Quiros et al. 2010: 266), and ISO 9000 could certainly be adapted to a TQM organization at a reasonable cost (Kemp 2006: 200). In 2000, the ISO 9000 standards were rewritten to incorporate the TQM concepts (Goetsch and Davis 2010: 8). Still, the ISO 9000 standards and TQM have continued to be the two pillars to improve and manage quality (Heras et al. 2002: 72).

Internationalization has motivated firms in most countries to be actively engaged in trying to achieve internationally accepted quality levels based on two major framework of TQM, namely the ISO 9000 and quality award criteria (Mahmood et al. 2006: 2). Thus, ISO 9000 has been construed as being a subset of TQM (Noronha 2002: 31). The key changes in the revised ISO 9001: 2000 standards

underscore a significant move toward TQM as exemplified by the positive TQM performance measures found in top management commitment, customer involvement and satisfaction, employee involvement and empowerment, customer–supplier relationships, and process improvement and management (Rizwan and Syed 2009).

ISO 9000 and TQM have some common points, and these common points may help ISO 9000 certified companies to be more similar in character to a TQM company (Martínez-Lorente and Martínez-Costa 2004). Countries like Australia, Canada, Europe, Hong Kong, and Singapore have attempted to implement TQM practices in the building and construction industry, mostly relying on the ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 standards (Hoonakker et al. 2010: 954). Nevertheless, TQM emphasis has shifted to an assessment as to whether an organization has developed a unique brand of TQM (Deming Prize Committee 2012: 3) and becomes an important QMS of the twenty-first century (Goetsch and Davis 2012: 7).

2.2.4 The Future of TQM

TQM is one form of management practices that have received great attention in the last two decades (Jung et al. 2006). TQM is a journey and not a destination (Burati and Oswald 1993) so much so that a successful TQM implementation is the ability to institutionalize TQM behaviors into everyday practice on the job (Low and Teo 2004). In combating its criticism of poor performance and productivity, the construction industry has turned to TQM as an initiative to solve its quality problems (Hoonakker et al. 2010: 953).

TQM is timely in the search for productivity improvement and customer satisfaction as the complexity of the construction industry and its customers continues to grow both in intensity and diversity (Hassan et al. 2011: 285–296). TQM keeps evolving to becoming the latest management mantra in globalized and drastically changing business environments (Bikshapathi 2011). A key inspiration behind the Global Innovation Index is derived from TQM, which has a long history in benchmarking and data analysis to evolving into a broader notion of business excellence (Dutta 2011: 6).

TQM is a culture, and inherent in the culture is an attitude expressed by everybody's involvement in the process of continuous improvement of products and services through the use of innovative scientific methods (Nitin et al. 2011: 220). With award-based frameworks and researcher-based frameworks for TQM, the future will see more of the former through improved knowledge of TQM culture from the latter (Nitin et al. 2011). Similarly, increasing globalization, focus on continuous improvements, and flexibility to adopt suitable and innovative forms of TQM (Deming Prize Committee 2011), point to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for TQM, as a concept, and TQM organizations.

2.3 Culture, National Culture, and National Cultural Dimensions

2.3.1 Culture

Culture's definition vary and are diverse. Consequently, culture's all-encompassing anthropological definitions by Tylor (1871) and Kluckhohn and Kelly (1945) still saw to Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) identifying over 150 definitions. Hofstede's (1980) seminal study defined culture as the collective programming of the mind, which distinguishes the members of one group from another and shifted attention away from anthropology. Following this, culture has been construed as influencing every aspect of the management process (Harris and Moran 1987: 12) as well as the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and actions (Ahlstrom and Bruton 2010: 36).

Culture has been defined in many ways (Hofstede 2001: 9) to the extent that understanding culture is critical because individual's cultural orientation is present in every interaction (Zion and Kozleski 2005). Since communication is made up of basic characteristics involving symbols according to Myron and Koester (1996: 28–29), it should have a shared meaning (Griswold 1994: 19). Culture, in comparison with tradition, is the possession of multiple traditions, which spans different domains of behavior (Whiten and van Shaik 2007: 191). Culture is different from identity, since groups from the same country in a face-off on the basis of different identities often share the same cultural values (Hofstede et al. 2010: 23).

Most scholars of culture would agree on the characteristics of culture as being *learned, shared, transgenerational, symbolic, patterned, and adaptive* (Luthans and Doh 2012: 108). And it remained valid that Hofstede's (1980) position that about 80 percent of the differences in employees' attitudes and behaviors are influenced by national culture still has resonance today (Ochieng and Price 2009: 527).

2.3.2 Forms of Culture

With the characteristic complex nature of culture, it makes theoretical sense to have micro/subcultures and macrocultures (Hofstede et al. 2010: 364). Similarly, multicultural construction project teams exhibit different cultures in the forms of shared values and beliefs, being perceptions of how things are done in home countries (practices) and about how things should be done (preferred practices and beliefs) (Ochieng 2010). In congruence, authors have delineated among the different forms of culture as are discussed subsequently in this section.

The business culture, the way of doing business, of a company is a sub-system of a national culture and is easier to change than is national culture (Tashiro 1997: 79), which is more deeply entrenched in an individual (Low and Leong 2000: 309).

The national culture consists of deeply held values and beliefs (Low and Shi 2001: 276), thus influencing how managers and employees make decisions and interpret their roles (Mead 2002: 3). Similarly, *organizational culture* in comparison with *corporate culture* includes the notion of culture in private, state, and not-for-profit sectors, whereas the latter is restricted to the private sector (Mead and Andrews 2009: 80).

The significant influences of national culture are also buttressed in the realization that management can only exert control over the organizational culture to the extent that they influence members' attitudes to work, such that they cannot change the national culture (Mead and Andrews 2009: 84). Thus, national culture subsumes the organizational culture, corporate culture, and the business culture (and in that order). National culture is based on values, while an organizational culture is based on practices (Hofstede et al. 2010: 346). As a result, national culture, being premised on values, is widely held within a nation, while the organizational culture varies a great deal from one organization to another (Deresky 2011: 95) due to varying practices.

2.3.3 National Cultural Dimensions

There exist criteria to classifying phenomenon as cultural to allow detailed comparative analyses between two different human cultures (Whiten and van Shaik 2007: 191). A *dimension* is an aspect of a culture that can be measured relative to other cultures (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005: 23). The four major frameworks useful for analyzing and understanding the many dimensions of culture, according to Ahlstrom and Bruton (2010: 44–59), include the following:

- (a) Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's (1961) *dimensions of value orientation* regarded as a *sociological framework*. The six dimensions identified include the following: (1) time orientation; (2) space orientation; (3) activity orientation; (4) relationships among people; (5) relations to nature; and (6) basic human nature.
- (b) Hofstede's (1980) *dimensions of national culture* regarded as a *psychological framework*. The four primary dimensions identified include the following: (1) power distance; (2) individualism versus collectivism; (3) uncertainty avoidance; and (4) masculinity versus femininity. Hofstede (1991) and Hofstede et al. (2010) later added the Confucian dynamism or long-term orientation and the indulgence versus restraint aspects, respectively.
- (c) Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's (1997) *dimensions of national culture* regarded as an *expansive framework* based on Hofstede's work. The seven dimensions identified include the following: (1) individualism versus collectivism; (2) time orientation; (3) Universalism versus particularism; (4) neutral versus affective; (5) specific versus diffuse; (6) achievement versus ascription; and (7) relationship to nature.

- (d) House et al.'s (2004) *Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE)* study based on the afore-mentioned three frameworks. The nine cultural dimensions identified include the following: (1) power distance; (2) uncertainty avoidance; (3) humane orientation; (4) collectivism I (institutional); (5) collectivism II (in-group); (6) assertiveness; (7) gender egalitarianism; (8) future orientation; and (9) performance orientation.

2.3.3.1 Hofstede's National Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede's framework has been the most frequently cited regarding the relationship between national culture and work-related values (Bhagat and McQuaid 1982) and instrumental in furthering an understanding of cross-cultural management theory and practice (Fernandez et al. 1997: 43). It has been the architecture that has characterized much of contemporary cross-cultural quantitative research and the standard to which others must make reference (Bing 2004: 81). It has been the most widely accepted and frequently cited model for cross-cultural research (Van Ness et al. 2005: 2). It has been the most influential work in the field of cross-cultural management (Fang 2010: 155), plausibly, based on the largest organizationally based study ever conducted (Ahlstrom and Bruton 2010: 47). Hofstede (2009: 15) also predicted that the model would stand the test of time best and be the best building block for future development of theory due to its simplicity, empirical base, and predictive power. Consequently, Hofstede's framework has also been applied to study the construction industries in Singapore (Low and Shi 2002), Hong Kong (Phua and Rowlinson 2003), Turkey (Giritli and Oraz 2004), China (Tsai and Chi 2009), and Nigeria (Okolie and Okoye 2012) among other countries. Following from the foregoing similar studies, this study likewise adopts Hofstede's framework as discussed subsequently.

From Hofstede's previous studies (Hofstede 1991, 2001; Hofstede and Hofstede 2005), the five national cultural dimensions (NCDs) include the following:

- (a) Power distance: The extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. The Power Distance index (PDI) informs us about dependence relationships in a country. As against counter dependence, authority survives only where it is matched by obedience.
- (b) Individualism or collectivism: The extent to which the ties between individuals are either loose (individualism) or integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups (collectivism). The Individualism Index (IDV) reflects prevalence of individual interests over groups. In collectivist societies, the power of the group prevails over the power of the individual.
- (c) Masculinity or femininity: The desirability of assertive behavior (masculine) against modest behavior (feminine). A masculine society is where emotional gender roles are clearly distinct as against feminine society where emotional

gender roles overlap; that is, both men and women are supposed to be modest and tender. The masculinity (MAS) scores reflect this.

- (d) Uncertainty avoidance: The extent to which a society feels threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations. This could be expressed through intolerable anxiety or nervous stress and in a need for predictability (written and unwritten rules). The Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) reflects the avoidance of uncertainty in countries.
- (e) Long-term orientation (LTO) or short-term orientation: The extent of persistence (perseverance), thrift, ordering relationships by status, and having a sense of shame against on the one hand; and reciprocation of greetings, favors, and gifts, respect for tradition, protecting one's face, and personal steadiness and stability on the other hand. LTO was formerly called "Confucian dynamism."

2.3.4 Hofstede's Sixth National Cultural Dimension

Hofstede's (1980) seminal study based on data of employee values scores collected at IBM between 1967 and 1973, covering more than 70 countries, generated the first four dimensions. Hofstede (1991) added the fifth dimension (LTO), originally Confucian dynamism, following Michael Bond's led research on the Chinese Values Survey (Chinese Culture Connection 1987). Bond constituted the research as an additional international study among students with a survey instrument developed together with Chinese employees and managers (Hofstede 1991: 161).

Bond's study applied the LTO, based on Confucian dynamism, to 23 countries, while another study conducted by Michael Minkov in 2010 extended the LTO to a total of 93 countries. Minkov's analysis of the World Values Survey data for 93 countries also generated a sixth dimension called indulgence versus restraint (Hofstede et al. 2010). Minkov derived the sixth dimension by analyzing and then splitting an earlier construct of well-being versus survival into two beings conceptually and statistically (Hofstede et al. 2010: 280). The next paragraph provides a brief discussion on the sixth dimension.

Indulgence versus restraint (IVR): Indulgence stands for a tendency to allow relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun. Conversely, its opposite pole, restraint, reflects a conviction that such gratification needs to be curbed and regulated by strict social norms (Hofstede et al. 2010: 281). While this study acknowledges IVR as a new dimension to the existing five, it has viewed IVR as being relatively new and has yet to be validated by other studies thus not considered further. Arguably, IVR also shares similarities with LTO as defined under the fifth dimension.

Figure 2.1 presents the other five national cultural dimension (NCD) scores for China and Nigeria, which are central to this study, as well as that of the USA due to its *de factor global reference* (www.globethics.net). Figure 2.1 accords well with

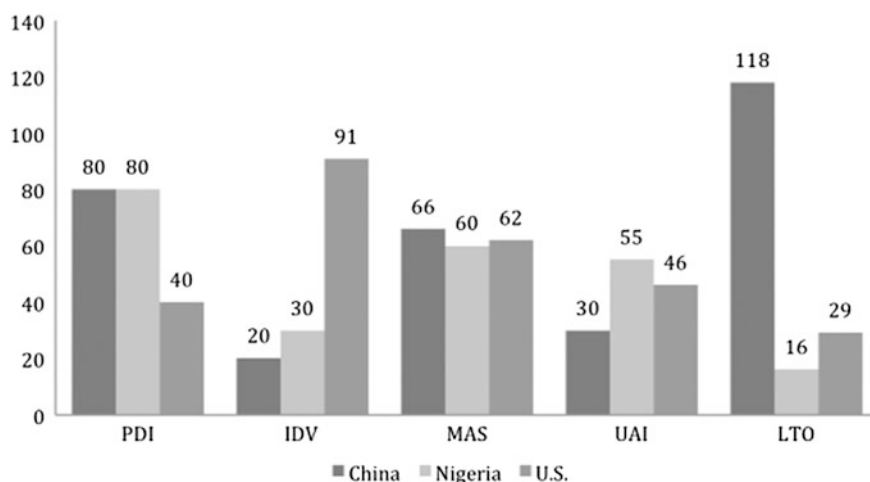


Fig. 2.1 NCD scores for China, Nigeria, and the USA

findings from other studies (such as Anedo 2012; Utomi 2008). From Utomi (2008: 44, 46), while significant difference exists between China and the USA in their operations in Africa, cultural differences, nonetheless, weigh heavily against the transfer of technological skills between the Chinese and the Nigerians. Hence, Anedo (2012: 92) has rightly noted that there are cultural differences between the Chinese and the Nigerians alike that need to be studied for greater mutual understanding (see Anedo 2011). These cultural differences affect business strategies, decision making (risk-taking or risk-avoiding), work-group characteristics, motivation system, and conflict management (Anedo 2012: 94–95).

2.4 Culture as a Source of Conflict in International Construction

2.4.1 Managing Culture in International Construction

International construction has created platforms for complex blends of cultures and nationalities (Rosenzweig 1998: 644). Multicultural team integration is a particular problem for clients and project managers (Ochieng and Price 2009: 529; Ochieng and Price 2010: 1160). While national culture is more deeply entrenched in an individual, changing the business culture can also be fraught with risks as the business culture reflects the national culture in strong forms (Low and Leong 2000: 309; Low and Shi 2001: 276).

International construction creates opportunities to develop products using the most up-to-date expertise and knowledge in a cost-effective manner (Clark and Ip 1999) through strategic pooling of resources and expertise for rewards or risks (Ling 2005: 510). Thus, greater cultural understanding and sensitivity in terms of personnel management by the parties involved in international construction projects is critical to the successful undertaking of such projects (Chan and Tse 2003: 375–376).

Cross-cultural issues present a further layer of complexity for international project managers (Henries and Souza-Poza 2005), and mismanaging cultural differences can render otherwise successful managers and organizations ineffective (Ling et al. 2007: 502; Low and Shi 2001: 276). International project managers are confronted with unfamiliar challenges that could lead to some degree of project failure (Burchell and Gilden 2008: 1054), which stems from “perception gap” arising from serious cultural assumptions (Ochieng and Price 2009: 529; Tashiro 1997: 1).

Culture is, and increasingly becoming, important in international construction as cultural differences often result in varying degrees of conflicts (Mohammed et al. 2008: 3). Cultural patterns in project environments reflect cultural patterns in the wider society (Mohammed et al. 2008: 4). Cross-cultural project environments create a web of patterns especially more evident in infrastructure projects, which by nature often include global economic assets and huge investments (Gerritsen 2009). As seen earlier in Fig. 2.1, differences exist between China and Nigeria along all the NCDs, save for PDI. Thus, project success transcends the ultimate based on the triple constraints of time, cost, and quality to the ways that project parties approach problems and conflicts (Mohd Danuri et al. 2010: 350).

2.4.2 Cultural Misunderstandings in International Construction

Project procurement and construction disputes are two of the major concerns in the construction industry with conflicts and disputes causing major disruptions to the industry (Latham 1994). The industry has the unenviable reputation of being highly adversarial (McGeorge and London 2007: 8). joint ventures (JVs), as a strategic alliance in international construction, are also facing major setback due to lack of complementarities between partners (Geringer 1991). This is caused by a failure to understand how cultural assumptions influence the development of a JV (Swierczek 1994: 40).

International contracting parties come from different cultural frameworks with different values, which can affect both the agreed objectives and the organizational design criteria for carrying out the objectives (Swierczek 1994: 46). The cultural differences also impede the smooth resolution of conflicts since conflict management behavior differs as a function of cultural values (Morris et al. 1998: 741). Particularly, the Chinese culture has been found to be a significant contributing

factor to conflict and its resolution in dealings with them (Chan and Suen 2005; Tsai and Chi 2009).

Cultural diversity in international projects cannot be avoided. A better understanding of the influential cultural factors will, however, help to reduce and manage conflicts in international construction projects (Chan and Tse 2003: 380). Conflicts are intrinsic in any construction development project, but when it gets in the way of executing the project efficiently, it adds undue burden and expenses to all the parties involved (Chinyere 2011: 61). If a project manager is familiar with the host culture, cultural misunderstandings are more likely to be avoided (Low and Shi 2001: 284) or resolved (Mohd Danuri et al. 2010: 350). By and large, while strategies exist to resolve the disputes, the only good construction dispute is one that is avoided (Skene and Shaban 2002) in the first instance.

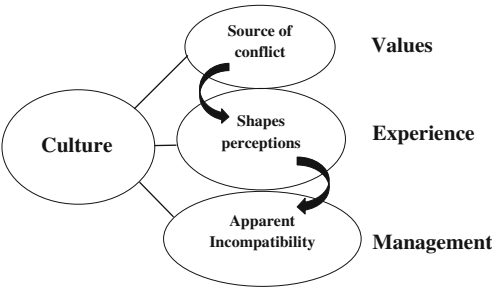
2.4.3 Interaction Between Culture, Perceptions, and Conflict

The definition of conflict has generated much debate that almost every academic discipline has its theoretical approach of understanding conflicts (Axt et al. 2006: 2). In a broader sense, conflict is the clashing of interests on national values of some duration and magnitude between at least two parties that are determined to pursue their interests and win their cases (HIIK 2005: 2). Pragmatically, conflict is a perception, by one or more people, that one or the other is interfering with each other's goals (Geisler 2011); it is the conditions in which people's concerns appear to be incompatible (Thomas 2006: 2).

Similarly, culture is also about one of the most enigmatic and controversial terms, which itself triggers conflicts very often (Bonacker and Imbusch 2005: 69). Culture is a determinant of perception (Avruch 1998), defined as the process whereby a sensory stimulation is translated into organized experience (Lindsay and Norman 1977). Hofstede et al. (2010) upheld that *culture is more often a source of conflict than of synergy and that cultural differences are a nuisance at best and often a disaster*. Culture frames the contexts in which conflict occurs by indicating among other things: resources for competition or objects of dispute; rules for contests; and cognitive, symbolic, and effective frameworks for interpreting actions (Avruch 1998).

The foregoing is underscored since by the fact that culture affects many of the communicational or interlocutory processes that lie at the heart of most conflict resolution techniques (Morris et al. 1998; Chan and Suen 2005). People's experience with structural features of procedures, directly or indirectly, impacts a sense of what to expect (Morris, Leung and Iyengar 2004: 128). Hence, culture has been construed as follows: influencing every aspect of the management process (Harris and Moran 1987: 12); the software of the mind (Hofstede 1991); the lens through which people ascribe meanings to the world (Núñez 2000: 1072); a moral compass (Hofstede 2009: 18); and the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience

Fig. 2.2 Relationship between culture, perceptions, and conflicts: a model



and actions (Ahlstrom and Bruton 2010: 36; Moran et al. 2011: 45). Figure 2.2 presents the interaction among culture, perceptions, and conflict.

From Fig. 2.2, culture differentiates between groups through shared values and is thus a potential source of conflicts (Hofstede 1980). Through experience, values create mental frameworks for interpreting actions, thus shaping the perceptions (Avruch 1998) and expectations (Morris et al. 2004: 128) of a particular group. These create apparent incompatibilities with another group, which, without careful understanding and management (Chan and Tse 2003: 380), degenerate into conflicts.

2.4.4 Conflict Intensities

Conflict is a feature of all human societies and, potentially, an aspect of all social relationships (Avruch 1998: 24). Conflict management is the main difference between a healthy relationship and an unhealthy one. However, when embroiled in a controversy that cannot be dealt with by managing conflict, learning to resolve conflict (conflict resolution) is the next step. Conflicts occur at the personal, national, and international levels such that it is possible to identify intrapersonal conflict, interpersonal conflict, intragroup conflict, and inter-group conflict (SDD 2003: 24). Figure 2.3 presents the progressive phases of conflict.

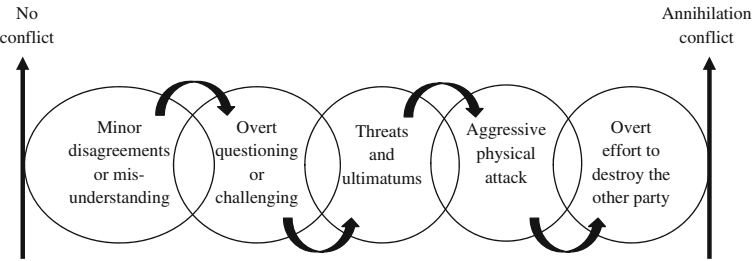


Fig. 2.3 Conflict intensity scale. *Source* Adapted from SDD (2003: 32)

From Fig. 2.3, since a conflict develops in intensity over time, cross-cultural teams should develop flexible disposition with regard to their perceptions and expectations. More critically, during the early stage of a minor disagreement or misunderstanding, so as to better harness the latent benefits that seeming threats may have overshadowed. The longer that conflict is left to escalate, the harder it becomes to use constructive communication and negotiation skills to resolve the conflict (SDD 2003: 33). A conflict does not just happen nor escalate on its own, people make choices that either escalate conflict or lead to more constructive outcomes (Tjosvold 2006: 91).

A research project conflict simulation model (COSIMO) has developed a methodology for evaluating the dynamic model of conflict (HIIK 2005). The HIIK's (2005) model incorporates five intensity stages: latent conflict, manifested conflict, crisis, severe crisis, and war. As presented in Table 2.1, the most important difference between the five stages of conflicts is that the first two are nonviolent in nature, while the subsequent three include the use of violence during the conflict.

Table 2.1 Conflict intensity stages

State of violence	Intensity group	Level of intensity	Name of intensity	Definition
Nonviolent	Low	1	Latent conflict	A positional difference on definable values of national meaning is considered to be a latent conflict if respective demands are articulated by one of the parties and perceived by the other as such
		2	Manifest conflict	A manifest conflict includes the use of measures that are located in the preliminary stage to violent force. This includes, for example, verbal pressure, threatening explicitly with violence, or the imposition of economic sanctions
Violent	Medium	3	Crisis	A crisis is a tense situation in which at least one of the parties uses violent force in sporadic incidents
	High	4	Severe crisis	A conflict is considered to be a severe crisis if violent force is repeatedly used in an organized way
		5	War	A war is a type of violent conflict in which violent force is used with certain continuity in an organized and systematic way. The conflict parties exercise extensive measures, depending on the situation. The extent of destruction is massive and of long duration

Source Adapted from HIIK (2005: 2)

From some of the literatures reviewed on the operations of Chinese firms in Nigeria (Aginam 2010; Alike 2011; Ukaoha 2009; Wang 2008), the conflicts experienced by the Chinese firms have transcended from being latent to being manifest as will be discussed in detail in a later Section.

2.4.5 Conflict-handling Modes

The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) is one of the world's best instruments for understanding how different-handling styles affect interpersonal and group dynamics. The over 30-year successful adoption of the TKI help individuals in a variety of settings to understand how different conflict styles affect personal and group dynamics (Schaubhut 2007: 1) underscore its continued relevance. The TKI measures five "conflict-handling modes" or ways of dealing with conflicts, which include the following: competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating as presented in Fig. 2.4.

The five modes can be described along two dimensions of assertiveness and cooperativeness. The former refers to the extent to which a party tries to satisfy its own concerns, while the latter refers to the extent to which a party tries to satisfy the concerns of another (Thomas and Kilmann 1974, 2007).

- (a) Competing is assertive and not cooperative.
- (b) Accommodating is cooperative and not assertive.
- (c) Avoiding is neither assertive nor cooperative.
- (d) Collaborating is both assertive and cooperative.
- (e) Compromising falls in the middle of both dimensions.

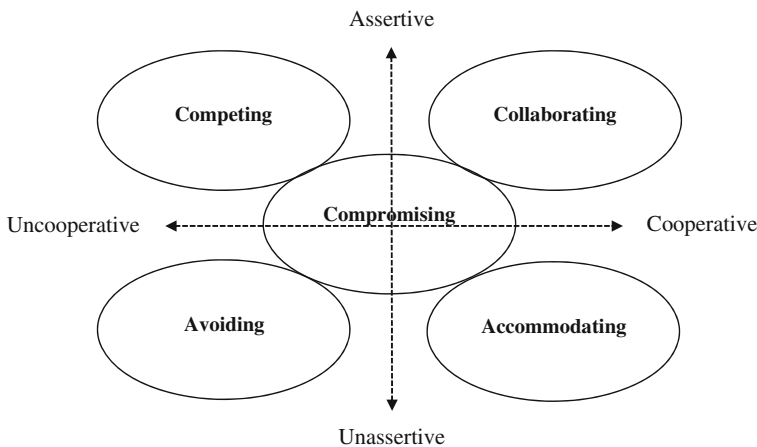


Fig. 2.4 Dimensions and conflict-handling modes for the TKI assessment. *Source* Adapted from Thomas (2006)

2.5 National Culture and TQM

2.5.1 Influence of National Culture on TQM Implementation

National culture influences organizations and their operations (Joynt and Warner 1985: 25). Past studies (Brian et al. 2001; Jäger 1996; Krüger 1999; McAdam 1996; Ngowi 2000; Nitin et al. 2011) also support the need for quality implementation to be responsive to national culture. Souza-Poza et al. (2001) and Noronha (2002), respectively, theorized bidirectionality and culture-specificity between TQM implementation and national culture. The relationship is premised on minimizing conflicts encountered in a cross-cultural organization, which impacts the implementation of TQM (Low 1998).

While TQM organizations are constantly evolving in response to external influences, national culture remains an influencing factor that creates risk when conducting and managing international business (Sennara and Hartman 2002). Previous studies exist on appropriate quality for Northern Ireland (McAdam 1996), TQM in Austria with respect to a national quality award (NQA) system (Jäger (1996), impact of national culture on quality management in Europe (Brian et al. 2001), TQM consideration for the quality heritage of the national business culture in Europe (Krüger 1999), and the influence of national culture on receptivity of TQM in Botswana (Ngowi 2000).

There are more than one hundred NQAs in different categories with the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) of USA, Deming prize (DP) of Japan and European Quality Award (EQA) being the most renowned (Bu et al. 2012: 25; Nitin et al. 2011). NQAs serve as proxies to culture-sensitive TQM implementation (Hendricks and Singhal 2000), which means that foreign firms need to adopt suitable TQM in different cultures. Contrastingly, this will need to be balanced against their deep-seated cultural values since the business culture reflects the national culture in strong forms (Low and Leong 2000: 309; Low and Shi 2001: 276).

2.5.2 National Culture and TQM Implementation

Often times, it has been very difficult to implement TQM successfully due to a failure to pay sufficient attention to the cultural and structural variables that influence TQM (Tata and Prasad 1998: 703). The need for companies to increase their level of competitiveness for strategic market positioning and continuity due to increasing global demands (Texeira-Quirós et al. 2010: 258) has necessitated the adoption of NQAs. From Calingo's (2002) study to Mohammed and Mann's (2010) study, concerted efforts are continuously being intensified to understand, measure, and document excellent global NQAs for adoption at the different levels of strategic operations. Some other studies have focused on regional NQAs such as in Africa (Alonso-Almeida 2011) and Asia (Mann 2011) and how they compare globally.

Table 2.2 National quality awards in selective countries

S. no	Name	Abbreviations used	Countries
1	Australian Business Excellence Award	ABEQ	Australia
2	Canada Awards for Excellence	CAE	Canada
3	China Quality Award ^a	CQA	China
4	Deming Prize	DP	Japan
5	Egyptian Quality Award	EgyQA	Egypt
6	European Foundation for Quality Management	EFQM	Europe
7	German National Quality Award	GQA	Germany
8	Golden Peacock National Quality Award	GPNQA	India
9	Hong Kong Management Association Quality Award	HKMA	Hong Kong
10	Kenya Quality Award	KQA	Kenya
11	Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award	MBNQA	USA
12	Mauritian National Quality Award	MNQA	Mauritius
13	Moroccan National Quality Award	Morocco	Morocco
14	Singapore Quality Award	SQA	Singapore
15	South African Excellence Award	SAEA	South Africa
16	Taiwan National Quality Award	TNQA	Taiwan

Source Adapted from Alonso-Almeida (2011), Nitin et al. (2011) and ^a Xiang et al. (2010)

NQAs serve to encourage and minimize conflicts inherent in an otherwise direct TQM implementation (Mohrman et al. 1995). Table 2.2 presents some of the common NQAs.

The list is not exhaustive but suffices to corroborate the need for TQM implementation with respect to national culture. Alonso-Almeida and Fuentes-Frías (2011) provide a comprehensive list of NQAs from the mid-1950s to the early 2000s, collectively referring to them as international quality awards and excellence quality models (IQA and EQM). With many models and where foreign companies fail to adopt a pragmatic approach, conflicts result. These are manifested through role conflicts among the employees (McNabb and Sepic 1995), which spiral into affecting other TQM practices (Lin 2012).

2.5.3 Case Studies of TQM Implementation

From the preceding Section, TQM implementation in different countries must bear on the national culture to minimize the chances of conflict, which can affect productivity and, ultimately, quality. NQAs and other similar initiatives serve as possible panaceas for effective TQM implementation to derive maximum benefits to both the implementing firms and the markets they operate in. Some case studies of such approaches include as follows:

2.5.3.1 USA

The great commercial success of Japanese companies and their extensive penetration of the European and US markets reflected changing commercial needs and quality expectations of customers (Krüger 1999: 261). TQM began to be introduced in the USA around 1980, primarily in response to severe competitive challenges from Japanese companies (Prajogo and Sohal 2001: 539). Quality campaign was initiated and led to the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Improvement Act of 1987 (Public Law 100-107).

Widespread TQM adoption became a win/win proposition for stakeholders, including employees benefiting from increased involvement and implementation of work processes with better control over performance (Mohrman et al. 1995). The USA adopted quality management as a way of life and of giving something back to the society (Koetsier and Rütjes 1995; NIST 2010: 2; Ortner 2000). And while TQM's origin has been linked to Japan (Powell 1995: 16), in a better perspective, the fact is that most theoretical developments in the advancement of TQM were made in the USA, whereas Japan held the initiative in terms of application (Martinez-Lorente et al. 1998).

From Japan's original total quality control (TQC), the USA advanced TQM replacing the word "control" with "management" with the reasoning that quality is not just a matter of control, it has to be managed (Martinez-Lorente et al. 1998). Having, hitherto, adopted management by control, US forced realization was a result of international competitive pressures and increasing demands for quality products and services (Arditi and Gunaydin 1997: 237). The adaptation persisted that although most US companies have their quality goals, their systems and processes do not completely relate to Deming's 14 points, thus not achieving TQM to the maximum extent (Rizwan and Syed 2009). Thus, despite TQM having contributed to the global competitiveness of many Japanese organizations, it has been difficult to implement in European and US organizations due to the ethnological cultures (Sousa-Poza et al. 2001). This has been attributed to the different corporate cultures being practiced due to the different cultural orientations of the different regions (task- or people-oriented).

2.5.3.2 China

TQM was adopted in Hong Kong with greater emphasis in the supply chain context on the notion that TQM works horizontally across functions and departments, involving all employees, top to bottom, and extends backward and forward to include the supply chain and customer chain (Wong and Fung 1997). Generally, TQM is driven by production efficiency in China, and by the government's directive with a centralized hierarchical organization in which resources, products and services were allocated almost exclusively by administrative means (Chen 1998: 714). Consequently, TQM has been found being extensively adopted in China with the benefits of its practices evident among the Chinese firms

(Yusuf et al. 2007). The widespread adoption of the ISO 9000 QMS in China (ISO 2011) also lends credence to the foregoing.

Chinese firms realized the need to transform themselves into being consistent with the TQM paradigm in order to be able to meet the requirements of a market economy (Chin, Pun and Hua 2001), and they realized that making such a transformation was difficult because it transcends mere change of techniques to encompassing change of systems and practices (Pun 2001). Thus, while China's "open door" policy involved the incorporation of new management techniques, including TQM (Li et al. 2003: 1026), the impact of TQM on the performance of the Chinese firms has been found to be depending on the degree of its adoption (Yusuf et al. 2007). A reason being that at the core of TQM is leadership and empowerment, which relate to the organizational culture influenced on the other hand by the national culture. And without profound knowledge, management action could cause ruination (Deming 1989).

Further, Li et al. (2003) study on TQM in China revealed an uneven implementation with substantial differences especially in the application of quality measures across different forms of ownership. Similarly, Chen et al.'s (2007) study also revealed that a majority of the active international Chinese firms in Africa were from Beijing, the capital. As a result, with China's large population, there is bound to be variance in the adoption and implementation of TQM across the country with firms in the capital in better stead to adopting new management techniques.

Noronha's (2002, 2003) studies on China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan found close relationship between the underlying cultural values and the fundamental TQM principles to theorize culture-specific TQM. With rapid adoption, TQM has been found to be having positive impacts on the performance of Chinese firms that have adopted the concept with more widespread application in congruence with TQM growing adoption (Yusuf et al. 2007). More critically, emphasis has also shifted to the macro institutions in China, which has also been found constituting serious impediments to Chinese firms' effective TQM implementation (Wu and Zhu 2012).

2.5.3.3 Nigeria

While many top executives of organizations in Nigeria are aware of TQM, the level of implementation has been very low (Akinola et al. 2012: 233; Nosakhare 2000: 7). Nonetheless, the successful implementation of TQM will assist Nigerian firms in strategic positioning to compete locally and globally (Nosakhare 2000). In particular, environmental factors such as political will backed with commitment will drive and improve TQM in the Nigerian context (Adeoti 2011: 20). In addition, the roles of holistic training on TQM and its application in the Nigerian construction industry have also been highlighted as exemplified by Iruobe et al.'s (2011) study.

With a drastic lag in quality certification (Osagie 2012), Nigeria could certainly promote the quality of its training by embracing quality in a more holistic manner, establishing internal quality assurance mechanisms and establishing the culture of quality (Akeusola and Ofulue 2011: 15). The Standards Organization of Nigeria

(SON) has been active in ensuring quality conformance in Nigeria, which suggests that the search for TQM in Nigeria through benchmarking and localization efforts, through the SON Conformity Assessment Program (SONCAP) and Mandatory Conformity Assessment Program (MANCAP) is already gaining momentum.

Idrus and Sodangi (2010: 36) proposed a quality performance evaluation model covering the company and site levels of construction projects in Nigeria, identifying TQM under the corporate level. TQM practice is not prevalent among the Nigerian construction firms due to clients' inadequate knowledge and SON's leniency and/or incapacitated abilities to enforce quality requirements (Akinola et al. 2012). Still, previous studies have underscored leadership styles and reward systems (Ehigie and Akpan 2004) as well as environmental factors (Osuagwu 2002) as being important to TQM implementation in Nigeria. Following, a domesticated version of TQM that responds better to the Nigerian culture has been launched (Irechuckwu 2010), validating the bidirectional and culture-specific relationships between culture and TQM.

2.5.4 Future Directions of TQM

There is the bidirectional causative model in which TQM implementation plan is adapted to the national culture in which it is being implemented (Sousa-Poza et al. 2001: 747–748) as well as a culture-specific TQM created when TQM is implemented in a cross-cultural context (Noronha 2003: 355). However, these models are only useful after significant cultural differences between contracting parties have been identified. It follows that cultural differences need to be addressed before devising strategies to achieving successful TQM implementation. This study aims to fill this identified gap in the relevant literatures reviewed.

2.6 Summary

This chapter reviewed the literatures on this study's key tenets, namely quality, culture, and conflict. It found ISO 9001 QMS as being the launch pad into TQM, premised on continuous improvement. As such, TQM practicing construction firms are able to adapt to changes internally and externally. However, TQM successful implementation is contingent on how well it relates to the national culture, which subsumes the other forms of culture. Consequently, the bidirectional and culture-specific relationships between culture and TQM necessitate locally responsive approaches by the adopting firms including in China and Nigeria. This minimizes conflicts that, otherwise, detract on the quality performance of the firms. This study is significant by investigating the foregoing for the Chinese working in Nigeria given their cultural differences with the Nigerians.

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Babatunde, O.; Sui Pheng, L.

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