

With increasing globalization of organizations, Organizational Development (OD) technology is more likely to be transferred and applied outside the U. S.. It remains unclear, however, how people from different countries will react to OD methods originated from the U. S.. Unfortunately, the paucity of empirical research germane to ethical developments in OD practice provides scant basis for addressing the preceding questions. Indeed, there is no evidentiary basis to imply if OD consultants working in non-U.S. environments can effectively function without compromising or modifying their ethical positions. For example, is OD even acceptable to their organizations (some cultures may resist external intervention)? If so, which methods are more or less applicable? Do these methods require different programs of implementation? In addition, to what extent are the values underlying the practice of OD shared cross-culturally? What unanticipated value conflicts might OD consultants face when working in other cultures? Few of these questions have been addressed in the previous literature. If OD technology is to be successfully transferred to other cultures,

answers to these questions are particularly critical if the profession expects to develop an ethical code sensitive to cultural diversity.

There is a growing body of literature suggestive of the need to address the cross-cultural issues in the application of OD technology. For example, Black and Mendenhall (1991, p. 178), have noted that: "negotiations between business people of different cultures often fail because of problems related to cross-cultural differences." Von Glinow and Teagarden's (1988, p. 320) discussed problems inherent in the transfer of human resource management (HRM) technology: "HRM technology will have to be modified to accommodate many of the Chinese system constraints outlined earlier – U.S. HRM technology is not culture free." Similar to HRM, the effect of applying OD technology outside the U. S. is yet to be known. Harris and Moran (1991, p. 13) also made similar comments about the globalization of management theory: "Oversimplification can lead to dangerous assumptions, so international leaders need cultural sensitivity in their analysis of world literature and trends in management and commerce."

In this study, we will explore the role of culture in the application of OD technology. When a particular OD technology is applied, it involves the interaction between consultants and clients. Their role differences have been modeled as the source of ethical dilemmas of the consultant-client relationship (White and Wooten, 1983). We further propose that the role differences between consultants and clients are caused by interaction between two variables -- their national cultures and ethical decision-making styles. As a result, culture plays a significant role of how ethical dilemmas occur in the consultant-client relationship and how each dilemma can be resolved. Later in the paper, we also explain the consequences of cultural differences along stages of OD application and types of ethical dilemmas.