

CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY

SULAIMAN ALMAIMAN

Developing a Framework to Facilitate a Culture for Continuous
Improvement within Nonprofit Organisations:
The Case of Saudi Arabia

SCHOOL OF AEROSPACE, TRANSPORT AND
MANUFACTURING

PhD

Academic Years: 2014 - 2018

Supervisor: Dr Patrick McLaughlin

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ABSTRACT

Current research in the field of continuous improvement shows that organisational culture influences the likelihood of organisations succeeding in their mission to continuously improve. However, little has been done to investigate how organisational culture can actually foster continuous improvement.

Particular aspects of organisational culture seem to be associated with successful continuous improvement. Yet, despite the apparent interest in the tools and techniques of continuous improvement, these practices have not yet been fully determined. While the for-profit sector, suffering from exhaustive competition, would be glad to discover these aspects, it is a major concern that nonprofit organisations cannot survive without continuous improvement, as they too need to respond dynamically to the rapid and dramatic changes in today's world.

This research asks what procedures and interventions would facilitate a culture of continuous improvement in nonprofit organisations. As the case study for this research, the Saudi nonprofit sector has been chosen, as little empirical research exists on continuous improvement in developing countries. Additional factors for choosing Saudi Arabia are that the country's economic growth rate is increasing, and the ambitious "Saudi Vision 2030" aims to expand and enable the nonprofit sector to increase its impact on the nation's well-being and economy.

This exploratory study adopts an interpretive paradigm whereby reality is socially constructed and treated as subjective, consisting of multiple entities that can be explored from the perspectives of the research participants. A grounded research methodology and an action research approach focused on an issue to bring to light the cultural features that foster continuous improvement. Grounded theory was the chosen approach for collecting and analysing the qualitative data; thus, the theory that were constructed was grounded in the data themselves. Qualitative data were suggested as appropriate for answering the research question. Thirty-one interviews in thirteen nonprofit organisations yielded data

which, when analysed revealed six themes. These themes were then returned to the participants through self-assessment surveys to gauge their organisation's proximity to the ideal position. After that, six proposed interventions were developed to help organisations to shift gradually to the ideal position of a continuous improvement culture. These interventions were developed from the basis of the literature and focus group discussions. Finally, a conceptual framework was synthesised to visualise the impact of an organisation's culture on its continuous improvement and to show how this impact could be achieved through similar intervention.

The originality of this work comes from the fact that while Saudi Arabia is attracting intense interest from the international research community, little research has been done on continuous improvement practices there, in part because Saudi nonprofit organisations may have been hesitant in granting access to foreign researchers. This study offers one of the first "inside views" of Saudi nonprofit organisations with reliable data, focusing particularly on continuous improvement.

Keywords:

Organisational Culture, Continuous Improvement, Nonprofit Organisations, Saudi Arabia, Operations Management, Grounded Theory, Qualitative Research, Social Constructivism.

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Undertaking doctoral research is a critical decision. I was blessed to obtain this chance at an early stage of my life, and I hope to benefit from its impact as much as possible. This journey was more challenging because it has taken place beside some major obstacles, including a few operations that forced me to have some short breaks and making it hard to maintain a proper life balance. Praise be to Allah, for without His great mercy this achievement could not have happened. Along the way, many people have assisted me and some warrant special mention.

This research has been funded by the government of Saudi Arabia, which competes increasingly in all fields. I am proud to participate in achieving our ambitious Vision 2030.

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My gratitude is extended to my parents for their endless practical and emotional support since I was a child, which is a debt that I shall struggle to repay.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AUD	Australian Dollar
CC	Cultural Change
CI	Continuous Improvement
CIC	Continuous Improvement Culture
CQI	Continuous Quality Improvement
CRM	Customer Relationships Management
CSFs	Critical Success Factors
EFQM	European Framework for Quality Management
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
GBP	Great Britain Pound
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	Gross domestic product
GT	Grounded Theory
IRRA	inter-rater reliability assessment
JIT	Just in Time
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
MBNQA	Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award
MLSD	Ministry of Labour and Social Development
NC	National Culture
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NPOs	Nonprofit Organisations
OC	Organisational Culture
PDCA	Plan-Do-Check-Act
PDSA	Plan-Do-Study-Act
SAR	Saudi Arabian Riyal
TPS	Toyota Production System
TQM	Total Quality Management
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
VSM	Value Stream Mapping

LIST OF PUBLICATION

- Almaiman, S. and McLaughlin, P. (2016) 'Success factors to facilitate continuous improvement culture within Saudi nonprofit organisations', *The 23th EurOMA conference*. Trondheim, Norway.
- Almaiman, S. et al. (2017) 'Developing a framework to facilitate an improvement culture: The Case of Saudi Arabia', *The 7th GIKA conference*. Lisbon, Portugal: Thomson Reuters.
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- Almaiman, S. and Mclaughlin, P. (2018) 'Developing an Improvement Culture within Nonprofit Organisations: A Grounded Theory Case of Saudi Arabia', *The 31st International Business Information Management Association Conference*. Milan, Italy: International Business Information Management Association (IBIMA).
- Almaiman, S. and McLaughlin, P. (2018) 'Facilitating a Continuous Improvement Culture: a Literature Review', *The 16th International Conference on Manufacturing Research 2018*. Skövde, Sweden: The International Conference on Manufacturing Research (ICMR).
- Almaiman, S. and McLaughlin, P. (2018) 'Investigating the Role of Organisational Culture in Facilitating Continuous Improvement within Saudi Nonprofit Organisations'. *Journal of Human Resources Management Research*, Vol. 2018, Article ID 724461, DOI: 10.5171/2018.724461.
- Almaiman, S. and McLaughlin, P. (Submitted) 'Facilitating a Continuous Improvement Culture: a Literature Review'. *Taylor and Francis journal of Production and Manufacturing Research*.

1 INTRODUCTION

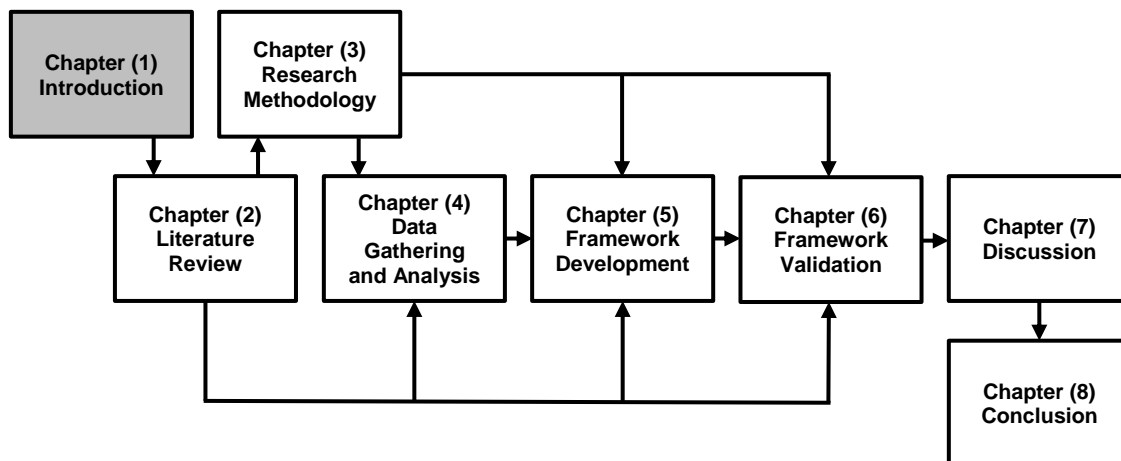


Figure 1: Research overview (chapter one)

1.1 Research Background

Despite the great challenges facing nonprofit organisations (NPOs), they continue to play an increasingly influential role at all levels. The NPO sector contributes to overall development, enhances well-being and quality of life, lowers unemployment levels, and participates in the economy through partnership arrangements with the private sector (Anheier, 2014). The sector also contributes significantly to gross domestic product (Salamon *et al.*, 2013). When NPOs flourish in a society, they clearly indicate that the society has a high level of humanitarian values and civilisation.

Continuous improvement (CI) is a fundamental driver of operational excellence. It is a concept that impacts on all organisations and particularly those in the nonprofit sector, because processes for improvement do not require sophisticated tools or advanced skills (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2016). In addition, CI has significant advantages, as it comprehensively strengthens and sustains productivity with effective and efficient use of resources (Bhuiyan and Baghel, 2005). However, serious barriers must be surmounted to succeed at CI (Lodgaard *et al.*, 2016).

The challenge that faces many organisations is how to foster CI and embed its spirit in their organisational cultures. Bessant *et al.* (2001) report that although there are many programs for CI, the failure rate is high. There are specific values

and behaviours associated with CI (van Dun, Hicks and Wilderom, 2017). In the last decade, several studies have confirmed the crucial role of organisational culture in implementing operational management approaches. There is no clear consensus, however, to the question of what this role consists of, especially in an academically neglected sector, such as the nonprofit world, based on what has been concluded from the literature review. It is notable that the nonprofit sector in the United States, where it is huge, lost more than 200,000 organisations between 2010 and 2013 (Casey, 2016).

Becoming a continuously improving organisation demands more than discussion and resources; it requires a proper organisational culture (Ahmed, Loh and Zairi, 1999). Successful CI depends on certain cultural factors (van Dun, Hicks and Wilderom, 2017). The literature in this field reveals that the primary function of CI in any organisation is to improve processes (Iberahim *et al.*, 2016). CI also develops services and products by establishing gradual, but incremental, improvements or developments in an organisation. CI involves tactics and the belief that all small changes are significant for organisations (Sila and Ebrahimpour, 2003). Specifically, the tactics of CI target the organisational culture, seeking opportunities rather than possible problems (Sohal and Terziovski, 2000).

There is a clear demand from different sectors for models of maturity in CI, with indicators including guidelines, that could lead to further progress (Fryer and Ogden, 2014). Developing such a framework would add great value to NPOs, and other organisations would also find it useful, which would fill the gap that has been identified in the literature review.

1.2 Research Context

Qualitative research requires that the the research context is suitably defined (Holliday, 2016). In this research, the nonprofit sector in Saudi Arabia is the context being explored. Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Middle East, and a member of the G20 (Al Saud, 2013). The Saudi GDP in 2016 was worth more than 646 billion USD (The World Bank, 2018). An ambitious part of its vision is to raise the nonprofit sector's contribution to the GDP by 2030 from the current level that is less than 1% to 5% (Council of Economic and Development Affairs,

2016). This means increasing the capability of NPOs, which will require concerted effort. Further clarification of the nonprofit sector in general and that of the particular Saudi context is highlighted in the following sections.

1.2.1 Nonprofit sector

There are three popular terms used to describe this sector: politicians often refer to it as the 'third sector'; economists tend to use the term 'nonprofit sector'; and others call it 'civil society organisations' (King Khalid Foundation, 2018). When choosing the most appropriate term to be used in this this research, 'nonprofit sector' was deemed the most accurate for the following reasons:

- Some key NPOs in Saudi Arabia are not necessarily nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and it is not appropriate to exclude them.
- It has been noticed when searching for relevant articles that the term 'NPO' reveals more results than other synonyms, which is assumed to be more recognised in the literature and this helps to include more published work in the research scope.
- NPOs looks more inclusive (for different types of NPOs) than the term: 'civil society organisations'. This inclusion is important in this exploratory study to be open to all types of NPOs, where there is no determinist yet to narrow the focus into certain types of NPOs.

Foundations as an institutional philanthropy, as a key component of the NPO sector, has a global reach. There are more than 260,358 foundations in 38 countries and Saudi Arabia has more than 121 foundations, which is the largest number in the Middle East and Arab world (Johnson, 2018).

The nonprofit sector is now a major component in national economies; studies show that the impact of NPOs has increased significantly all over the world (Salamon *et al.*, 2013). Casey (2016) confirmed that there are limited research projects have made a significant contribution to our understanding of the nonprofit sector worldwide and each covers only a limited number of countries.

Table 1 shows the contribution of NPOs to GDP in sixteen countries according to Casey (2016).

Table 1: The contribution of NPOs to GDP (Casey, 2016)

Country	Nonprofit contribution to GDP%
Canada	8.1
Isreal	7.1
Mozambique	6.7
USA	6.6
Belgium	5.8
New Zeland	5.3
Japan	5.2
Australia	4.9
France	4.7
Norway	4.6
Brazil	3.4
Kyrgyzatan	2.3
Mexico	2.2
Portugal	2.0
Czech Republic	1.6
Thailand	0.8

At the end of April 2016, the nonprofit sector in the United States, the largest in terms of the number of organisations, contained more than 1,570,000 organisations of various types. For example, charity organisations held assets of more than 3 trillion USD in 2013 and earned more than 1.73 trillion USD. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation alone has assets valued at 34.6 billion USD, and the annual health relief funding that it provides amounts to more than the total budget of the World Health Organisation (NCCS, 2017).

The number of charities registered in the United Kingdom totalled 167,109 by the end of 2016, which produced a total annual income of 73.11 billion GBP (Charity Commission, 2017). One of the largest examples of these organisations is the Wellcome Trust, which was established in 1936 to research ways to improve human and animal health. The value of the Wellcome assets is more than 2 billion GBP (Wellcome Trust, 2017).

According to 2010 statistics Australia had more than 600,000 NPOs registered across the country, with one million employees working in this sector along with more than six million volunteers (ACNC, 2017). In 2007 they added 43 billion AUD to Australia's GDP.

In Saud Arabia, it has been reported that the number of NPOs has increased by more than 20%, from 739 in 2015 to 900 in 2016 (ICNL, 2016). This reflects

increasing support for the expansion of this sector and a desire to see its positive impact.

1.2.2 Saudi Arabian context

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the largest country on the Arabian Peninsula, as shown in the map below (Figure 2), which occupies 80% of the total land area, and had a population of over thirty-two million in 2017, with 70% of them under the age of thirty (Vietor and Sheldahl-Thomason, 2018).



Figure 2: Saudi Arabia Administrative map (source: <https://www.cia.gov>)

Saudi Arabia has become a major player in a number of areas: for instance, in 2017 it was one of the ten countries in control of the world's energy supplies (USNews, 2018). Recently It has been progressively changing: it jumped five

places between 2015-2016 in the transparency index among 180 countries to be the 11th ranked country among the G20 (Transparency International, 2017).

Saudi culture has Islam as its recognised religion. Globally, Islam has an estimated 1.8 billion adherents, which is approximately 24% of the world’s population; the number of followers is expected to reach 2.2 billion by 2030 (Pew Research Center, 2017). Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Islam, is one of the world’s most religious countries (Al Ahwal *et al.*, 2016). Islam is assumed to shape the mentality and behaviour of the Saudi people, along with their Arab traditions (Bjerke and Al-Meer, 1993) pervading Saudi life (Hofstede, 1991). Islam promotes a set of moral values and social behaviours based on the text of the Qur’an and sayings of the prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him (Kabasakal and Bodur, 2002). However, it should be noted that not everything in an Islamic country necessarily represents the whole Islamic values (Albassam and Ntim, 2017). Vietor and Sheldahl-Thomason (2018) describe the practice of Islam through the five (well-known) obligations, which are:

1. Reciting that there is no God but God and Muhammad in the Messengers of God (Shahada).
2. Praying five times a day (Salat).
3. Giving 2.5% of one’s total net worth to the poor, which is called (Zakat).
4. Fasting during the month of Ramadan in the lunar calendar (Sawm).
5. Taking a pilgrimage to Mecca during one’s lifetime (Hajj).

Saudi national culture has been scaled through the lens of Hofstede et al.’s six-dimensional model (2010), which revealed the following scores for each dimension, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Hofstede et al. dimensions of national culture (2010)

Dimension	Meaning
Power distance	The extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.
Individualism	The degree of interdependence a society maintains among its members.
Masculinity	The fundamental issue here is what motivates people, wanting to be the best (Masculine) or liking what you do (Feminine).

Uncertainty avoidance	The extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations and have created beliefs and institutions that try to avoid these.
Long term orientation	How every society has to maintain some links with its own past while dealing with the challenges of the present and future.
Indulgence	The extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses.

Figure 3 below shows that the power distance in Saudi Arabia is very high (95) and tends to be more centralised, where people accept a hierarchical order with no need for further justification. In the second dimension (individualism), the score was low (25), which shows that Saudi is considered a collectivistic society, where loyalty in a collectivist culture is paramount, and over-rides most other societal rules and regulations. Masculinity in Saudi society seems to be relatively high (60). In masculine countries the emphasis is on equity, competition and performance and conflicts are resolved by fighting them out. Saudi culture has a preference for avoiding uncertainty (80). Countries exhibiting high uncertainty avoidance maintain rigid codes of belief and behaviour. Saudi culture has revealed a low score in long term orientation dimension (36), which exhibits great respect for traditions and a focus on achieving quick results. In the last dimension (indulgence), Saudi has achieved 52, which does not point to a clear preference on this dimension (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, 2010).

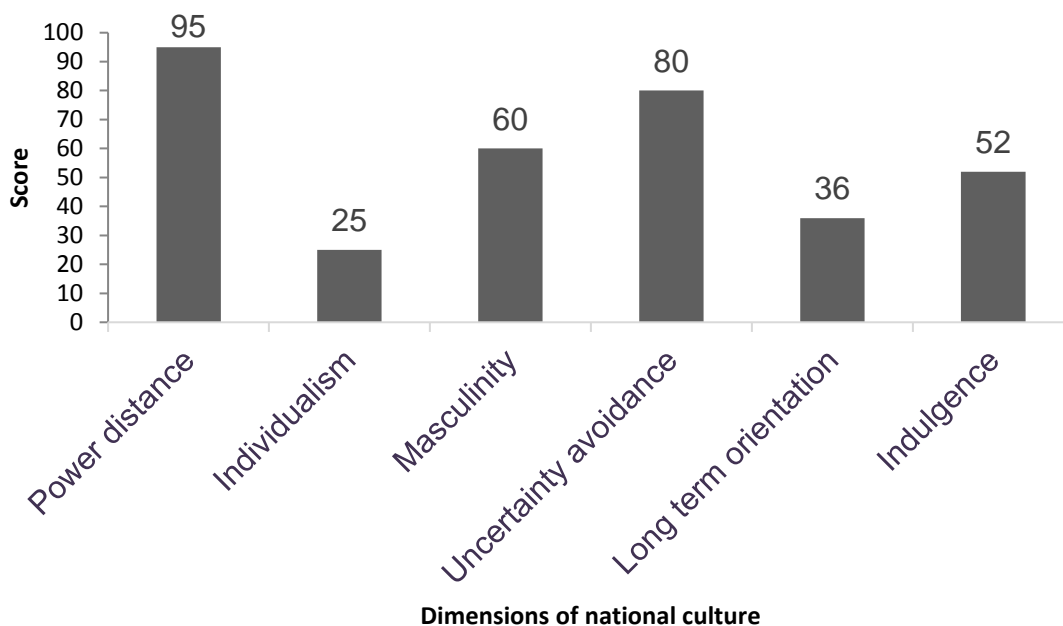


Figure 3: Saudi national culture according to Hofstede et al. dimensions (2010)

1.2.3 Saudi nonprofit sector

The ministry in Saudi Arabia which regulates the affairs of NPOs is the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD). The ministry categorises NPOs into two types: charities and foundations. Of the 900 organisations registered as NPOs in April 2016, 736 were charities and 164 foundations (ICNL, 2016). According to government regulations (MLSD, 2017), the legal differences between these two categories include the following:

- Private foundations can be established by individuals or by groups, whereas charities may be established only by groups of at least 20 volunteers.
- Foundations should generally support projects which are operated by charities; hence, they cannot benefit from government funding.
- The detailed existing regulations issued by the MLSD are meant to guide charities alone.

Nonetheless, the two are similar in some regards, according to regulations that correspond to the 'features' noted by Salamon et al. (2000); these include the fact that:

- Both aim to make no profit.
- Neither may be involved in profit-making transactions without permission from the MLSD.
- They may work only in Saudi Arabia.

Currently there are more than 9000 requests to set up a new NPO awaiting approval from MLSD, which could increase the size of the sector tenfold (King Khalid Foundation, 2018). Although the MLSD is responsible for the most common and officially registered NPOs, there are, however, other Saudi Arabian nonprofit agencies. Alternative nonprofit teams, not considered organisations, may be recruited for projects by wealthy people, and these 'Royal Foundations' may be patronised by a member of the Saudi Royal Family and supervised by the Royal Court. A recent report (King Khalid Foundation, 2018) indicates that the real number of NPOs is considerably more than those registered by the MLSD,

and they suggest that the estimated number is 2,598 and remarkably higher than the official number (900), which is fragmentedly registered in thirteen governmental authorities and not limited to the registered organisation in the MLSD.

This research only considered information from the main authority, the MLSD, along with a recent report illustrating the up-to-date position of Saudi NPOs, from the King Khalid foundation (2018). The report shows that the average annual individual contribution to NPOs is 2,769 SAR (1 SAR= 0.2 GBP approximately) and the total individual contributions represent 38% of charitable organisations income and governmental aid represent 27% (King Khalid Foundation, 2018). The report also states that the size of private endowments, which represent a key source of funding, exceeds 300 billion SAR and public endowments exceed 54 billion SAR, which they are resources for NPO sustainability. NPOs activities are categorised into four groups: social services 47%, housing and development 46%, Health 5.75% and education and research 1.20% (King Khalid Foundation, 2018), as shown in Figure 4 below.

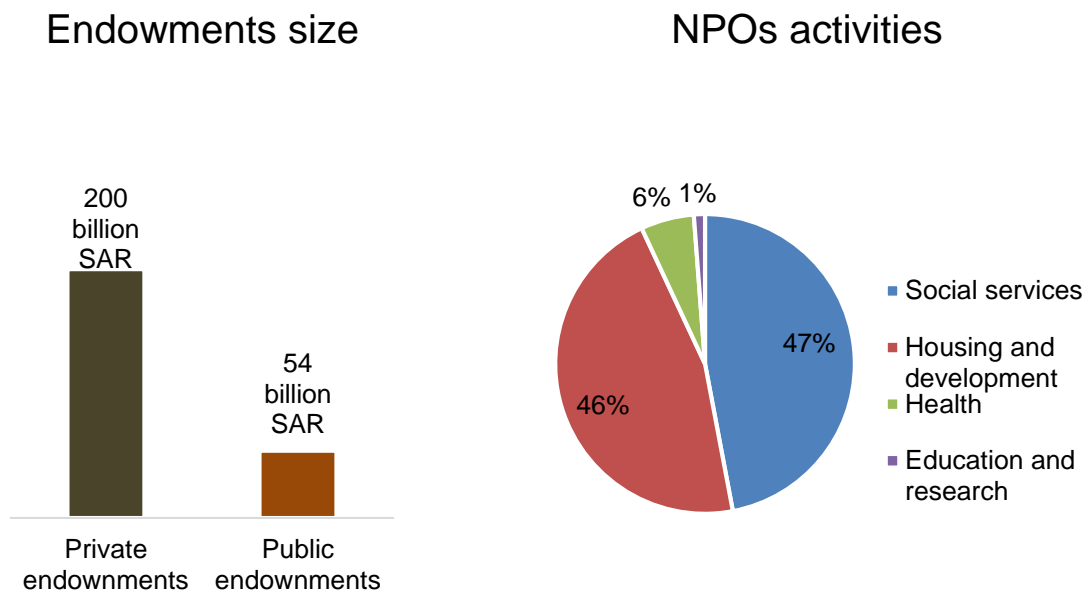


Figure 4: Saudi NPOs indicators (King Khalid Foundation, 2018)

1.3 Problem Statement and Knowledge Gap

Influenced by the current dynamic and complex operating environment, NPOs are increasingly concerned about their organisational sustainability (Claeyé and Jackson, 2012). NPOs are suffering from uncertainty of government funding and

a decline of private donations due to economic difficulties. Additionally, there is growing competition from both within and outside the sector, rendering the survival of NPOs ever more challenging (Al-Tabbaa, Leach and March, 2014).

The literature reports that organisations can become more competitive by establishing the right culture (Pun, 2001). If the wrong culture exists, no matter how earnest the efforts to promote CI, few changes are likely to be accomplished (Ahmed, Loh and Zairi, 1999). Similarly, not focusing on organisational culture affects the longevity of improvements and hence competitiveness (Testani and Ramakrishnan, 2012). CI has the advantage for smaller organisations of not requiring much outlay or expertise (Bessant *et al.*, 1994), thus it may also benefit NPOs.

Saudi Arabia has not received much attention in the literature with regard to CI in NPOs, despite its unique situation (Montagu, 2010; Givens, 2012; Alshammari *et al.*, 2014; Ovidiu-Iliuta, 2014). Albassam and Ntim (2017) have confirmed that there is an undoubted lack of studies explicitly on Saudi Arabia, which adds further support for the choice of Saudi Arabia being the context for this research.

Despite the significant contribution of NPOs (as shown in Table 3 below), there appears to be little written on CI in NPOs and the way in which organisational culture can further it.

Table 3: The top recorded NPO contributions to GDP (Casey, 2016)

Country	Canada	Mozambique	USA	Belgium	New Zealand	Japan	France	Norway
Year	2008	2003	2009	2008	2004	2004	2002	2009
NPOs contribution to GDP %	8.1	6.7	6.6	5.8	5.3	5.2	4.7	4.6

Table 3 confirms that the commitment of Saudi Arabia to raise the contribution of NPOs from less than 1% to 5% of GDP by 2030 (Council of Economic and Development Affairs, 2016) requires much hard work, as it would challenge the

world's top recorded figures (Casey, 2016). But setting this goal for NPOs would be an appropriate and holistic driver which could enrich their capabilities.

For further clarification of the research problem, the research gap should first be identified through a literature review; then a research aim should be designed which would contribute to the knowledge, but need not cover the whole extent of the gap or entirely solve the research problem (Locke, 2001), as illustrated below in Figure 5.

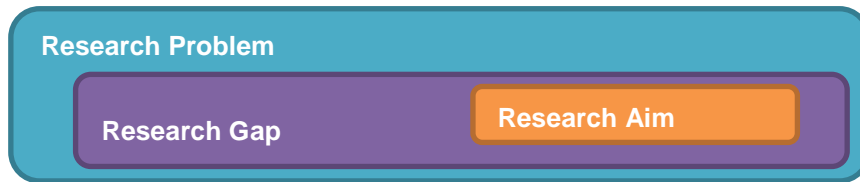


Figure 5: How this research responds to the research problem

In this research, the gap is identified from the intersection of three domains: organisational culture, CI and NPOs. According to a survey on the 'Web of Science' academic website (in January 2018), the level of research in this specific area is very limited, as demonstrated by Figure 6 below, which represents the amount of publications in each intersection between these domains.

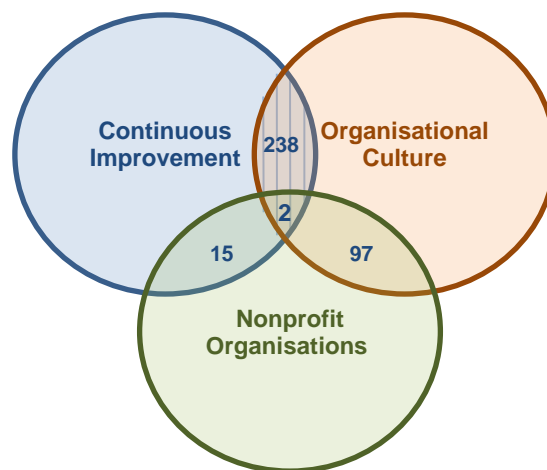


Figure 6: The lack of research in the intended scope

Therefore, based on the literature review, the main claims concerning the knowledge gap are stated in the following points:

- A suitable organisational culture is considered to facilitate CI (Bortolotti, Boscari and Danese, 2015; Fu *et al.*, 2015; Ibrahimi *et al.*, 2016; Lodgaard *et al.*, 2016; van Dun, Hicks and Wilderom, 2017).
- CI has a significant impact on organisations (Bessant, Caffyn and Gallagher, 2001; Carlson, Burrows and Erickson, 2001; Bhuiyan and Baghel, 2005)
- Nonprofit organisations are often neglected in the organisational literature (Montagu, 2010; Givens, 2012; Alshammari *et al.*, 2014).

To sum up, the NPOs have several struggles and CI would be beneficial since CI has been succeeding in other sectors for decades. In addition to that OC is a crucial determinant in CI succeeding. However, OC role has not been clarified and the question that has not been answered is how to facilitate CI culture in this neglected sector (NPOs) and this particular social setting (Saudi Arabia).

1.4 Research Aim and Questions

NPOs are facing many challenges: this indicates the research problem. CI is supposed to address these challenges and could lead to them enhancing their capabilities. The literature review has shown that there is a lack of research in this area: this represents the research gap. Therefore, this research aims to develop a framework which is proposed to secure the aspects of OC that facilitate CI within NPOs: this is the research aim.

The research aim brings up the question: How can the organisational culture (OC) foster continuous improvement (CI) within nonprofit organisations (NPOs)?

This main question is sub-divided as follows:

1. What OC aspects facilitate CI within NPOs?
2. What interventions are needed to provide OC aspects within NPOs?
3. How can these interventions have an impact on OC within NPOs?

To obtain rigorous answers to these exploratory questions, the grounded theory approach was used in cooperation with practitioners in the research context in a form of action research, where the intended framework was socially constructed and formed from their standpoint (Charmaz, 2014).

1.5 Research Objectives

To answer the research questions, the following four objectives were identified:

1. Conducting a literature survey on domains relevant to the research questions.
2. Gathering empirical data from the nonprofit sector in Saudi Arabia to identify the characteristics of organisational culture that influence continuous improvement.
3. Developing a framework based on the empirical data and literature to secure continuous improvement in Saudi nonprofit organisations.
4. Validating the framework through expert judgement.

1.6 Significance of the Research

The originality of this work comes from the fact that while Saudi Arabia is attracting intense interest from the international research community, little research has been done on CI practices there (in part because Saudi NPOs are reluctant to give access to foreign researchers). This study offers one of the first "inside views" of Saudi NPOs with reliable data focusing particularly on CI. It also offers evidence on the aspects that encourage CI on the extent of organisational culture.

This research investigates ways to ensure CI in the NPO sector in Saudi Arabia, which is important in the context of Saudi being one of the most influential developing countries. Its significance is seen in the following four dimensions.

1.6.1 Research on a continuous improvement culture

Despite the overwhelming amount of research on the tools and techniques of CI, the way in which organisational culture could be leveraged to foster CI has not been clearly identified. It has to be explained explicitly what organisations need to do to cultivate CI (Bortolotti, Boscari and Danese, 2015; Fu *et al.*, 2015; Ibrahimi *et al.*, 2016; Lodgaard *et al.*, 2016; van Dun, Hicks and Wilderom, 2017).

1.6.2 The research on the nonprofit sector

CI has been adding value to the for-profit sectors for decades. Studies note that this concept is not limited to manufacturing industries; there being an increasing interest in adoption of CI across other sectors, including services and health

(Iberahim *et al.*, 2016). It is therefore time to transfer this good practice to the NPO sector to meet the substantial obstacles it struggles to overcome. This transfer must consider the NPOs' particular characteristics, which are naturally not the same as those seen in other sectors (Givens, 2012; Alshammari *et al.*, 2014)

1.6.3 The research in developing countries

Most of existing knowledge in the broad field of CI has come from the developed countries in addition to that developing countries might differ from one another and this could affect their pursuit of CI.

1.6.4 The research in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia, which funds this study, is implementing a comprehensive transformational change to which the government is heavily committed. The transformation can be read in the words of its vision. The outcomes of this research aims to expand the capacity of Saudi's NPOs by 2030 to increase their contribution to GDP by more than 4% (Council of Economic and Development Affairs, 2016).

1.7 Overview of the Research Methodology

The following eight phases briefly describe the methodology designed to achieve the research objectives, as illustrated in Figure 7 below.

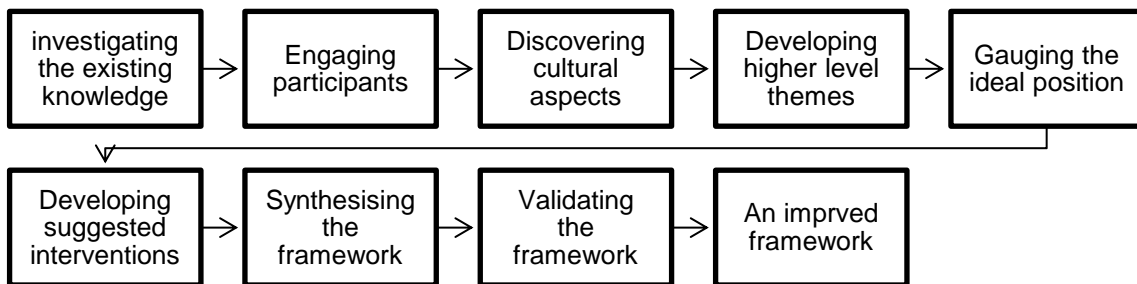


Figure 7: Overall phases of the research methodology

1.7.1 Phase one: investigating the existing knowledge

This first phase was necessary to appreciate the work of other scholars and to establish an initial understanding of the knowledge gap. This helped to clearly identify the research position and led to designing the appropriate approaches that could fill the identified knowledge gap.

1.7.2 Phase two: engaging participants

Because this research was action research, which involves participants in constructing the truth from their own perspective, they were invited to take part in pre-visits, workshops and initial interviews at an early stage.

1.7.3 Phase three: discovering cultural factors

Extensive interviews were conducted in this phase, which adopted issue-focused investigation, to identify which aspects of organisational culture could influence CI. These interviews gradually increased in number and the theoretical sampling was guided by the results of analysing the data.

1.7.4 Phase four: developing higher-level themes

The lower-level codes that emerged from analysing the interviews were then developed with the participants in focus group discussions. It should be noted that the data were analysed whilst making constant comparisons with the literature.

1.7.5 Phase five: gauging the ideal position

After the themes describing the ideal version of a CI culture were refined, a self-assessment survey was distributed to the participating organisations to gauge their proximity to the ideal.

1.7.6 Phase six: developing suggested interventions

During the focus group discussions, a series of interventions that could help move towards the ideal level of a CI culture was suggested. Further interventions were also extracted from the literature. The selected interventions, which were proposed for use in the framework synthesis, seemed appropriate for the chosen context.

1.7.7 Phase seven: synthesising the framework

This phase mapped the refined themes with the proposed interventions to identify and understand the influence of organisational culture on CI.

1.7.8 Phase eight: validating the framework

The framework design was distributed to experts in the field to see if they approved and could comment, a process that is called 'expert judgment'. This process was followed as it was deemed an appropriate method of validation. The impact of the interventions might not be noticeable in a few months, it might actually take years to take effect; this would exceed the time limit of this particular piece of research.

1.7.9 Phase nine: an improved framework

In the validation phase, most parts of the framework obtained approval, but other parts were improved by the minor changes suggested by the experts. This process helped to produce an improved version of the framework.

1.8 Thesis Outline

The research presents a detailed exploration of the subject background, research methodology, data analysis, findings and discussion. The next section summarises the content of the chapters.

1.8.1 Chapter one: introduction

An overview of the research background and context: it states the research problem, knowledge gap, question, aim and objectives. The chapter also touches briefly on research methodology, shows the significance of the present research and highlights the contribution to knowledge. Finally, it outlines the thesis chapters.

1.8.2 Chapter two: literature review

An exploration of the concepts of CI, organisational culture and the nonprofit sector. As a qualitative study, this thesis establishes a research position through scrutinizing established knowledge that is relevant to the research question. This added up to a systematic literature survey, which yielded a list of interventions from other contexts.

1.8.3 Chapter three: research methodology

A philosophical foundation and justification of the methodological design, which let the research question be addressed and achieves the research aim. In addition, it describes the actions that have been taken to achieve rigour and trustworthiness.

1.8.4 Chapter four: data gathering and analysis

A detailed description of the unit of analysis, sampling strategy, and the different sources of the data collected; and how this process evolved over several months. It has also a detailed description of the data analysis process and how it was conducted simultaneously and in parallel with the data gathering process. This chapter is concludes with ideal themes and suggested areas of focus for interventions, preparing the inputs for synthesising the intended framework.

1.8.5 Chapter five: framework development

After identifying areas of focus for proposing interventions that could fit with research context, the influence of the suggested interventions on the emergent themes was conceptualised. This conceptualisation brought together the interventions derived from the data analysis and the literature survey. The chapter concludes with an overall representation of the framework.

1.8.6 Chapter six: framework validation

An improvement process for the developed framework based on the comments of experts in the field, as a validation phase.

1.8.7 Chapter seven: discussion

Confirmation that the research questions had been answered and the research objectives had been achieved. This came through overall crucial comments of the framework. It shows the researcher's viewpoint and thoughts on the findings based on the observations that have been taken at every phase of the research.

1.8.8 Chapter eight: conclusion

A summary of the entire work through reviewing how the research questions have been answered; highlighting the contribution that was made to both academic knowledge and practitioners in the field; and how the framework could impact

real-life practices. This chapter also highlights some of the limitations that constrained the research; it is suggested that they be considered during future work in this area.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

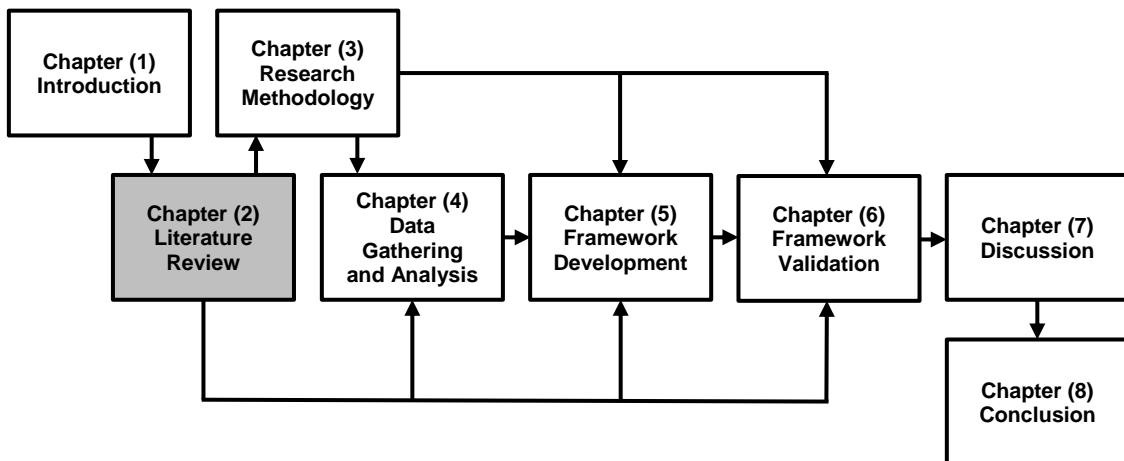


Figure 8: Research overview (chapter two)

This chapter has two main parts. The first part is an overview of the research domains required to identify the research position and to provide a solid foundation from which to start. The second part is an examination of the literature from which the most relevant articles could be extracted in order to facilitate in answering the research question.

2.1 Overview of the Research Scope

It is a crucial part of qualitative research to scrutinise established knowledge and determine positions, ideologies and discourses of knowledge to establish a research position (Holliday, 2016). The following parts provide an overview of the fundamental areas relevant to the research question, which highlighted in Figure 9.



Figure 9: Domains involved in this research

2.2 The Continuous Improvement Landscape

2.2.1 The evolution of the concept

The quality revolution in Japan following World War II overcame major suffering obstacles (Liker and Hoseus, 2008) and proved the importance of CI. This concept has been evolving in the literature, as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: CI definitions

Authors	Definitions
(Imai, 1986)	“Ongoing improvements that involve everyone in the organisation”.
(Bessant <i>et al.</i> , 1994)	“A company-wide process of focused and continuous incremental innovation”.
(Boer <i>et al.</i> , 2017)	“The planned, organised and systematic process of ongoing, incremental and company-wide change of existing practices aimed at improving company performance”.
(Gertsen, 2001)	“An improvement process that is systematically applied, carried out in small steps, and to a large extent relies on employee participation”.
(Ehie and Sheu, 2005)	“An umbrella concept for a wide range of tools and techniques to improve manufacturing performance”.
(Bhuiyan and Baghel, 2005)	“A culture of sustained improvement targeting the elimination of waste in all systems and processes of an organisation. It involves everyone working together to make improvements without necessarily making huge capital investments”.
(American Society for Quality, 2017)	“An ongoing effort to improve products, services or processes. These efforts can seek incremental improvement over time or 'breakthrough' improvement all at once”.

The term ‘continuous improvement’ has been developing in the Japanese car manufacturer Toyota (Liker and Morgan, 2006), which added it to its ‘lean’ tools as an aspect of the Toyota Way. Carlson *et al.* (2001) state that CI describes processes designed to monitor and improve services to the customer. Bhuiyan and Baghel (2005) found that “continuous improvement initiatives in the past reflected the use of various principles related to work improvement, [and] modern day continuous improvement is associated with organised and comprehensive methodologies”. CI importantly complements more radical, step-change forms of innovation (Bessant *et al.*, 1994); Bhuiyan and Baghel (2005) add that “major improvements take place over time ... [from] numerous incremental improvements”. From all these definitions, it can be seen that CI occurs “where

all members of the organisation work together on an ongoing basis improving processes and reducing errors to improve overall performance for the customer” (Fryer, Antony and Douglas, 2007). Generally, CI can be “an umbrella concept for a wide range of tools and techniques to improve manufacturing performance” (Ehie and Sheu, 2005). These tools could include Kaizen, lean, six sigma and total quality management (Huq, 2005).

2.2.2 Continuous improvement functions

The benefits of CI are available to all sectors (Fryer et al., 2007), but are most helpful to NPOs as CI is “more valuable at a time when financial budgets are severely constrained” (Cabinet Office of UK Government, 2012). CI has many benefits: it requires low capital investment (Jha et al., 1996); improves performance (Goh, 2000); improves customer satisfaction (Taylor and Hirst, 2001); and increases employee commitment (Temponi, 2005).

2.2.3 Continuous improvement, quality and operational excellence

CI is considered as a key driver for quality in the operational excellence journey (Coleman, 2015). It can be observed through the development of operations management approaches that obviously lead to CI, as shown in Figure 10 below.



Figure 10: CI as a key driver toward operational excellence

Figure 11 below illustrates the evolution of popular approaches for operational excellence from the 1920s until the 2000s.

-	Statistical Chart For Process Variation	1920s
-	Deming Cycle (PDCA)	1930s
-	Toyota Production System (TPS)	1940s
-	Juran Trilogy	1950s
-	Total Quality Management (TQM)	
-	Just in Time (JIT)	
-	Fishbone Diagrams	1960s
-	Lean Manufacturing	
-	Kaizen	1970s
-	ISO 9000	1980s
-	Six Sigma	1990s
-	Lean Six Sigma	2000+

Figure 11: popular approaches for operational excellence

Taghizadegan has classified the various approaches according of the phase of applying quality (2006), as shown in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Approaches for phases of quality implementation

Phase	Approaches
Define	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming • Affinity diagram • Interrelation diagram • Project chart
Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data gathering plan • Histograms • Value Stream Mapping (VSM)
Analyse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishbone diagram • Scatter diagram
Improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deployment flowchart • Tree Diagram
Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process control plan • Pareto diagram • Poka-Yoke for error prevention

2.2.4 Level of interest in continuous improvement

The Scopus database has shown (as of January 2018) a trend of increasing interest in CI, which started slowly in 1970, as shown in Figure 12. There was a sudden rise after 1990, which slightly decreased until the middle of the 2000s; interest then peaked in 2014.

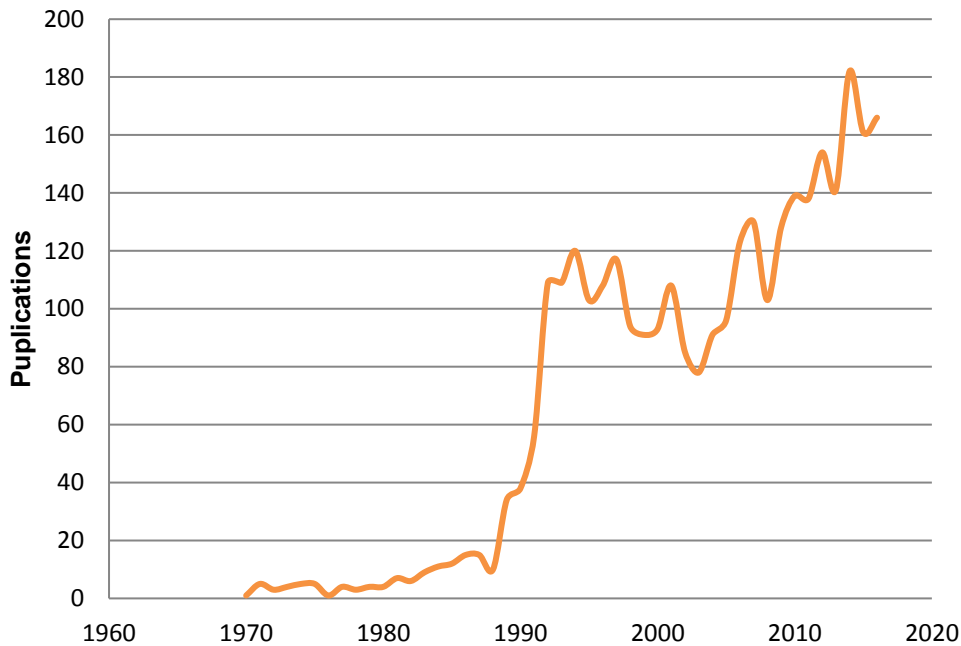


Figure 12: Level of search in CI (by year)

However, the subject area has not explicitly shown nonprofit studies. This lack of nonprofit studies clearly provides an initial indicator to support the knowledge gap. A detailed graph (Figure 13) showing the number of publications for a variety of subject areas is shown on the following page. This shows the complete lack of publications relating to NPOs.

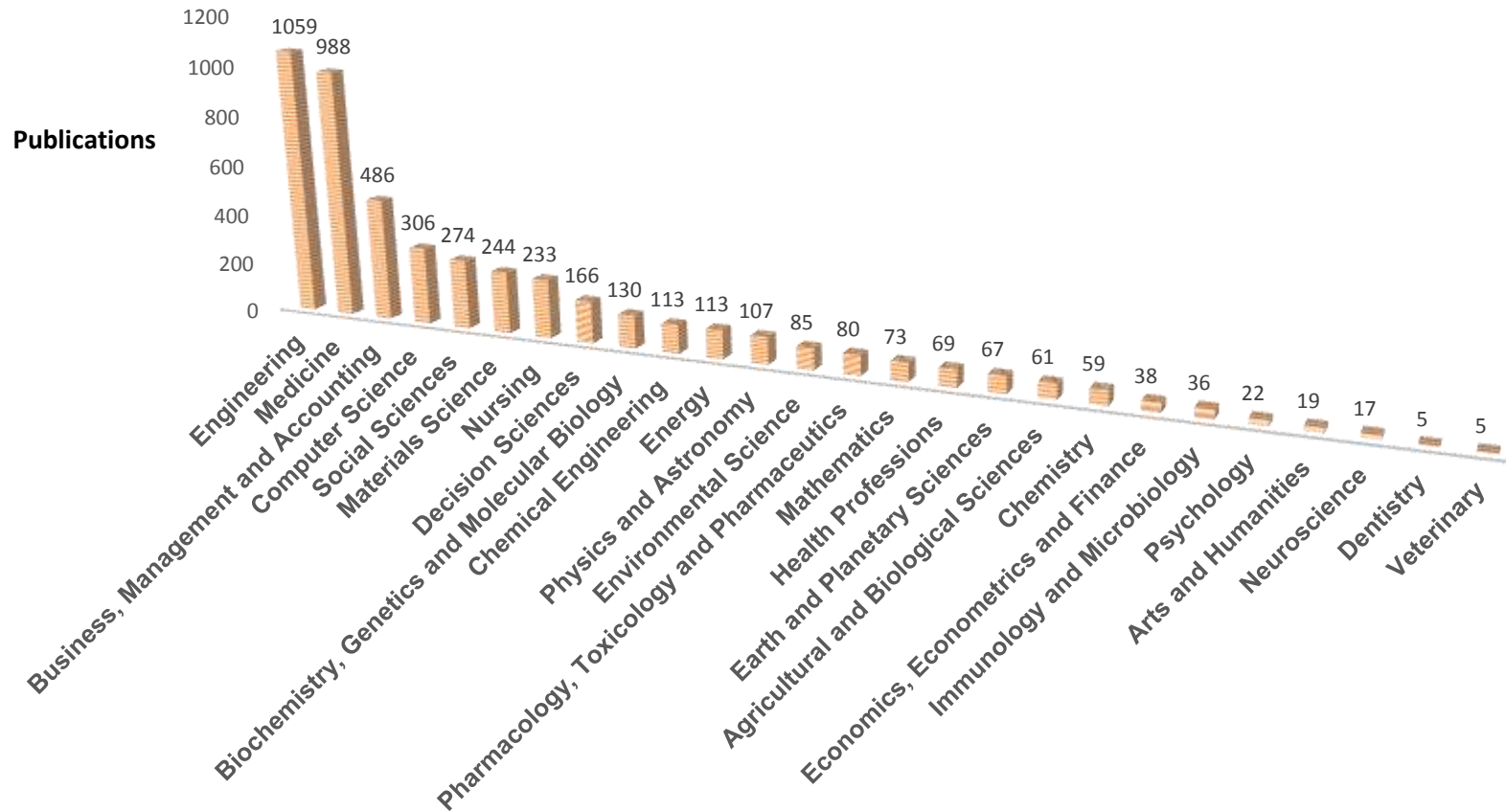


Figure 13: Level of interest in CI (by subject area)

2.2.5 Continuous improvement approaches

There are popular approaches that could represent best practices for CI implementation. CI is strongly associated with the Deming philosophy. The Deming cycle, which is known as Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA), is a continuous quality improvement model where the repetition of the four different stages aims to identify areas for improvement, 'iron out' any issue, and then standardize the work processes. Organisations are encouraged to identify an overall objective or goal for CI, and ways to achieve this; this may be to reduce waste by 15%, or to increase production by 10%. The next steps are to implement those planned changes and then monitor the outcomes to identify areas of success, issues, and areas for improvement. The final step is to evaluate the entire process, and based on that evaluation, look at whether the end goal or the methods used to get there need to be adjusted. Thus, it provides a structured approach to test out changes, although it may well reveal other issues that also need to be addressed (Reed and Card, 2016).

Singh and Singh (2015) believe that the two best approaches for CI are: Total Quality Management (TQM) and Kaizen. They can be assumed to provide the best implementation of the CI concept. Some researchers consider Kaizen to be a natural evolution of TQM, because both rely on the Deming philosophy. Therefore, Singh and Singh (2015) recommend applying them both to gain the maximum benefit of CI (Singh and Singh, 2015). The following sections provide an overview of these two approaches.

2.2.5.1 Kaizen

The Japanese philosophy of Kaizen (meaning to do or to change well) has been adopted within business management as a gradual and continuous means of progressing towards improvement in operational systems, as well as a way to increase value: productivity is increased while waste is reduced (Quddus and Ahsan, 2014). Kaizen has three core principles according to Imai (1986), which are:

1. Process orientation, which focuses on process control through process support and evaluation methods.

2. Small step improvement, which could be achieved through extensive use of standards as the base for improvement.
3. People orientation, which requires active management support and involvement.

2.2.5.2 Total Quality Management

TQM can be considered a subset of the Kaizen approach towards CI (Singh and Singh, 2015). Interestingly, although the Kaizen philosophy is targeted towards the manufacturing processes, Nassar, Yahaya and Shorun (2015) highlight customer service and satisfaction as the overall objective of all TQM initiatives. The customer service focus is further supported by Olsson and Flodberg (2011), who identified that organisations need to have customer service based values to drive internal CI processes. Several models of TQM, as a good practice of CI, have been suggested. Al-Tabbaa et al. (2014) report that these frameworks could be summarised into three main categories, examples are given in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Models of TQM

Categories	Models
Consultants-based Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (Crosby, 1996) - (Deming, 1986) - (Juran, 1988)
Quality Award Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (<i>Deming Prize</i>, 2018) - (<i>EFQM Model</i>, 2018) - (<i>MBNQA Model</i>, 2018)
Academic-based Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kanji's Business Excellence Model (Kanji and Wallace, 2000) - Oakland's Total Organisational Excellence Framework (Oakland, 2001)

2.2.6 Differences between Kaizen and TQM

Singh and Singh (2015) compared these Kaizen and TQM approaches through ten differentiative parameters as summarised in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Comparison between Kaizen and TQM (Singh and Singh, 2015)

Parameter	Kaizen	TQM
Focus on	Small incremental but continual improvement.	Long-term success by focusing on customer satisfaction.
Focal point	The improvement of the process.	The quality of the product to satisfy the customer.
Scope	Limited to selected project (its processes).	It is spread throughout the organisation.
Implementation method	Takes the form of small incremental projects in a selected area to make changes in the work standard towards betterment	Its improvement is to be made on all the processes in all the business departments of the organisation involving all people
The approach	Follows a bottom-up approach. The suggestions for improvement are put forward by the workers.	Follows both top-down and bottom-up approach, the need for improvement is suggested and introduced by top management as well as by the workers of the organisation.
Importance of resources	Works within the available resources of the organisation, which does not encourage large investment from the organisational resources for improvement.	Investment has to be made to improve the quality of product or process like an investment on new or updated machinery, which is little more expensive to implement as compared to Kaizen.
Involvement of people	The people linked to a particular process on which improvement project is taking place are involved.	A whole organisation including all employees at all levels are responsible and involved in the improvement of the quality of the product at all times.
Implementation mechanism	Small-scale improvements in steps.	Simultaneous operations in all the processes.
Improvement strategy	Small permanent improvements in processes.	Long-term improvements.
Improvement through innovation	Stresses on continual improvements in existing standards rather than innovation.	Involves CI of the process through Kaizen and innovation.

2.2.7 Enabling continuous improvement

It is a challenge to engender a CI culture within an organisation. Many CI projects fail from not preparing an appropriate organisational culture (Testani and Ramakrishnan, 2012). This process is not a simple task to achieve; it involves a

certain configuration for an organisation to enable CI behaviour (Bessant and Francis, 1999). That does not mean that change is impossible. Accordingly, Bessant et al. (2001) emphasised that enabling CI depends upon seeing CI not as a binary state or a short-term activity, but as “the evolution and aggregation of a set of key behavioural routines”. Bessant et al. (2001) classified five levels of CI implementation, as shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Five levels of CI implementation (Bessant, Caffyn and Gallagher, 2001)

Phases	Indications
Pre-CI	Interest in the concept has been triggered.
Structured CI	There is a formal commitment to building a system which will develop CI across the organisation.
Goal Oriented CI	There is a commitment to linking CI behaviour, established at 'local' level to the wider strategic concerns of the organisation.
Proactive CI	There is an attempt to devolve autonomy and to empower individuals and groups to manage and direct their own processes.
Full CI Capability	Approximates a model of 'learning organisation'.

The concept of CI has predominately been applied to manufacturing processes as a way to improve quality and deliverable reliability, as well as reducing costs and lead times (Aziz and Hafez, 2013). However, in today’s competitive global environment, even service-based industries are now adopting CI strategies as an efficient way to reduce costs, maximize value and thus remain competitive. This shift is acknowledged by Singh and Singh (2015) who stated that companies need to look at organisational culture and employee skills, as well as technology and processes, to implement CI. CI is regarded as being a situation whereby all employees in an organisation try and find solutions to issues that create barriers to the smooth functioning of the organisation (Al-jawazneh and Smadi, 2011). This demonstrates that organisational culture plays an important role, based on the processes implemented by companies (Brajer-Marczak, 2014). CI means that employees must constantly be thinking of ways such processes can be improved and therefore it requires employee commitment and participation (Brajer-Marczak, 2014).

Scholars have reported that certain behavioural characteristics influence CI, which the framework aims to achieve. Carlson et al. (2001) stated that there are expected behavioural features of CI culture, which may include:

1. People motivate themselves.
2. Staff work as if they own the organisation.
3. People treat each other with honesty, integrity and respect.
4. Everyone recognises their responsibility to improve continuously.
5. Everyone understands the need for change and heads toward it.

2.2.8 Barriers to implementing continuous improvement

As with any change process, some barriers will be encountered that need to be addressed to implement continuous change effectively. There are a number of factors that can affect implementation; Sommerbakk et al. (2016) identified motivation, leadership, resources, strategies and economic context among others. It is the implementation of CI that can determine how companies can successfully compete on quality, price and delivery and it is shown that small companies have more problems in successful implementation than large companies (Biswas and Yeasmin, 2016). Any organisation that is preparing to implement any changes to improve existing systems must also have a formalised strategic plan with an emphasis on customer focus if they are to be successful; the main feature of improvement focuses on customer expectations and satisfaction (Biswas and Yeasmin, 2016). Based on the literature, Singh and Singh (2015) extracted a list of important barriers to CI that are strongly associated with organisational culture; these include:

- Poor planning.
- Lack of management commitment.
- Resistance of the workforce.
- Lack of proper training.
- Teamwork complacency.
- Use of an off-the-shelf programme.
- Failure to change organisational philosophy.
- Lack of resources provided.
- Lack of effective measurement of quality improvement.
- Inadequate knowledge or understanding of CI.
- Inability to change organisational culture.
- Lack of continuous training and education.
- Inability to build a learning organisation.

- Incompatible organisational structure.
- Insufficient resources.
- Inappropriate reward system.
- Use of a pre-packaged programme.
- Ineffective measurement techniques.
- Short-term focus.
- Paying inadequate attention to customers.
- Inadequate use of empowerment and teamwork.
- Lack of a company-wide definition of CI.
- Lack of a formalised strategic plan for change.
- Lack of a customer focus.
- Poor inter-organisational communication.
- Lack of real employee empowerment.
- Lack of employee trust in senior management.
- View of quality programme as a quick fix.
- Drive for short-term financial results.
- Politics and turf issues.
- Lack of strong motivation.
- Lack of time to devote to improvement initiative.
- Lack of leadership.

2.2.9 Critical success factors for continuous improvement

According to Temponi and Cecilia (2005), critical success factors (CSFs) are the factors that ensure a competitive performance for the organisation if they are satisfactory. CSFs emphasise how a company will gain a competitive edge (Tsang *et al.*, 2001). CSFs are not goals; they are the processes and the actions that the management of an organisation can control to achieve its objectives. It is important to know that CSFs depend on a combination of mission and vision; it is not a static process. Critical success factors are not the ways of evaluating the success of a project, but are the means of managing the project. There are some CSFs that are assumed to have an impact on succeeding CI initiatives, which are associated with organisational culture and to increases the propensity to facilitate CI.

2.2.9.1 Effective Leadership

Effective leadership is the number one critical success factor for CI efforts and plans in an organisation. Leaders must support CI initiatives if the improvement process is to have any chance of being a success. Again, the senior management must put something into practice rather than just talking about it. This factor proposes that the process of CI will only be successful when leaders lead the organisation and “walk the talk” (Üstüner and Coşkun, 2004). The management must show behaviours that are supportive of the CI process and these behaviours should only be the ones that the leaders wish their staff and other employees to emulate. The changes that occur in an organisation cascade down from the guidance and support of its leaders. In corporations where the management does not support the efforts of the CI initiative, then the team in charge of implementing the action is perceived to be working in different directions.

2.2.9.2 Proactive Team

This success factor implies that the organisation must work as a team to implement the CI initiative. The team should not be just an ordinary team but should be a team that takes the approach of preventing the fire rather than fighting the fire; it is proactive, rather than reactive. Again, no person, company or even a team can focus on implementing change if in any way they cannot bring about change. The issues that require fixing in a company are the causes of “fires” which ultimately withdraw and block managers’ plans for solving the unchecked issues present in an organisation (Bhuiyan and Baghel, 2005). The management should lead the team in working smarter to support the CI initiatives rather than working harder. Working more intelligently towards a CI effort implies that the administration heads the organisation to approach CI initiatives tactfully and objectively. Some companies get it all wrong; they reward and recognise those managers and employees who caused the problems (Boer *et al.*, 2017). This culture and practice derail the progress of CI; they drain the motivation of the staff that helps in providing solutions to widespread issues affecting CI.

2.2.9.3 Constancy of Purpose

This factor is one that focuses on bold and unrelenting initiatives for CI. Deming (1986) included resolution of purpose in his 14 point list for factors that promote CI of services and products to society. This effort is valuable for maintaining and sustaining natural developments in the long term. The momentum of change needs to be kept and anything that can halt the efforts of change needs to be eliminated as it can cripple the incremental CI initiative (Goh, 2000). The success of CI activities does not solely depend on management actions. It is a practice that focuses on the long-term and that must penetrate all activities undertaken in a company. Continual developments are not a “flavour of the month” and can prove very unpopular with both management and employees.

2.2.9.4 Long-Term Focus

Many managers lack a long-term mindset. They focus on their monthly and quarterly targets. CI is as much about actions as it is about mindset. A company needs to lay out strategic plans for the work they are doing. This focus will allow them to have a long-term mindset which makes them understand that the company’s position changes for better in the long-term (Huq, 2005). Therefore, organisational leaders should not tolerate anything that derails the performance of improvements as this will affect their success in the future. A company achieves its long-term goals when it meets all its financial goals and when it has the power to deliver outstanding services and products to its customer. Most organisations fail to recognise that the hint for successful continual improvement activities is in the name. CI is a process and, therefore, an organisation should indicate opportunities that can lead to growth, make and measure improvement, and evaluate the progress. A long-term mindset is like an investment for the future (Hyland, Mellor and O’Mara, 2000). Organisations must understand that the efforts they make to improve their situation will be rewarded in the future. This action happens when they achieve their financial, performance and provision and promotion of outstanding products or services objectives.

2.2.9.5 Customer Management

An organisation that achieves its long-term goals is one that manages its clients effectively. A company does this by providing quality and outstanding services and products to their clientele. When customers are happy and satisfied with these products and services they will stay with the organisation (Karuppusami and Gandhinathan, 2006). A company must also devise plans for handling customers' complaints or any dissatisfaction that might arise. An efficient customer management process is one that ensures that the customers are happy all the time to be associated with an organisation and are satisfied with their products.

2.2.9.6 Communication

Communication is a key CSF in every organisation. The management must communicate to all its stakeholders regularly on the actions they intend to take. A company that has constant communication has no confusion because every individual is aware of their expectations and they work hard to fulfil their expectations. When all efforts are integrated, an organisation will achieve its objectives (Khoo and Tan, 2002). Similarly, the process of CI must be followed by clear communication on what the management is doing and how their actions will make the organisation achieve its long-term goals.

2.2.9.7 Teamwork

Teams strive to achieve a common goal. The activities of the CI process should be distributed evenly to workgroups. Each workgroup is dismissed or redefined only after fulfilling their goals. Workgroups have shared values. Organisations that embrace teamwork often achieve their goals efficiently and faster than in organisations where individual effort and contribution is preferred. Teamwork also enhances organisational learning (Leseure *et al.*, 2004).

2.2.9.8 Employee Empowerment

An organisation can empower its employees through training, development, and motivation as well as encourage employee participation. Training and development ensure that employees are prepared and are ready to take on the

broader tasks or activities of the CI initiative. Reward systems, on the other hand, work to motivate employees with rewards like pay raises, praise and recognition (Martichenko, 2004). Motivated employees have high job satisfaction and morale, and they work hard to achieve the goals of the CI process. Employee participation enables the management to consider the views of their employees and any other issues. This practice is meant to ensure that the organisation works as an integrated force which focuses on the achievement of the objectives of the continual improvement activity.

2.2.9.9 Ongoing Evaluation and Monitoring

It is critical that an organisation continuously evaluates and monitors its progress towards fulfilment of its long-term goals. A long-term mindset is a prerequisite for this CSF. One way of evaluating the progress is by establishing control mechanisms. These control mechanisms ensure that standardized outcomes of the CI process are in place, these results are then compared with the results of the improvement process. A company can achieve its CI goals in the future, but the control mechanisms act as a benchmark which enables the organisation to remain on the right track (Fryer, Antony and Douglas, 2007).

2.3 Organisational Culture Understanding

Organisational culture is deeply significant: it centres on how employees sense what is of value in their organisations based on what they observe and experience; this can be extremely beneficial for facilitating improvement (Ehrhart, Schneider and Macey, 2013). The following part discusses important information around this topic.

2.3.1 Overall cultural levels

There is no universally accepted definition of culture. “These manifestations are signs for the cultural reality, but not of the structuring devices for this reality” (Sackmann, 1991). Schein (2010) suggested organisational culture exists at three levels: artefacts, values and underlying assumptions (McLaughlin et al. 2005). The levels of culture “range from the very tangible overt manifestation that can be seen and felt to the deeply embedded, unconscious, basic assumptions that are defined as the essence of culture” (Fu *et al.*, 2015). The literature shows

that there are two dominant levels of culture (Liker and Hoseus, 2008), which are: National Culture (NC) and Organisational Culture (OC). The levels of culture are structured as follows in Figure 14.

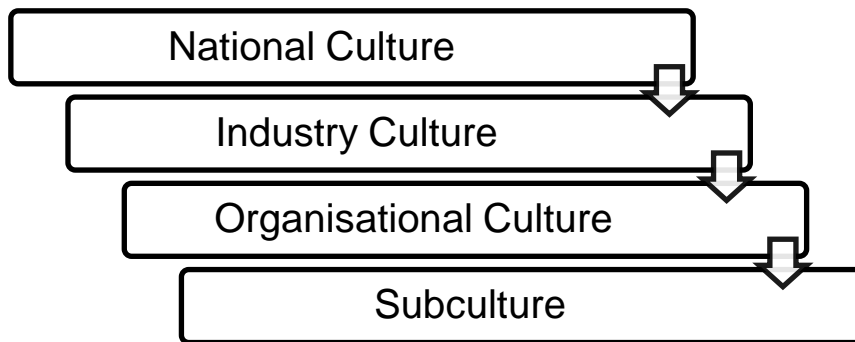


Figure 14: Culture levels (Liker and Hoseus, 2008)

Consequently, some of the cultural assumptions in an organisation can be as a result of the different backgrounds of the organisation's members (Van Maanen and Barley, 1984). Therefore, the strength of an organisational culture can be defined in terms of the homogeneity of group membership and the intensity of shared experience (Schein, 1984).

2.3.1.1 National Culture

Organisations are not independent from the societies in which they operate, and assumptions that are shared throughout a society inevitably influence organisational culture (Ehrhart, Schneider and Macey, 2013). Although not universally accepted (Jones 2007), one of the most widely cited definitions of National Culture was put forward by Hofstede (Bond, 2002). Hofstede and Hofstede (2001: 5) defined national culture as:

“The collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another”

Since organisations, whether transnational, multinational corporations or international, began operating internationally and well-known brands located themselves across the globe, research has explored the association between national and organisational culture (Al-Otaibi, 2014), arguing, for example, that national cultures are unlike local cultures (Liker and Hoseus, 2008). National cultures pervade organisational cultures (Liker and Hoseus, 2008). Even global companies are situated in sovereign states. Different nations and their national

shared values or community values influence their organisational cultures (Common, 2008). In The Middle East, where most countries have an Arabic cultural pattern, the behaviour of organisations is different from the behaviour of other organisations elsewhere.

The widely-cited definition of national culture from Hofstede was developed following an empirical study of 116,000 employees from fifty-three nations, working at IBM, the technology and consulting corporation, between 1968 and 1972. The study classified these employees along four dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism and masculinity/femininity (Bagchi *et al.*, 2003). Power distance normally determines how far the less fortunate and less powerful citizens or members of society accept and expect power to normally be unequally distributed (Al-Yahya, 2008). Uncertainty avoidance measures society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity, especially how far loving one's culture controls the future. The dimension of individualism versus collectivism measures how far citizens expect to focus on their and their immediate family's individual needs, compared to the degree of aid expected from social institutions (Common, 2008). Masculinity and femininity is Hofstede's third cultural dimension, which distributes roles and responsibilities between genders.

To demonstrate variations across national cultures, Van Maanen and Barley (1984), described distinct characteristics of Western culture and Eastern culture, as summarised in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Western culture and Eastern culture (Van Maanen and Barley, 1984)

Differences	Western culture	Eastern culture
Orientation toward nature	Tends to be oriented toward an active mastery.	Passively oriented toward nature, they seek to harmonise with nature and each other.
Relationships	Based on individualistic competitive relationship.	They view the group as the more important than individual.
Concept of time	Future-oriented.	Present or past oriented.
Views to resources	Space and resources as infinite.	Space and resources as very limited.
Human nature	Neutral and ultimately perfectible.	Assumes that human nature is bad but improvable.

Differences	Western culture	Eastern culture
Nature of reality	Based on science and pragmatism.	Based more on revealed truth than on empirical experimentation.

National cultures can be compared through the specific dimensions developed by Hofstede (1991), who conducted a comparison between different cultures. Hofstede proposed six basic issues that society needs to come to terms with in order to organise itself successfully; these are referred to as dimensions of culture and each one is expressed on a scale that runs out of one hundred points.

2.3.1.2 Saudi National Culture through the Lens of the Hofstede Model

To understand Saudi culture, necessary as it is the context for this research, a more detailed explanation of Saudi dimensions based on Bjerke and Al-Meer's (1993) study that analysed Saudi culture along the four cultural dimensions developed by Hofstede (1991) is given in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Saudi culture along Hofstede dimensions (Bjerke and Al-Meer, 1993)

Dimensions	Saudi national culture
Power distance	Saudi managers scored high on "power distance", suggesting a social distance between superiors and subordinates. This orientation could be attributed to the Muslim belief about authority in Islamic societies. Also, Arab traditions recognise status hierarchy.
Individualism/Collectivism	Saudi managers tend to prefer a tight social framework in organisational as well as institutional life (high collectivism). Islam is an important source for this orientation. Saudi managers, as Muslims, are required to co-operate with other Muslims and to share one another's sorrows and happiness. They are also required to offer non-Muslim groups social and cultural rights by the common bonds of humanity.
Masculinity/Femininity	The results place Saudi managers on the "feminine" side of Hofstede's four dimensions. This concern for others and friendly relationships among people is also attributed to Islamic teachings.
Uncertainty avoidance	Saudi managers tend to have a high uncertainty avoidance orientation. For example, Saudi managers, as Muslims and Arabs, do not tolerate persons who deviate from Islamic teachings and Arab traditions. They are very loyal to their organisations. Also, they do not like conflict. However, if they are forced, they resolve disagreements by authoritarian behaviour.

The dimensions here in Table 10 revealed some differences when compared with Figure 3 that shown earlier (page 7), which allows having a better

understanding for the evolution of Saudi National culture over the last two decades, as shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11: A comparison between two studies on Saudi national culture

Comparison		1 st Study (page 37)	2 nd Study (page 7)
		(Bjerke and Al-Meer, 1993)	(Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, 2010).
Age (years)		25	8
Dimensions		4	6
Perspectives		Managers	Mixture
Dimensions	Power distance	High	High
	Individualism/Collectivism	Low	Low
	Masculinity/Femininity	Low	High
	Uncertainty avoidance	High	High
	Long term orientation	-	Low
	Indulgence	-	Medium

From this table (Table 11) three comments have been noticed, which could justify this variation between the two studies, as follows:

- This 1st study has been conducted in almost two decades earlier.
- This 1st study explored a more specific sample.
- The 2nd study has explored two further developed dimensions.

However, they only different score was in the second dimension (Masculinity/Femininity) which might be affected by the differentiation of samples and/or the evolutionary change of perspective during the two decades.

2.3.1.3 Organisational Culture Concept

Culture is a primary determinant of change and improvement (Ahmed et al., 1999). The concept of organisational culture has evolved gradually and now seems to be an important asset for determining several aspects which control the continuous development of organisations (Clark, 2012). The main characteristics of organisational culture have been defined as a pattern of guiding principles or shared basic assumptions in an organisation (Clark, 2012).

Sackmann (1991) divided the components of organisational culture, using an iceberg model, into visible, i.e. visible, official and 'espoused' and 'basic' manifestations. Beliefs on the second level (invisible) are tacit, commonly held, habitually present and emotionally anchored (Sackmann, 1991). Similarly, Schein (2010) argues that culture can be analysed on "three levels: artefacts, espoused

beliefs and basic underlying assumptions”, agreeing with Sackmann (1991) that culture has two sides: visible and invisible. Parker’s definition (2000) acknowledges both levels: ‘Patterns of interpretation composed of the meaning associated with various cultural manifestations, such as stories, rituals, formal and informal practices, jargon and physical arrangements’ (note the focus on visible aspects). Invisible aspects were emphasised later; Ravasi and Schultz (2006) see it as “a set of shared mental assumptions that guide interpretation and action in organisations by defining appropriate behaviour for various situations”. Schein interprets it holistically, fitting the research context (2010: 18):

“The pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration and that have worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members”

Organisational culture largely encompasses members moral values, basic assumptions, shared principles, beliefs and ideologies; it incorporates the organisation’s vision and mission statements, codes of conduct and aims and objectives (Clark, 2012). These are normally its main driving elements and are more informal than formal. Organisations with a specific organisational culture are more likely to excel in their business plans and daily business operations because the culture guides the organisation to attain the established aims and purposes.

2.3.2 Organisational culture components

Organisations naturally differ in terms of their cultures, each one having its own paradigm. They can be compared through basic underlying assumptions around which the cultural paradigm forms (Schein, 1995); these include:

- The organisation’s relationship with its environment.
- The nature of reality and truth.
- The nature of human nature.
- The nature of human activity.
- The nature of human relationships.

Along with Sackmann's iceberg model, another perspective comes from Hofstede (1991) who proposed that certain dimensions can be used to explore an organisational culture; these are:

1. Means-oriented vs. goal-oriented.
2. Internally driven vs. externally driven.
3. Easy-going work discipline vs. strict work discipline.
4. Local vs. professional.
5. Open system vs. closed system.
6. Employee-oriented vs. work-oriented.

In same way Schein (2010, p24) argued that culture can be analysed at three levels:

1. Artefacts
 - Visible and feel-able structured, and processes.
 - Observed behaviour.
2. Espoused beliefs and values
 - Ideals, goals, values and aspirations.
 - Ideologies.
 - Rationalisations.
3. Basic underlying assumptions
 - Unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs and values.

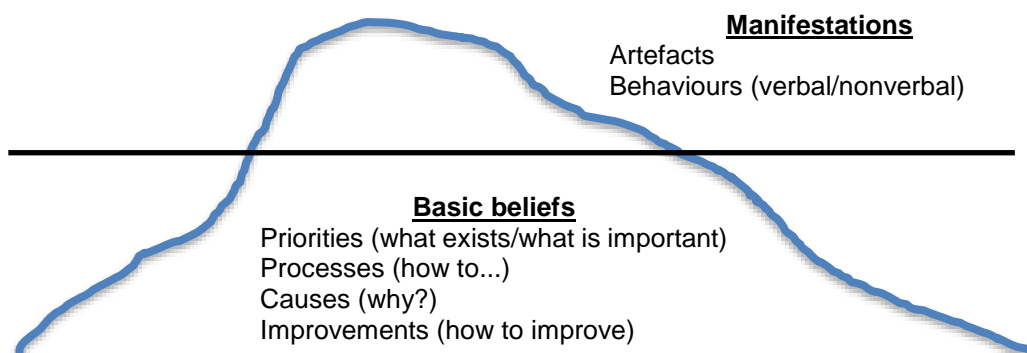


Figure 15: The two sides of culture (Sackmann, 1991)

However, Sackmann (1991), Hofstede (1991) and Schein (2010) agreed that culture components can be visible and invisible. These two sides of culture (as illustrated in Figure 15) are suggested in the following definition, which describes

it as: “Patterns of interpretation composed of the meaning associated with various cultural manifestations, such as stories, rituals, formal and informal practices, jargon, and physical arrangements” (Parker, 2000). It is noticeable that Parker focused on its visible aspects. Later work by Ravasi and Schultz (2006) focused on invisible aspects, with the definition of organisational culture as “a set of shared mental assumptions that guide interpretation and action in organisations by defining appropriate behaviour for various situations”. Since this has a heavier focus on organisational culture, a deeper describing it in the following section.

2.3.3 Assessing organisational culture

For planning such a cultural change, it is crucial to define and understand what the concept of organisational culture is, how could it be measured and how it can be changed. Having an instrument designed to assess culture would provide a more holistic perspective of organisational culture. Ehrhart, Schneider and Macey, (2013) believe that their empirical research specifically focused on organisational culture in the last few decades. A variety of models and theories have been developed in recent years as a result of a broad-based study of organisational culture (Givens, 2012), which can be used as an instrument to assess culture. Table 12 below summarises and analyses popular models that have been cited consistently in the empirical studies of organisational culture.

Table 12: Popular models of organisational culture

Periods	Authors	Key conclusion
1980s	(Nadler and Tushman, 1980)	<p>Organisations can be better understood if they are considered as dynamic and open social systems. There is no perfect way to organise, but there should be an ideal balance of input and output transactions. This system has characteristics that are evaluated in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual/Organisation • Individual/Task • Individual/Informal organisation • Task/Organisation • Task/Informal organisation • Organisation/Informal organisation
	(Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983)	<p>This model focuses on types of decisions and assesses culture through the following dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility/Control • Internal/External
	(Schein, 1984)	<p>Suggests that culture is what a group learns over a period of time as the group solves its problems of survival. This model represents the organisational culture at three levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artefacts • Espoused values • Basic underlying assumptions
1990s	(Hofstede <i>et al.</i> , 1990)	<p>This model suggests surveys based on questionnaires and interviews to determine organisational cultural differences, which can be assessed through six dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process orientated/Results orientated • Job orientated/Employee orientated • Professional/Parochial

Periods	Authors	Key conclusion
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open systems/Closed systems • Tightly controlled/Loosely controlled • Pragmatic/Normative
	(Denison, 1990)	Culture consists of the following dimensions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement • Consistency • Adaptability • Mission
	(Harrison and Stokes, 1992)	This model assesses organisational culture based on how people use power in the organisation and measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power-orientated culture • Role culture • Culture based on achievement • Support-orientated culture
	(Goffee and Jones, 1998)	This model is based on the two dimensions of sociability and solidarity. Sociability is a measure of the friendliness among members of the community. Solidarity is about relationships that are based on common tasks, mutual interests, and clearly understood, shared goals that benefit all involved parties, no matter if they personally like each other or not. These two dimension then categorise culture into four types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communal: high sociability and high solidarity • Networked: high sociability and low solidarity • Mercenary: low sociability and high solidarity • Fragmented: low sociability and low solidarity
2000s +	(Reigle, 2001)	This models assesses organisational culture through a five-dimensional score, one for each of the five culture elements, which are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language • Artefacts and symbols

Periods	Authors	Key conclusion
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patterns of behaviour • Espoused values • Beliefs and underlying assumptions
	(Cameron and Quinn, 2011)	<p>This model proposes four core values representing opposite or competing assumptions, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility and discretion/Control and stability • External focus and differentiation/Internal focus and Integration <p>These core values can then be used to assess culture and categorise it into four types, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hierarchy Culture: A very formalised and structured place to work. • Market Culture: A results-oriented organisation whose major concern is getting the job done. • Clan Culture: A very friendly place to work, where people share a lot of themselves. • Adhocracy Culture: A dynamic, entrepreneurial, and creative place to work.
	(Daft and Lane, 2015)	<p>Culture is described as involving the following four dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptability • Achievement • Clan • Bureaucratic

The assessments of culture in the previous table were reviewed for suitability to this research. In short, “integration studies focus on the perception that all mentioned cultural aspects are consistent and reinforce each other” (Maximini, 2015). The majority of what have been mentioned tend to be typology models rather than exploratory instruments. Even though Cameron and Quinn (2006) created a sophisticated model, “it might prove to not be sufficient, where this research needs to understand the full complexity of the inherent cultural characteristics, more than just a typology might be needed” (Maximini, 2015).

Schein’s model (1984) differs from the other models, and is more suitable for exploratory studies. It is currently one of the most widely used for this type of research, having been widely endorsed and cited thousands of times. For the purpose of this research, an adaptation of Schein’s model was utilised to investigate culture in NPOs. Schein’s model of organisational culture (1984) represents organisational culture at three levels: artefacts, espoused values and basic underlying assumptions. Schein (1991) emphasises that evaluation of culture is not complete without taking all these three levels in consideration, as shown in Figure 16 below.

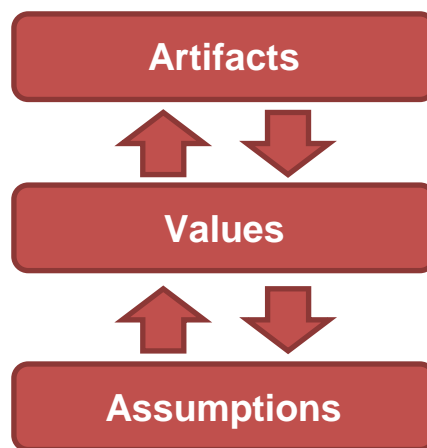


Figure 16: The three levels of Schein’s model (1984)

Artefacts include visible organisational structure and processes; they are readily observed and have multiple cultural meanings. This level does not tend to provide a direct meaning as the data can be easy to obtain but hard to interpret; a profound understanding of what lies behind this visible side is necessary. Hence, it is crucial to ask ‘why’ a group behaves in the way it does, rather than just ‘what’ they do. Needless to say that behavioural differences between organisations

make no sense until the underlying cultural aspects are uncovered and deciphered (Schein, 1984). To understand why members behave the way they do involves a move to the lower layer of this model, which are the values that govern behaviour.

Espoused values include strategies, goals and philosophies; they are observable patterns of meaning. Values are hard to observe directly, so it is important to infer them by deep investigation through a variety of data gathering and analysis tools and techniques (Martin and Siehl, 1983). However, Espoused values can be debatable, overt for which 'values' is more applicable (Schein, 1984). However, there is a deeper layer in this model which is non-debatable; this is the lowest layer.

Basic underlying assumptions are taken-for-granted beliefs, perceptions, thoughts and feelings; they are not directly observable but are apparent from observing the culture (Schein, 1984; Lawson and Shen, 1998). Taken-for-granted assumptions are strongly powerful, because they drop out of awareness and become unconscious and less debatable than espoused values (Schein, 1984).

Discerning these layers requires the efforts of both an insider and an outsider. The insider makes the unconscious assumptions, while the outsider helps to uncover the assumptions by asking the right kind of questions (Schein, 1984; Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). Schein (1984) argues that there cannot be a culture unless there is a group that owns it, where culture is embedded in groups. A given group, according to Schein (1984) can be described as a set of people who fulfil the following conditions; they:

- Have been together long enough to have shared significant problems.
- Have had opportunities to solve these problems and to observe the effect of their solutions.
- Pass these solutions to new member.

This model was chosen mainly for the strong coherence between its three levels, which makes it dynamic; its capacity to embody and represent cultural aspects is large. The dynamic nature allows a change at any level to affect the other levels and every single factor emerging from the data analysis to correspond to one or more levels. Further features of the Schein model (1984) suggest this model to

be the correct choice for this research that focuses on facilitating learning and improvement within an organisation. The relevant features include the fact that the model:

- Defines organisational culture in terms of a dynamic model of how culture is learned, passed on and changed.
- Does not rely solely on the notion that culture is just the set of shared meanings, but it goes beyond that boundary.
- Facilitates culture change through understanding the dynamic evolutionary forces that govern how culture evolves.
- Is ultimately embodied as an interrelated set of basic assumptions that deal with ultimate issues.
- Provides suitable categorisation for the learning issues into internal integration and external adaptation.
- Pays more attention to the opportunities and constraints that organisational culture provides.

2.3.4 Organisational culture and learning

Organisational culture can be studied through understanding the elements of an organisational system. Since the aim of this research is to facilitate CI culture, it is important to investigate the learning aspect of organisational culture. According to Schein (1984), organisational culture is a pattern that developed in learning to cope with its problems. Cultural elements can be defined as learned solutions to problems, where the organisation's problems are structurally associated with two types: external system and internal system. Similarly, organisation's problems can be categorised into either external adaptation or internal integration, which are two sides of the same coin. External adaptation problems are those that ultimately determines the group/organisation survival in the environment (external system) and determines the fate of the group (Weick, 1979). Solving these kinds of problems are influenced by founders of an organisation, who formulate the core mission of the organisation, which may begin to modify to some extent its original assumptions (Schein, 1995). While the internal integration problems are those that deal with the group's ability to actually function as a group, which can be considered as socio-emotional problems (Schein, 1984). Schein (1984) believes that "solutions that an organisation developed to solve both kinds of problem

when they have worked well enough to be considered valid are, then, taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to these problems". Further clarification is shown in Table 13.

Table 13: Schein classification of organisations problems (1995)

Categories		Key focus
External adoption	Strategy	Developing consensus on the primary tasks, core mission, or manifest and latent functions of the group.
	Goals	Developing consensus on goals, such goals being the concrete reflection of the core mission.
	Means of accomplishing goals	Developing consensus on the means to be used in accomplishing the goals.
	Measuring performance	Developing consensus in the criteria to be used in measuring how well the group is doing against its goals and targets.
	Corrections	Developing consensus on remedial or repair strategies as needed when the group is not accomplishing its goals.
Internal integration	Language	Consensus on common language and conceptual categories.
	Boundaries	Consensus on group boundaries and criteria for inclusion and exclusion.
	Power and status	Consensus on criteria for the allocation of power and status.
	Intimacy	Consensus on criteria for intimacy, friendship and love.
	Reward and punishments	Consensus on criteria for allocation of rewards and punishments.
	Ideology	Consensus on ideology and religion.

2.3.5 Cultural change models

Cultural change can be a long and challenging process as organisations provide values and procedures that condition employees to take on the characteristics of the organisation (Caporael, Griesemer and Wimsatt, 2013). To promote any change within an organisation, systems, management, and employees need to

undergo a shift in mind-set as well as operational procedures to adapt to, and adopt, the planned changes.

Culture change does not occur evenly in all organisations, where different maturity levels play a major role in change progress. Schein (1984) believes that there are three level of organisational maturity that reveal the readiness variation for cultural change; these are summarised in Table 14.

Table 14: Cultural change in different maturity levels (Schein, 1984)

Organisations maturity	Cultural change applicability
Young organisations	Cultural change can be described as clarification, articulation and elaboration.
Midlife organisations	Culture can be managed and changed, but not without considering all the possible resources of stability.
Organisations that reached a stage of maturity or decline resulting from mature markets	Since they might tend to comfort that prevent innovation, they would need to change part of their culture, where change will elicit strong resistance.

Organisational change usually starts with leadership and how they implement new strategies (Millar, Hind and Magala, 2012). Creating a culture of change is more than just issuing directives and setting new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). For transformation to be truly sustainable, information, decision-making, and allocation of resources need to be shared effectively amongst employees and stakeholders and this requires a learning culture to be promoted within the organisation (Sahab and Saeed, 2013).

Various perspectives on how culture change can occur are based on understanding and defining the status of the culture (Savolainen, 2013). Authors who tend to believe that culture is a static object, suggest fixing it and using sequential steps to change it, while others, who suppose that culture is dynamic and continuously changing, proved that relative plans and intervention could facilitate a change (Yüksek and Bekmeier-Feuerhahn, 2013). The existing literature reports several examples of change theory necessary to implement a major change in an organisation (as shown in Figure 17 below); these are discussed in the following sections.

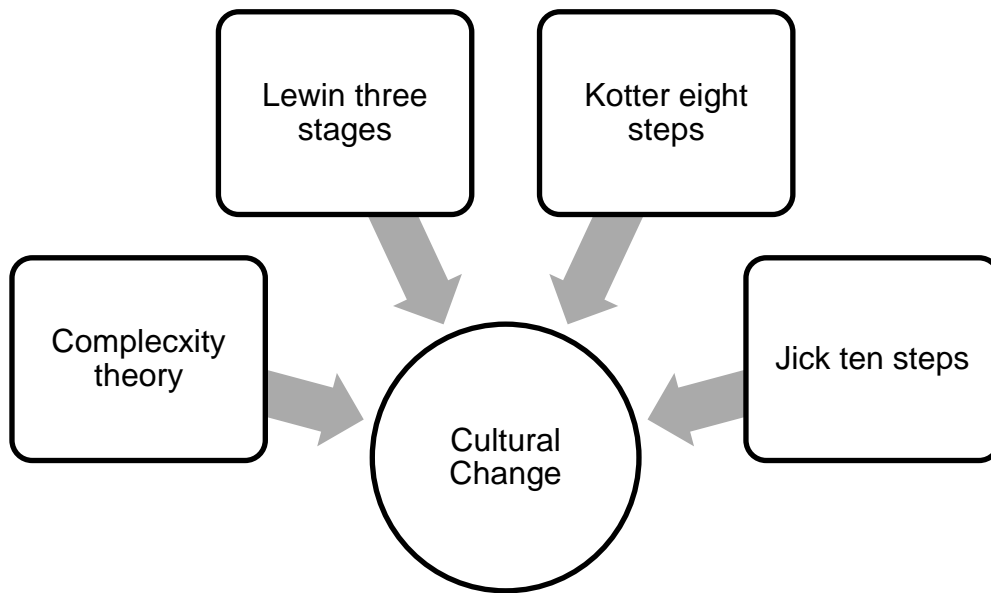


Figure 17: Popular theories in cultural change

According to Schein (2010), there is no perfect model for culture change, however, change can be achieved through the use of variety of techniques. The following section discusses four theories of cultural change. Complexity theory was found as an appropriate place to start in order to demonstrate how change can progress. Next, Lewin provides a clear illustration of culture change via a three step model. Finally, two more models for culture change that Mento et al. (2002) describe as the most well-known models are detailed; these are: Kotter's eight-steps model (1996) and Jick's ten-steps model (1991). These four popular theories are discussed below.

2.3.5.1 Complexity Theory

Complexity theory has been developed to help understand organisational and, consequently, cultural change. It focuses on how order emerges after a change; Houchin and MacLean (2005) concluded that organisations also need to be sensitive to the human element, specifically the dynamics involved in individual and group behaviours.

People are not one-dimensional, and there are other emotions and factors when it comes to the workforce (Burnes, 2009). Any change management must incorporate communication that allows the workforce to make sense of the change, therefore increasing the success of the change process (Pye, 2005). Without the full support of those affected by any organisational change, it is highly

unlikely that those changes will remain in place. The failure to adopt has been documented in case studies by Werkman (2010) with the reorganisation of emergency response teams with the police force; and Palmer, Dunfield and Akin (2009) with the introduction of the swipe card at British Airways terminals at Heathrow. In both cases, management ignored those employees who were affected by the changes, did not communicate the changes clearly and ultimately lost the trust of these employees, resulting in a reversal of the implemented changes.

Small events can cause great changes across a system, which is why it is important to ensure communication is cascaded throughout an organisation so that everyone understands what events are going to happen (Snyder, 2013). Complex systems can be managed by using a ripple effect through interpersonal interactions and relationships (Johnson, Dickinson and Huitema, 2008). This interpersonal ripple again puts the focus on the human element. Encouraging collaborative practices means that management utilises opportunities for interaction (Loorbach, 2010), and successful organisational change becomes more likely.

2.3.5.2 Lewin's three stage model

Lewin developed a change model involving three steps: unfreezing, changing and refreezing. The model is still widely used and serves as the basis for many modern change models as it is a practical way to understand the change process. It shows that the process of change entails creating the perception that a change is needed, then moving toward the new, desired level of behaviour and finally, applying that new desired behaviour as the norm, as illustrated in Figure 18 below.

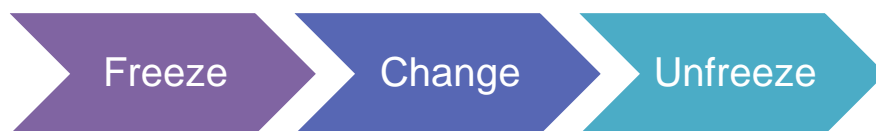


Figure 18: Lewin's three stage theory of change

This model is an example from a school of thought which believes that culture can be assumed as a static object and can be controlled through a short process; suggesting only three stages are needed to make the change successful.

2.3.5.3 Kotter's eight step model

Kotter's Change Management theory has been the foundation for many other models over the years and is an eight step change model (Kotter, 1996) that shown in Figure 19 below. The first steps look to create a climate for change: creating a sense of urgency, building the right team to communicate the planned change, and making sure the vision, or result, is clear. The next three steps are about engaging and enabling the whole organisation, which is achieved by communicating the reasons for the planned change, but also the benefits to each individual or department. These steps are further supported by Yüksek and Bekmeier-Feuerhahn (2013) with the theory that psychologically-orientated change communication that targets the emotional needs of the workforce will result in less resistance to change. The final two steps of the Kotter Change Management model are to implement and sustain the planned changes. The final steps require a focus on the desired change until it becomes integral to the organisation's culture and, as Clark (2010) reported, everyone shares the same norms and values. One of the main elements of successful change management is the human element, and it is important to ensure that everyone associated with the change is involved from the beginning (Anderson and Anderson, 2010).

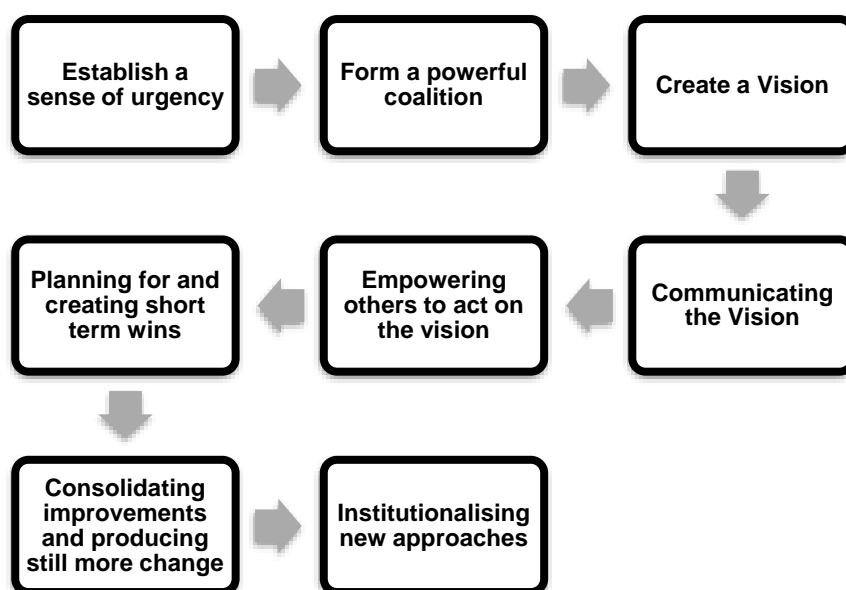


Figure 19: Kotter's eight step change management model

2.3.5.4 Jick's ten steps model

Jick (1991) emphasised that change succeeds when an entire organisation participates in the effort, and proposed ten comprehensive commands for implementing change; these include:

1. Analyse the organisation and its need for change.
2. Create a shared vision and common direction.
3. Separate from the past.
4. Create a sense of urgency.
5. Support a strong leader role.
6. Line up political sponsorship.
7. Craft an implementation plan.
8. Develop enabling structures.
9. Communicate, involve and be honest.
10. Reinforce and institutionalise the change.

These steps provide the leader with an outline roadmap towards cultural change. However, each of them needs to have a clear plan and possible initiatives in order to be implemented successfully (Kritsonis, 2005).

2.3.6 Continuous improvement models associated with culture

Following to the literature review, only a handful of models were found to be useful for this research context; these are the ones that associate successful CI implementation with certain aspects of culture. Figure 20 below shows four models, which also discussed in the following section.

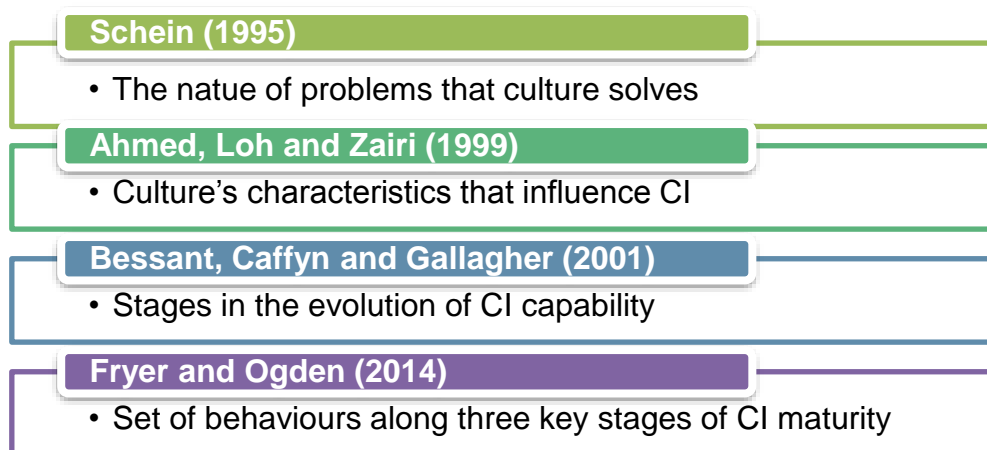


Figure 20: Useful models that associate CI with culture

2.3.6.1 Schein classification of organisational problems

Since culture is supposed to determine solutions to the problem that a group faces, Schein (1995) categorised these problems into:

- External adaption problems that deal with the group's basic survival.
- Internal integration problems that deal with the group's ability to function as a group.

This categorisation was based on the notion of Homan (1950), who distinguished between the 'external system' and 'internal system' and noted that they are two sides of the same coin.

2.3.6.2 Ahmed, Loh and Zairi Model

According to Ahmed, Loh and Zairi (1999), CI is primarily guided by culture and influenced by twelve cultural characteristics. These characteristics are categorised into two groups, which are external adaptability and internal consistency, as shown in Table 15 below.

Table 15: Culture's characteristics influencing CI (Ahmed, Loh and Zairi, 1999)

External adaptability	Internal consistency
1. Safe environment	7. Organisational slack
2. Risk-taking	8. Rewards
3. A future orientation	9. Training
4. Openness	10. Leadership
5. Autonomy	11. Common goals
6. External orientation	12. Belief in action

2.3.6.3 Bessant and Caffyn CI Maturity Model

According to Bessant et al. (Bessant, Caffyn and Gallagher, 2001) CI maturity has five-stages for the learning process, as shown in Figure 16 below. These stages are relatively linear and incremental. What makes this model useful in a research context is that the stages involve the accumulation of the typical characteristics that relate to aspects of organisational culture, as summarised in Table 16 below. Moreover, this model has been found appropriate to trace the progress toward a CI culture, where assesses CI maturity through noticing certain aspects of culture.

Table 16: Stages in the evolution of CI capability (Bessant and Caffyn, 1997)

Stage of development		Typical characteristics
Stage 1	Background CI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Problem-solving is random. - No formal efforts or structure. - Occasional bursts punctuated by inactivity and non-participation. - The dominant mode of problem-solving is by specialists. - Short-term benefits. - No strategic impact.
Stage 2	Structured CI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formal attempts to create and sustain CI. - Use of a formal problem-solving process. - Use of participation. - Training in basic CI tools. - Structured idea management system. - Recognition system. - Often parallel systems to operations.
Stage 3	Goal oriented CI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All the above, plus: formal deployment of strategic goals. - Monitoring and measurement of CI against these goals. - In-line system.
Stage 4	Proactive /empowered CI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All the above, plus: CI responsibilities devolved to problem-solving unit. - High levels of experimentation.
Stage 5	Full CI Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CI as the dominant way of life. - Automatic capture and sharing of learning. - Everyone actively involved in the innovation process. - Incremental and radical innovation.

2.3.6.4 Fryer and Ogden

Fryer and Ogden (2014) developed a model that is based on a set of eight organisational behaviours:

1. Integration of CI into the organisation.
2. Extent of CI projects.
3. Management support.
4. Strategic performance management.
5. CI training and learning.
6. Reward system.
7. Blame culture.
8. Communication.

These behaviours can be used to gauge and guide organisational progress along three key stages of CI maturity, which are in Figure 21 below.

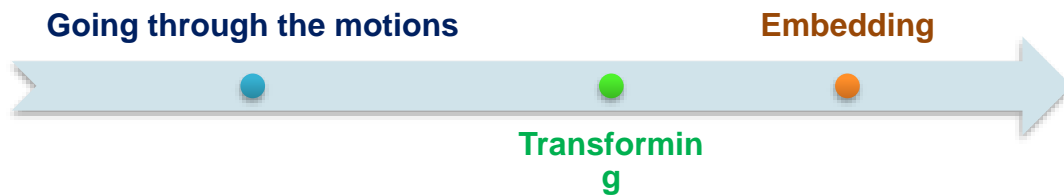


Figure 21: Three key stages of CI maturity (Fryer and Ogden, 2014)

2.4 Nonprofit Organisations

The nonprofit sector is the sum of private, voluntary, NPOs and associations (Anheier, 2014). NPOs are vital to economic well-being (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2015). NPOs are a central part of the social fabric in developing and developed countries (Weerawardena, McDonald and Sullivan, 2010).

The overlap between the main definitions of NPOs (Salamon, Hems and Chinnock, 2000) identifies the following features of such bodies; they are:

- Self-governing.
- Nonprofit-distributing.
- Private and non-governmental in basic structure.
- Voluntary to some meaningful extent.
- Engaging people based on some shared interest or concern.

However, Al-Tabbaa et al. (2014) incorporated more recent characteristics of NPOs; they:

- Are formally structured, although this structure may have different shapes (e.g. paid or voluntary staff).
- Operate exclusively for any other not-for-profit purpose.
- Are independent of the state (i.e. is independently governed and not part of the government).
- Re-invest their entire financial surplus either in the services that the organisation offers or back into the organisation itself.

NPOs which are philanthropic and centred on social well-being, work to improve the community by providing services which support and enhance community living. They may be educational, religious or charity groups serving the common good. Also, as a result of different countries individual charity laws, taxation policies and regulations, charities may vary from country to country.

A charity's reputation with its society and donors depends upon its financial stability, which is assessed by charity evaluators who consider how much charities gain from fundraising, sponsorship, revenue from investments and the income generated from the sale of goods and tax refunds (Oakland, 2003). Charities must reveal exactly how much they receive from their donors (Rad, 2005).

There are many forms of NPO. The term NPO does not necessarily mean that there is no profit, but there is no profit-distribution to share-holders, which means that they can be involved in investment activity and gaining profit (Salamon, Hems and Chinnock, 2000; Al-Tabbaa, Leach and March, 2014). This profit can be used to cover operational costs and help in sustainability, expansion and even provide donations. One example of a NPO that achieves impressive revenue is Rolex. It was established in 1905 by Alfred Davis and Hans Wilsdorf. In 1944, after Hans' wife passed away, he established a charity foundation called Wilsdorf Foundation and placed the ownership of Rolex in the hands of his foundation (Rolex, 2018). Currently, Rolex produce more than 800,000 USD every year, whilst the operating profit margin for the brand is around 30%. Forbes lists Rolex as the world's 69th most valuable brand, with a brand value of 8,7 billion USD (Forbes, 2018).

2.4.1 What is different in the nonprofit sectors?

NPOs can be defined as those delivering services to minorities from disadvantaged communities, whereas public sector organisations tend to cater to the majority (Feiock and Andrew, 2006).

Revenue sources are also a differentiation point between profit and NPOs. According to Henderson et al. (2002) and Greim (2012), NPOs tend to secure revenue from those who do not necessarily expect anything in return, for example, government funding and donations from individuals and companies.

However, with NPOs becoming more prominent in developing countries, there is an increasing demand to demonstrate their overall effectiveness (Wadongo, 2014). NPOs have been credited as change agents, moving from their initial brief of providing relief and welfare, to building sustainable development agencies, which can be further promoted through supportive leadership and adequate funding (Okorley and Nkrumah, 2012).

The challenge is how to measure the effectiveness of such NPOs when they are not able to compete on tangibles such as price. Certain costs can be reduced through the use of volunteers but, as they are not considered employees, they cannot be subjected to the same level of performance management (Wadongo, 2014).

Another challenge is the expectation that certain levels of service will be provided based on the funding received. This could place both management and employees under pressure to perform, but the targets set by either funders or management may not necessarily match deliverables from the employees (McKeon, 2016). Gruman and Saks (2011) state how certain elements within an NPO, such as effective customer service, cannot be objectively measured. As a result, the challenge arises of how CI measures can be established and maintained. This is further supported by Kendall and Knapp (2000) who argue that the very characteristics of an NPO would make any monitoring of processes a costly exercise.

International NPOs face tighter accountability and requirements for performance management than local NPOs (Mueller, Rickman and Wichman-Tou, 2006); although it can be argued that more established NPOs have better performance management systems than younger, less experienced NPOs (LeRoux and Wright, 2010). Nevertheless, there is now more pressure on all NPOs to account for the resources they have been given (Ebrahim and Rangan, 2014).

The role of NPOs is increasingly important in today's world, especially when governmental resources are limited in developing countries. Lekorwe and Mpabanga (2007) report that they are actively helping in reducing poverty, although they are not always encouraged to operate in some countries; this is often because they do not have the capabilities to manage funding effectively. There have unfortunately been a number of financial scandals involving the

misuse of resources which have had an impact on funding (Hug, 2011). Therefore, it is now more imperative that NPOs are transparent and show they are accountable to the stakeholders they aim to serve (O'Dwyer and Unerman, 2010).

Focusing research activities on NPOs would provide them with a degree of legitimacy that is often found to be lacking in the view of funding agencies, as such research would provide evidence of transparency and value (Hug, 2011). NPOs rely on the public for support, and the public are likely to give that financial support if they believe the NPO is using those resources effectively (Kraps, 2014). In addition, research can also identify the areas in which NPOs are operating; Barr, Fafchamps and Owens (2005) found that in Uganda the NPOs were all doing almost identical work and were in the same locality, thus showing duplication of efforts.

Governments funding NPOs are often unsure of the motives behind the organisation and are therefore reluctant to fund organisations that may challenge the government (Bendell, 2006), potentially making these relationships uneasy. However, it is important that an NPO has a good relationship with government if it wishes to have a sustainable impact. NPOs not only need to be accountable to those that fund them, but also to their beneficiaries (Bagire, Aosa and Awino, 2014). Implementing accountability measures will provide them with legitimacy; however, they also need to publicise the efforts they are making, and research can provide objective evidence of their activities.

2.4.2 Continuous improvement within nonprofit organisations

There is increasing pressure on NPOs to achieve best performance through CI approaches to ensure their sustainability (Cairns *et al.*, 2005). In order to achieve CI, NPOs have considered a variety of approaches (Chew and Osborne, 2009). Process improvement can be beneficial to NPOs, as it will help them to be more efficient as they work towards achieving their mission (Lassiter, 2007). Chen (2012) argues that individuals who work in management positions in NPOs have a more positive work attitude than those in the public sector; this was attributed to more intrinsic motivation and less bureaucracy. It has also been found that employees working in NPOs are more interested in meeting the needs of their users, rather than in extrinsic motivations (Schepers *et al.*, 2005). However, a

study by Mohiuddin and Dulay (2015) found that employees in an NPO did not have a sense of achievement, which may have been owing to a lack of communication of the organisations' goals and objectives. It is therefore important that the attitudes and perceptions of employees of NPOs in everyday interactions are understood and addressed. Without their participation, CI will be difficult to attain.

This need for accountability at the employee level is a reason for an NPO to regularly assess the skills and roles of their employees. If an organisation is undergoing change and seeking to improve its processes, the employees are fundamental to the way forward (Brajer-Marczak, 2014). It may seem obvious that a review of current systems and procedures would automatically identify areas for improvement, but organisational goals may not match the roles and responsibilities of individual employees. As the workforce changes, the methods used to manage them must also change (Torrington *et al.*, 2014).

Improving a workforce comes mainly through identification of any lack of skills, and then providing training to overcome the deficits; a nonprofit organisation that values learning can be better placed for CI (Derrick-Mills *et al.*, 2014). Orientation training can help employees have a better understanding of their role within the company (Tabvuma, Georgellis and Lange, 2015), but it must be specific and targeted to their actual role in order to be effective (McKeon, 2016). Kroll and Moynihan (2015) suggest that such training programmes are less likely to be implemented due to limited resources; however, NPOs should consider employee training important if they are to increase morale and staff productivity.

Grant and Berry (2011) note how those working in a nonprofit organisation already have a higher intrinsic motivational level, and so providing the right support in terms of training will reinforce staff engagement and even lead to competitive advantage through employee performance (Gruman and Saks, 2011).

Another way to improve employee performance would be incentives and rewards for excellence. Nankervis and Stanton (2012) state how low employee motivation can lead to increased sickness and absenteeism, so NPOs should look at how such incentives can tie in with their overall goal of CI. As previously stated, NPOs have limited resources, but non-monetary incentives such as a day off work,

flexible work arrangements, or even recognition from senior management would boost motivation (McKeon, 2016). However, any reward system within an NPO must be perceived as fair to all, otherwise, motivational levels will drop (Hafiza, Shah and Jamsheed, 2011).

NPOs, like most companies, should have appraisals and performance management systems in place to measure employee productivity. It is worth noting that the appraisal process is formalised and recorded, but rarely used as a living document (Torrington *et al.*, 2014). If it is carried out on a routine basis merely to check boxes and record figures, and has no employee input or further follow up with management, then the process itself is ineffective due to a lack of employee engagement (Nankervis and Stanton, 2012).

The overall expected impact of any CI process would be one in which NPOs are maximising their resources to deliver a value-for-money service. However, organisational culture, workforce diversity, and operational requirements may impact on how much and how well any CI process is undertaken.

2.5 Relevant Studies to the Research Focus

2.5.1 The purpose of this systematic review

To answer the research question, the literature was examined to make sure that it has been thoroughly investigated. A large part of the literature regarding interventions to develop a CI culture is based on examples in other sectors (mainly in the health sector). There is little empirical work on NPOs (King Khalid Foundation, 2018). However, some articles were found to examine aspects that could be relevant and worthy of consideration, which could be extracted and potentially add value to the proposed framework.

2.5.2 The process of this systematic review

Before reviewing the relevant articles, it is important to clarify the purpose of reviewing the literature in the qualitative research, which is different to doing so in quantitative research. In quantitative research, a literature review is commonly systematic (Holliday, 2016). In qualitative research, by contrast, a literature review need not be the same, since its purpose is to scrutinise established knowledge (Holliday, 2016), and sort out positions, ideologies and discourses of

knowledge to establish a research position. Hence, a systematic review was conducted as “a review of existing research using explicit, accountable rigorous research methods” (Gough, Oliver and Thomas, 2012).

However, there are different emphases when conducting a literature review and this differentiation is based on the philosophical basis of the research. One of these differences is that the process of reviewing literature in qualitative research tends to be conducted using an iterative approach, in which it is difficult to “specify in advance all the concepts, search terms and resources that will be searched, and different searches may be undertaken at different time points through the review” (Gough, Oliver and Thomas, 2012). That is why this review was carried out after the data gathering and analysis phase, as the grounded theory presents the data before the literature to ground the theory in data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Some other differences are summarised, according to Gough, Oliver and Thomas (2012), in Table 17 below.

Table 17: Different emphases of systematic reviews

Different emphases	Qualitative research	Quantitative research
Questions	Open	Closed
Concepts	Emergent	Pre-specified
Procedures	Less formal	More formal
Inference	Theoretical	Statistical
Process	Iterative	Linear

As a necessary step in any research, the existing knowledge had to be investigated. The process of this investigation is clarified in this section, which describes the procedure with which the literature review chapter was conducted. The literature review was developed into two parts. The first part, evolved naturally to provide a holistic overview of the research domains; this is the first section of the literature review. The second part was carried out systematically, in order to collect the most relevant articles that could respond to the research question. This section, details the process that describes the systematic approach used to provide an up-to-date critical report on what is relevant to the research topic. Three academic databases, namely, Web of Science, EBSCO and Scopus, were used to find relevant publications. A systematic search was conducted for the following keywords, with all their possible synonyms, in article titles and abstracts: ‘continuous improvement’, ‘organisational culture’ and ‘nonprofit organisations’. This research started with its questions and then looked

at the literature that corresponded to them. The following sections provide an overview of the three main areas for this research, which are: continuous improvement (CI), organisational culture (OC) and nonprofit organisations (NPOs), as shown in Figure 22 below.

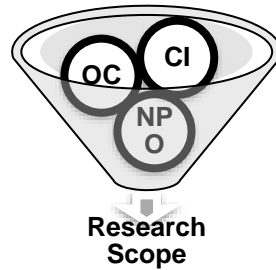


Figure 22: The areas that synthesis the research scope

Very few results were returned when all these terms were inserted. It was then thought useful to remove the keyword ‘nonprofit organisations’ so as to increase the chances of other articles emerging. This exposed an area where the two terms revealed the numbers of documents from the above three databases shown in the following figures (Figure 23 and Figure 24). The contents of these documents are presented in the Literature Review chapter.

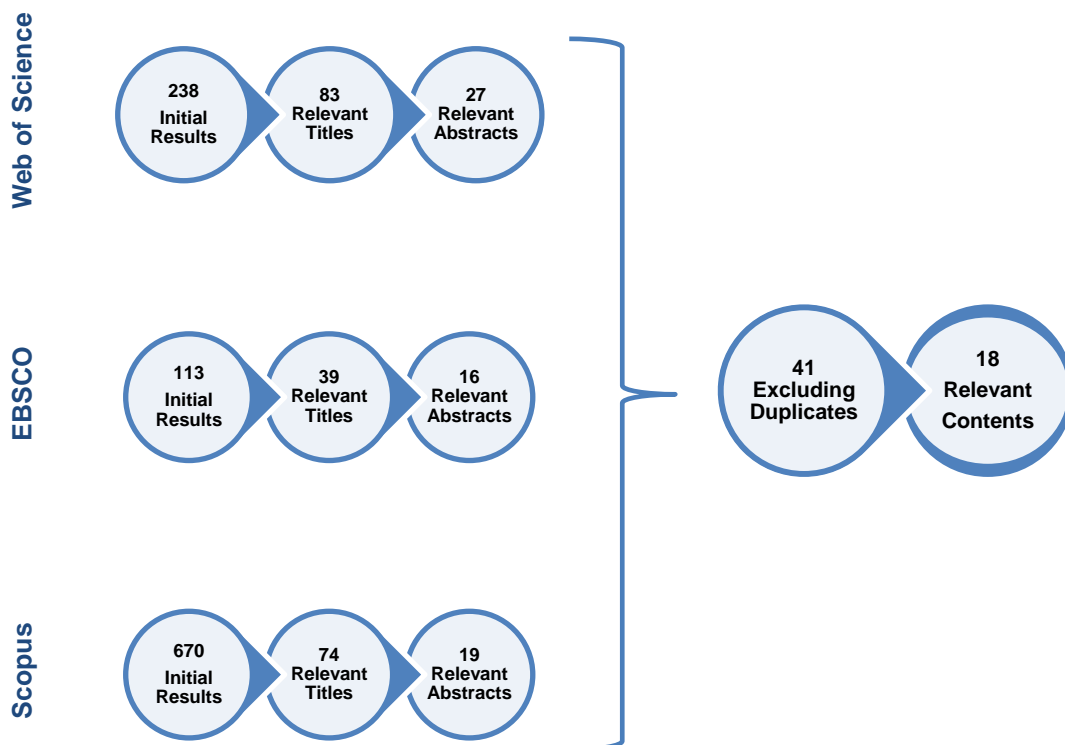


Figure 23: The process of collecting the relevant research evidence



Figure 24: Identifying the areas of relevant research

2.5.3 Descriptive analysis of the relevant studies

This research began by presenting the research questions; the literature to which they corresponded was subsequently analysed. The following provides an overview of the three main areas of this research; these are: continuous improvement (CI), organisational culture (OC), and nonprofit organisations (NPOs).

Taken as a whole, although the articles examined do not answer the research question entirely, they prove a considerable source for interventions to facilitate a CI culture within NPOs. Figure 25 below shows a comparison between the articles relevant to the research question which have been categorised by factors, and illustrate the varied focal points in each category. Figure 25 highlights again the importance of the research focus, where there is a clear lack as shown below.

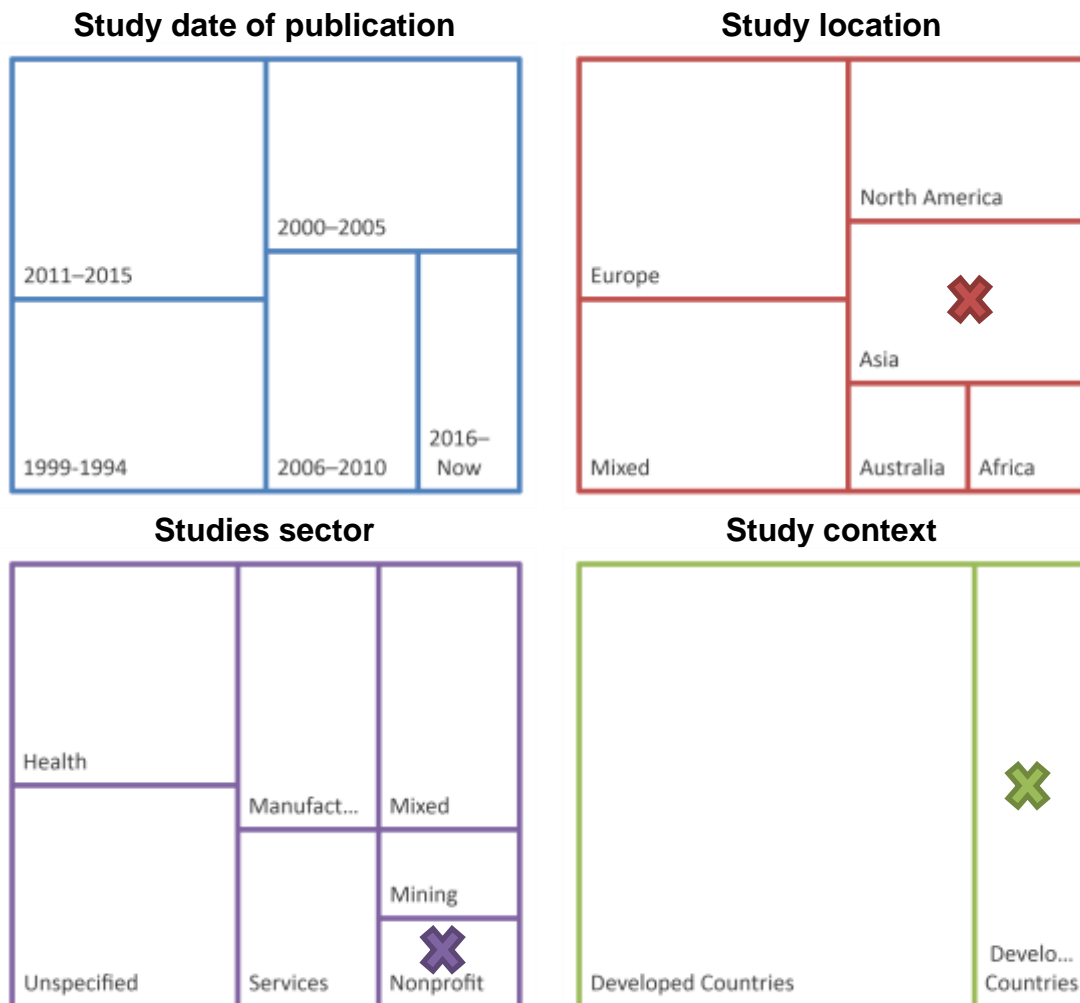


Figure 25: Descriptive analysis of the relevant articles based on four factors

Table 18 below adds further description for the most relevant studies related to the research question, according to systematic process as explained in the methodology chapter. This table shows the title, sample and number of citations according to Google Scholar™, as they appeared in March 2018. This table highlights the gaps which need to be considered in further research, which confirms the importance of this research. The most significant aspect here is the lack of focus on a CI culture within NPOs. Moreover, developing countries have not attracted sufficient research.

Table 18: List of the relevant studies

	Study	Sample	Citations
1	Rediscovering continuous improvement (Bessant <i>et al.</i> , 1994).	4 Case examples	446
2	Assessing the impact of continuous quality improvement /total quality management: concept versus implementation (Shortell <i>et al.</i> , 1995).	61 Hospitals	769
3	Empowering people in a five-shift operation for continuous improvement (Broekhuizen and Frericks, 1997).	A Single firm	N/A
4	Cultures for continuous improvement and learning (Ahmed, Loh and Zairi, 1999).	Literature exploration	165
5	Empowerment and continuous improvement in the United States, Mexico, Poland, and India: Predicting fit on the basis of the dimensions of power distance and individualism (Robert <i>et al.</i> , 2000).	A Single firm	444
6	An evolutionary model of continuous improvement behaviour (Bessant, Caffyn and Gallagher, 2001).	103 Organisations from different sectors	497
7	Assessing the factors influencing continuous quality improvement implementation: Experience in Korean hospitals (Lee <i>et al.</i> , 2002).	67 Hospitals	68
8	Enabling continuous improvement : A case study of implementation (de Jager <i>et al.</i> , 2004).	A Single firm	92
9	Convergence or National Specificity? (Dabhilkar, Bengtsson and Bessant, 2007).	100 Organisations	19
10	Continuous improvement : Role of organisational learning mechanisms (Oliver, 2009).	500 Organisations	76

Study		Sample	Citations
11	Exploring the fit between organisational culture and quality improvement in a home-care environment (Firbank, 2010).	4 Home-care agencies	6
12	Organisational structure and continuous improvement and learning: Moderating effects of cultural endorsement of participative leadership (Huang, Rode and Schroeder, 2011).	266 Manufacturing plants operating in three industries	52
13	Excellence models in the nonprofit context: Strategies for continuous improvement (Al-Tabbaa, Leach and March, 2014).	4 Organisations	30
14	Sustaining a quality improvement culture in local health departments applying for accreditation (Verma and Moran, 2014).	22 Local health department	10
15	Modelling continuous improvement maturity in the public sector: Key stages and indicators (Fryer and Ogden, 2014).	3 Case studies	9
16	Continuous improvement in Vietnam: Unique approaches for a unique culture (Nguyen and Robinson, 2015).	6 Organisations	6
17	Barriers to Continuous Improvement : Perceptions of Top Managers, Middle Managers and Workers (Lodgaard <i>et al.</i> , 2016).	A Single firm	9
18	Determinants of Sustainable Continuous Improvement Practices in Mail Processing Service Operations (Iberahim <i>et al.</i> , 2016).	A Single firm	2

Table 18 shows further details about the relevant articles. Although they do not answer the research question explicitly, they are a valuable source for proposing interventions as a crucial component for the framework. Aspects influence continuous improvement

This section reviews the information extracted from the studies outlined in Table 18, which could add value to the framework development. The process of analysing relevant articles was carried out after the data gathering and analysis phases. This unusual order was employed to comply with the grounded theory approach that was used, which suggests, according to Charmaz (2014), deferring examining the literature until after developing a conceptual analysis from the empirical data. This is in order to adhere to two important research rules:

1. Avoid being influenced by assumptions from literature that could affect the neutrality of the exploratory orientation.

2. Allow a comparison of how and where the emergent findings fit in with the literature.

Therefore, the following part is an extraction, based on the literature review, of what seems relevant to the research topic from these selected studies. The following part discusses the main aspects of organisational culture that have an impact on facilitating CI across variety of sectors and geographical contexts. The extracted aspects have been illustrated in a useful categorisation, developed by Schein (1995), as discussed earlier in this chapter. This categorisation helped to classify the extracted aspects influencing CI into two main headings: internal integration and external adaptation (see Figure 26).

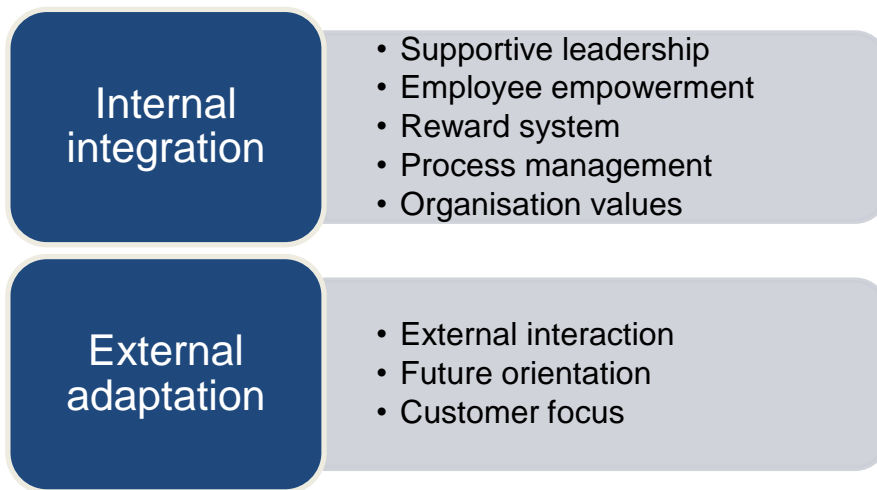


Figure 26: Dividing the aspects based on Schein categorisation (1995)

2.5.3.1 Supportive leadership

Leadership is of crucial importance in terms of supporting change in an organisation. Ahmed, Loh, and Zairi (1999) state that leadership is one of the elements that builds the internal consistency required for continuous integration (CI). De Jager et al. (2004) add that local leadership is of considerable importance in determining the success or failure of CI implementation. Further, Oliver (2009) discovered that there is a correlation between higher level of CI success and supportive leadership. Considering this, Huang, Rode, and Schroeder (2011) recommend that managers actively assess the extent to which the national culture endorses participative leadership. In cases where this endorsement is weak, managers should consider the extent to which the organisational culture will provide alternative support for this type of leadership. Verma and Moran

(2014), based on the literature and input from practitioners, confirmed that leadership commitment is a key element in a culture of quality improvement, which may be developed over time to help achieve a sustainable CI culture.

2.5.3.2 Employee empowerment

Bessant et al. (1994) declared that, in order for an organisation to enable CI, it must have an enabling infrastructure that encourages employees to implement improvements, while Shortell et al. (1995) advised leaders to allow employees to participate in improvement activities. In addition, Broekhuizen and Frericks (1997) found that empowerment can improve alertness in business operations and, thereby, speed up the CI process of the organisation when training the entire workforce and forming CI teams. Al-Tabbaa, Leach and March (2014), who compared widely-used business excellence models, found that they share a common CI thread, i.e., organisational learning that, consequently, comes through employee empowerment. Employee empowerment, according to Verma and Moran (2014), is a fundamental element of a culture of quality improvement. Furthermore, training and learning are organisational behaviours deeply associated with CI and can be used to gauge and guide organisational progress toward CI. In addition, employee participation can sustain CI practices (Iberahim *et al.*, 2016).

2.5.3.3 Reward system

People need to be motivated to undertake improvements, and this could also reduce their resistance to change (Burke, 2017). A reward system has been found to be an appropriate way to facilitate CI. Ahmed, Loh, and Zairi (1999) claimed that an organisation needs to have a reward system in order to have the internal consistency necessary to support CI. Further, Firbank (2010) concluded that a reward system is a cultural characteristic that influences CI implementation. Finally, Fryer and Ogden (2014) proposed a reward system for organisational behaviours that could guide the organisational progress of CI. This type of reward system has been found to have a significant impact when applied, and it is an effective practice (Nguyen and Robinson, 2015).

2.5.3.4 Process Management

Process management means having a clear commitment to control and improve a process using certain tools and techniques (Shaked, 2013). Bessant et al. (1994) suggest that the entirety of organisation management should be transformed toward managing as a process, which could be strengthened by a supporting toolkit. Al-Tabbaa, Leach and March (2014) had no doubt that 'managing for improvement' is in the spirit of CI. According to Bessant, Caffyn, and Gallagher (2001), CI development is essentially an evolutionary process, not a binary state. Process management underpins active CI implementation, which requires the use of scientific skills in decision-making and the adoption of a quality information system capable of producing precise and valid information (Lee *et al.*, 2002). According to Firbank (2010), CI is influenced by the degree of formalisation and professionalisation throughout the organisation. Verma and Moran (2014) argued that process adjustment and improvement should be considered as a non-stop mission, one that needs to allow the proper infrastructure to keep processes improving continuously. Process management also needs to develop futuristic planning through implementing strategic performance management (Fryer and Ogden, 2014). Nguyen and Robinson (2015) observed that different types of organisational structures play roles in CI progress, and they believe that some national cultures have more suitable structures than others in terms of CI. According to Lodgaard et al. (2016), organisations must demonstrate management commitment to organizing and operating CI and prove this by using a variety of CI methods in addition to capturing and sharing knowledge. Good maintenance of equipment is one of the CI practices that is mentioned widely in CI literature and one that has an unarguable impact (Iberahim *et al.*, 2016).

2.5.3.5 Organisation values

The literature shows that an organisation with flourishing CI has a certain set of values. These values articulate a supportive culture (Bessant *et al.*, 1994). Organisations must believe in action and improve their capabilities of implementing proper actions (Ahmed, Loh and Zairi, 1999). The courage to apply changes and openness to new ideas are important values associated with CI (Ahmed, Loh and Zairi, 1999). These values result in favourable CI behaviour

patterns (Dabhilkar, Bengtsson and Bessant, 2007). Oliver (2009) discovered that there is a correlation between a higher level of CI success and CI being part of organisational culture. Other CI values include collaborative teamwork, organisational commitment, strong communication, and respect for investing in the workforce as the most valuable capital of all (Firbank, 2010; Fryer and Ogden, 2014; Verma and Moran, 2014; Nguyen and Robinson, 2015; Ibrahimi *et al.*, 2016).

2.5.3.6 External interaction

Organisations are not isolated from the societies in which they operate. Hence, they must determine how to act properly and positively for the benefit of society and themselves. External interactions have an undesirable risk due to uncertainty, but the risk must be taken to move forward on a CI journey (Shortell *et al.*, 1995). Risk-taking organisations have more external adaptability than conservative organisations (Ahmed, Loh and Zairi, 1999). CI organisations must be actively involved with other entities in society in order to be key players in preparing for better and easier CI implementation (Firbank, 2010). On the other hand, governmental authorities are encouraged to provide the proper circumstances under which organisations could be more amenable to improvement through engaging with the organisations and developing ideal regulations, i.e., developing an ergonomic environment (Ibrahimi *et al.*, 2016).

2.5.3.7 Future orientation

Having the wherewithal to be able to hunt for future opportunities is a powerful advantage that allows early improvements and increases competitiveness capabilities. Being oriented towards the future requires a clear framework for improvement and strategic management skills (Bessant *et al.*, 1994). Ahmed, Loh, and Zairi (1999) report that an orientation towards the future is guided by having common goals that all members of an organisation are aware of. It has been also argued that no organisation can sustain CI practices without a clear future orientation (Ibrahimi *et al.*, 2016).

2.5.3.8 Customer focus

It is unarguable that customer needs and preferences must have a high priority. Customer focus allows organisations to design the right products/services, which

leads to customer satisfaction and loyalty (Firbank, 2010). Verma and Moran (2014) proposed customer focus to sustain a CI culture.

2.5.3.9 Summary of the key findings

Table 19 below summarises the extracted aspects and shows the frequency of each of them. The variation in frequency reveals that some aspects have appeared more frequently than others, which highlights the importance of the most frequent aspects.

Table 19: The aspects' appearance in the relevant articles

Authors/ Aspects	1. Supportive leadership	2. Employee empowerment	3. Reward system	4. Process management	5. Organisation values	6. External interaction	7. Future orientation	8. Customer focus
(Bessant <i>et al.</i> , 1994)		•		•	•		•	
(Shortell <i>et al.</i> , 1995)		•			•	•		
(Broekhuizen and Frericks, 1997)		•						
(Ahmed, Loh and Zairi, 1999)	•	•	•		•	•	•	
(Robert <i>et al.</i> , 2000)					•			
(Bessant, Caffyn and Gallagher, 2001)				•				
(Lee <i>et al.</i> , 2002)				•				
(de Jager <i>et al.</i> , 2004)	•							
(Dabhilkar, Bengtsson and Bessant, 2007)					•			
(Oliver, 2009)	•	•						
(Firbank, 2010)			•	•		•		•
(Huang, Rode and Schroeder, 2011)	•							
(Al-Tabbaa, Leach and March, 2014)		•		•			•	

Authors/ Aspects	1. Supportive leadership	2. Employee empowerment	3. Reward system	4. Process management	5. Organisation values	6. External interaction	7. Future orientation	8. Customer focus
(Verma and Moran, 2014)	•	•		•				•
(Fryer and Ogden, 2014)		•	•	•				
(Nguyen and Robinson, 2015)			•	•				
(Lodgaard <i>et al.</i> , 2016)				•				
(Iberahim <i>et al.</i> , 2016)		•		•		•		
Frequency of aspects	5	9	4	10	5	4	3	2

The top frequent aspects are the process management (10) and employees empowerment (9). This suggests an advanced focus on operations and human factors because they were found the most crucial OC aspects to facilitate CI.

2.6 Conclusion

Through this chapter, after presenting the fundamental background of the research scope, the knowledge gap has been made clear. A firm foundation has been established from which to develop the intended robust framework. Work will be accomplished according to the research methodological design in the next chapter, which has been detailed, in addition to the philosophical position that has been clarified.

The output of this chapter has revealed eight OC aspects that facilitate CI. These aspects answered particularly the first research sub-question, which is to explore aspects of OC that facilitate CI within NPOs, where the most discussed studies have not been conducted with NPOs and none of them have been conducted in Saudi Arabia and not even in the Middle East region

From this chapter, it has been concluded that there was no explicit answer found in the literature to respond clearly to the research problem yet, which confirms the research gap. However, a few relevant articles have been considered as a valuable source for proposing suitable interventions that could fit with the research context, as detailed in the following chapters.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

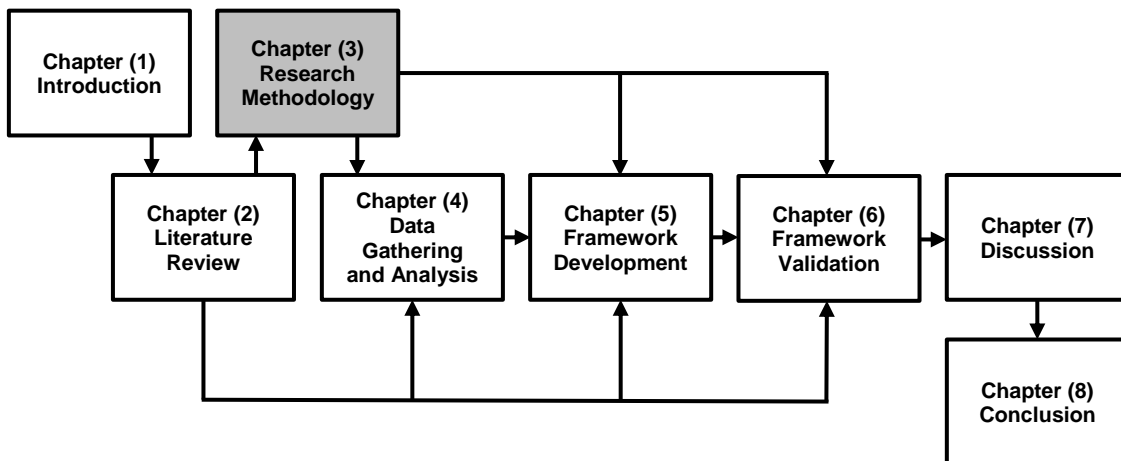


Figure 27: Research overview (chapter three)

This chapter provides a philosophical foundation, presents and justifies a methodological design in response to the research question and pursuing the research aim. In addition, it describes the actions that have been taken to achieve rigour and trustworthiness.

3.1 Philosophical Position

There are crucial reasons for clarifying the philosophical position at an early stage of research. Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) list some of these reasons, such as: helping to design research clearly; recognise which design will work and which will not; and to discuss their underlying philosophical implications. Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) also define four key philosophical terms, as shown in Table 20 below:

Table 20: Key terms in philosophy (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012)

Ontology	Philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality.
Epistemology	A general set of assumptions about the ways of inquiring into the nature of the world.
Methodology	A combination of techniques used to inquire into a specific situation.
Methods	Individual techniques for data collection and analysis.

Ontological identification, at the start of the research process, is extremely important because it determines the choice of the research design. Ontology is

defined as the science or study of being, a description which is developed for the social sciences to encompass claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other (Blaikie, 2007; Flowers, 2009). Essentially, ontology describes people's views on the nature of reality, whether it is an objective reality that really exists, or only a subjective reality created in our minds (Flowers, 2009).

This research explores aspects of organisational culture, and this involves social behaviour as a major target. Social behaviour is dynamic and varies with times and nations, for "learned behaviour in any organisational grouping or community is an outcome of the values, ideas, techniques, habits, routines which are passed on, from one generation to another" (McLaughlin, Bessant and Smart, 2005). Constructionism is a major paradigm in management research, which effectively forms the 'poles' from which other paradigms are developed or derived (Flowers, 2009).

Epistemology is 'knowing how you can know'; which is expanded by asking how knowledge is generated and how reality should be represented (Hatch, 2012). Hatch (2012) also confirms that interpretivists aim to draw meaning from and create their ideas of reality, in order to understand the views of others, and to interpret these experiences in the context of the researcher's academic experience. In addition to that interpretivism is inductive or theory building (Flowers, 2009).

3.2 Available Approaches

Several approaches can be taken to theory building in qualitative research (Gehman *et al.*, 2018). Teherani et al. (2015) find three commonly used approaches to framing qualitative research, where the nature of the research question determines the choice between them. The researcher must check their different purposes to find which is the most suitable. Table 21 below sets out these purposes:

Table 21: Identifying the appropriate approach for this research

Approach	Key Focus	Suitability
Ethnography	Developing an in-depth understanding of the culture of a group from the point of view of the study subjects, through lengthy immersion in this setting.	Although it helps to understand cultural aspects, It might not be useful, because this approach tends to interpret ethnographic differentiation, which is not the object of this research.
Phenomenology	Describing the essence of a phenomenon by exploring it from the perspective of those who experienced it so as to understand the meaning that the participants ascribe to it.	It might not be useful because this research does not investigate any phenomenon but instead tries to understand all the aspects of encouraging a culture of CI.
Grounded theory	Developing theories grounded in the study data.	This seems to be the most suitable, because its results could build a theoretical model that would apply to other contexts with similar social settings.

3.3 Researcher Position

The ontology of the researcher is constructivist, assuming that reality is socially constructed with interpretivist epistemology (Dahlbom, 1992). The researcher adopted an interpretive paradigm for mentally exploring social realities as subjective and multiple entities (Collis and Hussey, 2003; Hudson and Ozanne, 1988). Even though the literature survey revealed no clear theory that would facilitate a CI culture in NPOs, data can still be gathered and analysed to develop a possible theory (Charmaz, 2014).

To comply with the ontology and epistemology, grounded theory approach has been used for exploring the aspects of organisational culture that affect CI. This would suggest that an inductive approach should be used, to allow a theory to evolve during the research. Sackmann (1991) recommends the inductive approach, because of the sparsity of empirically based knowledge which could foster the development of a theory of culture in an organisational context. This would allow theory to be discovered from the data as Glaser and Strauss (1967) developed theirs, calling it grounded theory (GT), which both derives from and drives the research. It is also described as a set of methods that consists of

systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analysing qualitative data to construct theories that are ‘grounded’ in the data themselves (Faisal, Rahman and Azam, 2011; Charmaz, 2014). Next, researchers must choose between collecting quantitative and qualitative data according to the research question, not personal preference (Marshall, 1996). In the present study, qualitative methods had to take precedence because of the nature of the research question. The following figure (Figure 28) illustrates the philosophical position of the researcher in this research.

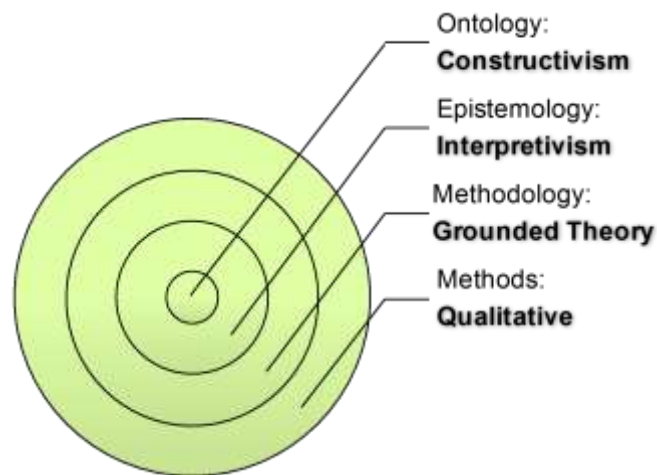


Figure 28: Researcher’s philosophical position in this research

Ontologies, epistemologies, and even types of theory differ in their approaches. Gehman et al. (2017) believe that approaches in qualitative research have to be customised, because scholars doing qualitative research should fundamentally be sensitive to the links between methods and theory.

3.4 Appropriate Approaches

The factors determining the choice of a methodology include the nature of the problem being investigated, the level of previous research in the same field and what assumptions about reality must be made in the research. This constitutes the philosophical position. Figure 29 shows all the available options for all philosophical positions, highlighting the options chosen in the present study.

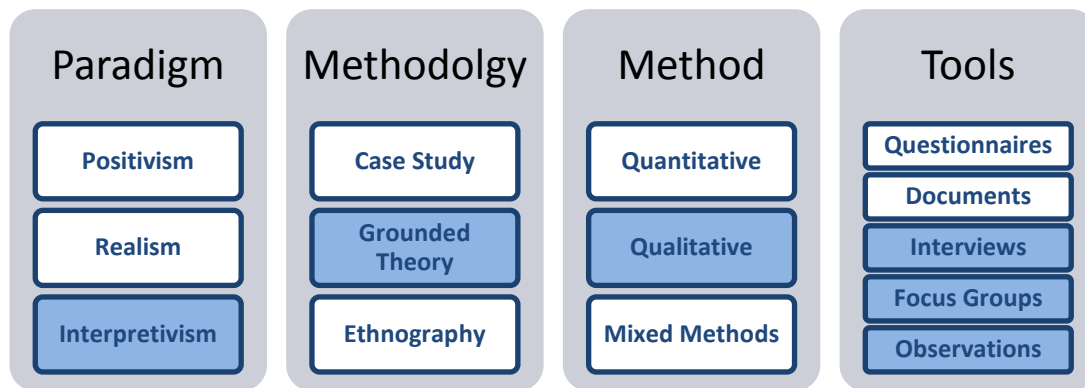


Figure 29: Research design

Given the paucity of literature on the application of CI within NPOs, and the marked need in the literature to implement this concept in certain circumstances, an exploratory and qualitative method was adopted in the research strategy. This was considered appropriate because the study, which investigates a social interaction, suggests social constructivism as the starting point, because it involves an enquiry to understand the potential of a social phenomenon (Creswell, 1994). Social interaction also involves people's behaviours, which need to be interpreted logically, suggesting interpretivism as an appropriate option (Eden and Huxham, 1996). Social constructionism is selected for use in this research because it has the following implications, as highlighted by Easterby-Smith et al. (2012):

1. Human interests are the main drivers of science.
2. The observer is part of what is being observed.
3. Explanations aim to increase the general understanding of the situation.
4. Research progresses by gathering rich data, from which ideas are inducted.
5. Concepts should incorporate stakeholders' perspectives.
6. Units of analysis would consider whole situations.
7. Generalisation is possible through theoretical abstraction.
8. Sampling requires a small number of suitable cases.



Figure 30: Theory formation through grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014)

Guest et al. (2011) summarise the strengths of grounded theory as follows; it is:

1. Good for smaller data sets.
2. Good for covering the data exhaustively.
3. An interpretation supported by data.
4. Useful for studying topics other than individual experiences.

Furthermore, Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) indicate that grounded theory is more flexible and preferable when dealing with transcripts, which are a major source of data for the present research. Accordingly, “accepting changes” and having “a clear stand on the issue of determinism” are important to consider when implementing grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2012), there are two general kinds of data to collect, each with its own method of collection. The first is qualitative, used when ‘quality’ is more important than ‘frequency’; its methods include interviews, observation and diary keeping. The second is quantitative, used when frequency is more important than quality. The second type most commonly collects data through questionnaires and other surveys. The nature of the research subject calls for qualitative data to be collected, particularly by ‘in-depth interviews’, which is most popular among the qualitative methods (Seidman, 2013). However, a variety of data collection techniques can be employed to generate data, each with its own unique properties (Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2011). This also gives the research methodology consistency. Interviews are the most useful data source for establishing connections between the social environment, motivation and creativity (Amabile, 1997). As a preliminary, a grounded theory study can be set in motion by devising “some broad, open-ended questions” (Charmaz, 2014).

3.5.2 Intensive interviewing for developing a theory

The intensive interviewing technique is aligned to the research choice of using the grounded theory method. Charmaz (2014) defines intensive interviewing as “a gently guided, one-sided conversation that explores a person’s substantial experience with the research topic”; she summarises its advantages, namely that it:

1. Opens instructional space for ideas and issues to arise.
2. Allows possibilities of immediate follow-up on these ideas and issues.
3. Results from interviewers’ and interview participants’ co-construction of the interview conversation.

An issue-focused Interview as a focal method can be complemented by two other methods in order to triangulate the obtained data, thus testing one source against another (Sackmann, 1991). Other qualitative methods may include observation and focus groups (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012).

3.5.3 Misconceptions about grounded theory

Many authors using grounded theory have serious misconceptions about it, which makes it difficult sometimes to persuade journal editors to publish work in which it is used. Suddaby (2006), from experience editing the *Academy of Management Journal*, presents six major misconceptions that many authors hold about grounded theory, which are listed below together with the actions that this research took in regard to them:

1. Grounded theory is not an excuse to ignore the literature

The literature was consulted continually, starting from the early stage of identifying the knowledge gap and during the data analysis through ‘constant comparison’ to confirm every level of the gradually emerging findings, until the final stage of synthesising the framework.

2. Grounded theory is not the presentation of raw data

The data were analysed thoroughly in several stages, with the participants’ involvement, to produce meaningful findings. This process has also been developed in parallel with the comparisons to the literature.

3. Grounded theory is not theory testing

Since this research had no specific theory from which to extract a hypothesis, it had to start with a qualitative question. This led to the collection and analysis of a rich data set where robust theory could be grounded and rigorously developed.

4. Grounded theory is not simply routine application

The process of data gathering and analysis, where theory was grounded in the data, was given sufficient time. It tended to be an unstructured process with unexpected findings, and was led by theoretical sampling. However, theory evolving naturally, based on social construction, made the study interesting.

5. Grounded theory is not perfect

Like any other approach, grounded theory is not perfect. However, each research subject has its own demands, which make some approaches more appropriate than others, which is a crucial issue to focus on.

6. Grounded theory is not easy

As noted during the stages of the theory's evolution and development, "easy" may not be the best description of this kind of research approach. It may result from the data gathering and analysis being multi-phased, with the associated uncertainty of such a process.

3.5.4 Comparing grounded theory's schools

During the development of the grounded theory approach after their original version of grounded theory in 1967, the two founders, Glaser and Strauss, diverged on some aspects of it. Their difference mainly centred on beliefs about and approaches to analysis. The key differences of these two schools of thought, according to Cooney (2010), are summarised in Table 23 below. The version chosen for the present research was more that of the Glaserian school, for the following reasons. First, this school tends to be more associated with the original version of grounded theory, which caused a significant revolution. Second, it

starts with general open-minded wondering, which avoids the bias that often results from being influenced by prior assumptions. Third, it emphasises the research sensitivity, as a key element of theory development. Fourth, it fits the research design that is based on ‘constructivism’, where social processes form the basis for theory development. Fifth, it has more flexible coding process that allows the findings to emerge naturally and gradually during ‘theoretical sampling’. Sixth, the outcome that this research aims to produce is to provide a conceptual theory rather than a description.

Table 23: Comparing the two schools of grounded theory

Comparison	Glaser	Strauss
Beginning	Open mind	General idea
Questions	Neutral questions	Structured question
Theory	Grounded in data	Interpreted by an observer
Social process	Should be identified	Need not be identified
Sensitivity	Comes from immersion	Comes from methods
Coding	More flexible	Restricted
Outcome	Conceptual theory	Conceptual description

3.5.5 Inductive data gathering process

Since the grounded theory approach relies mainly on data, rich interviews were conducted and triangulated by focus groups and observation to strengthen trustworthiness. Therefore, the process of the data gathering has been conducted through five main phases, as shown in Figure 31 below. Each phase has its necessary justification, as described in the following sections.



Figure 31: The phases of data gathering

Pilot interviews were introduced at the start, which included pre-interviews that were conducted to establish networking with participants and engage them with the research problem. During the pilot interviews phase, some cultural factors emerged, revealing initial concepts which matured and expanded in the next phase. Main interviews, which were been conducted through sub-phases as the research gradually evolved, represent the main sources of research findings. Furthermore, post-interviews were carried out, after the refined cultural aspect

have been identified, in similar social settings to the original interviews as a transferability test so as to add more confirmation to the findings. This positively confirmed the transferability of the research findings.

The total number of interviews was thirty-one; more than double of the minimum number required (fifteen) to achieve the level of saturation for qualitative research, as suggested by a group of authors (Bertaux *et al.*, 1981; Corbin and Strauss, 1990; Seidman, 2013). These interviews were triangulated by two further sources: focus groups and observations. The focus groups, five in number, succeeded in four important purposes: refining factors, categorising factors, developing interventions and tracing the influence. Observations were made throughout the entirety of the data gathering analysis, and had a significant impact on drawing and interpreting the findings.

3.6 Research Rigour

Establishing rigour in action research that relies on qualitative data must be shown to demonstrate research quality through presenting actions have been taken during gathering and analysing data (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). Certain aspects of the rigour in qualitative research lead to its trustworthiness, as shown in Table 24 below. These aspects, according to Guba and Lincoln (1994), include the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability that were typical of the data when they were collected and analysed.

Table 24: Four main aspects of trustworthiness and how they were considered

Confirmability (Objectivity/ Subjectivity)	Idea	Not allowing personal values to influence the findings.
	Action	Building theory from data that rely purely on participants' perspectives and submitting findings to participants to obtain their agreement.
Credibility (Internal Validity)	Idea	Matching researcher's observations with their theoretical developments.
	Actions	Using issue-focused techniques, triangulating sources of data and prolonged engagement with participants.
Transferability	Idea	The degree to which a study can be generalised across similar settings.

(External Validity)	Action	Describing the details of the social settings which allow the reader to decide how far they resemble other social settings. However, improved understanding of complex human issues is more important than the generalizability of the results.
Dependability (Reliability)	Idea	The degree to which a study can be replicated.
	Action	Clear steps in collecting data that should be implemented in the same way every time; applying inter-rater reliability assessment; and documenting all the materials used in the data collection and analysis.

Corley and Gioia (2004) describe detailed actions that have to be considered to ensure the above aspects. The following section discusses the steps that were taken in different aspects of this research for the sake of rigour.

3.6.1.1 Action research

The participants are the cornerstone of research when the concepts are inductively arrived at from the data collected (Bryman and Bell, 2011). They were involved in all the phases of data gathering in the present study. Their perspectives as participants in building a ‘socially constructed’ shared reality, are part of the input (Dahlbom, 1992). To view them in this way added value to researchers through generating an empirical study and to participants alike when their work has been improved. It represents a form of action research, in which the members of an organisation were involved over a matter of “genuine concern to them” (Eden and Huxham, 1996). This involvement appeared more intense during the interviews and was even more pronounced in the focus groups.

3.6.1.2 Focused investigation

A technique called issue-focused interviewing with a phenomenological orientation can be used to obtain highly relevant content from participants. It provides a specific context that leads respondents to “draw on the same stock of knowledge” (Sackmann, 1991). The research process indicated that CI was an appropriate notion for interviewees to reflect on freely and openly, as the taken-for-granted aspects of their various social settings. This investigation is necessary to extract cultural aspects that formulate a set of concepts for studying assumptions (Schein, 1984). Focused investigation can be done through a

complex interview, observation and joint-inquiry approach in which “selected members of the group work with the outsider to uncover the unconscious assumptions” (Schein, 1984). The interviewees were asked to give one example (or more) of a CI story from their organisation. This request allowed tacit components of culture from the insider’s perspective to be brought to the surface. Such components synthesise the situations being explored and were determined analytically by collecting and analysing relevant information.

3.6.1.3 Interviewing process

This process provided the main source of the data in this research and was undertaken in ten steps:

1. At the beginning, all interviewees agreed to take part and signified their approval before answering any of the questions according to Cranfield University’s ethical forms.
2. Then, an issue-focused approach was used to draw upon the same stock of knowledge (Sackmann, 1991). CI was chosen as the issue for a study of cultural beliefs. The interviews lasted an average of 45 minutes and were in Arabic, the interviewees’ main language, and this allowed enough time for deep exploration. This deep investigation was necessary, as values are hard to observe directly without inferring them by interviewing key members of an organisation (Schein, 1984).
3. All interviews were recorded as audio files.
4. These audio files were carefully transcribed as text documents. Then the transcripts were translated to convey their meaning and spirit from the source to the target (English); care was taken to ensure a meaningful version (Harbi, Thursfield and Bright, 2016).
5. The documents were coded with the support of Nvivo software.
6. After that, the codes as they gradually emerged were refined and revised.
7. Simultaneously, constant comparisons with the literature were repeated.
8. Theoretical sampling, also, was applied, in which the findings led to the next search for samples.
9. The samples of data were reviewed by two colleagues.

10. Finally, the findings obtained agreement from the participants during focus group discussions, which helped to refine and confirm these findings.

3.6.1.4 Theoretical sampling

Because this research seeks to improve the understanding of complex human issues above providing generalisable results (Marshall, 1996), its rich data sets required no large samples (Starks and Trinidad, 2007). Statistical representativeness was not at stake, because the objective was to understand social processes (Mays and Pope, 1995). To explore multiple dimensions of the social processes in question, the research used the purposive sampling of participants who had experienced the phenomenon under study and could report differing experiences of the phenomenon (Starks and Trinidad, 2007). At first the participants were randomly selected, as an “appropriate method” (Shenton, 2004); the subsequent findings led to different people, contexts and places until saturation point was reached. This suggests theoretical sampling, which, “with grounded theory ... is an emergent and ongoing process that evolves as the theory develops from data” (Goulding, 2002). According to Glaser (1978), the key aspect of theoretical sampling is that “the analyst simultaneously collects, codes and analyses the data and decides what data to collect next and where to find it”. Theoretical sampling is a specific type of nonprobability sampling in which the objective of developing theory guides the process of data collection and analysis (Mays and Pope, 1995). Such theoretical sampling was followed by ‘constant comparison’, which requires researchers to integrate the data “at the same time as the data are collected” (Goulding, 2002), the characteristics of the sample clearly indicating the diversity of organisations for which the participants worked. This diversity undoubtedly adds to the quality of the data by illustrating the research from different perspectives.

3.6.1.5 Saturation level

Forty factors influencing CI emerged. By the last few interviews of the main phase, saturation level had been reached. Several authors confirm that fifteen participants can enable qualitative research to reach saturation level (Bertaux *et al.*, 1981; Seidman, 2013; Strauss and Corbin, 2015).

Further sources of data, focus groups and observation, were employed (Sackmann, 1991) to achieve triangulation, increase reliability, refine the factors and improve the understanding of them (Schein, 2010). The participants of a nonprofit organisation contributed four focus groups, which were interviewed once the interview factors had been classified. The second focus group was interviewed to categorise the factors into themes, which synthesized an initial model. Observation accompanied the entire process of data collection and analysis.

3.6.1.6 Inter-rater reliability assessment

This assessment is intended to make the analysis of qualitative data more reliable. It involves the re-analysis of a representative sample of the transcripts by an independent person and then comparing his results with the researcher's results (Gwet, 2002). The procedure of inter-rater reliability assessment (IRRA) is that two or more judges rate material independently to determine whether their level of disagreement is acceptable (Rashid, 2010). Gwet (2002) describes this procedure as summarised in Table 25 below.

Table 25: The equations gauging the ratio of agreement in IRRA

Rater B	Rater A		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	a	b	B (Yes) = a + b
No	c	d	B (No) = c + d
Total	A (Yes) = a + c	A (No) = b + d	N

Where:

- a: Total number of subjects classified as (Yes) units by both raters
- b: Total number of subjects classified as (Yes) units by rater B and as (No) units by rater A
- c: Total number of subjects classified as (Yes) units by rater A and as (No) units by rater B
- d: Total number of subjects classified as (No) units by both raters

According to Gwet (2002), there are two common ways of assessment in this, namely: Cohn-Kappa (K) and the percentage of agreement (%)

1- Cohen-Kappa (K), in the formulation shown below:

$$K = (F1 - F2) / (N - F2), K = 0.00 \text{ to } 1.00$$

where $F1 = a + d$,

$F2 = [(a + b) (a + c) + (b + d) (c + d)] / N$ and

$N = a + b + c + d$

2- Percentage of agreement (%) in the formulation shown below:

$(\%) = [(a + d) / N] * 100 \%$

Then, the results should be compared to the the scale in

Table 26 below.

Table 26: Cohen-Kappa method and percentage of agreement method

Cohen-Kappa method		Percentage of agreement	
K Value ranges	Degree of Agreement	Percentage ranges	Level of Agreement
0.80 – 1.00	Almost Perfect	91- 100	Very high
0.60 - 0.79	Substantial	81 – 90	High
0.40 - 0.59	Moderate	71 – 80	Moderate
0.20 - 0.39	Fair	61 - 70	Fair
0.00 - 0.19	Slight	51 - 60	Slight
≤ 0.00	Poor	≤ 50	Poor

3.6.1.7 Peer-reviewing

Being reviewed by academics after being submitted either at conferences or in journals was the most challenging part of this research. The comments were considered and subsequent revisions contributed to the quality of the research content; they made the development and building of the framework robust and mature (Gioia, Corley and Hamilton, 2013). Table 27 shows how all the previous action could lead to achieve trustworthiness.

Table 27: Achieving aspects of trustworthiness

Actions to achieve the trustworthiness four aspects	Confirmability	Credibility	Dependability	Transferability
	Action Research	•	•	
Focused investigation		•	•	
Interviewing process	•		•	•
Theoretical Sampling			•	
Saturation level	•	•		
Inter-rater assessment	•		•	
Peer-reviewing	•	•		

3.7 Theoretical Underpinning

The process of developing the conceptual framework was informed by existing theories that seemed relevant to the research scope, as discussed earlier in the Literature Review chapter. Before going through the theoretical conceptualisation, it is important to differentiate between the theoretical framework, which is formed based on the literature, and the intended conceptual framework, which is based and grounded on the data which have been gathered and analysed, as illustrated in Figure 32 below. A useful differentiation is provided by Imenda (2014), who believes that the ‘theoretical framework’ refers to the theory which a researcher chooses to guide them in their research. On the other hand, the ‘conceptual framework may be defined as an end result of bringing together a number of related concepts to explain or predict a given event, or give a broader understanding of the phenomenon of interest a research problem (Imenda, 2014). Since a research problem cannot be researched meaningfully by referencing only existing theories, any empirical views must be ‘synthesised’ to represent an ‘integrated’ way of looking at the problem and develop a ‘conceptual framework’ or a ‘theory’, which is grounded in data (Liehr and Smith, 1999; Charmaz, 2014).

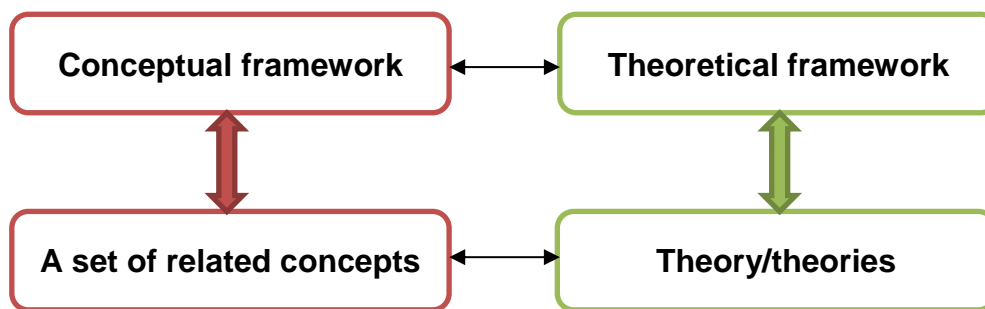


Figure 32: Derivation of conceptual and theoretical frameworks (Imenda, 2014)

Theoretical underpinnings help to fit the intended conceptual framework components together logically and understandably. The theoretical framework may involve different disciplines, and solid theories need to be chosen as tools for understanding and formulating the framework in a common language which also respects what has been discovered in the literature. Each discipline brings with it, of course, a variety of theories, which makes the selection process relatively difficult. However, in each field, there are popular theories which have been used widely and obtained general agreement in terms of their validity.

According to the current thinking in the research domain, four suitable theories were found to be appropriate for the present research context. These models were combined to establish a solid foundation for the theory construction, as shown in Figure 33 below.

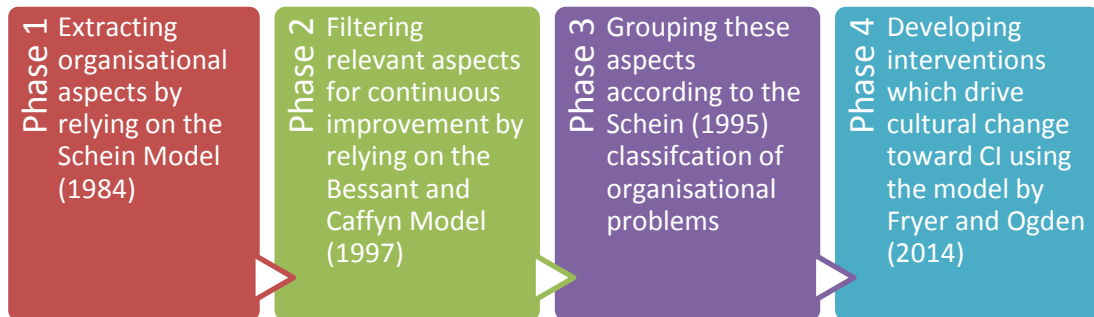


Figure 33: Theoretical underpinning for the framework development

The literature in the review chapter indicates that the following four models are appropriate for this research: the Schein model (1984), Bessant and Caffyn's model (1997), the Schein classification of organisational problems (1995), and the Fryer and Ogden model (2014). They have been combined as a theoretical foundation which will lead to synthesising the framework to be formulated in a rigorous process.

By relying on the outputs of these previous models, it becomes possible to move toward a CI culture. This can be achieved through research phases, including two crucial phases. The first crucial phase is to analyse an organisational culture using Schein's model (1984). This model can be used to discover an organisation's culture and extract the aspects which are relevant to CI. Deciding which of these aspects are relevant to CI can be done with the support of the Bessant and Caffyn model (1997) during the second crucial phase. When the aspects have been identified, interventions need to be developed to adjust the proper themes which facilitate CI. During that process, progress can be noted and improved.

Schein's model (1984) has been brought in to distinguish the aspects of culture which are relevant to CI. Bessant and Caffyn (1997) developed a model which assesses the maturity of CI using a five-point scale, in which each point on the scale is indicative of a CI maturity level. While the cultural aspects are explored using Schein's model, they can be compared to Bessant and Caffyn's in order to

determine which of them are relevant to CI. Next, the group of cultural aspects which influence CI must be categorized in a suitable way based on Schein (1995), whose organisational problem classification system classifies organisational problems into internal integration and external adaptability problems. Finally, these two groups are integrated into a three-stage cultural change plan to achieve CI based on the maturity model of CI developed by Fryer and Ogden (2014). These models have been selected through an intellectual investigation of the research domain, carried out in order to guide the whole process of developing the framework while passing several milestones in data collection and analysis.

3.8 Ethical Issues

In professional research involving fellow humans, there are ethical issues that have to be considered. Cranfield University (2016) instituted an ethics code that all Cranfield members have to act in accordance with. This code includes six main ethical principles which were profoundly considered during all phases of conducting this research. The themes kept in mind include: responsibility and accountability, integrity, intellectual freedom, respect and equality of opportunity, collegiality and sustainability. Figure 34 below shows the ethical approval that has obtained by the university to proceed with the research activity accordingly.

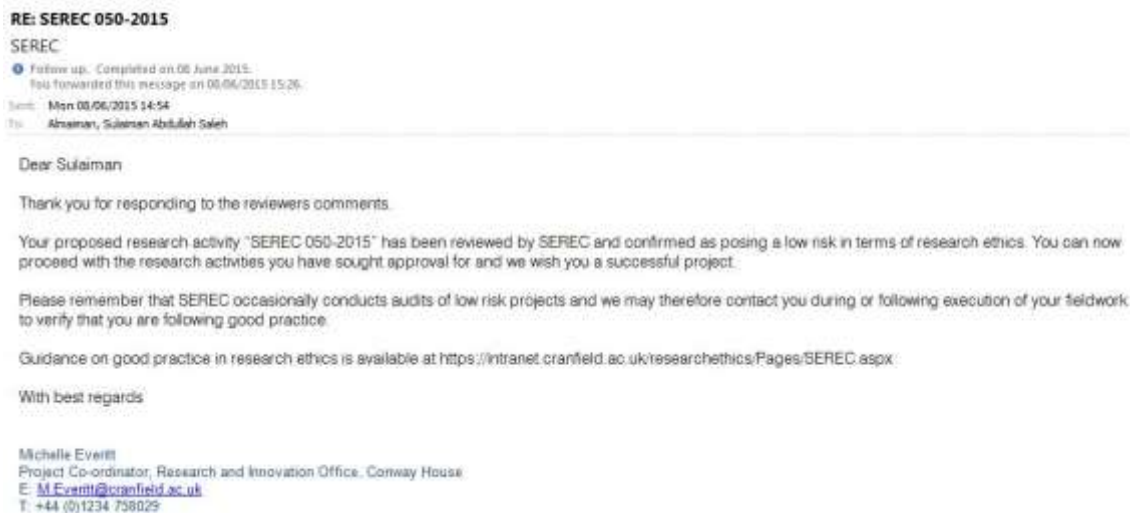


Figure 34: Cranfield ethical approval that has been obtained for this research

3.9 Summary

Figure 35 (in the next page) provides an overall view on the process of data gathering and analysis that this research has been through. This process has milestones that took shape gradually bearing in mind nine basic dimensions: First, investigating the existing knowledge early to verify the knowledge gap, while making comparisons continuously. Second, engaging participants to be ready to participate so as to obtain their active involvement. Third, discovering cultural factors from the participants' perspectives to allow the reality to be socially constructed. Fourth, developing higher-level themes during focus group discussions (to avoid any bias in developing them), which contributes to confirmability as a key element of trustworthiness. Fifth, gauging the ideal position for the researcher from which to study the NPOs to give him a deeper understanding of the current situation in regards to their CI maturity, how far they are from the ideal position, and what themes need improvement. Sixth, based on the themes which have been confirmed as influencing CI, naming the interventions which have been developed with participant interaction as well as other interventions gained from the literature. Seventh, depending on the previous outcomes, integrate the interventions to illustrate the proposed framework. Eighth, discussing the developed framework with experts in the field for validation. Ninth, introducing an improved version of the framework after all of these evolving stages.

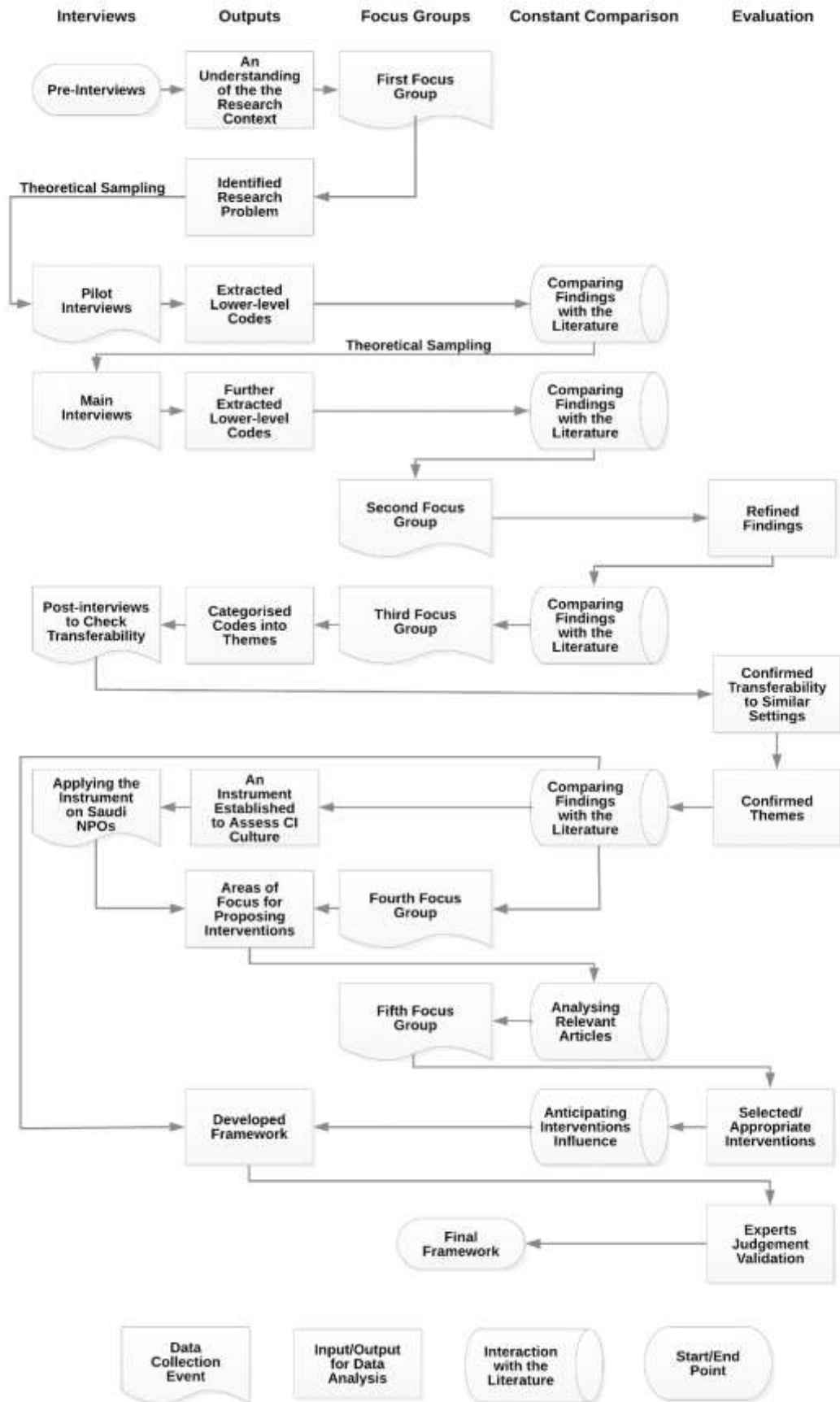


Figure 35: Detailed process of data gathering and analysis

4 DATA GATHERING AND ANALYSIS

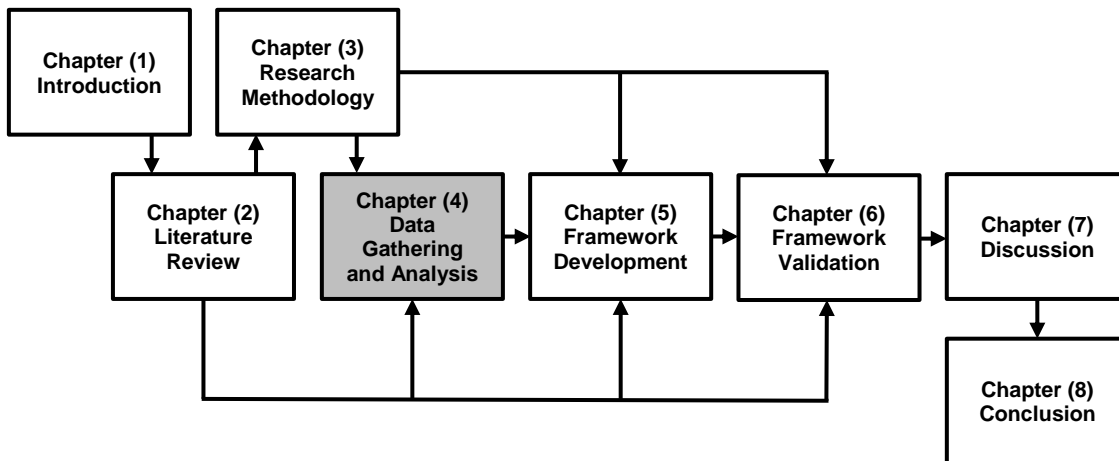


Figure 36: Research overview (chapter four)

This chapter starts by describing the characteristics of organisations and participants. Then it describes the actual process of data gathering and reveals the gradual emerging of findings from the data analysis. This is followed by the development of a gauging instrument to measure the ideal position for the developed themes. Finally, possible interventions to facilitate moving towards that desired position are suggested.

4.1 Data Gathering

4.1.1 Participant characteristics

As detailed earlier in the Methodology Chapter, there is clear diversity among the organisations and the interviewees in different aspects. Participants were recruited in purposive sampling with differing experiences of the phenomenon so as to explore multiple dimensions of the social processes under study (Starks and Trinidad, 2007).

The selected NPOs were diverse in terms of type and size (according to the classification of the MLSA) with a higher focus on the large foundations more than charities (the two dominant types of NPOs is Saudi according to MLSA). There was a diversity in participants characteristics. This diversity has reported differing experiences of the phenomenon so as to explore multiple dimensions of the social processes in question (Starks and Trinidad, 2007). The rationale for this higher focus was threefold. Firstly, large NPOs have complex systems which

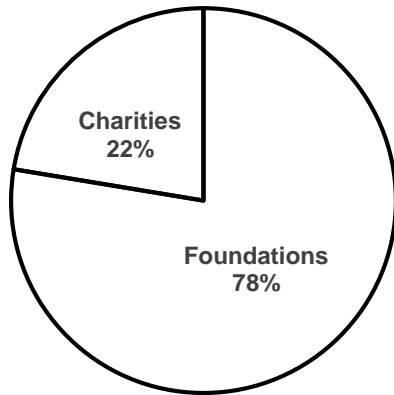
would allow them to benefit from adopting the CI concept, since “large organisations would have the size, personnel, and other resources necessary to undertake new program development in a systematic and sophisticated manner” (Barczak, Kahn and Moss, 2006). Secondly, foundations have more increasing expand and impact, in the Saudi NPO sector, when compared to charities that rely on foundations for sponsoring their charitable projects (MLSD, 2017). Thirdly and most significantly, the selected NPOs are those organisations that provided availability and flexible access to their resources and were found willing to participate in the study. For this purposive sample, Thirteen NPOs participated in the research. These NPOs shared a common interest in developing an improvement culture. The work domain by these NPOs includes different aspects of philanthropy, for instance, poverty reduction, health and education. Figure 37 (in the next page) shows the characteristics of organisations and participants involved in this research, according to the classification defined in Table 28 below.

Table 28: Classification used to describe participating NPOs

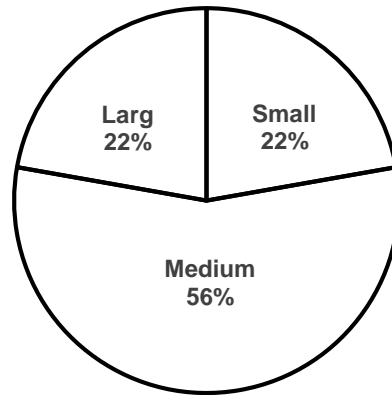
Organisations size	Larg	More than 50 employee
	Madium	Between 50 to 10 Employee
	Small	Less than 10 employee
Organisation maturity	Mature	More than 10 year age
	Growth	Between 15 to 5 year age
	Startup	Less than 5 year age

Organisations characteristics

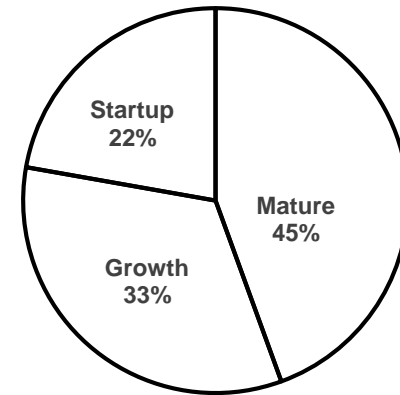
Organisations Type



Organisations Size

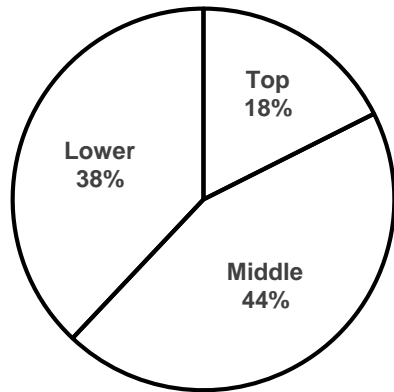


Organisations Maturity level

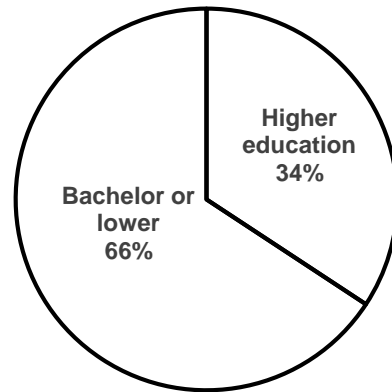


Participants characteristics

Interviewees Managerial Level



Interviewees Education



Interviewees Experience

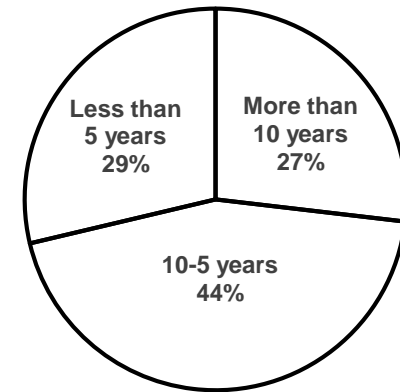


Figure 37: Organisations and participants characteristic

4.1.2 Pilot interviews phase

These interviews were conducted at an early stage of the research, which helped to understand the context, establish networks and initially to identify the research problem; they also helped to articulate the main question that targeted an issue-focused investigation (Sackmann, 1991). This question was asking for a real case of CI that had worked well or even failed within their organisations. The output from this phase was to identify nineteen factors, to be compared with literature, although further confirmation was needed with the next phase of main interviews.

4.1.3 Main interviews phase

This phase of interviews involved conducting further solo interviews to discover additional factors to confirm previous factors. Both these phases of interviews were the main source for the basic aspects of organisational culture that influence CI. The qualitative analysis of these interviews established empirical evidence that reached saturation level was confirmed by the time of the last four interviews. The core interviews were conducted over two phases. The accumulated outcomes from these two phases were forty cultural factors, which have been called 'the lower-level codes', which are presented in the Data Analysis section. The main interviews reaching saturation level informed the commencement of the next phase of developing higher-level themes in cooperation with participants in focus group discussions.

4.1.4 Transferability test

Transferability is a crucial issue of the quality of a qualitative study, which indicates the degree to which a study can be generalised across similar settings (Shenton, 2004). When the findings had arrived at a late stage of emerging, further interviews were conducted in a similar social setting to obtain more confirmation of transferability (Shenton, 2004). This test was conducted in two other countries that have similar social conditions and are members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Five participants from three NPOs were interviewed. These interviews were conducted following a 'close coding' process (Strauss and Corbin, 2015). The aim here was to have the forty factors as a checklist. This list was checked carefully during the interviews. Several factors appeared which confirmed the similarity and then the transferability. This indicated that the

transferability of the research findings to similar social settings was valid. These interviews showed the close similarity of the conditions in the two given countries. The other interesting outcome from this transferability test was that even though there was a high percentage of foreign workers that is up to 90% (Gulf Research Center, 2017), this seemed not to affect findings' transferability, which could then expand the transferability zone.

4.1.5 Focus groups phase

Five focus group sessions were conducted with a group of six participants taken from the same group of people previously involved in the interviews (to ensure clear understanding of the issue). These sessions were implemented gradually and helped to mature the data analysis. The first session was performed at an early stage to engage participants in the discussion of the context being studied. The second was in order to refine the aspects that emerged from the interviews and to obtain agreement on these aspects, which ultimately confirmed them. The third session was to categorise these aspects into higher-level themes. As a result, six themes emerged and constant comparison with the literature confirmed these themes, as shown below (Table 29). The fourth one was a brainstorming session for interventions that could facilitate a CI culture within participants' organisations. The fifth and final session was to refine and improve these interventions.

Table 29: The outcomes of the five focus group sessions

Sessions	Outcomes
1 st	Engaging participants to the discussion.
2 nd	Refining findings emerged from the interviews.
3 rd	Categorising lower-level codes into higher-level theme.
4 th	A brainstorm to identify areas of focus for interventions.
5 th	Refining and improving the proposed interventions.

4.1.6 Observations during data gathering

This is the third source of data used to achieve triangulation as suggested by Sackmann (1991). The notes from the observations were taken during all phases of data gathering and analysis. These notes were written manually and they were revised frequently to develop concepts that gradually emerged during data gathering and analysis events. They added appreciably to the interpretation of the findings and synthesising of the framework.

Table 30 below summarised the the whole data that have been gathered.

Table 30: Summary of the data gathered

Organisations participated	13
Number of interviews	31
Average time per interview (minutes)	45
Duration of interviews (hours)	23
Number of pages	345
Number of focus group sessions	5
Members of the focus group	6
Duration of focus group sessionsn (hours)	8

4.2 Data Analysis

The result of the analysis identified the central phenomenon of this research as transforming an organisational culture to facilitate CI within the selected organisations. It explains the role of changing the organisational culture, and how it can be leveraged to reach to the desired position. Coding was the ‘starting point’ for analysing qualitative data (Lofland and Lofland, 2006). ‘Open coding’ was used, which “involves the breaking down, conceptualization and categorisation of data” (Goulding, 2002). Data analysis involved coding the transcripts, which demanded careful reading and the use of Nvivo 10 software for Windows™. A crucial operation when adopting the grounded theory approach is to compare findings with those that emerged from data in the literature, which is called ‘constant comparison’. This must be considered during the data gathering process and in this research all findings that emerged were constantly compared with the literature. Then they were developed into thematic analysis with the participants’ engagement. The interventions were then carefully designed to meet these themes’ requirements. Cognitive mapping was also leveraged in synthesising and matching the framework components, in addition of the support of the accumulated observation notes. The themes of CI culture were also gauged in the same context by sixty-six participants as a further step for future research, which also helped in providing a better interpretation of the findings. The percentage of agreement approach (that has been described in ‘Inter-rater reliability assessment’ section in the previous chapter) has been applied on the outputs of data analysis with the co-operation of two volunteer raters. This approach was applied to a sample of the interviews (8 out of 31 interviewas that

represents 25.8%), which were rated by two independent raters, who checked to see which items on a list of forty factors were present in these interviews. Table 31 shows that a very high level (96%) of agreement was achieved

Table 31: Inter-rater assessment of factors' appearances

Interviews	Rater 1		Rater 2		Average percentage of agreement
	Factors	%	Factors	%	
1	38	95.0	39	97.5	96.25
2	39	97.5	40	100	98.75
3	37	92.5	38	95.0	93.75
4	39	97.5	39	97.5	97.50
5	39	97.5	40	100	98.75
6	37	92.5	38	95.0	95.00
7	38	95.0	38	95.0	93.75
8	39	97.5	37	92.5	95.00
Overall average					96%

The same assessment was done on the translation, in which a sample of the translated statements (fifty statements) was provided in both languages (Arabic/English) to two independent raters, both of whom spoke both languages. The results show a very high overall average (97%) agreement, as shown in Table 32 below.

Table 32: Inter-rater assessment of the translated statements

Rater 1		Rater 2		Overall average
Statements	%	Statements	%	
48	96	49	98	97%

It was an exhaustive endeavour to gather data and decipher the studied NPOs, which had to adhere to the four approaches suggested by Schein (1984); these are:

- Analysing the process and content of socialisation of new members.
- Analysing responses to critical incidents in the organisations history.
- Analysing beliefs, values and assumptions of cultural creators/carriers.
- Jointly exploring and analysing with insiders the aspects observed.

Description was given in the Methodology chapter, in addition to further discussion in the following chapters.

4.2.1 The lower-level codes

Tens of lower codes emerged during analysis, which represent the aspects of organisational culture influencing CI. This process was facilitated by using Nvivo™ software, which helped to archive and organise documents being analysed. Although this process was time consuming, being repeatedly iterative over couple of months, it would be much difficult without software support. Doing this manually would make it difficult to focus and extract pertinent aspects, due to the overwhelming amount, and richness of data. The output from this stage of analysis is the lower-level codes, which performed simultaneously with constant comparison with the literature. The list of lower-level codes has been evolving iteratively during data gathering and analysis till the saturation level has been reached, where no further concepts emerging. Figure 38 below shows some lower-level codes emerging at an early stage of analysis.

Name	Sources	References
An attractive work environment	3	25
Impact measurements	5	23
Outsourcing projects or ideas	4	21
Short-term milestones	2	17
Practical training	5	16
Desire for quality	3	16
Social activities	2	15
Desire to gain God reward	5	14
Partnerships with competitors	3	14
Employment process	3	13
Automating paperwork	4	10
Modelling business process	2	10
Involvement in decision making	2	8
Work flexibility	3	7
Focus on customer needs	2	6
Top management commitment	4	6
After donation service	1	3

Figure 38: Codes emerging at an early stage of analysis using Nvivo™

The emergent list, was refined and the descriptions of participants evaluated by independent inter-rater assessment. Further explanation and comparison with the literature for these aspects are detailed in the following sections. The following table Table 33 describes all these forty factors based on the participant perspectives:

Table 33: Description of the refined factors developed by participants

Lower-level codes	Descriptions developed by participants
1. Social relations with colleagues	Strong and harmonious relationships between employees, including top management, in addition to taking care of social relationships and employee's families.
2. Propensity for seeking outside consultants' help when needed	Contracting consultants when needed seems to be standard within the organisation, whilst being fully transparent and supporting them with all necessary resources to enable their task to be performed successfully.
3. Willingness to accept external ideas	Relying on other entities to provide professional services, or gaining successful ideas from other organisations.
4. Desire to export ideas	Developing and documenting successful models, then distribute them within other organisations in the same sector.
5. Desire to hit time targets	Acting when being delayed and/or celebrating when finished by the deadlines.
6. Flexibility in working hours	Employees are not forced to start at 9am, but they are supposed to complete their daily hours at any time within the day.
7. Using specific improvement tools	The organisation endeavours to select and adopt the most appropriate tools; it then works on training its employees on how to use them.
8. Propensity toward having proactive/planned actions	The organisation tries to prepare planned reactions to respond to expected situations rather than late reactions.
9. Open sessions for active discussion	The organisation periodically arranges open sessions for all employees to exchange ideas about issues of concern. Employees' views are taken seriously, and improvement initiatives are undertaken accordingly.
10. Informal communication	An atmosphere of intimacy prevails within the organisation that allows employees to communicate informally about issues through side conversations in the corridors, or even outside the organisation's building.
11. Carrying out improvement projects gradually	Giving development projects sufficient time to mature, and to allow all the organisation's staff to adapt and take the necessary time to assess them.

Lower-level codes	Descriptions developed by participants
12. Engaging the employees in improvement decisions	Improvement ideas come from the initiatives of the organisation's staff themselves; this makes it more likely for them to be activated.
13. Short communication lines between the manager and the employees	The functional structure of the organisation does not contain complicated levels that increase the gap between the manager and employees.
14. Support for improvement initiatives by the higher management	Higher management provides all means of support that guarantees the progression of improvement projects.
15. The commitment to change towards a better position	There is a clear intention at all levels in the organisation that reflects the desire to start improvement procedures.
16. Work motivation resulting from religious beliefs that encourage charity work	The organisation's employees are keen to increase their work effort because of religious beliefs that promote charitable activities.
17. Work motivation resulting from and humanitarian beliefs that encourage charity work	The organisation's employees are keen to increase their work effort because of humanitarian beliefs that promote charitable activities.
18. The commitment to automate paperwork	The organisation has serious intentions in all aspects towards converting their paper procedures into electronic systems.
19. Cooperating comfortably with competitors in the same sector	The organisation believes in the importance of cooperation with competitors; this cooperation involves a high level of transparency.
20. The desire to improve partner organisations	Giving priority to improve partners, who are the basis that the organisation depends upon in carrying out its services; this is undertaken in a variety of ways.
21. Flexibility in the way of achieving organisational goals	The employees have the right to make minor changes in work procedures, since this will lead them to carry out the work in a better way.
22. Concentrating on impact	The organisation seeks, in all its services, to achieve a tangible impact that will clearly reach the end user.
23. Tracing and assessing the improvement progress	The organisation takes different steps to measure the level of progress that has been achieved during the improvement operations.
24. Focusing on training	The organisation believes in the importance of training and making great efforts to improve its employees' skills possible.

Lower-level codes	Descriptions developed by participants
25. Organisational structure based on the market needs	The organisation designs its organisational structure and develops it in a way that responds to current conditions.
26. Having written work procedures	The organisation documents its work in a specific form and makes it possible for all employees to work according to these procedures.
27. Distributing the work procedures among the organisation's employees	The organisation spreads its written work procedures among the employees using all means possible.
28. Committing to follow the agreed procedures	The organisation directs employees to work according to its approved procedures, and follows up the extent of the commitment to these procedures.
29. Periodically updating the work procedures	The organisation updates the work procedures when necessary.
30. Responding to 'resistance to change'	The organisation takes the necessary actions to guarantee the smoothness of the change and reduce 'resistance to change' behaviour.
31. Respecting the feedback of all relevant parties	The organisation collects stakeholders' impressions about its services and gives their views an absolute priority.
32. Activating the feedback of all relevant parties	Employing feedback to improve the organisation's performance at all levels.
33. Caring for client satisfaction	The priority of the organisation is oriented towards satisfying client needs, and identifying specific tools to achieve it.
34. Documenting efforts to improve the organisation	The organisation records the experiments that it goes through on the improvement journey and uses this documentation continuously in the improvement cycle.
35. Recruiting, based on common cultural elements	The organisation seeks, through the process of attracting employees, to select the ones whose cultures are nearest to its own culture.
36. Facilitate the process of engagement in the organisation leveraging by the shared values	The organisation seeks to attract those who seem to have a higher level of religious commitment, which is understood to increase the motivation to work which is understood to increase the motivation to work.
37. Having symbolic slogans that employees recall motivating themselves	Having some specific expressions that are commonly used in the organisation, and have a motivational reference, lead to concentration on achieving the organisation's goals.

Lower-level codes	Descriptions developed by participants
38. Having real examples of successful improvement carried out by employees in the in the organisation	Having influential people in the organisation who have attributes that inspire the employees and motivate them towards CI.
39. The orientation of the organisation to achieve job security for its employees	Providing a secure working environment that provides generous benefits and advantages increases employee loyalty to the organisation and supports continuity.
40. More privileges for the ones with higher skills	Granting authority to those with high abilities will hasten the improvement process.

These forty lower-level codes had to be compared with literature not just for sake of confirmation but to clarify how would they influence facilitating CI to provide a deeper understanding in which would lead to drawing meaningful concepts into deloping higher-level, as follows afterwards. The content of this table had been solely based on participants perspectives, and what is needed next is to see what is the literature opinion and clarification for the role of theses extracted codes in facilitating CI.

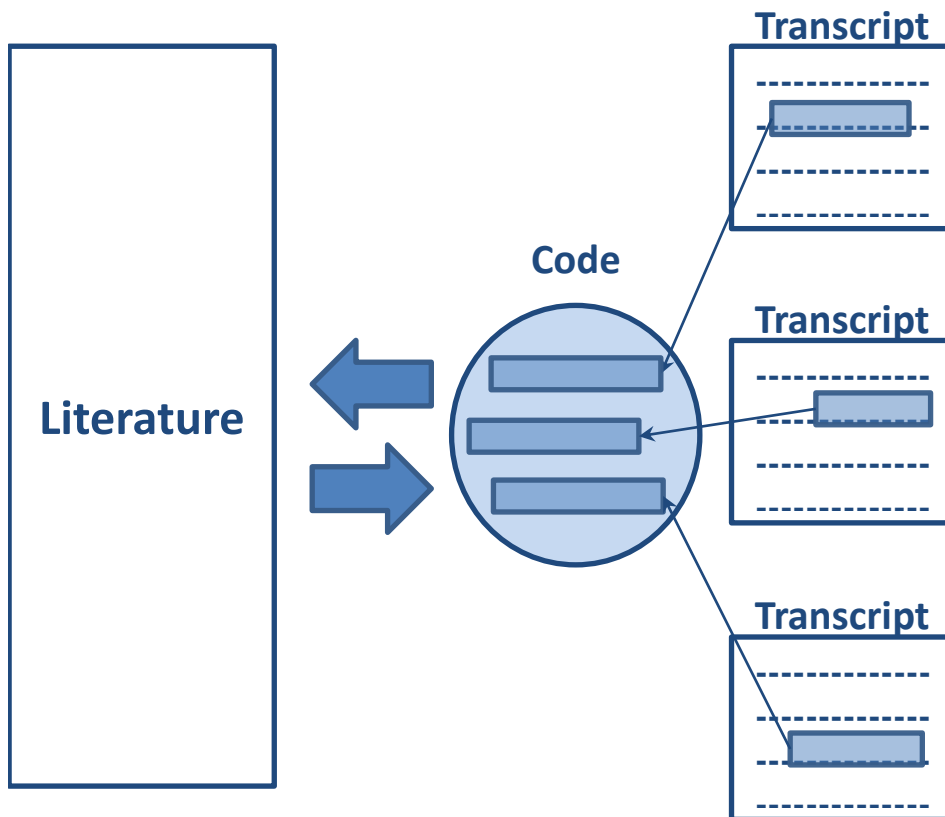


Figure 39: Exrtacting codes in thematic analysis and compare it with the literature

These following paragraphs (in the following pages) discuss each of these codes in the light of the literature. It can be argued that they could appear as literature section, but this is what should ground theory research should follow according to (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) who stated that the concepts emerged from data analysis must be compared simultaneously with literature. Hence, the following provides that required comparison, which clarifies how the emergent codes influence the enabling and sustaining improvements in an organisation. The following explanation of these codes below are completely based on the literature and some evolutionary refining can be noticed, where slight paraphrasing has been done to lead for better themes development.

4.2.1.1 Social relations with colleagues

Healthy interpersonal relationships in the workplace are instrumental in enhancing employee engagement. Individuals relating positively to their colleagues tend to be more engaged and satisfied than others (Falkenburg and Schyns, 2007), because humans are innately social beings; they crave comradeship and positive interactions with neighbours (Biggio and Cortese, 2013). The better the interactions, the happier people become. This often has important benefits as far as the workplace is concerned: work becomes more enjoyable and individuals become more productive, receptive to change and innovative (Falkenburg and Schyns, 2007). Positive informal social relations should be the aim at work (Morrison, 2004), through improving social skills, sparing time for relationships and enhancing one's emotional intelligence.

4.2.1.2 Seeking outside consultants' help when needed

Not all organisations can solve their problems alone, particularly their critical problems; outside consultants are then welcomed, because they provide a fresh perspective (Salomon and Shaver, 2005: 172); moreover, they supply extra personnel and specialised skills (Metrejean and Stocks, 2011). Furthermore, a consultant may obviate internal politicking by providing a range of options (Sammer, 2006). Yet organisations must acknowledge what consultants can and cannot supply.

4.2.1.3 Willingness to accept external ideas

The low and medium-tech sector in particular needs openness to outside knowledge for fostering innovation (Tsai and Wang, 2009). Accepting external ideas matters most. Low-tech companies benefit most from consultants' knowledge (Santamaria, Nieto and Barge-Gil, 2010), often because their innovation usually results from adapting ideas from high-tech companies (Robertson and Patel, 2007) disseminated through external sources who work with many firms (Wood, 2002). Innovation, a crucial ingredient of competitive advantage in today's increasingly complex business environment, must be imported; organisations must invite ideas from external stakeholders, customers and suppliers (Perkins and Arvinen-Muondo, 2013; Harland and Nienaber, 2014).

4.2.1.4 Desire to export ideas

Today, organisations operate in an increasingly interconnected world, thanks to factors such as globalisation, technological advancement and greater worldwide political-economic integration, and are now more interdependent than ever before. Hence, their success depends on willingness to share ideas, information and knowledge (Hakanen and Soudunsaari, 2012), particularly in today's ever more knowledge-based economy. The desire to export ideas can generate numerous benefits for business organisations: increased competitiveness and productivity, quality improvement, business growth, and greater access to new markets. Exporting firms are found to be more innovative than others (Salomon and Shaver, 2005; Salomon and Jin, 2008), but their status depends on developing a unique enabling culture (Jasimuddin and Zhang, 2013) which is vital for minimising resistance to the sharing of ideas and knowledge.

4.2.1.5 Desire to hit time targets

Any organisation exists to achieve a certain goal or objective by fulfilling a certain need in the market. Its effectiveness depends on its place within a time frame (Chong, 2008). Time is actually one of the five elements of an objective, according to the SMART framework (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) (Howell, 2005). An organisation may define the objective of improving customer satisfaction or expanding into new markets but must involve a time-target (Chong, 2008). This entails effective delegation, prioritising activities rationally and time is spent responsibly. An organisation that can hit time-targets

benefits by improved profits and perceived improvements to customer service, meeting customer needs (Lin, Hsieh and Chou, 2015).

4.2.1.6 Flexibility in working hours

Motivating employees and raising productivity depend on flexible working hours; rigid timetables discourage present and future workers. The attraction of flexible working hours outweighs even medical insurance, travelling expenses and subsidised meals; this positively affects productivity, job satisfaction and decision-making (Smith, 2010; Smith, Smith and Brower, 2011). Employees increasingly want greater control over their personal and professional lives nowadays for work/family balance (Julien, Somerville and Culp, 2011). This largely explains why a significant number of people undertake part-time jobs. Unfortunately, while companies that encourage this balance are well-regarded (Blazovich, 2014), most employers do not.

4.2.1.7 Using specific improvement tools

Improving the operating framework includes a full assessment of the situation, often starting with performance appraisals for ensuring that organisations can meet business objectives (Rusaw, 2009). Some assume that technological advances will inevitably result in business improvement but they may not unless the right ones are chosen (Shrestha *et al.*, 2012). Tools that can help assess the business situation include a SWOT analysis, benchmarking, market research, trend analysis and web-based seminars (Heisig, Clarkson and Vajna, 2010). The data collected, and market analysis allow the organisation to remedy their shortcomings. Such development tools include system updates and their effective and efficient use by the organisation. A good information system is essential, since decisions are determined by the quality of the information received, which should be aligned with organisation business strategy (Issa-Salwe *et al.*, 2010). This is a way of managing sustainable development.

4.2.1.8 Propensity to plan actions

Action planning constitutes an important component of strategic planning, whereby organisations define where they want to go in a certain time. An action plan is important in that it specifies that decisions adequately consider how the organisation should reach the due dates (Mucai, Wanjiku and Murigi, 2014). It

particularly outlines the various activities, actions, or tasks to be undertaken for the purpose (Brown *et al.*, 2007). If an organisation seeks to achieve regional expansion in the next five years, for instance, it must specify the actions needed to reach this end. Examples of actions in this case may include reaching out to strategic partners, identifying sources of finance, establishing new offices in a target market, recruiting new employees and so forth. Planning actions is, therefore, important in achieving organisational goals and objectives.

4.2.1.9 Open sessions for active discussion

Open and active discussion in an organisational setting is a practice that few companies manage to institute, despite its importance. According to Musenze *et al.* (2013), organisations that can harness informal communication through the social relationships of employees are more likely to deliver quality services. Open sessions for active discussion offer an avenue for companies to initiate and encourage brainstorming about the company's business portfolios and the current business needs, where these shared ideas ensure continued business improvement and growth. They go beyond internal discussions by including active discussions with the customers themselves; getting such feedback can greatly enhance the organisation's service and delivery (Alnassar, 2014). In addition, all stakeholders can play a valuable role by providing information on improvement. Open and continuing dialogue with them is important for successful progress (Fenner-Crisp and Dellarco, 2016).

Open and active discussion within the organisation can lead to two-way discussions where workers' suggested improvements can be taken seriously (Mishra, 1994; Bockman and Sirotnik, 2008). When management wants to change organisational operations, open discussions are important because consensus between workers and management on implementing change is vital; employee involvement has been found to influence productivity improvement (Phipps, Prieto and Ndinguri, 2013).

4.2.1.10 Informal communication

Informal communications are unstructured ones and thus not official (Johnson, Donohue and Atkin, 1994). Most oral communications in the workplaces are informal and include both conversations and meetings, but they may also be written. Whittaker *et al.* (1994) argue that such informal communication is

powerful through increasing social relations between workers and also more personal through involving face-to-face exchanges (Altinoz, 2009). Chow et al. (2000) suggest that modern informal communication in business has eliminated inconsistencies, given the improved feedback between superiors and subordinates; they also state that informal communication is free of pressure, especially when employees are dealing with clients, who need complex issues to be addressed immediately. Management/employee discussion is among the best uses for informal communication, especially when more complex tasks require prompt solutions; problems can be informally discussed and solved, to ensure a smoothly running business.

4.2.1.11 Carrying out improvement projects gradually

An efficient operating framework includes forecasting, planning, controlling and reporting work but improvement projects are gradual, and all stakeholders are responsible for the overall business development. The diverse needs of customers also affect the organisation's development and its gradual and continuous change (Savolainen, 2013). Business goals are dynamic and should always be specific when companies compete, but such goals need to be considered long-term strategies. For a business to advance, one has to consider and develop a plan for implementing its strategy (Studies and Jr, 2010) and to ensure effective business improvement, one must assess how the results of the growth will be achieved. With larger goals, one may establish a comprehensive measurement process which includes an increased number of customers and enhanced profitability.

4.2.1.12 Engaging employees in improvement decisions

Employees are arguably an organisation's most strategic and valuable asset; hence, they must be involved in decision-making, for quality and efficiency (Bockman and Sirotnik, 2008), not least because they are generally directly involved in implementing plans for change or improvement. Otherwise, they remain unmotivated, with no commitment or sense of belonging to the organisation, with low morale, productivity, job satisfaction and organisational performance (Konrad, 2006). Research confirms that actively engaged employees tend to be more productive and fulfilled than others (Palguta, 2013); thus, employees must be allowed to express their ideas and opinions at work.

4.2.1.13 Short communication lines between superiors and subordinates

Communication at work links all hierarchical levels in an organisation and success depends on close communication between superiors and subordinates (Abdullah and Antony, 2012). This boosts mutual trust and support as well as the frequency of interactions; AlRawashdeh (2012) found that organisations where management mixed with others greatly improved performance, partly because their workers are more satisfied and feel valued (Zeffane, 2012). Their feedback improves productivity (Ahmed *et al.*, 2010), except where communication gaps impair trust.

4.2.1.14 Support for improvement initiatives by senior management

Improvement initiatives in any company need support from senior staff. All staff must also show commitment to reformative change. Innovative improvements need funding: management must encourage all employees to add innovative input and build their commitment, supporting the improvement of the business by creating strategies for new products and ideas; this indicates good leadership (McMurray and Muenjohn, 2016). Management should manage change by ensuring that the organisational culture flexibly accommodates innovation by its employees. Close communication is vital for this purpose (Robertson, Roberts and Porras, 1993); the responsibility for communicating change rests with senior managers (Hansma and Elving, 2008). They are role models in adapting to change and emphasising its benefits (Heracleous, 2002), but if unconvinced they suppress their support (Hansma and Elving, 2008).

4.2.1.15 The commitment to change towards a better position

The four stages of reaction to change are denial, resistance, exploration and commitment (Scott and Jaffe, 1988); these four stages embrace change when they understand its causes (Wick, 2014) and resist otherwise, through uncertainty (Visagie and Steyn, 2011). Embracing change makes businesses more competitive, so senior management (Arbaugh, 2002) and employees (Bellou, 2006; Durmaz, 2008) alike must espouse the values of the organisation to ensure that change is successful (Maxwell and Steele, 2003; Falkenburg and Schyns, 2007).

4.2.1.16 Work motivation resulting from religious beliefs

One way for an organisation to motivate its employees in the workplace is engaging them via charity work. Charity work is deeply rooted in religion (Fagan, 1996) and it can motivate employees to encourage it in the work setting, offering them the chance to give something back to the community. This assertion stems from the notion of pro-social behaviour, which essentially denotes the act of doing something good for other people's benefit, which is growing in importance around the world (Rodell *et al.*, 2016). Not only those who engage in it but also their workplaces benefit from it by improving productivity, reinforcing a sense of pride, changing employees' attitudes to their employers, fostering ethical behaviour and increasing opportunities for interaction and networking.

4.2.1.17 Commitment to automate paperwork

The safety and service benefits (Jayaprakash and Balasubramani, 2011) of computerising paperwork, now experienced by larger firms, far outweigh its possible disadvantages and should be extended.

4.2.1.18 Cooperating comfortably with competitors

Kistruck *et al.* (2015) suggest that cooperating groups can learn much from each other and that access to new knowledge is often motivating. Despite the competitive environment (Cárdenas and Mantilla, 2015), cooperating with competitors, even in the short term (Peng *et al.*, 2012) has advantages; strategic alliances where rival organisations, such as airlines and manufacturers, deliberately elect to work together for mutual benefit (Damro, 2006) strengthen the parties against outsiders (Hamel, Doz and Prahalad, 1989).

4.2.1.19 The desire to improve partner organisations

Organisations depend on partner firms, which must keep pace with their demands, but sometimes the parties take less than full advantage of each other's strengths (Sanchez, Valentin and Martin, 2006). Yet by focusing on enhancing the performance of its partners, organisations can also reap the associated benefits, such as larger market share and shared resources (Peng *et al.*, 2012). Each partner organisation should be ready to develop and improve (European Commission, 2007).

4.2.1.20 Concentrating on achieving an impact

To make the greatest impact on performance, organisations should focus on decisive change (Harris, Gibson and McDowell, 2014), directing their efforts to the more profitable customers and using cost-effective methods to cater for the needs of the unprofitable ones. Eliminating waste will eventually lead to reduced costs and thus to greater profitability (Mentzer, 2004).

4.2.1.21 Tracing and assessing the improvement progress

Businesses should report and record the progress of improvement to provide future lessons, new goals and sustainable continuous business improvement (Heisig, Clarkson and Vajna, 2010). Methods of recruitment, staff performance, social and environmental auditing (Lee and Dale, 1998) and credit-worthiness can all be recorded, together with their key indicators (Gjerde and Hughes, 2007).

4.2.1.22 Focusing on Training

Training is vital for staff and organisations; its direct benefits in an increasingly changing and complex environment are undeniable and its indirect benefits in staff loyalty cannot be overemphasised. Organisations with trained staff have a greater competitive advantage in the marketplace than those without (Ncube et al. 2013).

4.2.1.23 Organisational structure based on market needs

Organisations must survive by constantly being prepared to adjust their structure in response to changing circumstances (Wooliams and Trompenaars, 2013). The structure determines how organisational activities are undertaken; a poorly designed structure may prevent an organisation from fulfilling its customers' needs. Hence managers must know how to adapt the organisational structure to meet different challenges (Osunde *et al.*, 2015).

4.2.1.24 Having written work procedures

Written work procedures should underlie all the decisions and processes of an organisation; they should be clear, accurate and updated (Gambescia and Donnelly, 2015), to guide and instruct employees without the frequent costly intervention of supervisors. Every organisation should have its own set (Plessis, 2016), recording what binds employees to the organisation. Procedures ensure consistent performance, showing robust internal controls (Ulans and Sherman,

2004); they minimize operating costs while ensuring that employees know what the organisation expects of them.

4.2.1.25 Committing to follow the agreed procedures

Written work procedures demand committed adherence to them, if they are to achieve their intended purpose (Plessis, 2016). Unless the entire workforce embraces the organisation's policies and procedures, these are merely cosmetic and will damage the organisation. Line managers in charge of performance management should ensure that organisational procedures are followed (Srimannarayana, 2010). This managerial commitment directs that everyone in the organisation, however senior, must abide by its procedures (Robbins, 1998), despite the greater autonomy with technological change (Nidhi Goyal, 2016).

4.2.1.26 Periodically updating the work procedures

Such compliance call in turn for the regular updating of procedures in a constantly changing environment, though many companies resist it (Vosloban, Vrabiuta and Aldea, 2013). Changes in employees' behaviour may require the procedures to be updated (Campbell, 1998), for instance, regarding the use of social media (Schultz *et al.*, 2015), as a result of increased automation in work processes, and in new socio-political regulations. Once updated, the new processes and procedures must be communicated to the workforce (Ketter, 2012). Such small changes, if regular, are easily justified and accustom employees to the need for change.

4.2.1.27 Managing resistance to change

Change is inevitable; management is likely to encounter resistance to change; the known being preferred to the unknown (Cross and Funk, 1997; Kiernan-Stern, 2005) and management must have strategies to meet it (Fine, 1986). The four types of change that greatly affect organisations are operational change, which tend to affect those who implement it at the lower-levels of the business; strategic change, when a business adapts its focus and changes direction; cultural change, where the company alters its outlook, perhaps bringing in new systems; and political change, affecting mainly senior management, as leaders of public organisations move or those in private organisations react to government policy (Mabey and Mayon-White, 1993).

Change can be made acceptable by good communication channels to explain it (Yılmaz and Kılıçoğlu, 2013) and by involving all staff in it (Dixon, Meyer and Day, 2014); this reduces anxiety and shows how the changes will promote business goals.

4.2.1.28 Respecting the feedback of all relevant parties

While it is important to consider everyone's opinions for the sake of teamwork and trust (Hakanen and Soudunsaari, 2012) and to improve quality through feedback, personal bias and opinion may deflect the organisation (Chang, Yeh and Liu, 2015). Hence feedback instruments should be quantitative as well as qualitative methods (Bradley *et al.*, 2004).

4.2.1.29 Activating the feedback of all relevant parties

People who are asked for feedback are motivated if it is respected (Chowdhury *et al.*, 2016) and demotivated if not (Hazen *et al.*, 2016). Universal feedback now has a more frequent role in behavioural change in the workplace, but must be sustained over time (Nowack, 2015). Performance feedback may improve performance (Coddington *et al.*, 2005) if suitably timed: immediate feedback is likely to be more informative (Goomas, Smith and Ludwig, 2011), but if feedback is objective, it rarely improves performance. Still, feedback is more useful just before a task is undertaken than at other times (Bechtel *et al.* 2015).

4.2.1.30 Caring for client satisfaction

Although all businesses seek to satisfy all their customers' needs (Ramakrishnan, 2015), satisfying customers is not enough; their expectations must now be exceeded (Diamandescu and Ionita, 2015). Loyal customers are often key indicators of a company's merits and in a competitive market provide sustainable competitive advantage (Summary, 2008).

4.2.1.31 Documenting effort of improvement stories in the organisation

Every organisation should record its growth and development to measure the level of its success (Veltri *et al.*, 2013). Dawson (2003) favours accurate accounts over those modified to fit audiences' expectations. Different versions are acceptable, proceeding from differing perspectives, but the data must be both reliable and valid (Dawson, 2003). A second purpose is for reference, should a

similar situation arise (Patterson, Nicholls and Long, 2015). Systematically documenting successes also maintains up-to-date records.

4.2.1.32 Recruiting based on common cultural elements

Recruitment and hiring decisions must derive from the organisation's shared values, beliefs, norms and standards: its culture (Vaijyanthi and Shreenivasan, 2014). Such consistency requires a candidate's values to resonate with the culture of organisations whose performance depends on strongly positive shared core values (Vaijyanthi and Shreenivasan, 2014). This explains why cultural fit is increasingly important in recruitment and why companies resort to following social media profiles in selecting employees (Calvasina, Calvasina and Calvasina, 2014); it ensures maximum benefits to employers and candidates (Vasavada-Oza, 2016).

4.2.1.33 Leveraging shared values

Most high-ranking companies share core values: being the best; attention to detail; people's importance as individuals; superior quality and service; innovation; informal communication; and importance of economic growth and profits. Without such shared values, including religious values, an organisation may become dysfunctional, resulting in ethical, moral or even legal infringements. Leveraging its shared values is, therefore, essential for building a high-performance culture as well as a sustainable organisation, especially with globalisation (Froese, Kim and Eng, 2016).

4.2.1.34 Having symbolic slogans that motivate toward improvement

Every business should have a clear slogan to prompt employees of its aims and objectives, motivate them, and remind them of their working responsibilities. It acts internally as advertising acts externally, easily visible and part of its vision and mission statements and its branding, its familiarity makes it more understandable (Ng and Chan 2008).

4.2.1.35 Having real examples of successful improvement

A key component of business improvement is having examples of successful improvement in its history to benchmark its progress. They are valuable, specific reference points and help to redefine roles during structural changes and reduce confusion. They create a vision of the future and the strategies required to get

there, improving the attitude of the change agents (Fearne and Hughes, 2013). Specific examples of business improvement help to identify and evaluate key drivers against performance indicators (Bouncken and Fredrich, 2016). With historical examples, the key drivers help an organisation to choose the operations relevant to their systems and this may give the business direction by establishing priorities (Jurisch and Palka, 2014).

4.2.1.36 Orientation towards employees' job security

Numerous studies confirm that employees who feel more secure in their jobs tend to be more committed and willing to perform consistently (Kooij *et al.*, 2013). Hence insecure employees, especially in periods of economic challenge, lack the confidence and drive to take on responsibilities outside their contractual obligations. Secure ones, conversely, take ownership of necessary change and work towards making it successful (Keim *et al.*, 2014).

4.2.1.37 More privileges for higher skilled employees

Businesses that are keen to improve should offer more privileges to motivate and retain their higher skilled employees since improvements may take time, requiring greater continuity, and should rightly be led by the most competent, talented and committed employees. Such people need special treatment to prevent other companies from poaching them (Akhtar, Azeem and Mustafa Mir, 2014). According to Salman, Nawaz and Matin (2014), a business performs better the longer it retains its most skilful employees. This also reduces recruiting costs and ensures a sense of continuity in projects requiring the total commitment of competent employees (Long, Ajagbe and Nor, 2012).

4.2.1.38 Applying performance measurements

Performance measurement must define business improvements. It is as important for efficiency as integrating such changes. Searcy (2012) finds it useful in evaluating, controlling, budgeting, learning and improving business systems. It checks whether the business improvement processes are aligned with the business targets, recognises progress, notes inadequacies and favours improvements. Performance measurements save time and money by pointing out priorities. Businesses must determine the factors critical for their success, measure the metrics and design appropriate systems to continuously improve

performance (Bititci *et al.*, 2012). Effective performance measurement not only handles small-scale changes, but also lays the groundwork for future plans (Long, Ajagbe and Nor, 2012); it is a major way of improving change processes.

4.2.1.39 Interacting with government regulations

Disclosure laws ensure that the quality and quantity of information about an organisation are published, strengthening corporate accountability (Zarsky, 2002). Businesses should comply with government regulations and statutory requirements, not least because, as Doran (2012) observes, nothing hinders their progress more than failing to do so. Moreover, ignoring government regulations prevents a company from claiming to perform well; it incurs fines and judgments (Järveläinen, 2013) and may lose business and attract a bad reputation from the negative publicity (Weber and Wasieleski, 2013). This derails business improvement, damaging consumer loyalty, employee morale and shareholders' confidence. Interacting with government regulations encourages growth in an enabling environment, bringing much-needed continued improvement.

4.2.1.40 Accepting the risk of failures

The risks and threats in business improvement may be operational or financial; Laitinen (2013) notes that changing conditions always make planning uncertain. But improvement to a business that accepts the risk of failure is more likely to succeed, because such a business manages to reduce the risk by integrating better safety measures. It consistently monitors and reviews its systems to ensure timely corrections and improvements to its risk management approach (Lussier and Corman, 2015). Schneider and Spieth (2013) add that a business that embraces the risk of failure is well-placed to take on a variety of challenges by reinventing and planning for better alternatives. To foresee other options, the risk of failure in business should be accepted.

4.2.2 The higher-level themes

Once these cultural aspects were extracted, further work had to be done to improve the understanding of what CI culture could look like. Adhering to constructivism, the process of developing these aspects into higher-level themes was done through focus group discussions by the participants, themselves, and they came to an agreement on certain indicators for each of these themes, which

have been supported by the constant comparison with the literature. The following sections add further explanations for these themes and how they influence facilitating CI within NPOs. Figure 40 shows how the themes have been developed with the participant based on the forty factors that have been emerged.

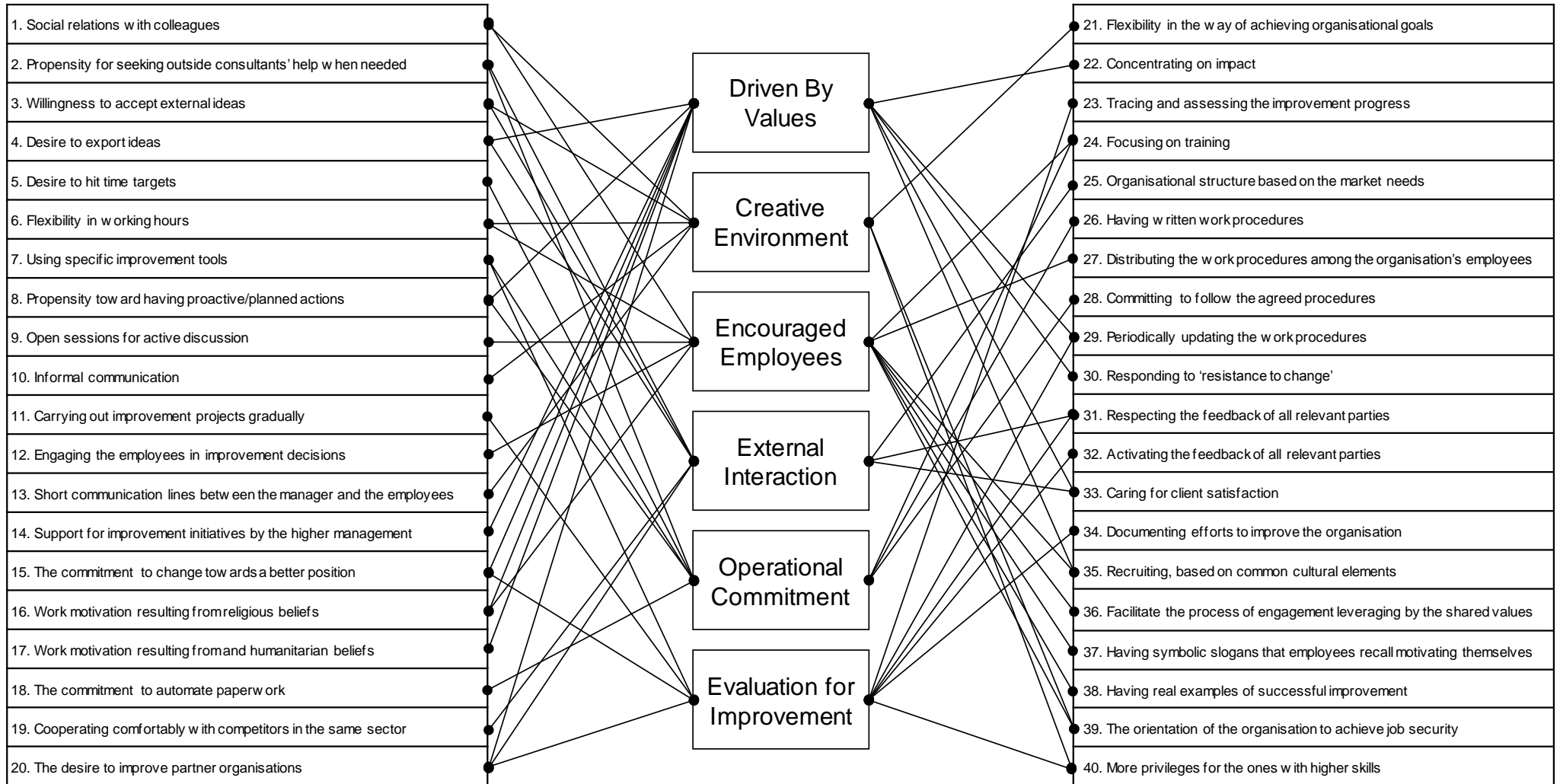


Figure 40: Developing the lower-level codes into higher-level themes

Each of these themes was socially constructed as supported by participant quotations and constantly compared with literature to see how would these themes influence facilitating CI within NPOs, as follows:

4.2.2.1 Driven by Values

It has been found that being driven by values is a key aspect for successful CI stories. Although Saudi NPOs share some similar themes that could exist in another context, there were some interesting aspects in which behaviour is shaped by Islam (Bjerke and Al-Meer, 1993). It has been reported that religious beliefs are associated with a higher level of social support for those in need, which was a key motivation for participants to work in this sector (Fagan, 1996). Being value-driven was found to be enhanced by religious teachings, and attention is paid to achieving results to obtain God's rewards for good deeds. One of the interviewees stated that:

“...however, in all cases we attempt to select individuals who have the same characteristics of our employees, on the whole: to be morally and religiously disciplined and to be recommended by trustworthy individuals who are well known for their righteousness and good reputations...”

According to the data analysis and constant comparison with the literature, the characteristics that are associated with this theme include: the courage and resolve to change for the better, graciously accepting criticism, and sharing successes with others (Harland and Nienaber, 2014; Harris, Gibson and McDowell, 2014; Wick, 2014; Lussier and Corman, 2015; Froese, Kim and Eng, 2016; Rodell *et al.*, 2016).

4.2.2.2 Creative Environment

Nurturing a creative environment might not be possible for all Saudi NPOs since these charities focus more on spending their resources on their clients. This does not allow generosity towards employee work stations or reward systems. Struggling to sustain resources was a constant concern of the participants, one that put them under pressure, which could limit space for creativity. Foundations, on the other hand, were more likely to have a creative environment since they are financially more stable and supported by their founder, most likely an

individual who gained their wealth after a long journey and much experience, which they then invested in setting up and operating their foundations in a more mature and professional manner than charities are operated under. One of the interviewees mentioned that:

“...there is an atmosphere of friendliness and brotherhood. They can have their breakfast together, they care for each other, and they are like a big family...”

According to the data analysis and constant comparison with the literature, the characteristics that are associated with this theme include: spontaneous communications, everyone participates in decisions on optimisation to raise the standards of the organisation, feedback is viewed as an opportunity, and experiences with optimisation are documented to profit from them (Phipps, Prieto and Ndinguri, 2013; Alnassar, 2014; Dean, Fath and Chen, 2014; Murante *et al.*, 2014; Chang, Yeh and Liu, 2015; Patterson, Nicholls and Long, 2015; Fenner-Crisp and Dellarco, 2016).

4.2.2.3 Encouraged Employees

This could be the most interesting theme, one that is possibly unique for this sector. NPO employees in Saudi Arabia have shown high motivation to be working in this philanthropic sector (Bjerke and Al-Meer, 1993; Fagan, 1996). Their motivations were interpreted through their humanitarian and religious values, which encourage them to consider more than just their job's benefits. However, some Saudi NPOs pay their employees generously and offer attractive features (especially foundations), which adds extra potential for CI to flourish. One of the interviewees revealed that:

“...we focused on all these practical points and scheduled practical training programs for our employees...”

According to the data analysis and constant comparison with the literature, the characteristics that are associated with this theme include: employees enjoy good relations and share values that enhance performance, the organisation provides constant support and training, employees are given sufficient authority, and the organisation endeavours to provide its employees with job security (Akhtar, Azeem and Mustafa Mir, 2014; Calvasina, Calvasina and Calvasina, 2014;

Jurisch and Palka, 2014; Keim *et al.*, 2014; Rama Devi and Phanindra, 2014; Vaijayanthi and Shreenivasan, 2014; Bouncken and Fredrich, 2016; McMurray and Muenjohn, 2016; Vasavada-Oza, 2016).

4.2.2.4 External Interactions

The nature of philanthropic activities involves many parties during charity projects. These parties include four main players. Firstly is the government that establishes and controls legislation and funds. Secondly, sponsors who fund the projects (the government, again, plus individuals or foundations). Thirdly, the charities that usually run the projects. Finally, the clients, who must be satisfied with the services provided to them. Therefore, having strong and trusted connections with these external parties would have a huge impact on strengthening CI. One of the interviewees confirmed this by stating that:

“...when the first organisation was established, and then the idea was copied completely. This is what is called a return for us. We achieved more additional returns in the charitable work sector...”

According to the data analysis and constant comparison with the literature, the characteristics that are associated with this theme include: organisations strive for customer satisfaction, willing to develop partners, benefiting from the opinions of outside experts, dealing comfortably with competitors, and participating effectively in government legislation (Dixon, Meyer and Day, 2014; Cárdenas and Mantilla, 2015; Diamandescu and Ionita, 2015; Humphries and Gibbs, 2015; Kistruck *et al.*, 2015; Ramakrishnan, 2015).

4.2.2.5 Operational Commitment

Organisations that have a commitment towards operations management have the fundamental requirement for cultivating CI. This commitment is proven using a variety of tools and techniques in operations management. This is a place where some NPOs fail. Sometimes they think that these tools should be applied only in manufacturing industries, although they have been successful for years in the services and health sectors. This can be proven by the commitment to move forward toward automating possible operations, as mentioned in an interview:

“...the case is automatically directed to the social researcher, who does not have to be present in person. He works through his iPad. He receives a message with case details: location and mobile phone number...”

According to the data analysis and constant comparison with the literature, the characteristics that are associated with this theme include: the organisation utilises defined tools for improvement, it benefits from feedback, its organisational structure is based on market needs, there are clear working procedures, and the organisation’s activities are based on planning and defined schedules (Mucui, Wanjiku and Murigi, 2014; Bechtel *et al.*, 2015; Gambescia and Donnelly, 2015; Lin, Hsieh and Chou, 2015; Nowack, 2015; Osunde *et al.*, 2015; Chowdhury *et al.*, 2016; Hazen *et al.*, 2016; Nidhi Goyal, 2016; Plessis, 2016).

4.2.2.6 Evaluation for Improvement

As CI is a non-stop journey toward excellence, there must be evaluation to assess the progress of this journey. This is what could convince some ‘not-continuously-improving’ NPO leaders to adopt approaches to achieve this theme. Applying key indicators could help remarkably, as revealed in an interview:

“...we manage to contract with independent consulting and training centres, and they would give us the results before and after the training...”

According to the data analysis and constant comparison with the literature, the characteristics that are associated with this theme include: the organisation adheres to performance standards, it implements improvements progressively, procedures are updated regularly, and to enhance this, channels of communications between employees are smooth and direct, and the organisation allows employees flexibility in working hours (Savolainen, 2013; Vosloban, Vrabiuta and Aldea, 2013; Blazovich, 2014; Schultz *et al.*, 2015)

4.2.3 The ideal position of continuous improvement culture

These statements describing the ideal position were empirically derived through an inductive process and supported by literature.

Table 34 provides Statements describe an ideal position (that are found confirmed by the literature) to support the interpretation of the indicators as facilitating CI.

Table 34: Ideal position for the developed themes of CI culture

Themes	Statements describe an ideal position	Supportive literature
1. Driven by Values	<p>The way things are done is based on a clear set of values, which are influenced by religions. These values are known to employees and supportively maintained. Applying any action that conflict with these values causes a critical resistance. These values ultimately contribute to the courage and resolve to change for the better, graciously accepting criticism, and sharing successes with others.</p>	<p>(Bjerke and Al-Meer, 1993) (Fagan, 1996) (Harland and Nienaber, 2014) (Wick, 2014) (Harris, Gibson and McDowell, 2014) (Lussier and Corman, 2015) (Froese, Kim and Eng, 2016) (Rodell <i>et al.</i>, 2016)</p>
2. Creative Environment	<p>There are spontaneous communications between employees at different managerial levels. Everyone participates in decisions on optimisation to raise the standards of the organisation. Feedback is viewed as an opportunity, and experiences with optimisation are documented to profit from them. There is support to reinforce improvement through a reward system.</p>	<p>(Phipps, Prieto and Ndinguri, 2013) (Dean, Fath and Chen, 2014) (Alnassar, 2014) (Murante <i>et al.</i>, 2014) (Chang, Yeh and Liu, 2015) (Patterson, Nicholls and Long, 2015) (Fenner-Crisp and Dellarco, 2016)</p>
3. Encouraged Employees	<p>There is a strong trust between employees and they share values that motivate them towards philanthropic activities. The organisation provides constant support and training, employees are given sufficient authority, and the organisation endeavours to provide its employees with job security.</p>	<p>(Bjerke and Al-Meer, 1993) (Fagan, 1996) (Rama Devi and Phanindra, 2014) (Vaijayanthi and Shreenivasan, 2014) (Calvasina, Calvasina and Calvasina, 2014) (Jurisch and Palka, 2014) (Keim <i>et al.</i>, 2014) (Akhtar, Azeem and Mustafa Mir, 2014) (Vasavada-Oza, 2016) (Bouncken and Fredrich, 2016) (McMurray and Muenjohn, 2016)</p>

Themes	Statements describe an ideal position	Supportive literature
4. External Interactions	There is a clear desire to co-operate with other parties outside the system. The organisation strives for customer satisfaction, is willing to develop partnerships, benefits from the opinions of outside experts, deals comfortably with competitors, and participates effectively in government legislation.	(Dixon, Meyer and Day, 2014) (Ramakrishnan, 2015) (Diamandescu and Ionita, 2015) (Cárdenas and Mantilla, 2015) (Kistruck <i>et al.</i> , 2015) (Humphries and Gibbs, 2015)
5. Operational Commitment	The organisation utilises defined tools for improvement, it benefits from feedback, its organisational structure is based on market needs, there are clear working procedures, and the organisation's activities are based on planning and defined schedules.	(Mucui, Wanjiku and Murigi, 2014) (Lin, Hsieh and Chou, 2015) (Osunde <i>et al.</i> , 2015) (Gambescia and Donnelly, 2015) (Nowack, 2015) (Bechtel <i>et al.</i> , 2015) (Plessis, 2016) (Nidhi Goyal, 2016) (Chowdhury <i>et al.</i> , 2016) (Hazen <i>et al.</i> , 2016)
6. Evaluation for Improvement	The organisation adheres to performance standards; it implements improvements progressively; procedures are updated regularly, and, to enhance this, channels of communication between employees are smooth and direct; and the organisation allows employees flexibility in terms of working hours.	(Savolainen, 2013) (Vosloban, Vrabiuta and Aldea, 2013) (Blazovich, 2014) (Schultz <i>et al.</i> , 2015)

4.2.4 Establishing an instrument to gauge the current position

This section discusses an early stage of establishing a self-assessment instrument to gauge the proximity to the ideal position. This instrument provides a clear description for the developed themes that ultimately describes that ideal position of CI culture. As a proactive action for future research to check the applicability and to assure the understandability of the provided themes that have

been socially constructed based on the perspectives of the participants themselves. The emergent themes were provided to the same organisations to gauge their positions against the ideal position. Sixty-six responses were received from nine different organisations. The perspectives of participants of this assessment instrument came from different backgrounds, allowing a good representation of the organisations' overall perspectives. However, the statistical correlation was not considered because the purpose of this assessment was to maximise exploration for this research (Mays and Pope, 1995), and large samples are not necessarily needed to generate rich data sets (Starks and Trinidad, 2007).

The instrument was distributed online using Google Forms™. Then the responses were analysed through Qualtrics software™ to facilitate better data mining. The results show similarly high scores among these organisations in terms of the ideal position of CI culture, although no statistical correlations were computed or hypothesis tests were done in this research since the goal was just to provide a better understanding for later analyses and clearer horizons for future research.

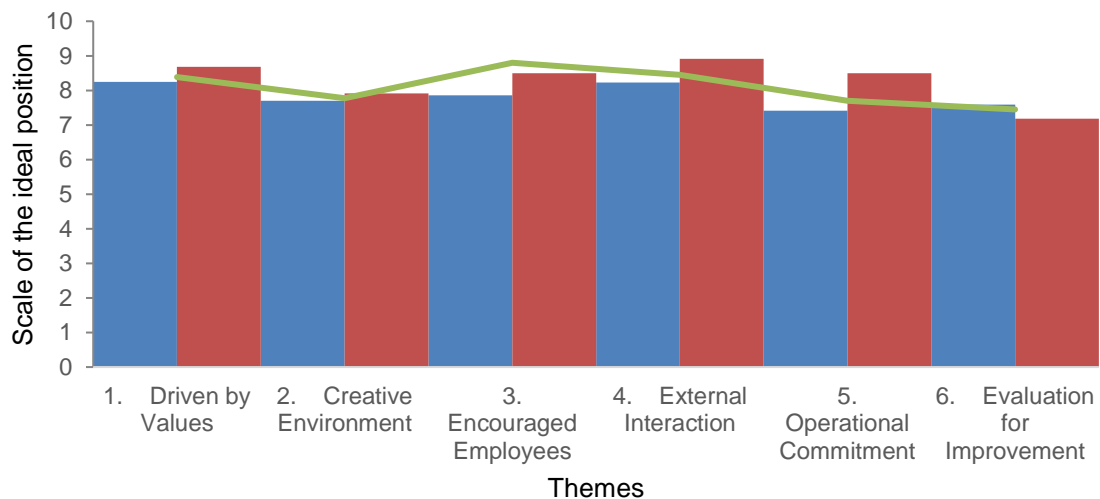


Figure 41: The average scores for each theme

Although that the purpose of applying this instrument is not to conclude on concrete outcomes, since it is just a pilot version for future research, but there were some comments have been noticed based on observation notes, which could provide a better understanding for the context being explored. There was

an impression indicates that participants have optimistic perspectives since the average scores are high for most of the provided themes. They believe that their organisational cultures are relatively close to the ideal position. However, each theme produces a slightly different average. In the first themes, the charities have shown a higher average score; this can be justified by the fact that they have more volunteers who work for the sake of doing good deeds. The second theme has revealed slightly lower score average for both types. The third themes was higher in charities; this may be due to the fact that charities work more closely with the public, i.e., they implement charitable activities that foundations sponsor and support. In the fourth and fifth themes, the average score was higher in charities; this might be due to their frequent involvement in logistical operations that involve several parties. In the last theme, the average score was a little higher in foundations, where the work procedures seemed to be more professional, which could allow more chances for improvement leveraging by performance indicators.

The trends in the current position of CI culture in Saudi NPOs were varied. There are two groups of themes: higher-scored and lower-scored themes, as summarised in Table 35 below. It is also clear that there are three themes that have high scores, while the other three themes have lower scores. The higher-scored themes are more closely related to individuals, whereas the lower-scored themes are more closely related to operations. This could indicate that individuals (within this sample of Saudi NPOs) have motivations, interact with other entities, and are driven by their strong values. However, these characteristics might be the very ones encouraging them to pursue philanthropic activities. This comment appeared when making observations for gathering data, especially within charities, which have fewer work benefits than foundations. The foundations have a more official work environment with generous benefits which can compete against those of for-profit-organisations. These observations might shed light on individuals' motivations in addition to the beliefs that encourage them to do what they do. It has been also observed that charitable organisations allow part-time employees and volunteers to join them, a practice which is not popular with foundations. Foundations tend to hire full-time, professional workers. However, both charities and foundations received high scores for the themes related to human factors.

Table 35: Two groups of themes according to their scores

Groups	Themes
Higher-scored themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouraged Employees - External Interaction - Driven by Values
Lower-scored themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operational Commitment - Evaluation for Improvement - Creative Environment

On the other hand, the lower-scored themes are more closely related to operations. This can be interpreted through justifications which were noticed during observations. Firstly, participants feel that they are less interested in operations management because they think that it is more appropriate for other sectors. Secondly, this sector has fewer financial resources in comparison to others, which limits investments in operational tools and techniques. Thirdly, the concept of nonprofit operations management seems relatively new, both in practice and academia. However, the interest in operations management within NPOs has been growing increasingly, which means that time and supportive efforts are needed to reach maturity in this area. This would absolutely help NPOs to increase their effectiveness and efficiency, which is most needed.

4.3 Areas of focus for developing interventions

During the last two focus group sessions, areas of focus were established and grouped into five categories. A variety of influential areas of focus for interventions were proposed to have an impact on achieving the developed theme. The focus group brainstorming has constructed a participative foundation to propose suitable interventions that could lead toward the desired position of CI culture, as summarised in Table 36 below:

Table 36: Areas of focus for intervention suggested by participants

Focus group Categorisation	Proposed areas of focus for interventions
Employees support	1. Focusing on training.
	2. Rewarding good behaviours in various ways.
	3. Considering employees needs and preferences.
	4. Innovating encouraging slogans.
Focus on operations	5. Setting a methodology to activate the role of the advisors.
	6. Evaluating the level of commitment to standards.

	7. Documenting all processes.
	8. Internal and external audits.
	9. Applying specific tools for improvement.
	10. Adjusting organisational structure to market needs.
	11. Goals driven management.
	12. Applying performance measurements.
	13. Automating processes.
	14. Having multiple tools for updating procedures.
Effective communication	15. Establishing social activities.
	16. Establishing a mechanism for utilising feedback.
	17. Having multiple channels for communication internally.
	18. Supporting open discussion sessions.
	19. Creating a climate for informal communication.
Values cultivation	20. Developing employees' values.
	21. Enabling an operations management culture.
	22. Clear vision for all employees.
	23. Documenting and presenting organisational history.
	24. Building an organisation's practices relying on its values.
	25. Aiming to distribute successful practices.
	26. Managing resistance to change.
Investing in influencers	27. Diversification of methods of customer satisfaction.
	28. Building partnerships with all parties.
	29. Participating with government in developing legislation.
	30. Partnerships with competitors.

4.4 Conclusion

This inductive exploration has revealed six influential themes that have an impact on facilitating CI within Saudi NPOs. These themes are highly transferable to other contexts; this is confirmed by a transferability test. However, this claim needs further investigation but is beyond the scope of this thesis, which aims to explore these themes solely within the context of Saudi NPOs. Further development is carried out in the following chapter to finalise the illustration of the intended framework, followed by some suggested interventions that could help NPOs move toward the ideal position of a CI culture.

5 FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

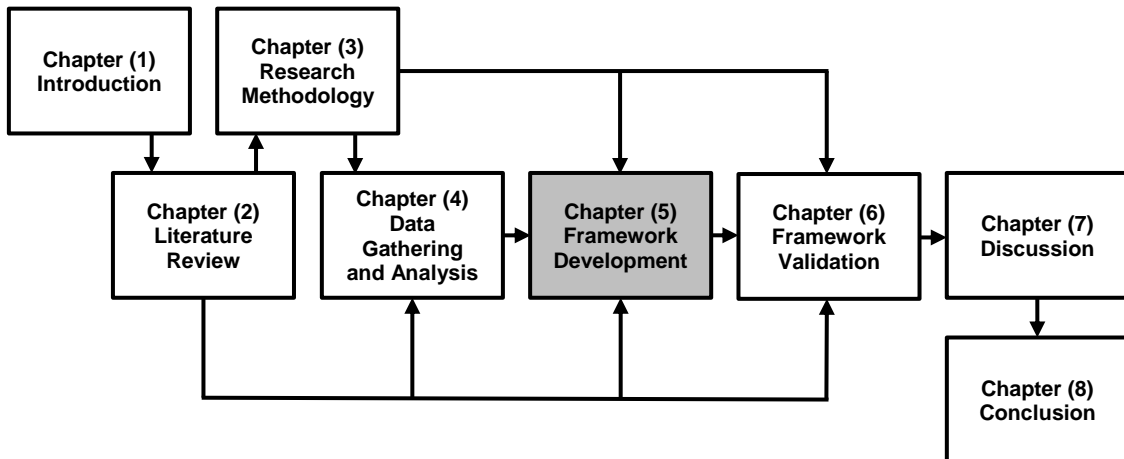


Figure 42: Research overview (chapter five)

The process of developing the framework evolved through four phases, as summarised in Figure 43 below. Firstly, positioning of the developed themes on the Schein model. Secondly, six interventions were proposed and supported by the literature to achieve the developed themes. Thirdly, anticipating the influence of the interventions. Finally, representing the whole framework that combines the revealed components and shows how they affect each other to reach to desired position of a CI culture.

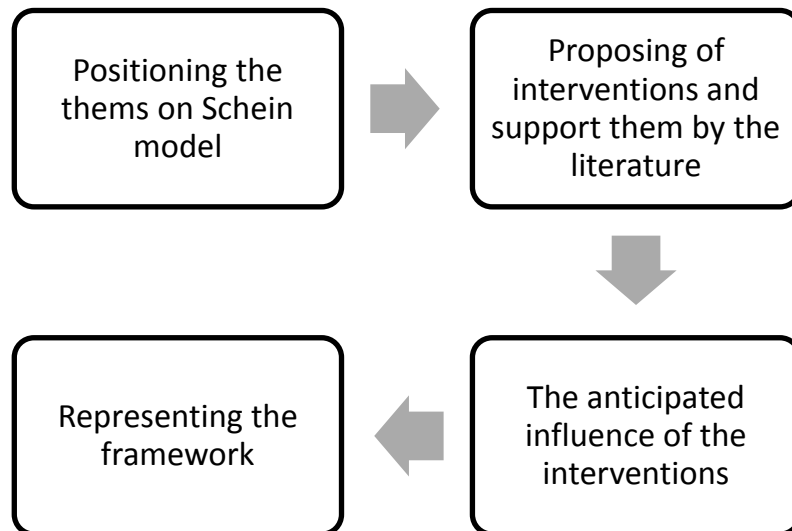


Figure 43: The phases followed to develop the framework

5.1 Positioning the Developed Themes on the Schein Model

Themes lie at different levels in the Schein (1984) model and are connected to each other through the dynamic nature of culture; some of which are assumed to be artefacts and some values. The underlying assumptions for these developed themes are below the artefacts and values levels (Schein, 1984) as shown in Figure 44.

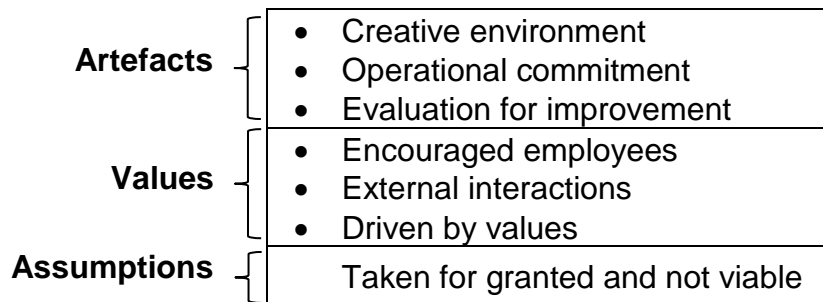


Figure 44: Representation of themes according to Schein (1984)

These themes have also been classified according to Schein's (1995) classification of organisational problems, which affect organisational learning, as shown in Table 37.

Table 37: Developed themes classified into organisational problem types

Developed themes	External adoption	Internal integration
1. Driven by values		•
2. Creative environment		•
3. Encouraged employees		•
4. External interactions	•	
5. Operational commitment		•
6. Evaluation for improvement	•	

Positioning the developed themes according to these two dimensions of Schein (1984, 1995) helps to clearly identify which areas of an organisational culture can facilitate CI, and then enables the most suitable interventions to be proposed to potentially help the ideal position of these themes to be reached.

5.2 Proposing Categories of Interventions

Six categories of intervention were proposed to achieve the required change. Each of these categories combine a series of actions, which were proposed in order to achieve change of particular aspects of an organisational culture that are the six developed themes, as explained previously. These interventions were triggered based on the participants' perspectives during focus group discussions

and strengthened by the content analysis of the relevant articles from the literature. These proposed interventions should have multiple impacts on the developed themes, meaning that it is important to pay attention to how the impacts take place. Table 38 details these categories of interventions and explains how they were underpinned on the areas of focus that have been developed by participants earlier.

Table 38: Developed interventions based on participant perspectives

Interventions	Key focus	Participants areas of focus
1. Empower employees	Provide employees with the required support to overcome the obstacles in CI implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees support • Effective communication
2. Team-oriented workforce	Encourage the work to be done by groups to obtain multiple perspectives on improvement progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective communication
3. Focus on training	Plan for frequent and up-to-date development and training which employees need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on operations
4. Rewarding improvement behaviour	Design and implement a reward system which encourages improvement behaviours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values cultivation
5. Optimise processes	Establish standards and apply operations systems to control and improve processes in order to maintain ideal levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on operations
6. Supportive Leadership	Plan and support all CI efforts and demonstrate the required commitment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees support • Focus on operations • Effective communication • Values cultivation • Investing in influencers

The following part proposed interventions with suggested actions and how they affect the desired theme of CI culture within the Saudi NPOs. These interventions were strengthened by the literature comparison.

5.2.1 Employee empowerment

The interventions seek to enable the human factor that ultimately determines the success of CI implementation. Empowering employees is the starting point for establishing an improvement culture. Engaging employees in decision-making, granting them the authority to try to do things differently, and supporting them afterwards are some of the requirements for empowering them and allowing CI initiatives to take place successfully.

This intervention can be implemented through the following actions:

- Ensure a proper fit between the job requirements and employee competencies.
- Strengthen the communication between management and employees to promote a “get-started” attitude.
- Develop an organisational structure to provide employees with autonomy.
- Engage employees in decision-making processes for encouraging change adaptation.
- Promote a “just-change” attitude by obtaining employees’ full support to do so.

Employees empowerment involves a number of changes within the organisation as the organisational structure needs to evolve from a hierarchal structure to a self-management structure (Mitki, Shani and Meiri, 1997), in which employees are empowered to make decisions within the area in which they operate. Empowerment means that decisions can be made by all employees at all levels of the organisation (Robert *et al.*, 2000). The frontline staff certainly need to be empowered (Randolph *et al.*, 2012), as they are the ones who are facing customers and are in a position to make a significant difference to customer relations. However, empowerment has both positive and negative effects and can be more successfully implemented in organisations which more readily accept participative decision-making; in societies which are used to having someone at the top giving orders and taking charge, empowerment may appear as a weakness. Nevertheless, it has been shown that empowerment can speed up processes and consequently improve performance (Broekhuizen and Frericks, 1997).

5.2.2 Team-oriented workforce

This intervention would encourage teamwork as different perspectives enrich improvement ideas. Hence, team discussions should take place on a daily basis, avoiding individual decisions which could reduce the probability that an improvement will flourish. Thus, to create a proper climate for CI, the organisation has to support working in teams and strengthen communications between employees to allow more flexibility in terms of CI progress. This intervention can be implemented through the following actions:

- Strengthen team membership through engaging teams in varied activities.
- Design work procedures that require teamwork to stimulate “working together”.
- Ensure a proper fit between group-level competencies and mission requirements.
- Develop a knowledge management system to gather and share improvement ideas.
- Formulate improvement teams to allow a focused improvement.

The organisational culture can influence the way in which staff feel part of the organisation, and a team-oriented workforce can be more productive and work together to share the vision and mission (Hodges and Hernandez, 1999). Successfully developing a team means, in part, that the social aspect is not ignored, as this can bring about team orientation, which Firbank (2010) states is one of the decisive attributes needed for CI.

5.2.3 Focus on training

This intervention is necessary in order to enable employees to do their work properly and confidently. This confidence then allows them to see opportunities for improvement. Training, when positioned as a frequent and important activity in an organisation, puts the organisation a step ahead of its competitors, as the organisation provides its employees with up-to-date knowledge which can motivate them to accelerate the progress of CI. This intervention can be implemented through the following actions:

- Allocate an annual budget for current/new employee developments and training.

- Provide online courses to provide opportunities for employees to learn at any time.
- Make sure that there are frequent training sessions for junior and new employees provided by senior employees .
- Link training progress to promotion policies.

A focus on training is supported by Solberg et al. (1998), as they suggest that the way to deliver quality is by building the skills and experience of the workforce. This is unlikely to happen without training, and Hodges et al. (1999) reiterate that, although employees need to work together as a team, they all need worthwhile training. This is also confirmed by Randolph et al. (2012), who suggest that training for all staff should start by concentrating on small projects and then grow from there. Training is important for improving skills and consequently productivity, as trained workers are more efficient since they know what they are expected to do.

5.2.4 Rewarding improvement behaviour

The objective of this intervention is to reinforce CI values that have to be maintained and supported in order to keep the spirit of CI sustained and flourishing. Rewarding employees who uphold these values is important, as they will be more loyal and have more respect for the organisation, thereby embedding CI values in the organisational culture. The organisation must first identify these values and design a reward system which fits their employees and encourages them to comply with the stated values. This intervention can be implemented through the following actions:

- Identify the CI values that need to be established and reinforced.
- Schedule frequent competitions for generating improvement ideas and nominate a monthly “improvement champion”.
- Develop an integrated reward system that targets stimulating the identified CI values.
- Revise the recognition and reward packages to include non-monetary incentives and to ensure their relevance to employees’ expectations.

It has been found that rewarding improvement behaviour is an effective way of motivating employees, and a reward system is a long-established intervention

used to achieve CI. However, a study by Fryer and Ogden (2014) argues that reward and recognition are not so apparent in public sector organisations. It may be that the private sector has more flexibility in terms of a reward system, although motivation can come from other sources, as well. Iberahim et al. (2016) suggest that motivation can be increased by allowing employees to make recommendations, as this gives them ownership; it may also make them feel that they are of value to the organisation.

5.2.5 Optimising processes

Operations management is a key intervention that provides an infrastructure for the processes to be established, controlled and improved. The improvement of operations requires setting standard work procedures; it is then possible to benefit from controlling and improving these procedures. Beyond that, there must be a clear commitment to improving operations to achieve higher levels of quality every day. Breaking operations down into processes makes it easier to engage everyone in coming up with ideas for improvements. Achieving an ideal productivity level, then, starts from process optimisation. This intervention can be implemented through the following actions:

- Promote process standardisation and visualisation to increase awareness of “how things get done”.
- Implement an appropriate operations management system and customise it according to organisational needs.
- Hire experts who have professional certificates in operational CI or support current employees in obtaining them.
- Centralise operations around clients’ needs through a customer relationships management (CRM) system designed to utilize their feedback.
- Set and benchmark organisational targets and break them down into measurable key performance indicators (KPIs), preferably for teams.

A good understanding of how processes relate to CI is very important in terms of optimising these processes (Shortell *et al.*, 1995), This statement is reinforced by Solberg et al. (1998), who found that understanding of improvement concepts is limited. Without a proper understanding of what is required, senior management

will not be able to motivate employees; yet the whole process is complex and multi-dimensional (Coleman, 2015). This means that it is important to dedicate time and effort (Verma and Moran, 2014) to ensuring that the whole workforce has a deep understanding of what CI entails. One factor that has been seen as providing an understanding of the process is accreditation, which has been identified as a driver of quality improvement (Verma and Moran, 2014). This is mainly because everyone has to benchmark against nationally or internationally recognised standards, and the employees have to become engaged in the process (Verma and Moran, 2014). These benchmarks give all employees an understanding of the requirements necessary for improvement. Optimising processes means making clients the centre of focus (Firbank, 2010), as optimisation requires that any services offered to customers should be of the highest quality (Mitki, Shani and Meiri, 1997). It should never be forgotten that all organisations are operating in a competitive environment, requiring flexibility (Broekhuizen and Frericks, 1997). This flexibility extends to the speed at which decisions are made, which ultimately comes down to empowerment. However, achieving this flexibility may be more challenging in those organisations which are situated in a national culture more attuned to hierarchal organisations.

5.2.6 Supportive leadership

This intervention is needed to lead the overall implementation of the previous interventions: CI implementation is challenging and needs to overcome a variety of obstacles in order to organise all associated activities. In the literature and data analysis, there is a clear requirement to have strong leadership support for CI, through personal involvement, and recognising and encouraging CI. It is necessary for organisations to have supportive leadership that is ready to respond dynamically to any challenges that affect the progress of the CI enterprise. This intervention requires hiring and inspiring leaders who have high competences and believe in change, openness and are willing to benefit from others' solutions. Supportive leadership is supposed to build strong connections with external parties which may provide the required support and ultimately add a desired impact on the whole sector and society. This intervention can be implemented through the following actions:

- Identify competencies needed for executive positions, then hire people based on them.
- Ensure embedding CI into the organisational culture is a key target in the strategic plan.
- Measure CI implementation progress using certain models, such as the Bessant model of CI maturity.
- Involve leaders in “day-to-day” operations so that they have a better understanding of processes and how to motivate other members of staff.

The importance of commitment towards succeeding in CI implementation cannot be underestimated (Firbank, 2010), and this is particularly true of leadership commitment (Verma and Moran, 2014). The enthusiasm and drive of senior managers helps to facilitate quality improvement (Fryer and Ogden, 2014). However, leaders must be seen to be competent (Coleman, 2015; Ibrahimi *et al.*, 2016) to be perceived as credible facilitators. They must also initiate self-assessment to recognise issues that need to be prioritised in order to promote a culture of CI (Coleman, 2015); in this way all can see what actions need to be taken to improve.

5.3 The anticipated influence of the interventions

This framework is designed to achieve a change in organisational culture and particularly targets the developed themes which have been positioned on Schein model of cultural levels (1984) and Schein classification of organisational learning (1995). Therefore, it is important to anticipate the impact of the proposed interventions using the same lenses (Schein, 1984, 1995), which are highlighted in Table 39. This table provides leaders with a roadmap to help them assess organisational progress towards the ideal positions. It provides the anticipated changes in artefacts and values in addition to the anticipated gain in terms of integration and external adaptability. It is important to highlight that these interventions are not a set of stand-alone actions; instead, they represent an integrated plan in which activities build on preceding activities to develop a culture which facilitates CI within the organisation. These interventions are provided as a holistic plan for change; they should not simply be adopted as a prescriptive set of instructions. The impact of the interventions might not be noticed in the short-

term. However, an assessment can take place every few months to assess progress and then apply any necessary adjustment to priorities. To measure progress, workshop sessions can provide the required feedback as to the effect of the interventions.

Table 39: Interventions and their anticipated desired effect through the lenses of Schein (1984, 1995)

Interventions	The impact on the organisational culture		The impact on the internal/external system	
	Artifacts	Value	Internal system	External system
1. Empower employees	Employees who are willing to suggest and implement improvements.	Confidence to make change.	Empowered employees increase their loyalty to the organisation.	Empowered employees increase organisational resilience and survival.
2. Team-oriented workforce	Several teams implement improvement initiatives.	Performing tasks collectively is how things are done.	Team work strengthens social integration between employees.	Focused teamwork produces would faster improvements which sustain organisational survival.
3. Focus on training	Ongoing training is taking place, and employees know how to use improvements tools.	Training sessions and individual development are valued and encouraged.	Training employees continuously empowers them to do their work properly.	Training employees continuously maintains their skills and keeps their knowledge up-to-date.
4. Reward improvement behaviour	Reward packages provided to improvement champions..	Encourage the “just-change” attitude.	Empowered employees increase their loyalty to the organisation.	Generous reward system attracts outsiders to join the organisation.
5. Optimise processes	Undertaking projects to move productivity to higher levels.	Systematic approach is a part of the group behaviour.	Optimising processes increases productivity.	Optimising processes increases organisational effectiveness.
6. Supportive Leadership	Top management involvement in operational activities.	Commitment to support changes.	Supportive leaders have a crucial role in maintaining integration and improving organisational productivity.	Supportive leaders have a crucial role in overcoming external system challenges..

5.4 Representing the Framework

This framework represents a grounded theory based on qualitative data analysis and is synthesised based on the social constructivism of participant perspectives and concepts extracted from the literature. The framework provides a holistic roadmap for an organisational cultural transformation with which to facilitate CI. The components that illustrated the framework have been developed into three stages, each stage has been reviewed and presented in an academic conference, as shown in Figure 45 below.



Figure 45: Three stages for developing the framework components

This framework suggests first assessing the current level of an organisation's culture. This assessment should be conducted in such a manner as to identify certain aspects of organisational culture. The framework is then developed to lead the transformation towards achieving these aspects and ultimately the ideal position can be reached. The framework starts when it asks organisations to identify their position against the ideal position of the required themes that have been described.

It is possible to use the suggested instrument, or any other instrument, to see how far an organisation is from being ideally facilitating for CI. Then, these certain themes can be reached through implementation of the proposed interventions, which are required to reach to the ideal level of development. These interventions provide a road map with both short and long-term goals in order to gradually transform an organisation's culture. This impact might not be noticed in the short-term, since cultural change needs a sufficient amount of time to be processed, accepted, adopted, and sustained.

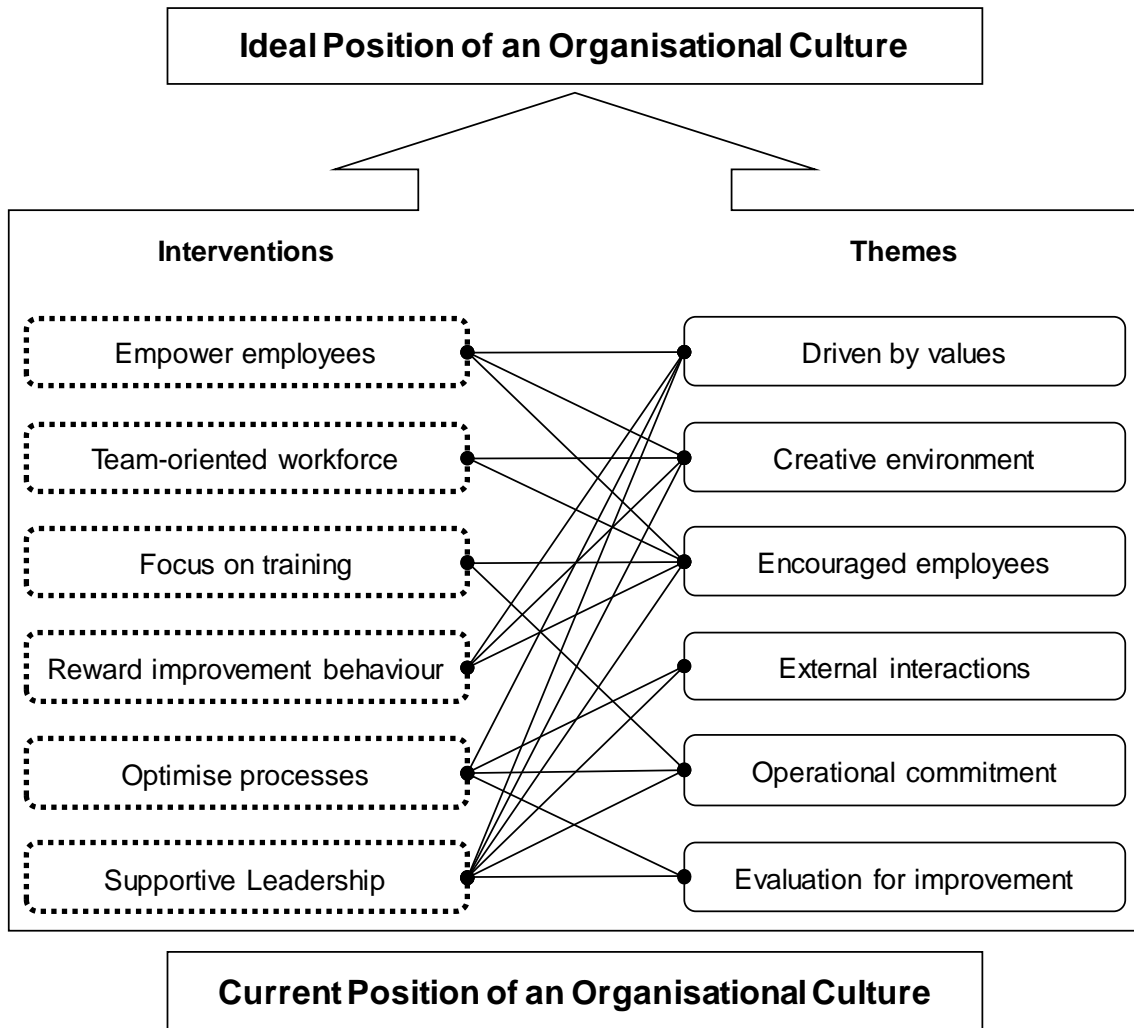


Figure 46: Overall representation of the framework's components

6 FRAMEWORK VALIDATION

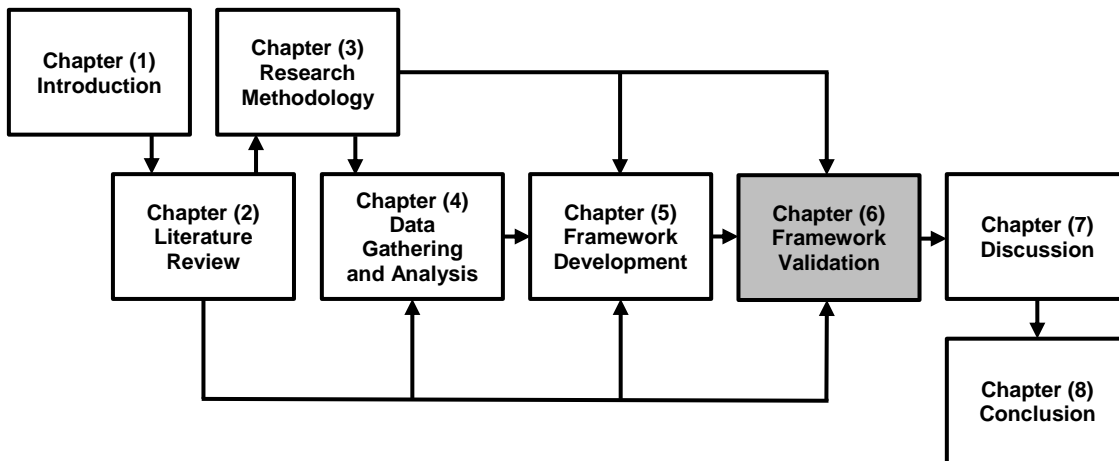


Figure 47: Research overview (chapter six)

Expert judgement has been found to be an appropriate way to achieve validation when the impact of framework interventions cannot be measured in the short term, which would have exceeded the time limit of the current research. This directed that expert judgment be chosen to obtain feedback, allowing the framework to be validated within the available time frame.

The framework was discussed separately with a group of experts in three different countries to obtain their thoughts and comments from different perspectives. The feedback was used to validate the framework according to the philosophy and methodology that was adopted. They have added valuable comments on the framework. Table 40 shows their expertise and involvement in CI activities and/or culture change implementation.

Table 40: Experts' involvement in CI

Expert	Involvement in CI and/or culture change	Country
A	Professor/senior lecturer in operation and quality management and master coach in quality, supply chain and Lean Six Sigma.	Saudi Arabia
B	Senior lecturer at a business school. Researches performance measurement and management, organisational design, and strategic change.	United Kingdom
C	The CEO of Hofstede Insights, which provides management consulting based on Hofstede theories in national and organisational culture.	Finland

The validation was conducted on the framework's elements, including the proposed interventions and anticipated impact on facilitating CI culture within Saudi NPOs. The experts endorsed the framework, in general, and believe that there is a real need in the nonprofit world to start implementing CI and embedding it into the culture of NPOs in order to overcome the numerous challenges that they have.

During the individual discussions, the experts agreed on four particular points:

1. The framework will make a contribution to the knowledge since there is a clear lack of operations management research in this sector, and in developing countries in general.
2. The framework has looked at facilitating CI from a different perspective, i.e., through leveraging the influential role of organisational culture.
3. The framework will be beneficial for the Saudi NPO sector, for which its design is particularly well-suited.
4. They believe that the framework could be applied in other similar contexts, especially in Gulf countries which share many cultural components.

However, a few suggestions were made to increase the impact of the framework, which focused on two areas:

1. Adding further practical action plans for the implementation of the interventions.
2. Some of the proposed interventions can be integrated, and some others might be too complex and should be divided into further separate interventions.

These points have been taken into consideration in developing the framework. Table 41 highlights the key thoughts of the experts.

Table 41: Key thoughts raised by the experts

Expert A	Expert B	Expert C
Sees the importance of creating a receptive culture within Saudi NPOs that need to stimulate CI so they can meet the targets of Saudi Vision 2030.	Believes that there is clear lack of research on operations management in the nonprofit sector and this framework would add a valuable contribution.	Endorses the novelty of how the interventions were presented and their anticipated impact on different components of organisational culture.

During on the validation discussions with the experts, the observation has produced valuable comments. The framework was found to have a potential to fit with other contexts, where the experts come from different countries and were satisfied with the overall outcomes. There was a clear agreement on the necessity to have a measurement that allows practitioners to start with. NPOs then can implement the model that suits their situation then the can apply the proposed intervention with a prioritised focus on the most relevant to their needs. Finally, creating such a cultural change is a comprehensive work that needs huge efforts and its impact might not be noticed in the short term.

7 DISCUSSION

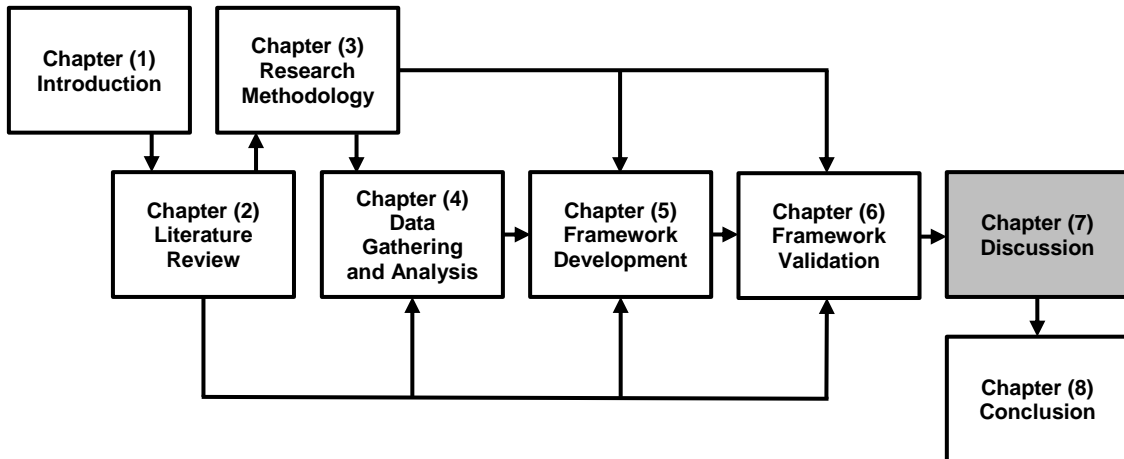


Figure 48: Research overview (chapter seven)

The cultural landscape of CI has not previously been clearly defined, and so the path to understanding was not immediately apparent. This research addresses the planning activities essential to achieve the desired change to a CI culture. This particular chapter adds crucial comments on the framework that was developed which need to be discussed and aligned with the analysis of CI cultures in the current literature, and makes observations on how the proposed interventions are required to enable CI within the context of Saudi NPOs.

7.1 The Impact on Saudi NPOs Organisational Culture

Those involved in the nonprofit sector demonstrate strong charitable values that motivate them to be involved in philanthropical activities; religious beliefs can also reinforce these values. These high moral standards can be leveraged in supporting CI efforts to enhance and sustain quality of services in this important sector.

The lack of research on how to facilitate CI in different sectors, besides the obvious targets of Saudi NPOs, to cooperate with Saudi Vision 2030 increases the significance of this research. Adopting an action research methodology by engaging participants in all phases of developing the framework increases its potential to transfer a positive impact into the real world.

Even when everything is in place, organisational culture is the main platform that ensures CI success (Hodges and Hernandez, 1999). Despite it being

demonstrated that CI only has positive effects (Robert *et al.*, 2000), the means of achieving it depend upon the individual organisation. The organisational culture determines the strategies that can be used for improvement (Hodges and Hernandez, 1999), and cultural differences can affect business practices (Huang, Rode and Schroeder, 2011).

7.2 The Process of the Framework Implementation

The starting point for a culture change is to set a plan for that change. This confirms the necessity for applying a well-defined implementation approach to succeed in achieving a desired cultural change (Abduelmula, Birkett and Connor, 2017). Hofstede Insights (2018) developed a culture change model based on Hofstede research. A multi-focused model was suggested, beginning with the defining of an optimal cultural position, and then action plans can be set to reach the desired state. These empirical ideas support the way the developed framework was designed, which was based on identifying both the current position and the desired/ideal position. By analysing the gap between the two positions, the most suitable intervention for facilitating organisational transformation can then be selected. This iterative process of planning, implementing and evaluating the outcomes of interventions should be repeated until the values of CI become embedded into the organisation's culture.

The importance of commitment to quality improvement cannot be underestimated (Firbank, 2010), and this is particularly true of leadership commitment (Alefari, Salonitis and Xu, 2017). The enthusiasm and drive of senior managers helps to promote quality improvement (Fryer and Ogden, 2014). However, leaders must be seen to be competent (Coleman, 2015; Ibrahimi *et al.*, 2016) in order to be perceived as credible facilitators. They must also initiate self-assessment to recognise issues that need to be prioritised in order to foster a culture of CI (Coleman, 2015); in this way all can see what actions need to be taken to improve.

7.3 The Influence of National Culture on the Framework

Organisational change is unarguably influenced by the underlying assumptions that are rooted in national culture. This reality required serious consideration of Saudi levels on Hofstede national culture dimensions, as commented in Table 42

below. National culture is also a crucial factor when understanding the reactions of employees (Robert *et al.*, 2000) as it has an influence upon participative leadership (Robert *et al.*, 2000; Huang, Rode and Schroeder, 2011). Hierarchical and bureaucratic cultures are a barrier to quality improvement (Shortell *et al.*, 1995) as improvement requires decentralised decision-making and progressiveness (Firbank, 2010). Leaders at all levels must be engaged (Randolph *et al.*, 2012); however, there is some debate over whether organisational culture can actually be changed (Firbank, 2010). It may be that CI strategies must adapt to the organisational culture. Table 42 below shows how national culture can be considered when implementing the proposed interventions in Saudi NPOs.

Table 42: Mapping national culture dimensions with the proposed interventions

Hofstede dimensions	Saudi level	Influenced interventions	The influence on the framework
1. Power distance	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive leadership • Empower employees 	This is a major challenge, where leaders play an over-influential role, which could constrain employees' empowerment. However, this might be leveraged to coordinate and support improvement initiatives. It is also highly required that leaders be tolerant to mistakes that come from 'trial and error' to encourage employees to move forward in CI confidently.
2. Individualism	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork-oriented workforce • Rewarding improvements behaviour 	Low individualism should enable a teamwork-oriented workforce. This also suggests the rewards system consider designing reward packages to be provided to the teams instead/besides individuals reward packages.
3. Masculinity	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork-oriented workforce • Rewarding improvements behaviour 	Selection process of team members should consider high masculinity through emphasising the importance of work to be done rather than who has done it.

Hofstede dimensions	Saudi level	Influenced interventions	The influence on the framework
			Team rewards (instead of individuals) might reduce the undesired impact of high masculinity.
4. Uncertainty avoidance	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive leadership • Focus on training • Optimising processes 	High uncertainty avoidance might negatively inform the leadership style through minimizing the chances of a 'just do it' attitude, because of fear of mistakes. However, this could be addressed through focusing on training and adopting professional systems for operations management.
5. Long-term orientation	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive leadership 	Needs to add further focus on long-term planning to overcome the low orientation towards strategic goals.
6. Indulgence	Moderate	-	Seems not to have a significant influence as the Saudi level in this dimension is not at one of the extremes.

7.4 Important Drivers for Making the Desired Change

Organisations need to carefully assess what they are doing and their motivations for doing it in terms of CI (Kululanga, Edum-Fotwe and McCaffer, 2001). Once they can reflect on their operations, then they will be able to identify room for development or improvement. Good quality systems are needed (Lee *et al.*, 2002) and correspondingly robust means of measurement (Brennan *et al.*, 2012) will ensure that there is certainty where improvements are being made. Often the instruments for measuring any modifying factors that could lead to improvements are not systematic and do not have a core set of measures. There is therefore haphazard evaluation, which does not provide sufficient evidence for decision-making (Brennan *et al.*, 2012). This has also been identified as an area that needs to be addressed by Kululanga et al (2001), who report that frameworks are useful for measuring organisational learning (Almanei, Salonitis and Xu, 2017), and why Lee et al. (Lee *et al.*, 2002) advocate the use of scientific skills in decision-making.

Measurements are instrumental in ensuring that CI is being made, but the quality of these measurements can have an impact on progress. There might also be

possibilities for unintended consequences by applying the proposed interventions, the progress of which need to be monitored during iterative implementation and deciding what modifications should be taken with consideration of the comments on the Saudi national culture dimensions. There will be several foreseeable and emergent barriers when applying a framework in a certain context, which has to be taken into consideration during the journey of change (Elgadi, Birkett and Cheung, 2016).

8 CONCLUSION

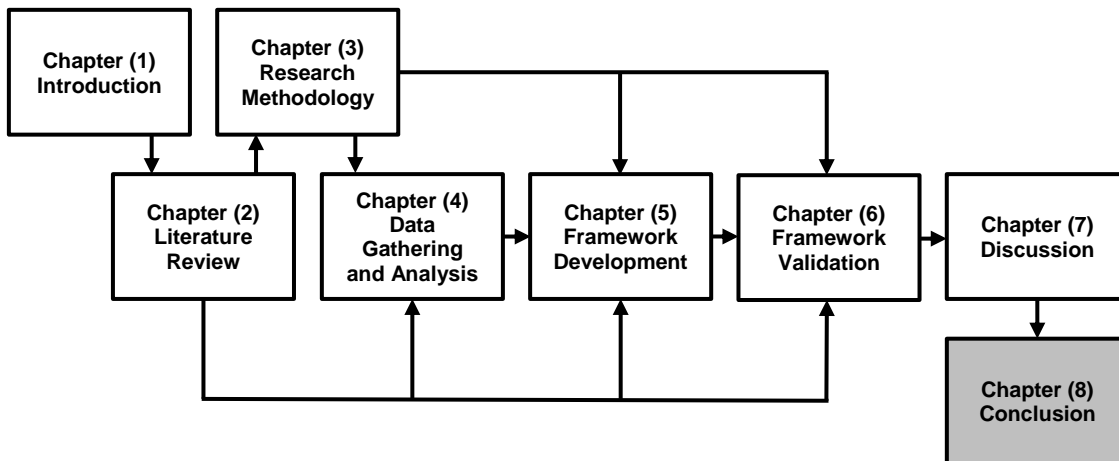


Figure 49: Research overview (chapter eight)

The framework has integrated two main parts: developed themes and proposed interventions. The developed themes were found to be pertinent to CI capabilities. The proposed interventions were based on focus group discussions and content analysis of relevant articles. These interventions were developed from the perspectives of the underlying themes (McLaughlin, 2016) influencing CI within NPOs.

The emergent themes were found to be strongly connected with each other and deeply associated with Saudi national culture, which is a dominant component of Saudi society. Of the NPOs sample, foundations seem to be more professionally organised and struggling less with their financial stability, which allows them to concentrate more fully on operational excellence. However, some charities have shown a high commitment to CI and achieved a significant improvement, which make the themes that have emerged in the research available to both types of NPOs.

This framework is suggested to NPOs in Saudi Arabia to create a sense of sustainable self-improvement that could strengthen and accelerate the realization of the Saudi Vision 2030. Preparing a suitable culture for facilitating CI is a necessary foundation in order to start significant transformation. This framework has paid attention to the social setting as it has a substantial effect and makes it more appropriate for the nonprofit context and other similar contexts.

It is important to mention that any cultural change could take years and requires a long-term commitment and frequent progress observation and control to ensure that the change is on the right track.

8.1 Contribution to Knowledge

The originality of this work results from the fact that, even though Saudi Arabia is attracting intense interest from the international research community, little research has been done there on CI practices; in part because Saudi NPOs are reluctant to grant access to foreign researchers. This study offers one of the first "inside views" of Saudi NPOs to reveal reliable empirical data focusing particularly on cultivating a CI culture. This research adds to both knowledge and practice and the contribution made in this regard is set out in the following sections.

8.1.1 Academic contribution

This research adds to the broad field of operations management by discovering the cultural aspects which are responsible for enabling and sustaining the successful implementation of CI. This contribution has looked at facilitating CI from crucial but neglected perspectives, i.e., the undoubtable influence of organisational culture and its behavioural aspects. It has been strengthened by a focused exploration on a certain sector which has distinguishing characteristics and deserves research attention. It was necessary to consider the effect of Saudi national culture on the phenomenon. Doing so has enhanced the maturity and holistic nature of the framework's conceptualisation.

8.1.2 Practical contribution

Saudi NPOs are striving to participate actively in the ambitious Saudi Vision 2030. The framework developed has real potential to make a substantial impact on Saudi NPOs. This practical contribution was made possible by the use of a framework which considered participant perspectives. It did so since it was the result of socially constructed action research. This practical impact is not limited to the Saudi context: a transferability test revealed that there is significant potential to transfer the findings to other similar contexts.

8.2 Review of the Research Question

The research questions for this exploratory study have been reviewed in the context of the investigation that has been conducted. The main research question was supplemented with three sub-questions that comprise the different stages of the research activity. The responses to the research question and sub-questions are shown in Table 43 below.

Table 43: Research questions and review informed by the researcher

Research question	Review
<i>How can the organisational culture foster continuous improvement in nonprofit organisations?</i>	The aspects identified are in the form of the six developed themes. Modelling these themes as an ideal position of CI culture provides a clear indication of the aspects of organisational culture that influence CI. The proposed interventions for Saudi NPOs complete the answer to this question.
Sub-questions	Review
<i>What cultural aspects facilitate continuous improvement?</i>	The cultural aspects for a CI culture are informed through the literature review and the participants' perceptions. This examines the cultural aspects of a CI culture from theoretical and empirical perspectives. These cultural aspects form the basis of an ideal CI culture.
<i>What interventions are needed to provide these cultural aspects?</i>	The use of the ideal position provides the foundation to proposing interventions. These interventions are based on the literature and focus group discussions.
<i>How can these interventions influence these cultural factors?</i>	The interventions are designed to shift the underlying values and beliefs towards the desired ideal position through the application of suitable artefacts.

8.3 Personal Reflection of the Research

This research has impacted my knowledge and skills. My academic appreciation has evolved robustly whilst undertaking the research journey and from completion of this thesis. The most significant reflections include changing how I interpret events around me, whether professional or social, and rather than relying on the visible side of a phenomenon, I try to dig into the invisible and surrounding circumstances. I have become skilled in questioning the validity of evidence needed to construct a reality. I am more receptive to the perspectives of others and understand the reasons that could cause difference of opinion.

Furthermore, the characteristics and statistical representativeness of different research contexts play a crucial role in generalising/transferring findings. Adopting action research has taught me the necessity of bridging the gap between academia and practice. Validating the work thorough peer review, conferences or the journal publication process has enriched my experience and strengthened my confidence to move forward. I now consider publishing to not be limited by the submission deadline of a thesis, but rather one part in a fascinating journey. I have learned that being awarded a PhD degree is just the starting point in academia and also has a practical impact on social life.

8.4 Limitations

There were challenges during this research: some have been addressed successfully, whereas others require further clarification.

With regard to the issue of statistical generalisability (Yin, 2009), the findings of this research would not be suitable for generalisation since the sample was not statistically representative. This is not a requirement when the objective is to understand social process (Mays and Pope, 1995). Further, quantitative research can address this issue.

The limitation to four years' investigation (according to the researcher's sponsorship) did not enough to allow enough time for further validation with different techniques. It was clear that in this case, expert judgment validation was the most appropriate approach to fit within the time limit.

8.5 Future Research

It is suggested for future research to have further exploration to gain more influential factors. There is, also, an importance to measure the variation of the impact of the emergent factors, which could help to balance the focus when implementing intervention efficiently. The impact of proposed interventions can be measured whining the next few years. A positivist research can be conducted with a wide representative sample to discover whether there is a significant difference between different social settings or among different types of NPOs within the same social setting.

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APPENDICES



Date: Wednesday, June 11, 2014

To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that (Sulaiman Abdullah S Almainan) is a PhD researcher in the UK sponsored by the Government of Saudi Arabia.

The King Khalid Foundation is proud of supporting his research with all relevant resources within the area of our profession.

He carries with him our best wishes for his future success.

Yours sincerely,

Yasser Abdullah Altwajri
Head of PR & Media
King Khalid Foundation



Figure 50: One of the participated organisations approval

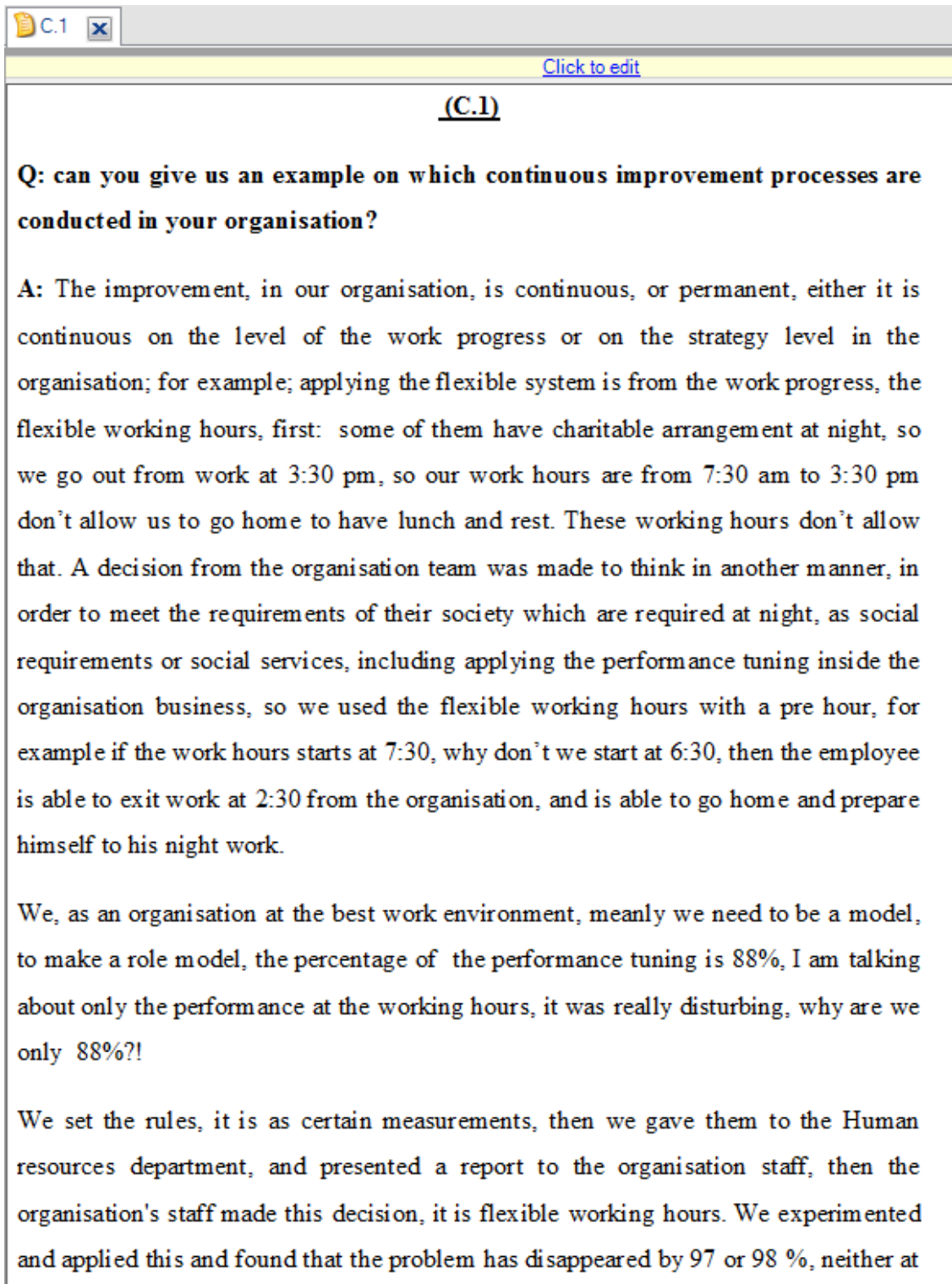


Figure 52: A sample of an interview transcript



Figure 53: Early stage of developing areas of focus with participants for the proposed interventions

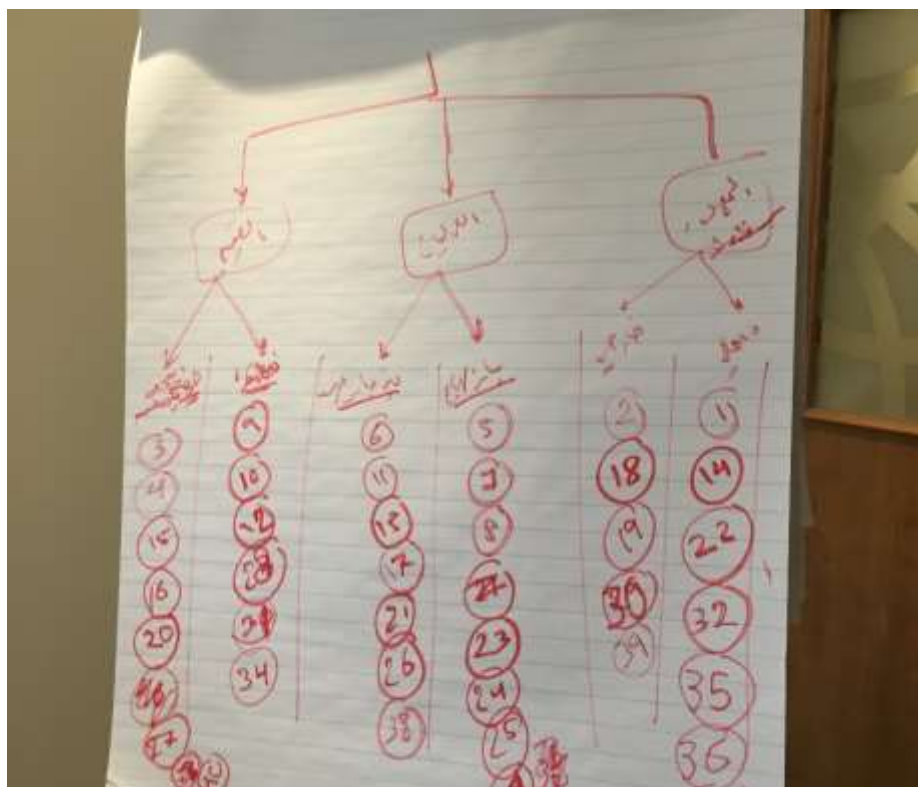


Figure 54: One of the focus group sessions with the participants



Figure 55: Presenting parts of the work in academic conferences