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Project GLOBE: Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Education

Marcus Dickson
Ariel M. Lelchook
Gettysburg College
Mary Sully de Luque

See next page for additional authors

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Project GLOBE: Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Education

**Abstract**
Book chapter focusing on using information from Project GLOBE (global leadership and organizational behavior effectiveness) to teach leadership in a global context.

**Keywords**
project GLOBE, global leadership, organizational behavior

**Disciplines**
Business | Organizational Behavior and Theory

**Authors**
Marcus Dickson, Ariel M. Lelchook, Mary Sully de Luque, and Paul Hanges

This book chapter is available at The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College: https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/mgmtfac/9
In this chapter, we target instructors who are going to teach about leadership across cultures, probably to graduate students in MBA, PhD, or EMBA programs in Management, Organizational Psychology, or related fields. We briefly describe Project GLOBE, the largest study of leadership across cultures conducted to date. Our discussion includes a variety of criticisms of GLOBE, as well as summaries of the published responses to those critiques. We then focus on what we see as the big question: the universality and the cultural contingency of specific approaches to leadership. The relationship between specific cultural values and preferred leadership styles are also reviewed. We identify and answer questions about GLOBE that have often emerged...
from students in our teaching about the project, and describe for instructors how to use these questions in ways that promote students' understanding of the leadership and culture connection. We conclude by discussing the data from the project, and offer suggestions for using GLOBE data and results to facilitate student exploration about leadership and culture.

As researchers who have been involved with Project GLOBE for many years, we have often written about the findings of the project, or the analyses employed in the project. Three of the authors have been engaged with GLOBE for over a decade each, and so we’ve presented and written extensively about the project.

In this chapter, though, we get to take a different approach—we get to discuss the use of GLOBE as a teaching tool. While there are ways to use GLOBE to discuss a variety of methodological and statistical issues, especially around multi-level analyses, our concern in this chapter is on using GLOBE to help teach about leadership in a global context. As Bass (1990) and others have noted, a substantial majority of the writing about leadership in the last fifty years has been written by North Americans, and then perhaps has been extended to consider how it might vary in other cultural contexts. Considering the cultural variation and universality identified in Project GLOBE and the systematic relationships between cultural characteristics and preferences for several different styles of leadership can be particularly useful in addressing the assumption that “leadership is leadership” or that “people want the same things all over the world” that we have at times encountered in our teaching about global leadership. More importantly, the results in GLOBE open the door for discussion around the variety of ways in which cultural variations and culturally variant leadership preferences manifest themselves, helping to prepare leaders for in-depth exploration of specific regions’ or specific societies’ typical/modal leadership styles.

Our presumed audience for this chapter is instructors who are going to teach about leadership across cultures, probably to graduate students in MBA, PhD, or EMBA programs in Management, Organizational Psychology, or related fields. We assume a reasonable prior knowledge of the dimension-based approach to assessing culture (e.g., Hofstede, 1980, and GLOBE), of leadership theory, and at least some prior knowledge of Project GLOBE, as well as access to House et al. (2004), the first GLOBE book.

We start off by describing GLOBE sufficiently to allow an instructor to describe the project to students. We identify and address several criticisms of GLOBE, and then focus on the big question that students generally have when talking about leadership across cultures—the universality of specific approaches to leadership. Several other potential questions about GLOBE that often emerge in conversations with students follow. Once students have generated questions, they may want to explore the answers on their own. In other words, if an instructor wanted to get his or her students to actually mess around with the GLOBE data set, or to examine the items, what possibilities are available to them? Thus, we conclude by discussing the data from the project, and how to use GLOBE data and results to facilitate student exploration.

So with our somewhat facetious title to this chapter, we do not disavow GLOBE’s original title, but instead of focusing on “Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness,” we focus on Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Education—using GLOBE to teach culture, leadership, and the interaction between the two. To begin to achieve that goal, we’ll first provide a brief overview of the project, to facilitate teaching about Project GLOBE...
itself. As with any study, it is important to understand how a project was executed in order to understand the extent to which its results can be seen as legitimate. Thus in this section, we’ll provide both information about the project and suggestions on how to teach about the project.

What Is Project GLOBE, and How Might I Teach About It?

Project GLOBE is a multi-phase, multi-method study of leadership and culture around the world. The first phase of GLOBE focused on the creation of research instruments to measure leadership and societal and organizational culture. (For purposes of this chapter, we focus on the development of the leadership scales, with lesser reference to the development of the culture scales.) In GLOBE Phase II, the psychometric properties of the scales were replicated through a wide-ranging, multi-industry data collection phase. Together, these two phases created the basis for the first two GLOBE books (Chhokar, Brodbeck, & House, 2007; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). The third and current phase of this research program presents a comprehensive study of the strategic leadership effectiveness of specific CEO leader behaviors on top management team attitudes and firm performance in twenty-four cultures (see early studies by Sully de Luque, Washburn, Waldman, & House, 2008; Waldman et al., 2006, as well as the upcoming book by House, Sully de Luque, Dorfman, Javidan, & Hanges, 2011).

How Did GLOBE Start?

The initial notion of Project GLOBE surfaced from discussions regarding the global relevance of charismatic leadership theory. In summer of 1991, GLOBE’s Principal Investigator, Robert House, developed the idea of a global research program, focused on culturally contingent aspects of leadership and organization practices. House initially organized Project GLOBE as a small coordinating group (Robert House, Paul Hanges, Mike Agar, & Marcus Dickson) and a large group of Country Co-Investigators (CCIs) who gathered data and helped interpret the data in the context of (in most cases) their own native cultures. Over the next few years, two multi-national pilot studies were conducted, with an international gathering of the Coordinating Team and CCIs held between the two pilot studies to interpret the results of the first study and to make revisions in anticipation of the second.

A key outcome of the international gathering of Coordinating Team and CCIs was the recognition that several non-western leadership items needed to be added to the questionnaires. In addition, the GLOBE researchers devoted a considerable amount of time to defining the construct of leadership to reflect their myriad perspectives. From this, an operational definition of organizational leadership emerged: the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members (House & Javidan, 2004). Additionally, following this meeting the GLOBE Coordinating Team grew in size to become a truly international team. Thus, after two pilot studies and the international gathering, six second-order leadership factors had been empirically identified, in addition to twenty-one first-order leadership subscales, as well as the nine GLOBE culture scales. Definitions for both the culture and leadership dimensions are shown in Figures 26.1 and 26.2 (Javidan et al., 2006).

1 Also debated was the definition of culture, which was ultimately defined as the “shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives that are transmitted across generations” (House & Javidan, 2004).

2 In the present chapter, we focus on the six second-order leadership factors. Full details of the twenty-one first-order factors, as well as the nine GLOBE culture scales, are available in House et al., 2004.
**Figure 26.1 GLOBE Culture Dimension Definitions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance Orientation</td>
<td>The degree to which a collective encourages and rewards (and should encourage and reward) group members for performance improvement and excellence. In countries like the United States and Singapore that score high on this cultural practice, businesses are likely to emphasize training and development; in countries that score low, such as Russia and Greece, family and background count for more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>The degree to which individuals are (and should be) assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in their relationships with others. People in highly assertive countries such as the United States and Austria tend to have can-do attitudes and enjoy competition in business; those in less assertive countries such as Sweden and New Zealand prefer harmony in relationships and emphasize loyalty and solidarity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Orientation</td>
<td>The extent to which individuals engage (and should engage) in future-oriented behaviors such as delaying gratification, planning, and investing in the future. Organizations in countries with high future oriented practices like Singapore and Switzerland tend to have longer term horizons and more systematic planning processes, but they tend to be averse to risk taking and opportunistic decision making. In contrast, corporations in the least future oriented countries like Russia and Argentina tend to be less systematic and more opportunistic in their actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humane Orientation</td>
<td>The degree to which a collective encourages and rewards (and should encourage and reward) individuals for being fair, altruistic, generous, caring, and kind to others. Countries like Egypt and Malaysia rank very high on this cultural practice and countries like France and Germany rank low.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Collectivism</td>
<td>The degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward (and should encourage and reward) collective distribution of resources and collective action. Organizations in collectivistic countries like Singapore and Sweden tend to emphasize group performance and rewards, whereas those in the more individualistic countries like Greece and Brazil tend to emphasize individual achievement and rewards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Group Collectivism</td>
<td>The degree to which individuals express (and should express) pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families. Societies like Egypt and Russia take pride in their families and also take pride in the organizations that employ them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Egalitarianism</td>
<td>The degree to which a collective minimizes (and should minimize) gender inequality. Not surprisingly, European countries generally had the highest scores on gender egalitarianism practices. Egypt and South Korea were among the most male dominated societies in GLOBE. Organizations operating in gender egalitarian societies tend to encourage tolerance for diversity of ideas and individuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Distance</td>
<td>The degree to which members of a collective expect (and should expect) power to be distributed equally. A high power distance score reflects unequal power distribution in a society. Countries that scored high on this cultural practice are more stratified economically, socially, and politically; those in positions of authority expect, and receive, obedience. Firms in high power distance countries like Thailand, Brazil, and France tend to have hierarchical decision making processes with limited one-way participation and communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty Avoidance</td>
<td>The extent to which a society, organization, or group relies (and should rely) on social norms, rules, and procedures to alleviate unpredictability of future events. The greater the desire to avoid uncertainty, the more people seek orderliness, consistency, structure, formal procedures, and laws to cover situations in their daily lives. Organizations in high uncertainty avoidance countries like Singapore and Switzerland tend to establish elaborate processes and procedures and prefer formal detailed strategies. In contrast, firms in low uncertainty avoidance countries like Russia and Greece tend to prefer simple processes and broadly stated strategies. They are also opportunistic and enjoy risk taking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHAT HAPPENED IN PHASE II?

In Phase II, the GLOBE team consisted scientists, with 145 of these serving as CCEs. This team collected and analyzed data from approximately 17,000 managers from 951 organizations in sixty-two societies. The sample from each culture consisted of middle managers in at least two of three industries: telecommunications services, food processing, and financial services. The three industries were selected because they commonly exist in most countries regardless of economic development and offer some variability in industry type.

The validation process confirmed that the leadership and culture scales displayed acceptable psychometric properties as well

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1 Many of these researchers continue to be engaged in GLOBE’s ongoing, programmatic research.
as construct validity when compared within a nomological network (Hanges & Dickson, 2004). The culture and leadership scores aggregated to the society level of analysis were subsequently ranked for the sixty-two societies. This information allows for a comparison of societies on each dimension.

The primary conclusion of Phase II was that cultures can be differentiated based on the attributes and behaviors that culture members rate as either facilitating or inhibiting effective leadership, and that this differentiation varies systematically based on the pattern of endorsement of the various culture scales. In other words, leadership preferences vary around the world, and culture predicts leadership preference. Building on the social information processing perspective on leadership (e.g., Lord & Maher, 1991; O'Connell, Lord, & O'Connell, 1990; Shaw, 1990), GLOBE referred to the shared leadership perceptions within each culture as Culturally endorsed implicit Leadership Theories (CLTs).

Finally, in order to provide a more parsimonious way of considering the range of data, the GLOBE data for the sixty-two societies were analyzed to establish a set of ten regional clusters (Gupta & Hanges, 2004), conceptually similar to the work by Ronen and Shenkar (1985). Gupta and Hanges note that this clustering approach provides a "convenient way of summarizing intercultural similarities as well as intercultural differences" (p. 178), providing great utility for both training and research (Javidan et al., 2006). The cultures included in GLOBE's Phase II and their respective clusters are shown in Figure 26.3.

**Figure 26.3 Countries and Clusters Included in the GLOBE Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster Name</th>
<th>Countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>Australia, Canada, England, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa (white sample), United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin Europe</td>
<td>France, Israel, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland (French-speaking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nordic Europe</td>
<td>Denmark, Finland, Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germanic Europe</td>
<td>Austria, Germany (former East), Germany (former West), Netherlands, Switzerland (German-speaking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>Albania, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Poland, Russia, Slovenia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Columbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Venezuela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa (black sample), Zambia, Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>Egypt, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Asia</td>
<td>India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confucian Asia</td>
<td>China, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Are the Major Criticisms of GLOBE?

Although there has been passionate debate on the GLOBE cultural dimensions (see Graen, 2006; Hofstede, 2006; House, Javidan, Dorfman, & Sully de Luque, 2006; House, Javidan, Dorfman, Hanges, & Sully de Luque, 2006; Tung & Verbeke, 2010), less attention has been given to the GLOBE leadership research. The vast majority of the literature focusing on the GLOBE leadership dimensions has been distinctly supportive of the research process and findings (Aycan, 2008; Grisham & Walker, 2008; Liddell, 2005; Yan, 2005).

The GLOBE leadership research is not without criticisms, however—some very vocal and very strong. In teaching about GLOBE's leadership findings, we would encourage instructors to have their students read about GLOBE, perhaps starting with the Den Hartog et al. (1999) article and then some specific chapters from House et al. (2004), including Chapter 2 (by House & Javidan) providing an “Overview of GLOBE,” Chapter 3 (by Javidan, House, & Dorfman), “A Nontechnical Summary of GLOBE Findings,” Chapter 6 (by House & Hanges), which reviews “Research Design,” Chapter 8 (by Hanges & Dickson) on “The Development and Validation of the GLOBE Culture and Leadership Scales,” and Chapter 21 (by Dorfman, Hanges, & Brodbeck) on “Leadership and Cultural Variation: The Identification of Culturally Endorsed Leadership Profiles.” Then allow the students to generate their own list of criticisms of the project, and ask them to generate specific details about those criticisms—not just “I don’t think the scales are valid,” but instead “I have questions about the validity of the scales because...” In generating a list of criticisms, your students are likely to identify most or all of the following, and maybe a few others. After identifying them, your students might find reading the critiques cited here useful, as well as the responses from GLOBE, where they exist.

SAMPLE AND EXTRAPOLATIONS TO SOCIETIES

Several criticisms of the GLOBE leadership research have centered on the sample used and the extrapolations made to societies (Graen, 2006; Hofstede, 2006). Specifically, since some countries in the GLOBE Phase II sample have sizable subcultures (e.g., China, India, the United States), it is questionable whether the samples used in GLOBE in any country are representative of that entire country. Indeed, demarcated cultural boundaries may not be reflected through national borders. To this, Graen (2006) notes “little can be concluded about the many variables that may be responsible for national means of these samples, much less differences between means of several national samples” (p. 97). In the GLOBE research, the CCIs were directed to sample the dominant business sectors of their societies when collecting data. For each country, samples were to be comparable on the dominant effects that influence cultures (e.g., language, religion, history, ecological factors).

To address this issue, House and colleagues (2006) note that “GLOBE uses the terms ‘societies’ and ‘societal culture’ instead of ‘country’ or ‘nation’ to indicate the complexity of the culture concept and because in several instances we sampled two subcultures from a single nation” (p. 104). Examples of separate subcultures included population samples from black and white South Africa, former East and former West Germany, as well as French- and German-speaking Switzerland.

THE USE OF MIDDLE MANAGERS

Another critique relates to the sampling of middle managers. Criticizing the GLOBE leadership research, Hofstede (2006) states that “measuring leadership from survey answers by leaders is, in my eyes, a debatable approach. If you want to find out about the quality of a product, do you ask
the producer or the consumers?" (p. 884). However, it was precisely because of the view they have as producers and consumers that middle managers were selected for this research. Indeed, middle managers are leaders of some and followers of others (Javidan et al., 2006). Although Graen (2006) suggests that GLOBE employed a convenience sample, the middle manager sample was a deliberately selected middle manager sample. With the intent of testing implicit leadership at the cultural level, House and colleagues (2006) note “such a test requires an appraisal of how leadership is perceived and evaluated in each culture in general rather than administering a self-assessment or reporting on a specific leader” (p. 104).

CONSTRUCT AND METHODOLOGICAL VALIDITY

A final critique of the GLOBE leadership research centers on matters of construct and methodological validity (Graen, 2006; Hofstede, 2006). Although a complete review of the statistical rigor that address these criticisms is beyond the scope of this discussion (for comprehensive reviews see Hanges & Dickson, 2004, 2006; Javidan et al., 2006), several methodological issues should be noted. Using a sample of middle managers permits generalizability about the subcultures of middle managers in the three industries studied. This increases the internal validity since the units of analysis are carefully delineated and internally homogeneous, hence comparable (Hanges & Dickson, 2004). These procedures were designed to avoid common source bias to help ensure the construct validity of GLOBE scales (House & Hanges, 2004).

Additionally, these scales were assessed for external validity. One procedure to minimize response bias contamination is to implement multiple methodologies to measure the same constructs. GLOBE researchers used unobtrusive measures to accomplish this. Content analysis of text was conducted with the GLOBE culture scales that revealed well-founded support of the quantitative results (Gupta, Sully de Luque, & House, 2004). With respect to all the scales, utilizing other source information gathered separately, such as media analysis, individual and focus group interviews, archival data, and other national surveys (e.g., World Values Survey), discriminant and convergent validity was shown providing evidence for the construct validity of the measures (Javidan & Hauser, 2004). As House and colleagues (2006) note, “this was of utmost importance, because construct validity provides essential information about the integrity of the constructs measured by the GLOBE scales” (p. 103). Ultimately, the utility of the GLOBE leadership scales is found both in their robust psychometric properties and just as importantly in their capability to emphasize implicit leadership theories cross-culturally.

What Does Project GLOBE Tell Us About Whether Leadership Is Universal or Culturally Contingent?

One of the most frequent and broadest questions that students ask about Project GLOBE is whether it answers the question of whether there is one thing that around the world is considered to be effective leadership. They want to know because if there is a single leadership style that is likely to be successful across all cultures, then expatriate training and management of culturally diverse groups becomes infinitely less complex than if different leadership styles and behaviors are necessary across cultural contexts (e.g., Dickson et al., 2001). Several researchers have tried to address this issue, including Robie and colleagues (2001), who assessed data from Personnel Decisions International’s (PDI) PROFILOR—a multi-source managerial performance feedback system—to try to determine whether there are managerial skill dimensions that are consistently seen as critical across cultures. Using a sample of seven European countries and the United States, Robie et al.
found that two of the PROFILOR’s managerial skill dimensions—“drive for results” and “analyze issues”—were consistently endorsed across cultures, though several other dimensions did not. As in many studies, Robie and colleagues found inconsistent results about the universality of leadership styles across cultures.

This assessment gets more complicated, however, when we realize that the term “universal” can mean a great many different things (Bass, 1997; Lonner, 1980), and it is important to be clear about what is meant by the term. We find it helpful to rely on Lonner’s (1980) descriptions of different types of universality, including:

- The simple universal—a phenomenon that is constant all across the world. In data terms, a simple universal occurs when means do not vary across cultures;

- The variform universal—when a general principle holds constant across cultures but the enactment differs from culture to culture. In data terms, culture is a moderator;

- The functional universal—when within-group relationships between variables are constant across cultures. In data terms, within-country correlations between variables do not vary across cultures.

Bass (1997) took this one step further in discussing leadership across cultures, and introduced another conceptualization of universality:

- The variform functional universal—when consistent relationships between two variables are found in every culture, but the magnitude of the relationship changes from culture to culture.

Bass (1997) was concerned about identifying an additional way to think about universality because he was assessing whether transformational leadership (Bass, 1985) was universally effective. He concluded that it is, based on three criteria:

1. there is a consistent hierarchy of correlations across cultures, such that transformational leadership correlates most strongly with important outcomes, with contingent reward leadership less strongly correlated, various management-by-exception approaches still less strongly correlated, and laissez-faire leadership least correlated with important leadership outcomes;

2. there is a “one-way augmentation effect”—in other words, in a hierarchical regression, when you enter transformational leadership after transactional leadership, transformational always accounts for additional variance in predicting important leadership outcomes, but when transformational leadership is entered first, transactional leadership does not account for additional variance; and

3. “in whatever the country, when people think about leadership, their prototypes and ideals are transformational” (p. 135).

Interestingly, GLOBE has contributed to the field of leadership studies recognizing that “variform and variform functional universals can be simultaneously universal and culturally contingent in a predictable way, as when the variation in the enactment of a common characteristic or the strength of a common relationship is determined by measurable characteristics of the cultures” (Dickson, Den Hartog, & Mitchelson, 2003, p. 734). Relating specifically to Bass’ (1997) assertions about the universality of transformational leadership, GLOBE data suggest that some components (visionary and inspirational) of their analog of the transformational/charismatic leadership style were in fact universally preferred across cultures, while others (self-sacrificial) were not universally preferred. Further, given the culture-level
variability that can exist within a variform-functional universal, GLOBE also found that the variability in both the universal and the non-universal aspects of the transformational/charismatic leadership style could be predicted based on the cultural values of the society (Dorfman, Hanges, & Brodbeck, 2004). Thus, the data suggest that Bass (1997) was right when he suggested that transformational leadership is universal, but that he only had part of the story.

The universality versus cultural contingency of other aspects of leadership was also tested within GLOBE. Specifically, GLOBE standardized scores at the country cluster level of analysis, and then tested to see whether the cluster scores differed significantly from each other for each of the six second-order leadership factors. One aspect of these findings partially re-printed from House et al. (2004) is shown in Figure 26.4.

This shows that for some dimensions of leadership (Team-Oriented and Autonomous), there are no significant differences in the extent to which these are valued across the country clusters. The other four second-order leadership factors, however, are significantly differently endorsed across the ten country clusters, suggesting that these should not be considered to be universally endorsed approaches to leadership. While it may seem strange, for example, to those in the Anglo cluster (highest endorsers of Charismatic/Value-Based Leadership) that not everyone equivalently endorses charismatic leadership, or to those in Germanic Europe (highest endorsers of Participative Leadership) that not everyone equivalently endorses Participative Leadership, these styles of leadership are endorsed significantly differently across the clusters (though in some cases the differences are between high endorsement and very high endorsement).

In teaching about these differences in the endorsement of leadership styles, it may be useful to turn to the series of figures presented in Chapter 21 of House et al. (2004). Slides based on these figures (Figures 21.1 through 21.10) are available in PowerPoint format at the web address listed in this chapter’s appendix. They show the leadership scores for each cluster in a circumplex model. We have structured this file to allow instructors to superimpose one cluster atop another, highlighting the magnitude of the differences between, as well as the variability in scores within, clusters. These slides may be especially useful in discussing the universal and contingent aspects of leadership. Students often find the nuances of universal leadership to be challenging to understand especially if it is their first introduction to these concepts.

Teaching the concepts of universal and contingent leadership can challenge students’ assumptions about how effective leadership is defined. Some students may only be familiar with how leadership is viewed within their own culture and assume that all cultures value the same leadership traits. Thus, it may be helpful to first teach the concept of culturally contingent leadership values. After students are introduced to the idea of culturally contingent leadership values the various nuances of what is meant by “universal” can be introduced. Introducing the various nuances of universal leadership will further challenge students’ ideas of effective leadership and will likely change how they view what is meant by the term “universal,” even applied to constructs other than leadership. Using the PowerPoint slides will provide practical examples of how concepts can be either culturally contingent or “universal.”

*Using raw data (rather than the standardized-within-cluster data presented above), the lack of significant difference—or universality of level of endorsement—holds true for Autonomous leadership, though not for Team-Oriented leadership.*
### Figure 26.4  Ranking of Societal Clusters Using Relative (i.e., Standardized) Country Cluster Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charismatic/Value-Based</th>
<th>Team Oriented</th>
<th>Participative</th>
<th>Humane Oriented</th>
<th>Autonomous</th>
<th>Self-Protective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>highest</strong></td>
<td><strong>highest</strong></td>
<td><strong>highest</strong></td>
<td><strong>highest</strong></td>
<td><strong>highest</strong></td>
<td><strong>highest</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>Southern Asia⁶</td>
<td>Germanic Europe</td>
<td>Southern Asia</td>
<td>Germanic Europe⁶</td>
<td>Middle East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germanic Europe</td>
<td>E. Europe</td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>E. Europe</td>
<td>Confucian A.</td>
<td>Confucian A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nordic Europe</td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>Sub-Sahara Af.</td>
<td>Confucian A.</td>
<td>Sub-Saharan Af.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Asia</td>
<td>L. America</td>
<td>L. Europe</td>
<td>L. America</td>
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<td>Confucian A.</td>
<td>Sub-Saharan Af.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>L. Europe</td>
<td>Confucian A.</td>
<td>E. Europe</td>
<td>L. America</td>
<td>L. America</td>
<td>L. America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Af.</td>
<td>E. Europe</td>
<td>Confucian A.</td>
<td>L. America</td>
<td>L. America</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>lowest</strong></td>
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**Abbreviations**

L. = Latin  A. = Asia  Af. = Africa  E. = Eastern

**Note:** The placement of each societal cluster below a leadership dimension indicates the relative importance of this dimension compared with the other leadership dimensions within a particular societal cluster. For example, the Anglo cluster is the highest in rank for Charismatic/Value-Based leadership, indicating that this leader dimension was extremely important (relative measure) in comparison to the other five leadership dimensions within the Anglo cluster. The size of the relative score for each societal cluster is this compared to the size of the relative scores for other societal clusters. Using the Tukey HSD analysis, clusters in the top band are significantly different from those in the bottom band. The clusters in the middle band are placed between these extremes for heuristic purposes. Societal clusters within each block are not significantly different from each other.

⁶Societal clusters in these columns are ranked in order; however, there are no significant differences among them in each column.

**Source:** Adapted from House et al. (2004).
Some Other Potential Questions From Students About Project GLOBE

The next part of the chapter addresses several other potential questions from students regarding Project GLOBE and how it can be used to teach leadership. In courses designed for global managers the information from Project GLOBE can be used to teach them how to adapt to other cultures. Different countries' culture scores and culture cluster memberships can be examined to help identify the differences and similarities between cultures. In courses designed to teach about the fundamentals of cross-cultural leadership, GLOBE can be used to provide information on how countries differ in values and how that affects which leadership attributes and behaviors are seen as effective in different countries.

HOW CAN WE USE THE RESULTS?

The results from Project GLOBE can be used in many ways. The findings from the study can be used to understand differences and similarities between or within cultures in perceptions of leadership styles and effectiveness. However, care should be taken in how the results are examined to ensure appropriate types of comparisons are being made (e.g., is the unit of analysis the aggregated societal-level responses or the ten regional clusters?). The results can be used to help managers and executives work with others from different cultures or to develop cross-cultural training programs to help the transfer of knowledge (Javidan, Stahl, Brodbeck, & Wilderom, 2005).

The ability for leaders to make comparisons between their own cultures and other cultures can help leaders remain open-minded (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009). Understanding other cultures is necessary in the ever-increasing global economy. In developing the list of leadership items the focus was to create a comprehensive list of behaviors, attributes, and characteristics based on several leadership theories (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009). Thus, the results from GLOBE provide information on a vast number of leadership attributes and behaviors that allow a wide-range of cross-cultural comparison of the leader attributes and behaviors that are seen as desirable and effective.

There are different types of information than can be obtained from Project GLOBE. When teaching leaders how the data from Project GLOBE can be used to help them navigate a global economy, they can be taught to use the GLOBE results to examine country and cluster information, compare the culture profiles of two or more countries, examine country or cluster information on the profiles of outstanding leadership, and compare the profiles of outstanding leadership between two or more countries (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009). For example, when comparing two societies such as Russia and Denmark, knowing Russia is high on the cultural dimension of power distance and that Denmark is low on power distance will help a leader recognize that in Russia obedience toward superiors is expected; however, in Denmark more equality is expected between individuals that are high in power and individuals that are low in power (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009). Leadership profiles provide information on what is viewed as effective leadership in the various countries and culture clusters.

As a leader working in another country or with people from other cultures, success may depend on the ability to appreciate the leader characteristics valued by people in other cultures. Results from GLOBE indicate that cultural values can predict leadership profiles. For example, societies that have high scores on Performance Orientation, Gender Egalitarianism, or Humane Orientation are more likely to desire Participative Leaders, while societies that have high scores on Uncertainty Avoidance and Power Distance are more likely to disfavor Participative Leaders (House et al., 2004, p. 47).
The nine cultural dimensions in GLOBE are aspects of a country's culture that distinguish it from other countries and societies. The six leadership dimensions are leader attributes and behaviors that people from all cultures can recognize. These cultural and leadership dimensions are important because many leadership differences found among cultures have their origins in the implicit leadership beliefs that stem from different cultural values (Javidan et al., 2006). Knowledge of a society's score on the nine cultural dimensions provides insight into the leadership attributes and behaviors valued by the society. However, while scores on the cultural dimensions will provide a good starting point to understand a society's leadership values, it is important to remind students that knowledge of a society's score on cultural dimensions does not immediately reveal the exact leadership profile valued by the society. Each culture has a unique combination of scores on the nine cultural dimensions.

In summary, the results of Project GLOBE support the argument that leadership values, or the strength of the relationship between leadership values and what is viewed as effective leadership, can be identified from the cultural dimensions. In a practical application of this research, teaching students how to use the data obtained in Project GLOBE will help them understand leadership attributes and behaviors valued in cultures other than their own. Being aware of cultural values that are strongly endorsed within a society will help managers identify leadership practices that are strongly associated with effective leadership and strongly associated with inhibiting effective leadership.

**What Are the Major Take-Away Points on Leadership From GLOBE?**

As we are in an increasingly global context, executives and managers face new and evolving leadership challenges. As people from different cultures are in more contact, there is a need to increase understanding between various cultures and develop successful cross-cultural business relationships. One of the benefits of Project GLOBE in teaching leadership is the availability of data from sixty-two societies that were included as part of the project (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009). While this list of societies is not exhaustive, it does provide the most comprehensive examination of cross-cultural leadership to date.

Not all managerial practices are universally acceptable (Javidan, Dorfman, Sully de Luque, & House, 2006). GLOBE has helped leaders or managers identify which practices from their own culture are acceptable or unacceptable in cultures that are unlike their own, while noting the leader attributes that will direct leaders to succeed in other cultures. The study suggests that there are some leader behaviors, attributes, and characteristics that are universally desirable (e.g., being motivational, dynamic, honest, and decisive) and some that are universally undesirable (e.g., being a loner, egocentric, irritable, and ruthless; Dorfman & House, 2006). There are other leader behaviors that are culturally contingent—which are valued in certain countries and cultures, but not in others (e.g., being individualistic, status-conscious, or a risk taker; Javidan et al., 2006).

The results from Project GLOBE also suggest that even some of the universally desirable or undesirable attributes may be enacted distinctively in different cultures. Javidan and colleagues (2006) provide many useful examples, including that while both Americans and Brazilians value respect for a manager, they have different expectations for behaviors that constitute respect. Brazilians typically prefer formal relationships between leaders and subordinates, while Americans typically prefer an open environment where there is mutual respect and opportunity for subordinates to debate with their subordinate. Formality in the American culture may be seen as not
being open to suggestions by subordinates; however, in Brazilian culture it will generally be viewed as a manager appropriately treating people according to their position. Behavior that is viewed as a friendly debate between a manager and subordinate in American culture may be viewed as aggressive behavior by a manager in Brazilian culture. Thus, while both cultures value "respect," the behaviors associated with respect may differ (Javidan et al., 2006).

The identification of universally desirable and undesirable leadership characteristics suggests that there are both similarities and differences between societies. Leaders and managers can build on the similarities between their culture and other cultures when addressing differences in desired leadership behaviors. While the general advice to recognize that cultural differences exist and to respect them is better than assuming all societies share the same values, GLOBE can be used to teach leaders how to determine what specific behaviors and actions will be viewed as acceptable in different cultures.

GLOBE data can be used to learn about other cultures; however, they can also be used to teach leaders about their own culture. Teaching leaders how to communicate the similarities and differences between cultures can help them identify common ground to build future relationships, and dismiss misunderstandings between their own culture and their host culture (Javidan et al., 2006). Teaching about the nine cultural dimensions and six leadership dimensions identified in Project GLOBE can help leaders gain a better understanding of their own culture. This may help leaders realize that beliefs they hold about effective leadership, which may in fact be specific to their own culture and are not universal.

While adapting to other cultures may at times be useful, leaders do not necessarily have to automatically adopt an entirely new leadership approach to become more effective in another culture (Javidan et al., 2006). However, leaders should make informed decisions about when they will adapt and what they will retain from their own leadership style. If leaders prefer a style different from one typically used in a host culture, they should clearly explain their rationale to employees in the host culture. The information from GLOBE can help leaders (a) explain their approach to leadership in cultures other than their own, (b) identify how their approach is similar and different from leadership approaches typically seen as effective in another culture, and (c) understand why they prefer a particular leadership approach.

Are There Specific Attributes That It Would Be Helpful for Global Leaders to Have?

To succeed globally, leaders must address cross-cultural challenges. While there are some leadership attributes that are universally desirable or undesirable, many are culturally dependent. Global leaders need to be able to adapt to other cultures, have a global mindset, and be able to endure amid ambiguity (Javidan et al., 2006). There are many factors that should be considered when adapting a leadership style to be more effective in other cultures. Maintaining a global mindset is important because it will be helpful for the leader to remember that differences in leadership relate to differences in cultural values, social systems, and societal norms. Each culture has unique combinations of cultural values and expectations that influence what is seen as effective leadership. When teaching about global leadership and how to adapt to other cultures, it may be helpful to remind leaders that the process of adapting to other cultures may be stressful and difficult. Being able to tolerate ambiguity will be important as leaders identify similarities and differences between their own culture and other cultures. Adapting to differences will not necessarily
be easy and being able to tolerate misunderstandings and uncertainty will help a leader prevail in another culture.

How Can I Use the GLOBE 2004 Data to Facilitate Student Learning About Leadership?

As indicated earlier, we believe that students will benefit in their understanding of culture and how it affects leadership by incorporating the GLOBE databases into the classroom. We believe—and the educational data support—the old saying often attributed as a Chinese proverb, “Tell me and I’ll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I’ll understand.” To this end, we have tried to find ways to facilitate student exploration of GLOBE leadership data by making several data files available to instructors for downloading. Specifically, we have added several files to the web address listed in the appendix. This webpage already contains a variety of useful information about Project GLOBE such as PDF versions of the original GLOBE surveys that can be downloaded and used to provide students with context for the data files.

For this chapter, we have added six data files to this website. Specifically, we have added an Excel file that has the leadership data averaged to the country level for all the six GLOBE higher order leadership scales as well as the twenty-one first-order leadership scales. A comma-delimited file of this information is also available on the website. In addition to the GLOBE leadership scales, we also have Excel and comma-delimited files for society averages of the separate GLOBE leadership items and files for the GLOBE culture scales, again averaged to the country level, posted on this website.

GLOBE Learning Exercises

The GLOBE leadership scales data can be used to provide students with first-hand experience regarding country differences that affect whether leadership styles are
perceived to benefit or inhibit effective leadership. For example, it is widely believed in the United States that participative leadership is beneficial in the United States. Thus, students may be quite surprised to explore the GLOBE data and find that there are countries that rated participative leadership as ineffective or even harmful to effective leadership. Students could then generate hypotheses regarding factors that might explain this societal variety in perceived effectiveness of leadership attributes. In the 2004 book, GLOBE demonstrated the explanatory power of societal culture to account for these leadership rating differences. However, the students may generate other hypotheses and so new variables can be entered into the data and the explanatory power of these variables can be explored (e.g., GNP, level of development, religious beliefs). This analysis can be repeated with the first-order leadership scales. The societal differences on these scales were not reported in the 2004 book and so this more detailed exploration of leadership would be an excellent follow-up exercise after exploration of the second-order factors.

Another exercise would be for the students to discuss how to best conceptualize leadership differences across societies. In other words, is it practical to acknowledge that each society differs in their desired leadership attributes beyond what was examined in GLOBE? Or is there practical utility in only paying attention to leadership differences that are a function of the GLOBE societal clusters? (Gupta & Hanges, 2004; Gupta, Hanges, & Dorfman, 2002). Students could explore how much variability there is in leadership styles for countries within each cluster as opposed to variability in leadership styles for societies from different clusters. This exercise can lead to a discussion of expatriate managers and the extent to which cultural similarity might facilitate adaptive expatriate assignments. Further, this exercise tends to lead into a discussion of the boundary conditions of social science research and how various organizational interventions and practices (e.g., mergers and acquisitions, transfer of technology, human resource practices) may or may not be successfully implemented across societies.

Finally, the files containing the individual leadership items provide the most flexibility for the individual instructor. For example, students could identify individual leadership items that are culturally contingent as opposed to culturally universal. Also, this data set does not limit students to replicating the GLOBE 2004 findings. Rather, students could identify their own themes among the items and explore the extent to which these leadership attributes vary across cultures. For example, while not part of the original intent of the GLOBE study, Resick, Hanges, Dickson, and Mitchelson (2006) reviewed the items in the GLOBE survey and created several different measures of ethical leadership. Resick and colleagues (2006) reported on the differences across societies on these different ethical leadership measures. These researchers subsequently validated these ethical leadership measures in that they found that these measures were related to the United Nation's corruption index (Resick, Mitchelson, Dickson, & Hanges, 2009).

In sum, there are several exercises that can be developed with the GLOBE data that can improve students' understanding of leadership and the effect of culture on this variable as well. Allowing students to "mess around" with the data directly will likely enhance their understanding of the strengths and the limitations of Project GLOBE, and of the influence of societal culture on organizational leadership preferences.

Conclusions

In 1997, Mark Peterson and the late Jerry Hunt raised a cry of alarm about what they believed to be an American bias in cross-cultural leadership research. Mellahi (2000) went further with this concern and
looked at how managers from different parts of the world are taught about leadership when they pursue MBAs in Western countries. Focusing specifically on Asian, Arab, and African managers in MBA programs in the UK, Mellahi found Western leadership values to be significantly emphasized while indigenous leadership values were neglected, leading the non-British MBA students to interpret these indigenous leadership values as being unimportant.

We agree that these are serious concerns, and they make the teaching of leadership across cultures challenging. Those teaching leadership in some parts of the world or in some educational settings may find that their students have very limited experience with—and perhaps stereotypical views of—people in other cultures and their views and preferences related to leadership. In other parts of the world or in other educational settings, students may be well-traveled or have very extensive knowledge of cultures other than their own. In both types of settings, a data-driven approach to discussions of cultural similarity and variation provides, in our experience, the best approach for promoting understanding and breaking down of preconceptions. Project GLOBE provides the opportunity to take such a data-driven approach in teaching about leadership across cultures.

In the present chapter, therefore, we have attempted to provide support to and ideas for instructors who wish to approach issues of leadership across cultures in a more culturally complete manner with a data-driven approach.

References


### Appendix 26.1: Article Suggestions and Access to Files

The following articles are ones we would recommend that instructors especially consider when teaching about GLOBE's leadership results.

This is the first major article to appear describing the results of the GLOBE study, including both the culture and leadership results. The large number of co-authors raises interesting discussions with students around what is necessary to execute a project of this size, and how collaborators are recognized.


This article provides exactly what the title suggests—an introduction to the project.


This article uses GLOBE to discuss why it is important to consider cross-cultural differences in leadership. An example of an ineffective transfer of leadership knowledge is provided when cross cultural differences are not accounted for.


This article provides four hypothetical examples of an American manager in other cultures and provides examples of how GLOBE data can be used to address cultural differences and some of the processes involved in adapting to other cultures.


This article focuses on the practical implications that can be obtained from the GLOBE data. It provides a summary of the culture and leadership dimensions as well as how managers can apply the information.

Files referred to in this chapter can be found at http://www.bsos.umd.edu/psyc/hanges.