

UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN COMPANIES THROUGH THE GLOBE PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

In today's interconnected world, leadership cannot be understood without considering culture. The Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) Project is one of the highly comprehensive international research initiatives examining how cultural values inspire leadership styles and organizational success. Conducted across more than 60 societies, the project explores how deeply embedded beliefs, norms, and social expectations shape leadership behavior within organizations.

This paper examines how leadership styles and organizational cultures differ across countries and why those differences matter in practical business settings. By analyzing the nine cultural dimensions and six leadership dimensions identified by the GLOBE Project, the study highlights how culture affects managerial decision-making, employee engagement, and overall organizational performance. The paper also emphasizes the growing importance of cultural intelligence for managers working in multinational and multicultural environments.

Pioneers who understand ethics expectations better resourced to communicate effectively, motivate teams, and foster inclusive workplaces. In this way, the GLOBE framework serves not only as a theoretical model but also as a practical guide for developing effective global leadership competencies.

KEYWORDS: Leadership styles, Organizational culture, Workplace values, Team dynamics, GLOBE Project.

INTRODUCTION

The modern business environment is no longer confined within national borders. With globalization, technological advancement, and international trade expansion, organizations increasingly operate across diverse cultural contexts. As a result, leadership today requires higher than technical expertise or managerial competence. It demand cultural awareness, adaptability, and sensitivity.

Leaders frequently interact with employees, clients, and stakeholders from different cultural backgrounds. These cultural differences influence expectations regarding authority, teamwork, communication, and decision-making. When leaders fail to recognize these differences, misunderstandings may arise, potentially reducing organizational effectiveness. Conversely, culturally aware leaders are more capable of building trust, minimizing conflict, and enhancing collaboration. Organizational culture further shapes how employees interpret leadership behavior.

It affects attitudes toward hierarchy, rewards, performance evaluation, and ethical standards. A strong and aligned culture can enhance productivity and engagement, while cultural misalignment may lead to dissatisfaction and resistance to change. This Project was developed to systematically examine the relation between culture and leadership across societies. By identifying specific cultural and leadership dimensions, the framework helps describe why specific leadership approaches succeed in some countries but fail in others. Understanding this relationship is critical for managers operating in global environments.

Background of the Study:

The study is grounded in the increasing globalization of business, where organizations operate across diverse national and cultural boundaries. Leadership effectiveness today depends not only on technical and managerial skills but also on the ability to understand and manage cultural differences. This Project, initiated in 1991 by Robert J. House, provides a comprehensive framework to study how culture influences leadership and organizational processes across societies.

Problem Statement:

The central problem addressed in the paper is the challenge leaders face in managing culturally diverse teams and organizations. A standardized leadership style is often ineffective across different cultural contexts, leading to communication gaps, conflicts, and reduced organizational performance. Without cultural awareness, leaders risk misalignment between

organizational culture and employee expectations, which can hinder teamwork, motivation, and overall effectiveness.

Objectives of the Study:

- Provide deeper understanding of how leadership styles and organizational culture vary across countries.
- Analyze the nine cultural dimensions and six leadership dimensions discovered by the GLOBE Project.
- Highlight the relevance of these dimensions for modern organizations, especially multinational corporations.
- Emphasize the importance of cultural awareness in improving communication, employee engagement, decision-making, and organizational effectiveness.

Significance of the Study:

- It equips managers and leaders with the knowledge to adapt leadership styles to cultural contexts, thereby improving organizational performance.
- It underscores the value of organizational culture in molding employee behavior, motivation, and teamwork.
- For multinational companies, it provides practical guidance on managing cross-cultural teams and fostering inclusivity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The GLOBE Project, initiated in 1991 under the leadership of Robert J. House. It builds upon earlier cultural studies, but extends them by directly linking culture with leadership effectiveness.

According to this framework, culture is described as a set of shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations that develop from the common experience of individuals within a society. The study identified nine cultural dimensions namely power distance, uncertainty avoidance, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism, gender egalitarianism, assertiveness, future orientation, performance orientation, and humane orientation.

Additionally, it proposed six global leadership dimensions: Value-based leadership, team-oriented leadership, participative leadership, humane-oriented leadership, autonomous leadership, and self-protective leadership. Findings from research indicate that while certain

leadership characteristics are universally recognised, many are significantly shaped by cultural contexts.

Earlier studies also emphasize that organizations aligning their leadership approaches with cultural values are more likely to achieve greater employee satisfaction, enhanced teamwork, and improved organisational performance. Research conducted under the Project also demonstrates that cultural dimensions influence leadership expectations at both national and organizational levels.

For instance, cultures with high performance orientation value leaders who set challenging goals and reward excellence, whereas cultures with high humane orientation prefer leaders who are supportive, compassionate, and concerned about employee well-being.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based entirely on secondary research. Various credible scholarly materials such as peer-reviewed journal articles, textbooks, conference proceedings, and published reports related to the GLOBE Project — were reviewed to ensure reliability and academic integrity. Rather than collecting primary data through surveys or interviews, the research adopts a descriptive and conceptual research design. The main objective is to analyse existing findings and present a structured understanding of the impact of cultural dimensions influence leadership practices and organizational behavior. Special attention has been given to analyzing: The study focuses on examining the nine cultural dimensions identified by the GLOBE Project The six global leadership dimensions The relevance for multinational organizations.

Research Design:

A descriptive and conceptual approach was adopted to analyze the collected data, enabling the identification of patterns, relationships, and theoretical insights related to culture, leadership, and organizational effectiveness. No primary data collection methods such as surveys, interviews, or observations were employed; therefore, the study remains conceptual and descriptive in nature, aiming to provide a clear and structured theoretical understanding of leadership and organizational culture through the GLOBE framework.

Special emphasis has been placed on understanding the GLOBE cultural dimensions and their implications for organizational behavior, the leadership styles and leadership attributes identified by the GLOBE Project, and the application of these findings in organizational and managerial settings, particularly in multinational and cross-cultural companies.

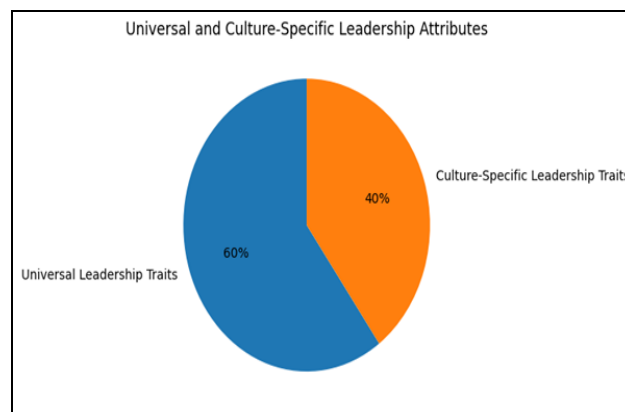
The research remains conceptual and descriptive, aiming to provide a clear, structured, and theoretical understanding of leadership and organizational culture through the GLOBE framework. This methodology is suitable for academic research and helps in developing a strong theoretical perspective on global leadership practices.

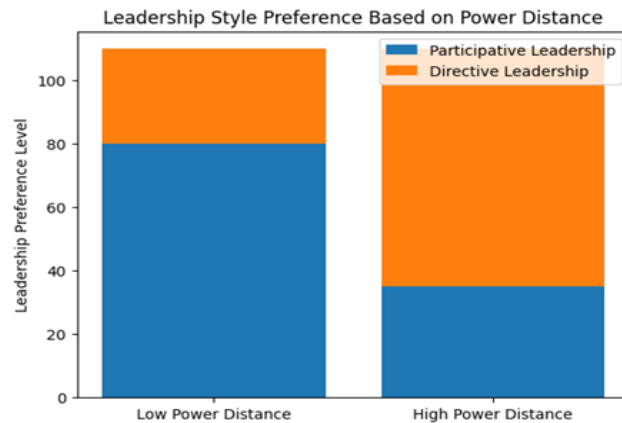
FINDINGS

The review of the GLOBE Project clearly demonstrates that leadership effectiveness is deeply influenced by cultural context. Employees' expectations of leaders are shaped by societal norms and shared values. What is considered strong leadership in one country may not be perceived similarly in another.

Certain leadership qualities such as integrity, vision, and decisiveness appear to be universally valued. However, the expression of these qualities varies across cultures. For instances, participative leadership tends to be more suitable in societies with low power distance, where employees expect involved in decision-making processes. On the other hand, societies with hierarchical structures may favor more directive leadership styles.

The research indicates that organizations aligning their leadership practices with cultural norms often achieve better employee satisfaction, stronger collaboration and improved outcomes. Multinational companies, in particular, benefit significantly when leaders demonstrate cultural adaptability and weakness.





DISCUSSION

The implications of the GLOBE Project extend beyond academic theory and directly influence managerial practice. In a globalized business environment, cultural intelligence has become a critical leadership competency. Managers operating in collectivist societies must emphasize teamwork, group harmony, and loyalty whereas, in individualistic cultures leaders may prioritize personal responsibility and achievements. Similarly, reward systems, communication styles, and motivational strategies must reflect cultural preferences.

Leadership development programs should therefore incorporate cross-cultural training and awareness-building exercises. Without such preparation, leaders risk creating misunderstandings, reducing morale, and weakening organizational cohesion. Culturally informed leadership is not optional in global organizations — it is a strategic necessity.

The discussion also underlines the importance of incorporating cultural intelligence into leadership development programs. Organizations should train managers to understand and apply frameworks such as the GLOBE Project to strengthen their cross-cultural leadership capabilities. Failure to recognize cultural differences may lead to employee dissatisfaction, resistance to leadership, and poor organizational outcomes. Therefore, culturally informed leadership is not only a theoretical concept but a practical necessity for organizational success in a globalized business environment.

CONCLUSION

The GLOBE Project offers valuable insight into the dynamic relationship between culture and leadership. It demonstrates that there is no universal leadership style suitable for all contexts. Effective leadership depends on cultural alignment. Organizations that adapt their leadership strategies to both national and organizational culture are better positioned to foster engagement, manage change, and achieve sustainable success. For multinational

corporations, the GLOBE framework offers practical guidance for leading culturally diverse teams.

In conclusion the GLOBE Project serves as a practical guide for understanding leadership and organizational culture in a globalized business environment. It provides valuable guidance for managers, HR professionals, and future leaders in designing culturally sensitive leadership strategies and leadership development programs. For students and researchers, the GLOBE Project establishes a strong foundation for further academic research in the area of leadership, organizational behavior, and international management, making it highly relevant in today's interconnected world.

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