

A Failure of Scholarship: Response to George Graen's Critique of GLOBE

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According to Professor George Graen, there is only one way to validly study leadership using questionnaires – his way. He strongly and invalidly criticizes the Global Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness (GLOBE) research program, and we appreciate the opportunity to address his comments.

The essence of Graen's critique is that GLOBE authors claim too much cross-cultural ecological and construct validity for any meaningful practical recommendations to emerge. While GLOBE researchers, including those responding in this rebuttal, disagree with this assessment, we acknowledge that the ultimate test of the GLOBE project rests in the usefulness of the results to cross-cultural researchers and practitioners. We will point out some factual errors found in Graen's critique that are likely a result of either not understanding the programmatic nature of the GLOBE project, or simply not paying careful enough attention to the published material listed as sources for the critique.

Programmatic Study of Culture and Leadership

As a central point, Graen asserts that the GLOBE questionnaires were developed through an insular process, without the collaboration of a larger group of heterogeneous scholars. Thus, he argues that the resulting constructs are not valid. Further, Graen claims that the GLOBE research is "a large number of one-shot, self-report, culturally biased survey studies."

The process through which the GLOBE questionnaires were developed has been clearly articulated, and demonstrates a collaborative and internationally inclusive exercise in cross-cultural research. GLOBE comprises over 160 scholars from 62 cultures (House, et al. 2004). One hundred and forty-five of these are referred to as Country Co-Investigators (CCIs) who represent their societies. The CCIs have been directly involved in creating and facilitating the GLOBE project. In 1993 the CCIs convened at University of Calgary in Canada to discuss the development of and process for the research program. One of the first topics they debated was the definition of leadership that would drive the GLOBE project. The definition of leadership agreed upon is "the ability to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members" (House, et al. 2004). After the meeting in Calgary the CCIs employed individual interviews and focus groups with managers to better understand how leadership is conceived and evaluated in their cultures. From this information they also provided additional items which they thought were relevant.

Using the reports from CCIs as well as a review of the cross-cultural and leadership literature, Robert House, the Dutch group, and Phillip Podsakoff of the United States then distilled the 753 items into questionnaire items, of which 382 were leadership items and 371 were societal and organizational culture items. The items describing cultures included questions relevant to Hofstede's

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four dimensions of culture (Hofstede 1980; 2001) plus three additional dimensions: performance, humane, and future orientation. Consistent with, but not identical to Triandis' research on collectivism (Triandis 1995), GLOBE found two dimensions of this construct: in-group collectivism and institutional collectivism. Hofstede's masculinity-femininity dimension was divided into two dimensions: assertiveness and gender egalitarianism.

These written items were then sent to all the CCIs for their feedback. They commented on relevance, understandability, translatability and face validity of the culture and leadership items as they pertain to their societies. Especially, they relayed any apprehension they had regarding the use of particular items in their culture. Several items were revised, some were deleted, and others were added as a result of this process. To empirically verify the societal scales, two pilot tests were conducted in Phase 1 with 43 societies (Hanges & Dickson 2004). Together with the assistance of CCIs, the standard procedure of psychometric assessment was implemented primarily by Paul Hanges and graduate assistants at the University of Maryland.

Through Q-sorting, item evaluation, and translation/back-translation processes and editing or deleting items, the set of leadership and culture items emerged. The fact that the remaining items also survived an explicit evaluation for cultural inconsistencies and the translation/back-translation process strongly suggests commonality of meaning of the questionnaire items and scales across cultures. As a result of the scale development and validation (Phase 1), nine cultural dimensions and 21 first-order leadership subscales (and six second-order leadership factors) emerged. In Phase 2, the major data collection phase, the psychometric properties of the scales were replicated for the third time.

The leadership and organizational culture scales demonstrated validity within a nomological network (Hanges & Dickson 2004). The scales largely exceeded professional standards with regard to properties such as dimensionality, inter-item reliability, inter-rater agreement, and aggregability. All scales had reliabilities of .85 based jointly on Cronbach's Alpha and within-society

interrater agreement, using inter-class correlation analyses. The scales also discriminated well among societies. Additionally, the scales were tested for external validity using sources of information collected independently. That is, the GLOBE culture scales (practices, and values) showed convergent and discriminant validity with respect to unobtrusive measures, archival data, and other national surveys such as the World Values Survey (Inglehart, Basanez & Moreno 1998). All of this evidence attests to the construct validity of the scales (Gupta, Sully de Luque, & House 2004). This was of utmost importance, because construct validity provides essential information about the integrity of the constructs measured by the GLOBE scales.

In addition to questionnaire methodology, the GLOBE project used an extensive range of qualitative analyses including media analyses, individual and focus group interviews, archival data and unobtrusive measures in an integrative approach to understand and measure cultures and leadership (Javidan & Hauser 2004; Gupta, Sully de Luque, & House 2004). As mentioned above, the archival data served as a mechanism for construct validation of the culture dimension scales. However, it also assisted in determining the relationships between the culture dimensions and important economic and human condition variables. This is in contrast to Graen's assertion that the scales were based on an insular process and did not have construct validity. Clearly, the rigor described above was a collaborative intercultural process and the scales show construct validity. Interestingly, while Graen criticizes GLOBE for failing to provide evidence of construct validity, in his own work on Leader-Member relations (LMX) he provides no such evidence of his LMX measure. In fact, he has changed LMX scales several times since its initial inception and provides no construct validity for the revised scales.

Another critique from Graen suggests that GLOBE used convenience sampling for their study. This suggestion is false. The sample is a selected sample, rather than a convenience sample. The industries to be sampled were food processing, financial services, and telecommunications services. All industries were domestic organizations to ensure cross-cultural comparabil-

ity. We specified this requirement because respondents from these organizations would most likely be from the societal culture in which these organizations functioned. Obviously, if multinational (i.e., non-domestic) organizations were sampled then the sample could well reflect the multinational organizational culture. Ultimately, a majority of the CCIs gathered data from all three industries in their respective cultures. Middle managers were used in the sample because we sought to query respondents who had experience as both a leader and follower. These are both originators and recipients of leadership. They experience leadership since they report to a higher level of management, and they have experience with behaving as a leader because they manage lower level employees.

We do not claim, as Graen asserts, that these samples are wholly representative of the countries from which they are drawn. Admittedly, it is impossible to obtain all representative samples from large countries with multiple sub-cultures. To deal with this, the CCIs were instructed to gather data from the dominant business sectors of their societies. The samples obtained from each country were to be similar with regard to the dominant influences that shape cultures, such as history, language, ecological factors, and religion. Also, several countries with predominately Chinese ethnicity were sampled separately (i.e., China, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan) to ascertain deeper differences among these societies.

Notably, 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. For example, we included respondents from French and German speaking Switzerland, black and white South Africa, as well as former East and former West German populations. At least three societies from each major region of the world were included in this sample of societies (Gupta & Hanges 2004). Of the 62 societies included in the GLOBE study, these samples come from North and South Africa, Asia, Europe (Eastern, Central, and Northern), Latin America, North America, the Middle East, and the Pacific Rim.

Graen states that the GLOBE participants were responding based on social desirability, by answering “What I want outsiders to think about my mother country.” This is a gross misrepresentation of the instructions given to respondents. They were asked to indicate the way things are in their society, that is societal practices; and the way things should be in their society, which is intended to represent their values. We discuss these differences more later.

In fact, Graen misses our major point. He assumes that we intended to measure leadership in each culture. Our intent was to obtain data that would permit us to test the implicit leadership theory at the cultural level. 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. To this end, one of GLOBE’s major interests was to explore the Culturally Endorsed Implicit Leadership Theory (CLT) across cultures, assumed to affect how an individual accepts and responds to others as leaders (Lord & Maher 1991).

GLOBE asked the participating managers questions regarding outstanding leadership and did not ask them to do self-assessment or assessment of other leaders. For each leadership attribute we provided a definition to guide the respondents. For example “Diplomatic” is defined in the questionnaire as skilled at interpersonal relations, tactful. Respondents were asked to rate on a 7-point scale whether “this behavior or characteristic greatly contributes to (or inhibits) a person from being an outstanding leader.” The instructions for questions assessing culture at the societal level asked participants to “respond to the questions by circling the number that most closely represents your observations about your society.” Similar questions were asked of a separate group of respondents with respect to their organization. The instructions for questions assessing leadership asked participants to identify the response “that best describes how important that behavior or characteristic is for a leader to be outstanding.”¹

¹ Appendices for the respective questionnaire instructions are available on request.

The usefulness of the GLOBE leadership scales rests not only in their strong psychometric properties, but also in their capacity to highlight implicit leadership theories around the world. The GLOBE findings demonstrate substantial agreement about outstanding leadership requirements among respondents within each society, as well as differences across societies and societal clusters. Thus far, the research shows significant relationships between the global CLT dimensions and dimensions of societal cultural values. Additionally, in the third phase of the GLOBE program, in process, we have collected data describing reported behavior of 800 CEOs. These behavioral assessments are based on questionnaire responses by the CEO's direct reports. In fact, the leader behaviors assessed were specifically written to test aspects of culturally endorsed implicit leadership theory in Phase 2 of the GLOBE project.

Average Leadership Style and LMX Critique

Graen argues that the appropriate unit of analysis is the relationship between leaders and members (i.e., superiors and immediate subordinates). He criticizes all the research conducted on leadership at the Ohio State University, the University of Michigan, University of Washington, and the State Universities of New York at Albany and Binghamton since approximately 1950 because they employed what he refers to as the Average Leadership Style (ALS). Graen advocates the Vertical Dyadic Linkage (VDL) approach. According to Graen, the ALS approach ignores dyadic data and focuses solely on unit averages.

We contend that the use of the VDL and ALS approaches should be used selectively according to the purposes of the investigations. For example, if one is interested in performance of firms as a function of the behavior of CEOs, then the appropriate approach would be the ALS approach comprised of the average of the reports of individuals who are knowledgeable about the behavior of their respective CEOs. In contrast, if one is interested in the effect of CEOs on individual behavior, then the appropriate approach would be the VDL.

GLOBE has never employed the ALS ap-

proach. However, GLOBE does report findings on the average society ratings on a) cultural dimension practices, b) culture dimension values and c) 21 factorially derived first-order leadership dimensions. These dimensions were grouped into six second-order dimensions. The major focus of the first GLOBE book was to provide descriptive information concerning the major GLOBE culture dimensions and CLTs. As a continuing part of this programmatic research, the second book of the GLOBE study includes comprehensive, in-depth qualitative and quantitative descriptions of each of 25 societal cultures (Chhokar, Brodbeck, & House, 2007).

Graen was the primary architect of the leader-member exchange theory (LMX). This theory focuses on the exchange relationships and role-making process between a leader and follower. A central point in the theory is that supervisors develop differential exchange relationships with followers such that it makes little sense to identify ALS across subordinates. There is a great deal more to leadership than VDL. In addition to LMX, leaders formulate or implement visions, policies and strategy, maintain relationships with peers and members of external organizations, foster and maintain healthy organizational cultures, to name only a few of the critical functions. The LMX theory addresses none of these issues, but only the relationships between superiors and subordinates. Graen criticizes all ALS studies in favor of his VDL approach. The scales used to measure LMX, however, do not reflect explicit exchanges between leaders and followers. The dyadic relationship is what matters and, when it is favorable to the subordinate, it is likely to lead to increased subordinate satisfaction and performance (Gerstner & Day 1997).

Despite the intuitive appeal of LMX, there are substantial problems that limit the theory's usefulness (Yukl 2006). These problems are not trivial since they go to the heart of the validity of LMX. For example, according to a meta-analysis of LMX, the relationship between LMX and performance differs substantially depending on whose perspective of LMX is measured. There exists a smaller relationship between subordinate reports of LMX and subordinate performance ratings ($r =$

.28) than between leader reports of LMX and subordinate performance ratings ($r = .41$) (Gerstner & Day 1997). To measure the moderating effects of measurement instrument (leader vs. member), it was necessary to remove 20 percent and 33 percent of the outliers respectively to achieve homogeneous effect size for this sample. Even more striking is that there is only a low to moderate relationship between a leader and subordinate's assessment of the LMX relationship—with just .29 as the mean sample-weighted correlation between the two. For this aforementioned sample, it was necessary to remove 38 percent of the outliers to achieve homogeneous effect size. Such numbers of outliers suggest either inadequate sampling or situational forces were at work at the time the studies were conducted. In addition, the findings by (Gerstner & Day 1997) are in the range of the findings by ALS studies and are far lower than findings of studies concerning charismatic-transformational leadership (House & Aditya 1997; Yammarino, et al. 2005). Yukl (2006) concludes the lack of agreement of the basic nature of the relationship means that individual perceptions are highly confounded with other variables, and that the LMX theory is too simplistic.

Graen in his critique of GLOBE states that “there is almost universal acceptance of the dyadic approach” and implicitly leaves the reader with the notion that LMX theory is far superior to other leadership theories. Although his claim of universal acceptance has not been substantiated, we will review some of the highlights of the LMX theory. Several significant issues to consider involve how the dimensionality and theoretical content of LMX has varied over time (Schriesheim, Castro, & Cogliser 1999). In the early years of Graen's theory, the number of subdimensions of LMX changed and acceptance of the leader by subordinates was added (Graen 1976; Cashman, Dansereau, Graen, & Haga 1976; Graen & Ginsburgh 1977). The LMX subdimensions both expanded and contracted through the 1970s (Graen, Cashman, Ginsburgh, & Schiemann 1977; Graen & Schiemann 1978; Schiemann 1977), before increasing even further by 18 additional dimensions in the 1980s (see Schrei-

sheim, et al. 1999 for a comprehensive list). This larger group of questionnaire items has not been tested for construct validity. During this same period, the conceptualizations and subcontent used in LMX dissertation research reported almost a dozen separate theoretical definitions and over three times as many different subcontext components. In fact, many LMX articles did not define the construct of LMX used or its subcomponents. Although Graen and his colleague attempted to provide a more systematic and comprehensive explanation of LMX, the construct of LMX in the 1990's and on continues to be imprecise (Graen & Scandura 1987).

Interestingly, Graen and a colleague made a divergence from prior LMX research by defining this theory as a purely relational concept, and therefore no longer primarily being interested in the leader and follower in the work context (Graen & Uhl-Bien 1995; Graen & Uhl-Bien 1998). They create a four-stage model of research, through which they claim LMX has evolved. With this shift in perspective, Graen's revised LMX theory has been criticized as being unclear with regard to levels of analysis (Dansereau, Yammarino, & Markham 1995), possibly allowing for any level of analysis provided that the relationship is the focus (Dansereau, et al. 1995). This introduces mixed levels of analysis, and also confounds theoretical specification.

As such, another substantial issue to deliberate when reviewing LMX, and no less important, is levels of analysis. Organizational scholars have clearly recognized that specifying the level(s) of analysis at which phenomena are predicted to occur is essential to reliable research (House, Rousseau, & Thomas-Hunt 1995; Klein, Dansereau, & Hall 1994). As the early formulation of the VDL model considers leadership as taking place between a leader and a subordinate, the dyadic level of analysis had been the primary focus of LMX research. Indeed, the notion of leadership occurring only with the vertical dyad separated the VDL approach from the ALS model, which prevailed at the time. Thus, the unit of analysis for leadership research was between leaders and each of their members individually within the context of the work environment (Graen & Cashman 1975;

Dansereau, Cashman, & Graen 1973; Dansereau & Minami 1972), and this assumption largely dominated early LMX research (Schriesheim, et al. 1999). Thus, the appropriate level of analysis was clearly delineated at this point in time. However, it later becomes obscured to the detriment of theoretical clarity.

One further aspect of LMX theory deserves note. The theory is largely presented as a universal theory and ignores potential situational variables as to their potential for affecting the exchange process (Yukl 2006; Epitropaki & Martin 2005). An exception is a study where demographic and organizational variables were examined as to how they affect the leader-member exchange relationship (Green, Anderson, & Shivers 1996). The results were not particularly impressive, but the size of the work unit did have significant negative relationships to the quality of the exchange and subordinate satisfaction and commitment. In addition, gender dissimilarity was related to lower LMX scores. Although Graen's TCB model assumes that culture is critical in that one national culture should not dominate over another in joint projects, there have been no studies that empirically test the moderating influence of culture on the leader-member exchange relationship. Graen is certainly aware of the potential influence of culture since his chapter with Wakabayashi in the *Handbook of Industrial Organizational Psychology* describes the major differences between "leadership making" in the American and Japanese context (Graen & Wakabayashi 1992).

As evidenced above, there are numerous questions about the LMX scales themselves such as how they were developed and changed on an ad-hoc basis without adequate a priori theoretical definition of the content sub-domains (Schriesheim, et al. 1999). In addition, there are levels of analysis issues that often are ignored. To make certain that measurement and data-analytic methods appropriately relate with proposed levels of analysis, the theoretical specification is essential. As a result of their comprehensive review of theory, measurement, and data-analytic practices, Schriesheim and his

colleagues conclude that fundamental problems exist relating to the validity of LMX. They note:

In particular, the construct has some basic definitional problems, the measures used to assess LMX have varied substantially without explanation, and the analytic procedures utilized have generally not been aligned with the theory being proposed and tested. These issues draw into question the usefulness of any substantively oriented synthesis of extant LMX literature" (p. 64).

With this information, Graen's claim that LMX is far superior to other studies of leadership generally is highly questionable, and its superiority in methodological rigor and validity as related to the theory and measures of the GLOBE research specifically is unlikely.

Leadership and Cultural Labels and Stereotypes

Another of Graen's arguments concerns his disagreement with the labeling of the leadership dimensions resulting from the GLOBE research. The GLOBE six secondary leadership dimensions (labeled global leadership dimensions) should not be confused with leadership *types* as stated by Graen. Furthermore, the labeling of the six GLOBE leadership dimensions that Graen uses in his critique is incorrect. The *autocratic* label that Graen identifies is actually labeled *Autonomous*, the *shared* label is in fact labeled *Participative*, and the label *defensive* should be labeled *Self-protective*. These labels provided by Graen are inaccurate, and although they may be convenient labels for him, they were not chosen by GLOBE. The labels he uses reveals, in part, his ethnocentric bias in his imprecise interpretation of GLOBE's leadership dimension labels. For example, Graen's use of the label "defensiveness" instead of the label "self-protective" indicates his ethnocentricity because the word "defensiveness" is a pejorative term, whereas "self-protective" is a neutral term. In fact, this leadership dimension is considered acceptable by several societies in the GLOBE sample.

There are several issues that are worth discussing with respect to how the culture and leadership labels were developed. We knew that developing the labels used for each culture, leadership, and cluster dimension would be a weighty endeavor.

We therefore chose to implement an iterative process that involved a great deal participation by many of the GLOBE scholars. The labels supplied for the nine culture dimensions, the six leadership CLT factors, and the ten culture clusters were based on the several considerations. These labels were created based on theoretical, qualitative and statistical evidence. Many of the GLOBE culture dimensions that we measured are direct descendants of the prior cross-culture research and, for these, labels were provided (Hofstede 1980, 2001; Triandis 1995). Additional cultural dimension labels were constructed with the assistance of the CCIs. The GLOBE book details how all scales demonstrated validity within a nomological network.

Within the six global CLT leadership dimensions, four are closely related to prior leadership constructs found in the extant leadership literature (Charismatic/Value-Based, Team Orientation, Humane Orientation, and Participative leadership). However, we found two dimensions that have not been typically associated with “Western” oriented leadership. The first CLT dimension, *autonomous*, emulates an independent, individualistic, and unique aspect of leadership. The second dimension, *self-protective*, may hold more negative connotations from a Western perspective, since it has not been previously considered in the leadership literature. Eastern leadership perspectives such as face saving and status consciousness are characteristics of this dimension that may be more easily identified and are found to be important when viewed from a non-Western perspective. However time-consuming, creating labels for these dimensions was greatly facilitated through the participation of the CCIs.

The regional clustering of the GLOBE dimensions was based on a conceptual and empirical process, with great involvement from the CCIs (Gupta & Hanges 2004). Among the many goals for enacting the cluster analysis, GLOBE scholars wanted to study the differences and similarities among the GLOBE societies more broadly rather than concentrating on differences and similarities among these societies one dimension at a time. Further, GLOBE expected that these cultural clusters would be helpful for viewing the CLT proto-

types that exist in the societies connected with specific cultural clusters. In practical terms, clusters offer a valuable framework for handling the intricacies of multi-cultural ventures. The knowledge managers gain from cluster information may help them appreciate the application of practices, policies, and human resources across cultural boundaries. Ten groupings of the GLOBE societies surfaced, which showed some similarities to previous cluster studies. The regional labels formulated for the clusters were created through arduous and lengthy discussion among scholars both inside and outside the GLOBE network. Although not precise, the resulting labels capture many of the characteristics of the groupings. Indeed GLOBE clearly notes that inter-cultural similarities may conceal noteworthy within-society heterogeneity.

Graen’s harsh criticism of the GLOBE clustering demonstrates a lack of knowledge generally about cluster analyses and specifically about the GLOBE analyses. As indicated in the clustering literature there is no universally accepted or generally practiced clustering of countries. This is not necessarily a negative aspect since different societal clusters may be similarly valid depending on the uses for which the process was developed. Thus, the final GLOBE clustering labels were based on results from the GLOBE analysis and previous empirical studies as well as other factors such as common language, geography, religion, and historical accounts, with much input from GLOBE scholars.

A larger issue pervasive in Graen’s criticisms relate to the overall applicability of the GLOBE dimensions in describing leadership and culture within societies. Among the his many comments about the GLOBE research, Graen claims, “Although we strongly object to cultural stereotypes of this kind as dysfunctional for cross-cultural relations and, teamwork, and third culture facilitation, House and his associates disagree and recommend the practical use of these surface-level stereotypes.” Moreover, he states that since GLOBE research promotes cultural stereotypes, it is therefore dysfunctional. Dismissively referring to the GLOBE dimensions as surface-level stereotypes that lack depth further shows the deficit of

understanding Graen has for this programmatic research. Many of Graen's arguments are confusing or ill-developed, since he ostensibly confounds his discussion of the theory, constructs and statistical analysis. Nevertheless, we will attempt to address his general critique that GLOBE culture and leadership dimensions represent stereotypes and are dysfunctional.

As articulated elsewhere (Hanges & Dickson 2004; Javidan, et al. 2006), all major GLOBE constructs (societal culture, organizational culture, and culturally endorsed implicit leadership theory) are what multilevel researchers call convergent-emergent constructs (Kozlowski & Klein 2000). For convergent constructs, the responses from people within organizations or societies center around a single value typically characterized by scale averages. For emergent constructs, these constructs may derive from the cognitions of individual survey respondents, but are actually manifested at an aggregated level of analysis (i.e., for GLOBE it was either the organizational or societal level). In the GLOBE data analyses, this created a "nested" structure where individuals were nested within organizations and domestic organizations were nested within societies (Hanges & Dickson 2004).

A major objective when creating the leadership and culture scales was to make a distinction *between* organizational and societal cultures. The scales are not intended to measure differences *within* cultures or between individuals. As such, our scales are most appropriate for cross-cultural rather than intra-cultural research. Clearly, the GLOBE constructs were not designed to assess individual variation within organizations or societies and should not be used for this purpose. Graen's remarks regarding individual variation of behaviors within societies may indeed have merit. However Graen's comparison of individual anecdotal examples to the GLOBE convergent-emergent constructs is misdirected and uninformed. This may not be surprising given the persistent lack of appreciation for levels-of-analysis issues endemic in the LMX literature.

Criticizing the GLOBE research as promoting societal cultural stereotypes, Graen underestimates the intellectual capability of individuals

interested in understanding leadership and culture. Our position is that anyone interested in cross-cultural research would go beyond the first GLOBE book prior to entering into cross-cultural interactions. Therefore, we do not believe that the scores on cultural dimensions and leadership would cause serious students of culture, or intercultural managers to form stereotypes, but rather to seek out information beyond the first GLOBE book (House, et al. 2004).

Another point Graen presents in his article concerns the "GLOBE Package" that he suggests is: the purpose of GLOBE, the survey instrument used, and the taxonomy. He provides an abbreviated list of what he claims is the stated purpose and the instrument measures, which he follows with various criticisms of the GLOBE research. Regarding his definition of the GLOBE study's primary purpose, it *appears* Graen extracted some information from the survey instrument cover page, and then extrapolated this into the major objectives of the project. His disregard for the multitude of information written about the purpose of the GLOBE project (*Journal of World Business* 2002; Den Hartog, et al. 1999; Javidan & House 2001; House, et al. 2004; Javidan, et al. 2006) shows the paucity of diligence Graen implemented in his critique.

It is evident that Graen does not fully appreciate the intent of the survey sections, nor does he grasp the importance of GLOBE's purpose for having two separate questionnaire surveys. Employing a more holistic perspective, GLOBE research considered culture as consisting of both managers' reported values and societal and organizational practices. From this perspective, culture is seen to emerge as a collective adjusts to continuing challenges it faces from external opportunities and threats, as well as handling relations among its members.

Each of the GLOBE instruments is comprised of five sections: two sections examining leadership, two sections assessing culture, and one section for demographic information. This was a deliberate and purposeful action. Four versions of each culture item were written to examine both the tangible (i.e., cultural practices) and intangible (i.e., cultural values) characteristics of culture.

The items assessing the cultural practices of an organization or society measured managers' reports on how things *are*, whereas the items assessing the cultural values of an organization or society measured managers' reports on how things *should be*. The GLOBE leadership items consisted of behavioral and trait descriptors (e.g., visionary; autocratic; nurturing; benevolent) together with a brief definition of each. The process through which these descriptors emerged from the research was outlined above. Relevant to leadership emergence and effectiveness, the items were written to reflect a variety of traits, skills, abilities, and personality characteristics potentially. These items were then incorporated into two separate versions of the questionnaire survey, designed to evaluate two levels of analysis (i.e., organizational culture and societal culture). Half of the respondents in each organization completed the organizational culture questionnaire, and the other half completed the societal culture questionnaire. This enabled GLOBE to collect independent assessments of organizational and societal culture.

An important finding in the GLOBE study was that values and practices each are related to important, but separate, phenomena. Reported cultural *practices* are shown to be predictive of societal phenomena, such as economic health, national competitiveness, societal health, life expectancy, and the Human Development Index. In contrast, reported cultural *values* and not practices are associated with reported attributes of outstanding leadership across GLOBE countries. Equally important, GLOBE findings indicate that culture also influences the type of leadership qualities that are perceived to lead to outstanding leadership. Both universally perceived effective and universally perceived less effective qualities surfaced in this research. Of great interest from a cross-cultural perspective, however, is the discovery that some aspects of leadership, such as humane and/or participative leadership, are culturally contingent. All the significant findings and important contributions resulting from the GLOBE project are dismissed as cultural stereotypes that are as Graen states, "gross over-generalizations of both similarities and differences between national cultures based on surface-level diversity." We have shown

throughout this paper that Graen's statement above is patently false.

What Is Third Culture Bonding (TCB) Method?

In his critique of GLOBE, Graen claims to contrast GLOBE to his "superior" approach which he calls Third Culture Bonding or TCB. Graen's technique of TCB seems to be relatively obscure in the cross cultural literature that is published and read by scholars in the field. Nevertheless, we were intrigued by his claim and since his critique provides little information on what exactly his TCB is, we started to search for the articles written on this topic. We found three articles written by Graen and his colleagues (Graen & Wakabayashi 1994; Hui & Graen 1997; Graen, Hui, & Gu 2004) that seem directly relevant to the TCB model.

To start with, reading the three articles made it quite clear that Graen is taking a very liberal and rather careless approach to research. He refers to work leading to these articles as research. But from the information provided, they seem to be based on consulting projects that he and his colleagues have conducted for a few corporations. He never explains the exact methodologies used for his "research." In his critique, Graen states: "In contrast, our TCB validated measures consistently have been available to researchers without any such conditions for purposes of furthering our understanding of leadership." But he does not provide a reference for where to find these measures. Is he referring to the ever changing LMX measures, or to new TCB measures? The only source that we could find is his coauthored article with Hui and Gu (2004, p. 43) where he presents a few tables containing a few questions. It is not clear at all if these are the items for his TCB and what their psychometric properties are. We have no idea how useful these items are as research tools, even if they may be useful as consulting tools. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, we could not find any other authors using or referring to his TCB measures. It is noteworthy that the GLOBE instruments are now available on the GLOBE website, <http://www.thunderbird.edu/wwwfiles/ms/globe/>.

Another example of Graen's careless and fictional scholarship is the way he confuses very

important constructs. He calls his TCB as a methodology to find a bridge between two cultures. But he does not even define what he means by culture. He ignores all the existing literature on organizational and national cultures and invents this phrase without understanding the phenomena. Careful reading of his articles reveals that he is in fact referring to organizational Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). In Table 9.4 in his coauthored article (Graen, Hui, & Gu 2004, p. 239) he lists a series of "Third culture management issues," comparing "the American way" with "the PRC way" (People's Republic of China). For example, he claims the following: "Performance Appraisal: American way: Prepare your case with documents and sell it hard by pushing the envelope. PRC way: Prepare your Zen to be judged by your superior" (p. 239).

He provides no theoretical explanation of how and why performance appraisal is part of culture, and which level of culture? Is it part of national culture or organizational culture? And what is the empirical evidence for making such a claim about "the American Way and the PRC Way?" If the evidence is based on his interviews with a few American managers and Chinese managers, how does he know that the contrast is a difference between national cultures and not organizational cultures? While one may get away with such statements as a consultant, one should be much more rigorous as a researcher.

Graen criticizes GLOBE for making suggestions on how individual leaders can work with direct reports who are from a different culture and argues that his TCB is a better way. Recall that GLOBE identified attributes of leaders that were universally endorsed or refuted (e.g., honest, dictatorial) and those that were culturally contingent (e.g., independent). Graen refers to these aspects of leadership as stereotypes but we discuss these in terms of culturally endorsed leadership dimensions, each of which consist of a set of leadership attributes. These leadership dimensions and associated attributes seem eminently reasonable to consider when leading others in cross-cultural contexts; apparently Graen disagrees. He seems confused about the level of analysis issue. Our focus in the *Academy of Management Perspectives*

article is at the individual level based on the mean of the scales aggregated to the societal level, while his is at the organizational level: "The TCB organizations are constructed by carefully focusing on the volatile areas of cross-cultural ambiguity and conflict with a top-level cross-functional and cross-cultural team," (Graen critique) and "This organizational design team should include all cultures, the various functions (e.g., production, HRM, marketing, sales and distributor, engineering, the union, etc.), the various levels (e.g., shop floor, supervision, managers, and executives), and include some "transculturals" from all cultures at least at the "insider" level and a consultant at the "judge" level." While Graen's approach for consulting seems quite reasonable, we are not aware of any research program using TCB where the measurement and subsequent use of such data confirms Graen's contention of TCB emergence.

In addition, he seems ambivalent to the fact that he is referring to how *organizations* can better manage cross cultural issues while GLOBE is focused on how *individuals* can better manage such issues. So when he claims that his TCB approach is superior to GLOBE's approach, it is not clear what he is referring to. Is he suggesting that we should not focus at the individual level? Or is he arguing that such suggestions as the following from our *Perspectives* article are useless and dysfunctional: "First, the executive needs to share information about his own as well as the host country's culture" (p. 84). Or, "Second, the global manager needs to think about how to bridge the gap between the two cultures" (p. 84) or "The manager then needs to seek their help on both approaches; i.e., each culture making changes to accommodate and strengthen the other" (p. 85). In other words, it is not clear at all why Graen makes that claim that his TCB, with unclear and less than meticulous research methodology is superior to GLOBE in its advice, given that the two approaches are focused at different levels of analysis.

Graen takes GLOBE to task for what he calls cultural stereotypes. He criticizes GLOBE for offering surface level stereotypes and overgeneralizations about cultures: "Cultural stereotypes, although admittedly gross over-generalizations of

both similarities and differences between national cultures based on surface-level diversity, are recommended by its authors as basis for cross-cultural competence, learning, knowledge, and perspective used for building models for organizational operations across national cultures. **We strongly disagree based on our third culture research and consulting in Asia.**" (Graen critique, bolded by this author.)

Graen also makes specific remarks about GLOBE's views on China, "Clearly, even the new generation of Chinese business leaders with its emphases on individuality and independence from family is a poor fit based on our studies of coastal China. This may fit the old Chinese culture better but certainly not the new generation in Singapore" (Graen's critique).

We read Graen's two articles relating to China (Graen, Hui, & Gu 2004; Hui & Graen 1997). They are replete with statements about the American and the Chinese cultures: "In America, however, one can choose the level of relationship with any other person, including parents. . . In China, the expected behavior towards the parents by children is clearly defined by the father-son relationship in wu lun." Or "For example, the Chinese culture regulates a good portion of its collective actions using relational mechanisms such as 'face' and 'familial sanctions' (Ho, 1976), while the American culture relies more on formal, enforceable agreements such as contracts and other legal agreements" (Graen, Hui, & Gu 2004, p. 234). Graen and colleagues do not seem worried about generalizing to 1.3 billion Chinese and do not seem worried about coastal regions or age groups while making such statements. Why he is complaining about GLOBE's conclusions and interpretations, is not clear.

In any case, in criticizing GLOBE's work at the societal culture level, not only is Graen ignoring all the work that GLOBE did to ensure general validity (Hanges & Dickson, forthcoming), but he also ignores all the work by tens of other researchers on cross cultural issues since Hofstede's seminal work in 1980 (Hofstede 1980). Furthermore, since, like GLOBE, he has published on the Chinese culture, it is quite surprising that he does not show any comparison of GLOBE's and his writings

on China. If he feels that the GLOBE commentary on Chinese culture is inconsistent with his own writings or is inaccurate, he needs to show it clearly and empirically. Instead, he seems to be suffering from memory loss when he complains about GLOBE.

Concluding Remarks

In this paper, we have attempted to respond to Graen's critique of GLOBE. We found his paper surprising in two important ways: first, his view that his is the only way, whether it is about leadership or culture. Having spent most of his career as an academic, he should know well that science is not just about what we know, but also what we don't know. Scientific knowledge progresses when scholars try to push the envelope of the existing knowledge and focus on new problems or new ways of addressing old problems. Any scholar who claims that his or her method is the only way and nothing else is of any value, without presenting rigorous scientific evidence, is trying desperately to hang on to the past and to prevent the future. The GLOBE group of scholars has spent the past 12 years working together to help move the field forward. But we are the first to acknowledge that while we may have provided answers to one set of questions, many more unanswered questions remain. This is the nature of research and we dedicated a full chapter of the GLOBE first book to this topic (Javidan, House, Dorfman, & Hanges 2004).

Secondly, when a scholar takes a critical view of another's research, he/she owes it to the authors and the scientific community to spend the time and the effort to read a sufficient amount of the work being criticized. We do not expect Graen to read the entire 700 plus pages in the GLOBE book, but we do expect him to at least read and understand chapters critical to his critique along with the *Perspectives* article that he used as the justification for writing his critique. Our careful reading of his critique has left us with the uneasy conclusion that this is not the case and that is unfortunate.

But, we view this exchange as another opportunity for cross cultural researchers to better scrutinize the work of the GLOBE team and to make

up their own minds in terms of how the Graen suggestions and GLOBE writings can be helpful to them. For this, we are thankful to the *Academy of Management Perspectives* and to George Graen.

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