GlobeSmart® Profile: Psychometric Evaluation and Insight Report



Prepared July 2024

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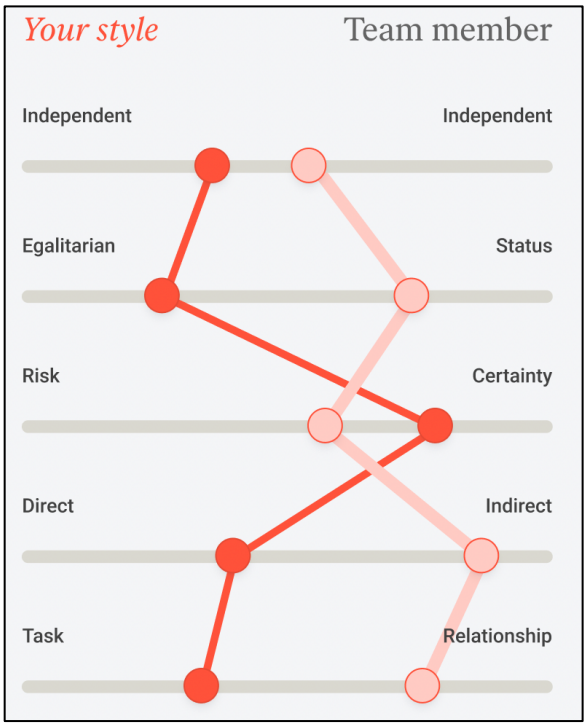
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Executive Summary

The GlobeSmart Profile (GSP) is a statistically validated tool to foster inclusion, allowing individuals to better understand their work style and how it relates to other colleagues and cultures. After completing a survey, work style preferences are compiled into a profile chart with placements across five dimensions:

- Independent-Interdependent
- Egalitarianism-Status
- Risk-Certainty
- Direct-Indirect
- Task-Relationship



The GlobeSmart Profile is a useful tool for starting discussions about the impact of culture and work-style differences. It also provides custom advice and strategies for adapting one's work style to collaborate more inclusively with others.

Since its inception, the psychometrics and content of the GlobeSmart Profile have been regularly re-evaluated to maintain a high standard of rigor and reliability.

Most recently, in 2022 and early 2023, we utilized an iterative testing methodology to review GSP data and make incremental changes to survey items that were then redeployed for additional testing. This process was repeated until a higher degree of reliability was established. Iterative versions of the GlobeSmart Profile were tested with more than 8,000 users across 140 countries representing corporate, nonprofit, and academic organizations. The most recent data analysis demonstrated good reliability across all five dimensions of the GSP (Cronbach's alpha range: 0.62-0.73).

Overview of the GlobeSmart Profile and its Dimensions

The GlobeSmart Profile (GSP) is a tool for promoting inclusive collaboration in the workplace and beyond. It allows individuals to learn about their preferred work style, and then extend that understanding to the work styles of other individuals, teams, organizations, and cultures. The GSP is useful for starting discussions about the impact of culture on collaboration and offers personalized strategies for adapting one's style to work better with others.

The GSP is based on a previous Aperian instrument known as the GlobeSmart Assessment Profile (GAP). The GAP, originally developed in 2000, was an adaptation of a highly reliable and valid research instrument developed by leading cross-cultural researcher, Dr. David Matsumoto of San Francisco State University.

Dimensions

The GlobeSmart Profile has five dimensions:

- Independent-Interdependent
- Egalitarianism-Status
- Risk-Certainty
- Direct-Indirect
- Task-Relationship

Independent	Theme/Definition	Interdependent
People at this end of the dimension tend to: • Place great importance on individual identity • Derive identity from personal choices and achievements • Prefer taking action on their own	How do I derive my identity?	People at this end of the dimension tend to: • Place great importance on group harmony and cooperation • Derive identity from group affiliation • Feel a sense of duty, obligation, and loyalty to ascribed groups
Notes: This dimension had its roots in elements of Hofstede's dimensions of *Individualism v. Collectivism* and *Masculinity v. Femininity.*		

Egalitarianism	Theme/Definition	Status
People at this end of the dimension tend to: • Be comfortable challenging the views of superiors • Be flexible about roles • Treat everyone much the same • Assume power and authority should be shared broadly among a group	What is my preference for how my group should be structured, and how power should be distributed?	People at this end of the dimension tend to: • Prefer not to challenge those above them • Be deferential to superiors • Adapt behavior depending on relative status • Assume power and authority should be reserved for a few members of a group
Notes: This dimension is related to Hofstede's concept of *Power Distance*.		

Risk	Theme/Definition	Certainty
People at this end of the dimension tend to: • Prefer rapid decision making and quick results • Place great importance on flexibility and initiative • Value speed over thoroughness	How do I make decisions in uncertain or ambiguous situations?	People at this end of the dimension tend to: • Spend significant time on background research • Establish proper procedures before starting a project • Value thoroughness over speed
Notes: This dimension is related to Hofstede's concept of *Uncertainty Avoidance*.		

Direct	Theme/Definition	Indirect
People at this end of the dimension tend to: • Come to the point quickly	How do I communicate requests, tasks, and feedback?	People at this end of the dimension tend to: • Spend time explaining the context before coming to the point

• Be forthright in asking questions in most settings • Be comfortable making requests, giving direction, or disagreeing with others • Give negative feedback directly		• Avoid asking questions in public settings • Express disagreement in subtle ways • Give negative feedback indirectly

Notes: This dimension came from a variety of sources, and there are a number of issues that should be addressed when discussing this dimension. For example:

- **Hierarchy:** The degree of directness in communication in many cultures will often be tied to one's position in an organization's hierarchy, i.e., whether one is "above" or "below" the people to whom a communication is addressed. The intent in our use of this dimension is to address the degree of directness in communication among people at similar levels of hierarchy rather than between superiors and subordinates.

- **Explicit vs. Implicit:** Cultures also differ on how "explicit" or "implicit" they are, i.e. the degree to which communication is supposed to be precise and clear (explicit), or sophisticated and nuanced (implicit). Explicitness is related to directness, but "explicit" communicators may not necessarily be the most direct when giving feedback to others. U.S. Americans, for example, may be very explicit in their communication, but they are not nearly as direct or confrontational when giving feedback as are the Dutch, Israelis, Germans, or Russians.

Task	Theme/Definition	Relationship
People at this end of the dimension tend to: • Place high value on reaching goals and objectives on schedule • Prioritize accomplishing tasks over maintaining relationships	When working on new projects, do I prefer to address tasks or relationships first?	People at this end of the dimension tend to: • View time building relationships as key to achieving good results • Prioritize maintaining relationships over accomplishing tasks on time • Focus on who people know as much as what

• Focus on what people achieve more than who they know		they themselves can achieve
Notes: This dimension is related to Hofstede's concept of *Individualism v. Collectivism*.		

Survey Items

The GSP consists of 40 survey items, 35 of which are scored to produce individuals' profiles. The five remaining items are included as experimental items but are not scored. When sufficient data is available for these additional items, they will be examined for possible inclusion in the scored survey. A seven point Likert agreement scale is used as the response scale for the items, ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

Culture Profile Placements

The culture placements in the GSP were derived from a combination of three data sources, each of which build on the previous one:

1. **Merged data of leading cross-cultural researchers:** The GSP is based on the previous Aperian instrument known as the GAP. In the GAP, the country placements on the dimensions were derived from the merged data of leading cross-cultural researchers such as Hofstede, Schwartz, McCrae, and Inglehart. The placements were empirically derived, statistical averages of available country data on the five cultural dimensions as they existed in research literature.

2. **GlobeSmart Profile User Data:** In addition to the data from leading cross-cultural researchers, the development of the GSP included data from more than 700,000 users, each of whom filled out demographic items before completing the GAP survey. This user data was combined with the above-mentioned research data to update a number of country placements.

3. **Expert Judgment Data:** Finally, expert opinions from a dozen Aperian trainers and associates living and working in countries around the world were incorporated to make final adjustments to the country placements. There were three rounds of expert input in this revision process, with each round receiving higher levels of convergence on the placements of countries on the dimensions by the group of experts.

While the culture placements on each dimension are based on the data sets mentioned above, it is important to note that these placements are not absolutes. Many people from a particular culture will fall to the left or to the right of the culture average on the chart. It is also useful to keep in mind that cultures evolve over time, and typical behaviors along the selected dimensions of culture can change. Because of this, Aperian continues to update the culture placements in the GSP every few years.

History and Development of the GlobeSmart Profile

In 2016, the GlobeSmart Profile underwent an extensive revision process. The goal of the revision was to update the dimension descriptions, make them mutually exclusive, and re-evaluate the survey items for each dimension.

With a panel of content experts, new questions were developed and tested among a diverse sample of 187 participants. By using subject matter experts to develop, review, and edit individual questions, preliminary face validity was established for the GSP. Psychometric evaluation included construct validity, which confirmed that the five GSP dimensions are related but distinct, and each dimension was composed of appropriate questions. This was accomplished using exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation. The correlation between each dimension and its corresponding individual items was examined using the component matrix, revealing a clear association between the individual items and the dimensions they were intended to assess. Results of the confirmatory factor analysis clearly supported the five dimension model, with all individual questions “loading” on their intended dimension, and with nearly all factor loadings being greater than the .30 threshold.

Dimension	Average Factor Loadings
Direct-Indirect	.63
Risk-Certainty	.60
Independent-Interdependence	.51
Task-Relationship	.56
Egalitarianism-Status	.48

How the GlobeSmart Profile was updated

Whereas the previous revision of the GlobeSmart Profile (2016) focused on the big picture, in this latest revision from 2022 through early 2023, the focus was on improving the reliability of the individual survey items. This meant ensuring that all items are clear, succinct, and interpreted similarly by all participants (Tourangeau, R.). To assess reliability, we used Cronbach's alpha (α) test and established a threshold of α>.60 as an indicator of good reliability (Taber, KS).

Questions were reviewed and modified using an iterative testing approach in which small changes were made incrementally over time, with periodic review and analysis informing the subsequent round of changes. This cyclical process repeated itself until we had strong, established reliability as well as positive feedback from Aperian stakeholders and end users.

Current Psychometrics

In early 2023, the revised GSP survey items were iteratively tested with more than 8,000 participants.

By conducting the tests with active GlobeSmart users, we were able to ensure participation by users from around the world. GlobeSmart users come from more than 140 countries, the majority of whom are located in the United States, India, the United Kingdom, the Philippines, Germany, Japan, Singapore, the Netherlands, and Poland. More than 200 corporate, nonprofit, and academic organizations are represented in our pool of participants.

The most recent reliability analysis took place in February 2023. As demonstrated in the table below, all dimensions had solid reliability above our established threshold (α>.60).

Dimension	Current Alpha (α)
Direct-Indirect	.62
Risk-Certainty	.63
Independent-Interdependent	.73
Task-Relationship	.65
Egalitarianism-Status	.65

We will continue to evaluate both reliability and validity to maintain the psychometric properties and rigor of the GlobeSmart Profile.

About Aperian

More than 30 years ago, Aperian pioneered a new approach to understanding culturally diverse teams and the impact this diversity can have on organizations. This expertise is the foundation of our data-driven learning platform, with scalable, interactive solutions that cultivate inclusion for measurable impact.

Starting with individuals, we help people show up with empathy and insight, inspiring change at work and beyond. This inspires teams to bridge differences, allowing unique strengths to shine through, and accelerating innovation. And it ultimately affects entire organizations—those operating globally in reach, mindset, or ambition—helping build the skills and confidence to create inclusive environments that connect people and fuel growth.

Aperian has grown from a two-person team into a dynamic workforce spanning 60 countries and 32 languages. We are a trusted partner to over half of the Fortune Global 100, and have turned three million learners, and counting, into changemakers. Designed for human impact on a global scale, Aperian enables learning for transformation.

References

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