

Dobson, Paula and Garry Gelade

2012 Exploring the Roots of Culture Using Spatial Autocorrection. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 46 (2) 160-187.

The objective of Dobson and Gelade's article, *Exploring the Roots of Culture Using Spatial Autocorrection*, is to find a relationship between national culture and geographic and ecosocial space. The author's use Moran's I (similar to Pearson's correlation coefficient with values between -1 and +1, numbers closer to 0 having weaker to no relationships) to measure the strength of relationships. They use data from previous research/evidence to compare relationships as well as from GLOBE. The data from previous research was not detailed, but the article mentioned the indicators for socioeconomic space were taken from the Nations Human Development Index, the religious matrix data from the Association of Religious Data Archives, and temperature from a Tyndall Centre data set. The authors acknowledged that their results from comparing different past researchers' results may be unsound and complicated, especially since different researchers researched different countries. Their main point was to prove how the GLOBE analysis was more accurate since the past research looked at personal values in the aggregate whereas GLOBE looks at compared beliefs of how things should be (beliefs) with how people believe things are (practice). When analyzing results from previous research and GLOBE they looked at correlations with a $|r|$ of 0.71 or higher with p 's less than .05, .01 and .001 (each result distinguished by different markers). Their results showed that people's beliefs (not practices per se) about how society should be were strongly influenced by religion. Their research demonstrated that countries that are geographically close, similar religious profiles, and similar levels of national development are culturally similar and this national culture has less to do with physical climate. The article would be stronger if it accounted in more detail to the various cultures within countries as opposed to national culture and described in more detail where the data came from. With that said the authors acknowledged some weaknesses and discussed some nuanced variables and relationships in order to make their point.