

First-Year Adaptation of International Missionaries and Humanitarian Aid Workers

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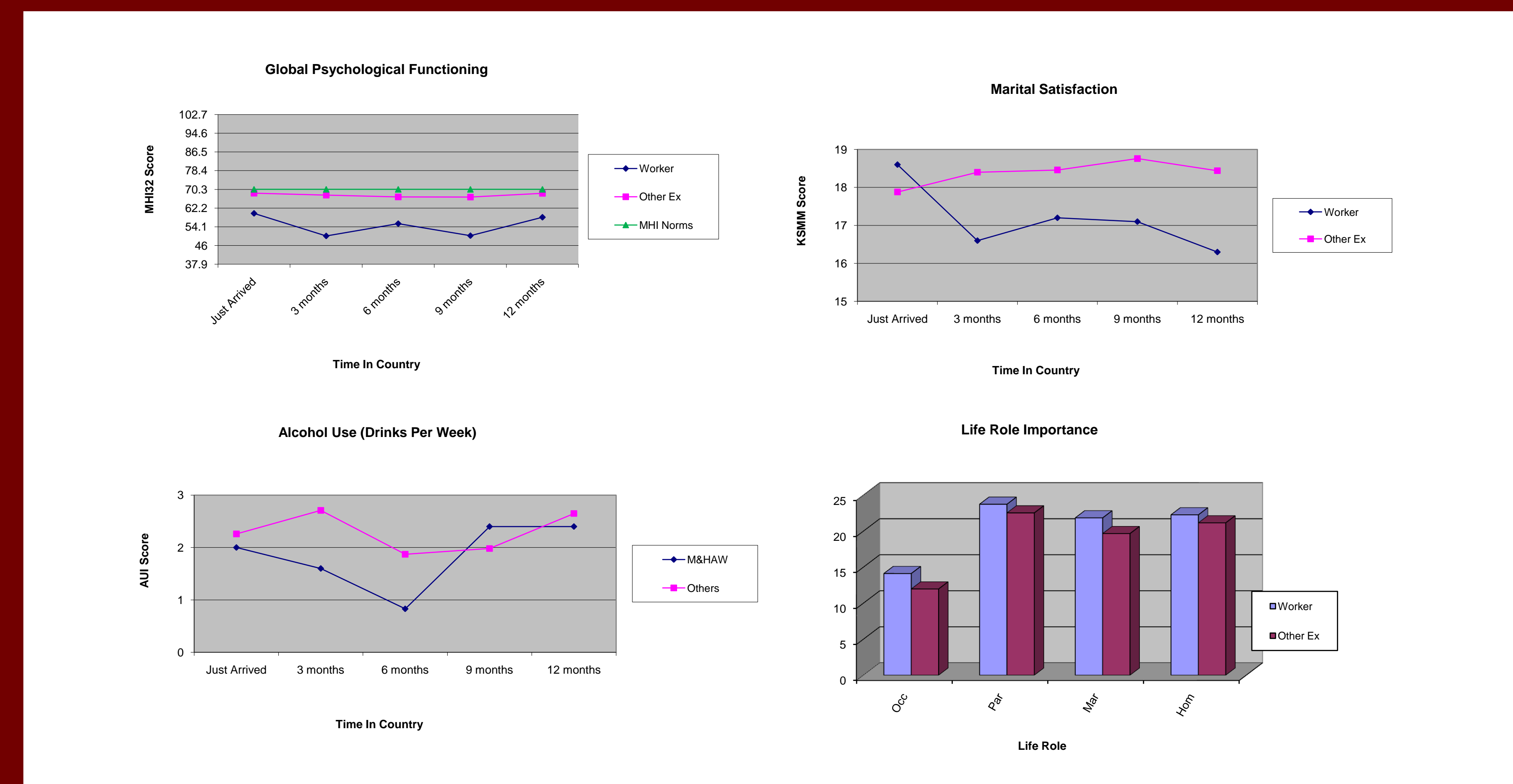
Abstract

Compared to other expatriate groups, missionaries have reported less satisfaction in their foreign postings (Navara & James, 2002). In our project, we sought to further delineate the adjustment experiences of the wives of missionary and humanitarian aid worker families (M&HAW). Data were from a larger project (Bikos et al., 2006) where 32 American, female, expatriate spouses who relocated to Ankara, Turkey, completed measures of global functioning and were interviewed at *just-arrived, 3-month, 6-month, 9-month, and 12-month* stages. In our current project, data from five female spouses of missionary and/or humanitarian aid workers (M&HAW) were examined. Results of a Consensual Qualitative Research analysis (Hill, et al. 2005; Hill, Thompson, & Williams, 1997) are presented in the context of 11 domains. Although the small and unequal sample sizes prevent the accurate use of inferential statistics, graphing of mean marital satisfaction and global psychological functioning scores show the M&HAW sample to be lower at each of the time-in-country intervals than other expatriate groups. In fact, M&HAW scores of global psychological functioning were lower than a normative sample of medical patients with chronic illness. In contrast, M&HAW women valued marital, parental, occupational, and homemaker life roles more than other expats.

Culture Shock Model



Results



Conclusions

- ✓ M&HAW appear to have lower scores on global adjustment factors.
- ✓ The Culture Shock Model is inadequate to predict adaptation.
- ✓ Research team investigating the possibility of a more substantial project.

Table 1
Table of Domains, Core Ideas, and Frequencies

Domain	Core Idea	Total Unit Count	Total Participant Count	Frequency Just Arrived	Frequency Three Months	Frequency Six Months	Frequency Nine Months	Frequency Twelve Months	
Emotional Functioning	Symptoms of Mental disorder	12	2	Rare	Rare	Rare	Rare	Rare	
	Euthymic Mental State	11	5	Rare	Typical	Typical	Variant	Variant	
	Mild Negative Affect	11	4	Variant	Rare	Typical	Rare	Rare	
	Exhibiting Loneliness	5	1	Rare	Rare	Rare	Rare	Rare	
	Exhibiting Mixed Affect	4	2	Rare	Rare	Rare	Rare	Rare	
	Active Spiritual Connection	4	2	Variant				Rare	
Faith	Peace in Adversity	5	1	Rare				Rare	
	Marital Conflict	5	3	Rare	Variant	Rare	Variant	Variant	
Family	Marital Satisfaction	6	4	Variant	Rare			Typical	
	Children's Educational Conflict	0							
	Children's Educational Satisfaction	1	1		Rare				
	Child Health Struggles	3	1			Rare	Rare		
	Child Health Satisfaction	0							
	Engaged in Family Planning	11	4	Typical	Variant	Variant	Rare	Rare	
	Children's Social Struggles	3	3		Rare		Rare	Rare	
	Children's Social Success	6	3		Rare	Variant	Typical		
	Home Country Family Support	6	4	Variant	Variant	Variant	Variant	Variant	
	Home Country Family Distress	10	4	Typical	Variant	Variant	Variant	Typical	
	Role Stability w/in Family	3	2	Rare		Variant			
	Role Change w/in Family	10	4		Rare	Rare	Variant	Typical	
	Financial Struggles	2	1		Rare		Rare		
Future	Positive Expectations	3	3	Rare		Rare	Rare		
	Negative Anticipated Struggles	2	1			Rare			
	Career Orientated goals	6	2	Rare	Rare			Rare	
	Family Orientated Goals	2	2				Variant		
	Financial Goals	4	2	Rare	Variant			Rare	
	Plans for Repatriation	3	3	Rare				Rare	
	Personal Development	1	1				Rare	Variant	
	Experiencing repatriation uncertainty	2	2						
	Negative Health & Environment Concern	4	2	Rare	Rare		Rare		
Host Country	Positive Health & Environment Concern	9	4	Rare	Rare	Typical	Typical	Typical	
	Positive Cultural Interactions	18	5	Rare	Rare	Rare	General	Typical	
	Negative Cultural Interactions	6	3			Rare	Rare	Rare	
	Concerns with Living Arrangements	3	3	Rare	Variant				
	Comparisons to Home	10	5	Rare	Rare	Typical	Rare	Variant	
	Establishing Daily Routines	18	4	Variant	Typical	Typical	Typical	Variant	
	Interpreting Cultural Norms	8	4		Variant	Rare	Rare	Variant	
	Learning Turkish as a Goal	9	4	Rare	Variant	Variant	Variant	Variant	
Language	Language Progress	5	3			Typical	Typical	Rare	
	Challenges to Learning Turkish	10	3	Rare	Rare	Rare	Typical	Rare	
	Social Challenges Due to Not Knowing	6	3	Rare	Rare	Rare	Variant	Variant	
	Language Regrets	6	3	Rare	Rare	Rare	Rare	Rare	
	Positive Experiences with Language	5	3	Rare	Rare	Rare	Rare	Rare	
	Settling In	29	5	Variant	Typical	Typical	Typical	Variant	
	Logistics	Difficulties with Technology	9	5	Rare	Variant	Variant	Rare	Rare
Comforts from Home		4	2	Rare	Variant				
Navigating Organizational Benefits		25	5	General	Typical	Variant	Typical	Typical	
Move, Luggage Stories and Nightmare		7	3	Typical					
Making Ends Meet Financially		6	4		Rare		Rare	Variant	
Predeparture Struggles		4	3	Variant				Rare	
Household		Finding Permanent Residence	7	4	Typical	Rare		Variant	
Household	Appliance and Furniture Issues	7	3		Variant	Rare	Rare		
	Negative Housing Problems	2	2		Rare	Rare	Rare		
	Household Help Issues	8	3	Rare	Rare	Variant	Variant	Rare	
	Household Supply Issues	4	3	Variant	Rare	Rare	Rare		
	Pitfalls of Vicarious Living	2	2		Rare			Rare	
	Negative Cultural Experience	3		Rare					
	Previous Experience	Positive Cultural Experiences	1	1		Rare			
Country Comparisons to Turkey		11	4	Variant	Variant		Variant	Rare	
Learning Experiences to Build On		16	4	Variant	General	Variant	Rare	Typical	
Training and Briefing		4	2	Rare				Rare	
Connection/Disconnection		3	1	Rare	Rare				
Christian Community		1	1		Rare				
Social Support		Finding Support for Children	3	1	Rare	Rare			
		Support from Local Community	12	4	Rare	Rare	Variant	Variant	Typical
		Support From Other Americans	6	4			Rare	Typical	Variant
		Support from Expatriate/International comr	13	4	Rare	Typical		Typical	Typical
		Church Based Support	4	4	Rare	Variant			Rare
	Support From Spouse	7	4	Variant	Rare	Rare	Variant	Rare	
	Support From Children	1	1			Rare			
	Distal Support from Friends and Family	5	4	Variant	Rare	Rare	Rare		
	Distal Negative Reactions From Friends	6	4	Rare				Typical	
	Impact of the Organizational Culture on Technology's Role in Maintaining Soci	9	5	Variant		Typical	Variant	Rare	
	Advice About Creating Social Connect	6	4		Variant		General	General	
September 11	Feeling Isolated	10	5	Variant		Rare	Typical	Rare	
	Reunited with Old Friends	5	3		Rare	Rare	Variant		
	Negative Experience with Visiting Fam	4	2	Variant	Rare				
	Global Feelings of Support	1	1			Rare			
	Existential/Philosophical Reflections	22	5	Rare	Typical	Variant	General	Rare	
	Security Precautions - Behavioral	0							
	Worries - Affective	2	2				Variant		
	Relating Personal Reactions	3	2		Rare		Rare		
	Negative Reactions of Family and Frie	5	1	Rare	Rare				
	Felt Sense of Security	6	5				Rare	Rare	
	Supportive Local Response	2	2				Rare		

N = 5; General = >4, Typical = 3, Variant = 2, Rare = 1