

Research Insights – The Journeys of Two Papers

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Hang Seng University - May 8, 2023



From Idea Inception to Publication

Shaffer, M. A. & Harrison, D. A. (2001). Forgotten partners of international assignments: Development and test of a model of spouse adjustment. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86, 238-254.

Lau, V. P., & Shaffer, M. A. (2023). A typological theory of domestic employees' acculturation stress and adaptation in the context of globalization. *Academy of Management Review* (published online in 2021).

Agenda

- Planning the Journey
 - Before the research project starts
- Journeying into the Wilderness
 - Submitting the paper
- Staying Alive
 - Managing manuscripts and revisions
- Returning Home
 - Preparing for the next project

Planning the Journey

Before your research project starts



Encountering the Unknown

- What is the new idea?
 - Start with clear, strong, and novel research ideas/questions
- Ways to ask questions:
 - New questions about new phenomena
 - New questions about old answers
 - New perspectives on old questions
 - New answers to old questions
 - New extensions to old answers

The Start of Two Projects

- AMR - Global Domestics (Conversation over lunch on Dec. 30, 2017)
 - A new question about a new phenomenon
 - How do domestic employees who are caught up in the globalization process adapt to an altered work environment in their home countries where what was once familiar has now become unfamiliar?
 - Differentiated experiences of global and domestic employees
- JAP - Expatriate Spouses (Dissertation topic 1993/94)
 - New perspective on old questions
 - What is the adjustment process for expatriate spouses?
 - Differentiated experiences of expatriates and expatriate spouses

Assess Relevance and Interest

- Who cares about this research?
 - Primary audience
 - Your own interest
 - Coffee house test
- Why should they continue to care?
 - Shelf life of the idea
 - Staying power of the question
 - Process lasts a long time - at least 2 years before submission

***Resources Needed
to Make Your
Project Top-Tier***

Compelling ideas

Access to quality data

Access to quality data

Access to quality data

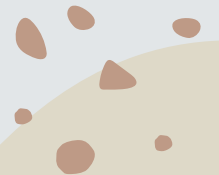
Time

Specific expertise, co-authors

Clever, creative arguments

Journeying into the Wilderness

Submitting the Manuscript



You Need a Lot to Get There

Strong scholarship alone carries no guarantee or even high probability that your paper will be published.

Strong scholarship that is well-packaged and clearly communicated does. It will get published somewhere!

Map it Out

- Target a journal
- Write a Letter to the Editor (don't send it)
 - Describe the major themes
 - Specify 3-4 major contributions
 - Highlight other strengths

A Map for the AMR Paper

- Targeted Journal - AMR
- Major Themes
 - Globalization as an exogenous force that influences domestic employees
 - Acculturation stress
 - Adaptation approaches of employees and adaptation cultures of organizations
- Contributions
 - Resource-based perspective on acculturation at both individual and organizational levels
 - Integration of theories by Hobfoll (1989) and Berry (1997) to provide strong theoretical arguments
 - Typological theoretical approach

A Map for the JAP Paper

- Targeted Journals – AMJ, JIBS, PPsyc, and (finally) JAP
- Major Themes
 - Experiences of expatriate spouses differ from those of expatriates
 - Focused on both the content and process of adjustment
 - Adopted both inductive and deductive approaches
- Contributions
 - Identified ‘personal adjustment’ as a distinct form
 - Developed and tested a model of inputs to expatriate spouse adjustment
 - Revealed that adjustment is more than a stress/strain experience – for spouses it is also a process of identity (re)formation

Writing the Paper

- Always read the Style Guide
- Use simple, plain language
- Tell a story with an interesting message
- Find an editing pal
- Solicit friendly reviews
- Submit to conferences



Some Lessons Learned

- Stay on course – set deadlines
- Err on the deductive side for empirical papers
 - No backing in or retro-fitting
 - Theory is fundamental – it explains why
 - Summary of studies is not theory
- Explain choices of constructs, theory, methods, analyses
- Revisit contributions – these evolve
- Finish strong

Anticipate Reviewer Pushbacks

- Acknowledge Limitations
 - Leverage these for next studies
- Some 'biggest' limitations (in behavioral research)
 - Common method variance
 - Self-report data
 - Cross-sectional design
 - Statistical insignificance



Staying Alive

Managing manuscripts and revisions

*Will it
be accepted?*

Basic Decision Rule

Need majority + decision maker



Some Examples

2 of 3
reviewers plus
Editor/AE

3 of 4
reviewers plus
Editor/AE

3 of 3
reviewers

2 of 2
reviewers
(Editor
needed?)

A Timeline for the AMR Paper

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED
12/30/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initial discussion of idea for the paper• Draft 1 of 70 different models
12/10/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submitted to AMR Hackathon Workshop - rejected
10/28/2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submitted original version to AMR
01/31/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High-risk R&R• 16 pages, single-spaced comments from review team
05/05/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submitted 1st revision to AMR
08/12/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2nd R&R opportunity• 16 pages, single-spaced comments from review team• 2 reviewers doubtful/1 reviewer + AE positive
12/13/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submitted 2nd revision to AMR
03/15/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conditional acceptance - WOOHOO!• 5 pages, single-spaced comments from review team
04/05/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submitted 3rd revision to AMR
04/06/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final acceptance!!!

Major Concerns of the Review Team

- 1st R&R
 - Scope is too broad
 - Need to drop the first 4 propositions about the antecedents of acculturation stress
 - Lack of theoretical precision
- 2nd R&R
 - Scope is still too broad - need to just focus on individual and organizational levels
 - Clarify globalization and address confusion about global culture and negotiated culture
 - Clarify how we frame resources
 - Provide stronger rationale and justification for proposed relationships
- 3rd R&R
 - Clarify the use of 'dominant' and 'non-dominant' concepts - i.e., although domestic employees are the dominant group, they engage in similar patterns of acculturation as non-dominant groups
 - Avoid deterministic language (e.g., use 'may/can' instead of 'do/will')

Staying on Track



**Start on the
revision right
away**



**Create a
response
document**



**Assemble
references and
resources**



Make a plan
Gantt Chart
Coordinate
response with co-
authors
Map review team
comments on the
paper

Converse with the Review Team

- Always provide a point-by-point response to every comment
- Use an informal, conversational style
- Write the responses first and then change the paper
- Win over the reviewers
 - Evidence and logic trump citations and emotion
 - Bleed a little (or a lot)
 - Choose your battles and opponents
- Be humble but resolute

Possible Potholes on the Trail

- Inevitable shortening of the paper
 - Don't get personally attached to paragraphs
 - Stay on message
 - Note lengthening required by reviewer comments
- Some reversals are possible – don't argue with reviewers or get defensive
- 'I'm just so sick of this paper'

Returning Home

Preparing for the next project



Following up...

- Due diligence tasks
 - Check references again
 - Work with the copy editor
 - Correct page proofs
- Be proactive promoting your paper
 - Send unsolicited reprints to colleagues
 - Accept opportunities for dialogues
- Celebrate your accomplishments

Making the Next Journey Easier

- Keep templates or databases
 - Arguments and rationales
 - Topical responses
- Volunteer to be a reviewer
 - Build favo(u)r with reviewers
 - Get an inside look at the process
 - See how others 'work' the system
- Build a pre-review network

Ideas for the Next Journey

Reimagining Expatriate Adjustment
Going beyond Global Employees
Expanding the Concept of Global Work

David Harrison
Mihaela Dimitrova
John Kammeyer-Mueller
Teresa Harrison
Fabian Froese
Cristina Gibson
Tobias Blay
Jose Benitez

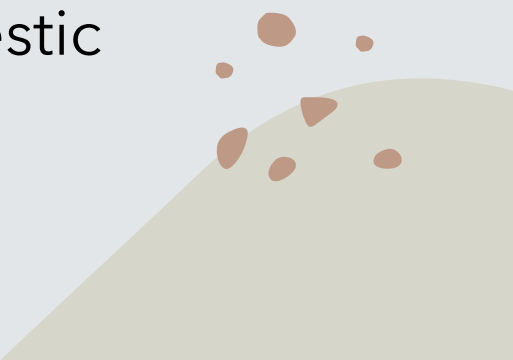
Reimagining Expatriate Adjustment

- For 30+ years adjustment has been a focal construct in the international HR literature
- So, isn't it finally time to move away from studying adjustment?!
- Move away from asking 'what' to asking 'how'
 - Shift from viewing adjustment as a static state to viewing it as a dynamic process
- Look to other disciplines/areas of study that examine change
 - e.g., the newcomer socialization literature



*What Can We Do to
Move Beyond
Expatriate
Adjustment*

Adjustment of Other
Forms of Global
Employees and Domestic
Employees



Adjustment of Alternative Forms of Global Employees

Alternative forms

- Frequent international business travelers
- Short-term assignees
- Global virtual team members
- Global domestics
- Immigrants

Differences that might affect adjustment

- Shorter times spent in host countries
- Multiple countries visited
- Degree of uncertainty and organizational support
- Influence on family members

Adjustment of Employees without Global Roles

- Host Country Nationals (HCNs)
- Domestic employees

Some Generative Research Questions

Targeting Expatriates and Other Actors



Dynamic Interplay Processes

- Do expatriates use different proactive behaviors depending on whom they seek to approach (e.g., supervisors, colleagues, host-country nationals outside the organization)?
- As time passes, would expatriates decrease their proactive behaviors? As expatriates learn more about the local culture and environment, are they more likely to increase their proactive behaviors towards host-country nationals and decrease them towards other expatriates?
- What type of support and assistance are organizational and host-country actors most likely to provide in response? Are some actors more inclined to help than others (e.g., other expatriates vs. host-country nationals; peers vs. supervisors)?
- Would family actors engage in proactive behaviors to try to adjust to the host-country? What would these proactive behaviors be? Who are the most likely targets of their behaviors? Would expatriates benefit from the proactive behaviors of their family members (e.g., benefit from the growing social network of family members)?

Stable Factors Influencing the Dynamic Processes

- Are there personal factors (e.g., personality, core self-evaluations, prior international experience, cultural intelligence) that help expatriates better navigate interactions with host-country actors and thus, ensure that their proactive behaviors achieve the intended goals?
- Is it more difficult for certain groups of expatriates (e.g., women, disadvantaged minorities) to proactively approach others in and outside of work? Will their proactive behaviors be less effective in achieving the desired goals? Do they face greater external barriers to remaining authentic instead of needing to conform?
- How do institutional differences in economic and legal systems affect the proactivity of expatriates? Do expatriates from a country that sanctions corruption and other misbehaviors struggle more to adjust in countries that are more prone to corruption and other forms of misbehavior (e.g., sex discrimination)?

Going beyond Global Employees

Immigrants are those who leave their origin country intending to become an enduring resident in a destination country

Socially characterized as sources of political strain and domestic backlash - but

Most immigrants are those seeking better jobs, improved standard of living, and a more secure future for themselves and their families

Why Study Immigrant Employees

- Corporations are generally supportive of immigrants, especially when highly-skilled domestic workers are scarce/expensive
- Immigrants bring unique resources that can add value to organizations and communities
- Incumbents often protest what they see as negligent entry standards for foreigners
- Immigrants are easily stigmatized, abused, and even attacked

Overarching Research Question and Specific ‘Conversation’ Areas

- What are the unique individual, interpersonal, and cultural mechanisms that govern immigrant experiences and contributions to firms?
- 4 main micro-level research areas
 - Identity, status, and insecurity
 - Creativity and voice
 - Support and antagonism from coworkers and supervisors
 - Social network structures



Generative Research Questions

Intended to stimulate conversations about immigrant employees



Identity, Status, and Insecurity

- What features of origin and destination cultural identities are kept or relinquished by immigrants as they transition between nations and workplaces?
- How do official or governmental designations of an immigrant's status (e.g., "tiers" or permanent versus temporary) affect the sorting of social status in the workplace? How is that sorting internalized by immigrants?
- If insecurity is a persistent stressor for immigrants, do immigrant employees develop greater hardiness and useful coping strategies that dissipate its effects over time?

Creativity and Voice

- What are the underlying processes that help individual immigrants translate their multicultural experiences and multilingual abilities into the expression of creative ideas?
- How do immigrants contribute to team creativity? What team structures and dynamics facilitate and or hinder the contributions of immigrants?
- What personal (e.g., language ability, conflict avoidance styles, etc.), leadership (e.g., support, LMX, etc.) and organizational (e.g., structures, processes, etc.) factors facilitate or hinder immigrants' expression of creative ideas?

Support and Antagonism

- Under what conditions are immigrant employees seen by coworkers and supervisors as *legitimate* or accepted members of teams, organizations, or communities? Are they less likely to receive discretionary efforts or OCB-I's?
- How long does it take for coworkers to *trust* immigrant employees; what sequences of competence, benevolence, and integrity-based trustworthiness speed it up or slow it down?
- How vulnerable are immigrants to unfair treatment in resource allocation decisions; how often are they targeted for managerial hostility or abusive supervision?

Social Network Structures

- What are the outcomes and consequences of immigrants located centrally or at the periphery of the workplace social network?
- How often and in what ways do immigrant employees use their origin culture or workplace social networks to acquire new jobs or develop critical ties to start a new company?

Expanding the Concept of Global Work

- Historically, expatriate research has focused on the expatriate and their transition from a home to a host country
- Recently, scholars have shifted focus to consider global work itself
 - Demands of global work: international travel, cognitive flexibility, and nonwork demands
- Consider new horizons – global virtual work (i.e., remote, hybrid, or technology-enabled work)

What is Global Virtual Work?



- Collaborative work among individuals that spans across different countries and is supported by technology mediated communication
- Goes beyond recent definitions of virtual work by emphasizing the cross-national (e.g., laws/regulations, labor costs, migration), and cross-cultural (e.g., values, language, time zones) facets of geographic dispersion.

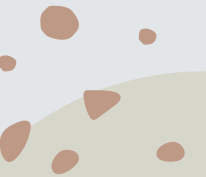
Moving beyond the IHRM Literature

- Global virtual teamwork - team-based collaboration of individuals who are globally dispersed, who rely exclusively on communication technologies, and who accomplish a common goal
- Distributed work - different types of global virtual work arrangements beyond global virtual teams
 - Gig work (performed online such as cloud work)
 - Global digital platforms
 - Offshoring or outsourcing
 - Digital or global nomads



A New Model of Global Virtual Work

A work in progress!



Digital environment

- Digital platforms
- Digital infrastructure
- Cloud infrastructure
- Business applications

Country environment

- Law & regulations
- Culture
- Time zones

Macro environment

- Change in global labor structures
- Migration

Organizational practices

- Global job design
- International recruitment
- Cross-cultural training
- Leveraging organizational practices

Team characteristics

- Global leadership
- Dispersion (i.e., diversity, time zones)

Individual characteristics

- Cross-cultural competence
- Language skills
- Digital technical skills

Relational dynamics

- Trust
- Conflict
- Communication/coordination
- Socio-cultural integration

Organizational outcomes

- Knowledge and innovation
- Financial performance

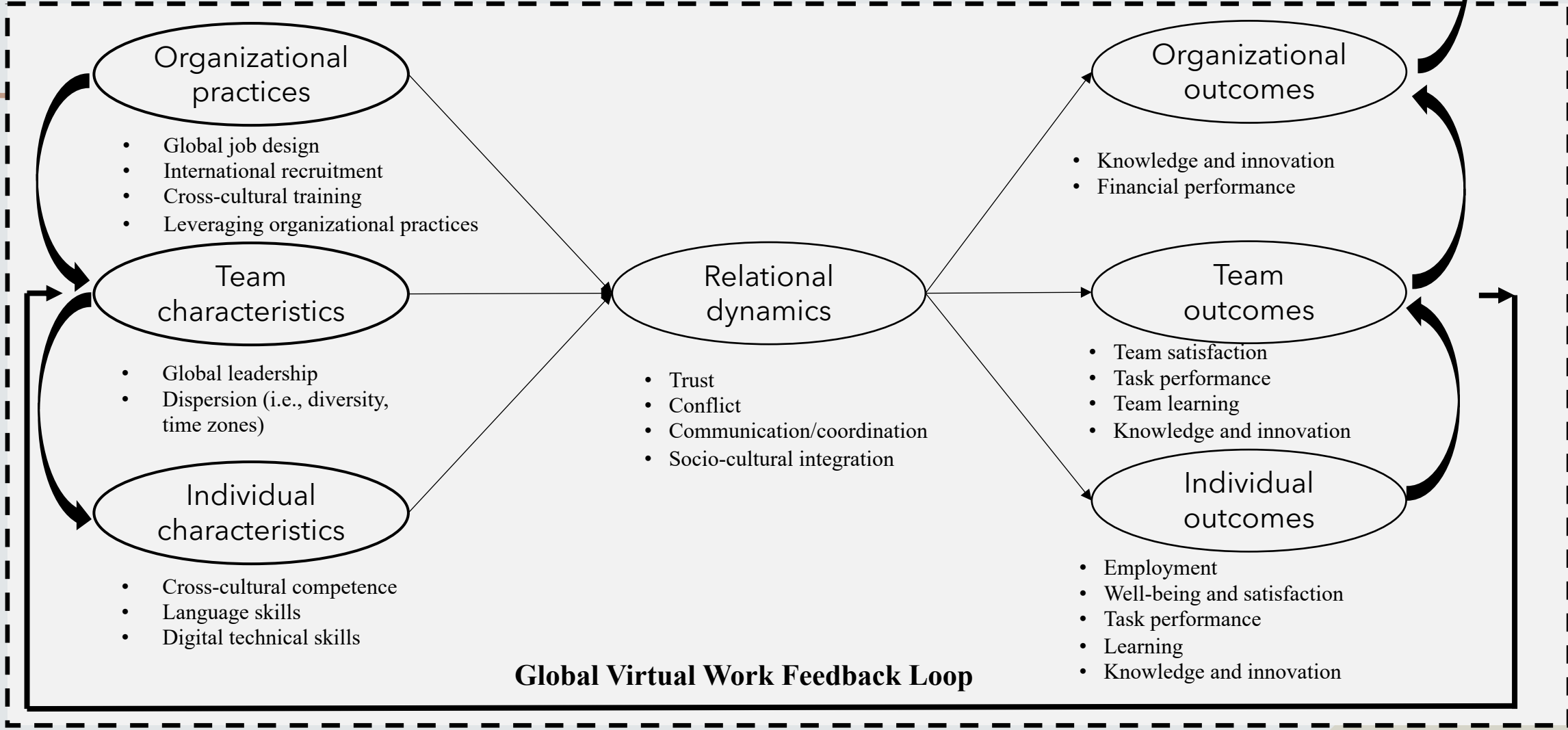
Team outcomes

- Team satisfaction
- Task performance
- Team learning
- Knowledge and innovation

Individual outcomes

- Employment
- Well-being and satisfaction
- Task performance
- Learning
- Knowledge and innovation

Global Virtual Work Feedback Loop



Some Generative Research Questions

Navigating Boundaries, New Technology, and Temporality



Navigating Global Work

- How do MNEs socially integrate the increased diversity of global workers who span cultures, geographies, and levels of analysis?
- Is there a dark side to the technological revolution and the increased adoption of automation and robotics as well as AI-enhanced systems in manufacturing and distribution?
- What is the role of time in global virtual work? Consider the need to synchronize work across multiple time zones, the influence of dynamic environments, the time frames allocated for global work and time pressures for completing it, and time as an exogenous force.

Thank You!

Any Questions?