**Current Study**

- Prospective analyses compared the direction of the temporal relationship between alcohol use and psychological distress in a sample of female expatriate spouses during the first year of their assignment in Turkey.
- We expected to see psychological distress positively predicting alcohol consumption over time, and for the reverse relationship to be weaker or not exist at all.

**Participants and Procedures**

- Participants: Female expatriate spouses (N = 32) during their first year of assignment in Ankara, Turkey.
  - Inclusion criteria included (a) women must have held a U.S. passport and (b) the women could be employed; however, their husband's position must have been the primary reason they moved to Turkey.
  - Age ranged between 30 and 50 years (M = 38.63, SD = 2.65).
  - Ethnicity: 82% European American, 6% Hispanic, 3% African American, and 3% as Asian American.
  - 66% were in Turkey because of their husband's work with the U.S. government.

- Measures:
  - Participants were administered up to 5 survey packets total. These were administered at just-arrived, 3-, 6-, 9-, and 12-month stages.
  - Data was collected by the third author in person using paper-and-pencil measures.
  - Instead of using a sample with more gender and ethnic diversity.
  - The average one-month lead psychological distress score was .52. This suggests that 51.2% of the variance associated is between-subjects variance and 48.8% is within-subjects variance.
  - The average one-month lead psychological distress score was .52. For every 1-point increase in current distress, participants reported one-month lead distress increased by .57 points. Further, within-persons current alcohol use increased one-month lead distress by .08 points; this was tempered a bit for those whose overall alcohol use was heavier.
  - The relationship between alcohol use and future distress was strongest for those with the lowest overall alcohol use. This is among those individuals who drank the least, increases in alcohol use and increases in distress predicted alcohol use the following month.

- Analysis Data were prepared via multiple imputation and analyzed using hierarchical linear modeling. Cross-lagged analyses (with the dependent variable in a lead-1 role) in order to better understand the direction of the temporal relationship between alcohol use and distress.

- Future Research
  - Analyze a sample with more gender and ethnic diversity.
  - Analyze the process of acculturation across different nationalities and in different countries/cultures.

**Introduction**

- American expatriates have experienced internalizing disorders, such as depression, and externalizing disorders, such as substance abuse, at greater rates than their stateside counterparts (Truman, 2012).
- A contributing factor could be acculturation stress -- "the psychological impact on the process of cultural adaptation" (Lueck & Wilson, 2011, p. 187).
- Expatriate spouses may face unique stressors such as leaving a career (Bikos & Kochleves, 2013; Mohr & Klein, 2004) and studies focusing on expatriate spouses (e.g., Cho, Lee, & Jezewski, 2005; Weise, 2013) have reported increased risk of psychological issues such as depression, insomnia, isolation, and marital distress.
- Because alcohol consumption and psychological distress frequently covary and may be reciprocal (Schutte, Hearst, & Moos, 1997), it can be a challenge for researchers to determine which variable precedes the other. The tendency for psychological distress to precede alcohol use, particularly among women, has been suggested by a number of researchers (Abulseoud et al., 2013; Moscato et al., 1997; Mushquash et al., 2013; Schutte et al., 1997; Tschann et al., 1994).

**Participants**

- Female expatriate spouses (N = 32) during their first year of assignment in Ankara, Turkey.
- Ethnicity: 82% European American, 6% Hispanic, 3% African American, and 3% as Asian American.
- 66% were in Turkey because of their husband’s work with the U.S. government.

**Methods**

- Participants were administered up to 5 survey packets total. These were administered at just-arrived, 3-, 6-, 9-, and 12-month stages.
- Data was collected by the third author in person using paper-and-pencil measures.
- Measures used:
  - Mental Health Inventory (MIH; Stewart & Ware, 1998; Ware & Ware, 1983): Used to measure mental health functioning through concepts of psychological distress and well-being. Scores range from 1 to 6 (low to high distress).
  - Alcohol Use and Aggregated Distress
    - Alcohol Use and Aggregated Distress
      - Alcohol Use
      - Aggregated Distress
      - Table 1: Alcohol Use and Aggregated Distress
        - Fixed Effect
        - Alcohol Use and Aggregated Distress
        - Coefficient
        - SE
        - p-value
        - For INTRCPT1, \( \beta_1 = 1.553, p < 0.01 \)
        - For DIS22 slope, \( \beta_2 = 1.823, p < 0.01 \)
        - For ALC USE slope, \( \beta_3 = 0.053, p < 0.01 \)
        - Note: \( p < 0.01 \)
        - ALCUSE = Alcohol Use; DIS22 = Distress subscale; ALCUSEAG = Distress subscale aggregate
        - The ICC for the empty model predicting one-month lead alcohol use was 0.428. This suggests that 42.8% of the variance associated is between-subjects variance and 57.2% is within-subjects variance.
        - The average one-month lead alcohol use score (across all participants and all waves) was 1.6. For every 1-point increase in current alcohol use, participants reported one-month lead alcohol use increased by .57 points. Further, within-persons current alcohol use increased one-month lead distress by .08 points; this was tempered a bit for those whose overall alcohol use was heavier.
        - The relationship between alcohol use and future distress was strongest for those with the lowest overall alcohol use. This is among those individuals who drank the least, increases in alcohol use and increases in distress predicted alcohol use the following month.

- Analysis Data were prepared via multiple imputation and analyzed using hierarchical linear modeling. Cross-lagged analyses (with the dependent variable in a lead-1 role) in order to better understand the direction of the temporal relationship between alcohol use and distress.

- Future Research
  - Analyze a sample with more gender and ethnic diversity.
  - Analyze the process of acculturation across different nationalities and in different countries/cultures.


