

**An Investigation into the relationship between Reverse Culture Shock and  
Social Support among Returned Volunteers.**

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Specialization) at DBS School of Arts, Dublin**

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## **Abstract**

The present study employed a correlational design to test the relationship between the measured variables of: reverse culture shock, social support availability, social support satisfaction among a convenience sample of returned volunteers (n = 8 males, n = 35 females), who participated voluntarily. The results indicated statistically significant correlations between reverse culture shock and social support satisfaction ( $\tau_b = -.469$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , 1 tailed), reverse culture shock and social support availability ( $\tau_b = -.289$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , 1 tailed), reverse culture shock and agreeableness ( $\tau_b = -.307$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , 1 tailed), and reverse culture shock and neuroticism ( $\tau_b = .572$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , 1 tailed). Additionally an independent samples design was employed to test the differences in the independent variables of active church membership, and the measured variable of age and gender. The results indicated statistically significant results between reverse culture shock and gender. No statistically significant results were found to exist between reverse culture shock and active church membership or the variable of age.

## **Introduction**

### **Reverse Culture Shock**

Culture shock is the emotional distress experienced by individuals in a foreign culture; this distress is brought about by an individual encountering unexpected or perturbing behavior differences, viewpoints and communication difficulties. It is the anxiety that results from losing all familiar signs and symbols of normal social intercourse (Oberg, 1954).

These cross-cultural issues which are part of culture shock were defined by Oberg (1954) as involving the ebbing and flowing of exhilaration, anxiety, frustration, hostility, bewilderment, homesickness, denial, lethargy, and other varying reactions to situational stress before these feelings of stress and anxiety settle and the individual settles into the adjustment and acceptance of their home culture (Furnham and Bochner, 1986).

More recently studies have found that most individuals experience equal or greater disorientation on return from the foreign culture to their own culture. This is defined as reverse culture shock and is a condition which can show a profound personality change brought about by the adaptation to the host culture they resided in (Siddiqua, 2010). Reverse culture shock is the process of returning, re-understanding, reassimilating and reabsorbing the individual's home culture after living in a foreign culture for a significant period of time. Some individuals find returning home more difficult than adjusting to the foreign culture. As individuals can expect that home will stay the same as when they left, and can be shocked to discover that both they and their home has changed (Storti, 2003).

Individuals can carry with them a static, mental and emotional snapshot of home; and are unprepared for the changes that have occurred during their absence, changes that no longer match the original snapshot of home. The expectation of a seamless reentry into the home environment is not always easy, and empirical evidence strongly suggests that reverse culture shock can actually be more emotionally challenging than culture shock (Storti, 2003).

Individuals can experience reverse culture shock in varying ways; some individuals may experience few effects, while others show problems that can last up to a year or longer. The literature states that no individual is exempt from the effects of reverse culture shock (Adler, 1981, Carlisle-Frank, 1992). Storti (2003) states that individuals reentering their home culture can find it to be a slow, terrifying and painful process. That that psychological distress relating to the transition between the foreign environment and the home cultures and can be associated with potential health concerns. These psychological problems caused by reentry can be irritability, loneliness, loss, depression, anxiety, impatience, and anger. This psychological distress can even cause such physical problems as appetite loss and sleeplessness (Church, 1982).

The symptoms of reverse culture shock are correlated to personal adjustment and shyness according to Gaw (2000). In his literature review, he includes a list of symptoms including academic problems, cultural identity issues, and social withdrawal, depression, and anxiety, feelings of alienation, disorientation, stress, confusion, anger, hostility, helplessness and discrimination.

A study into the adjustment of an individual by Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) found the previous U-curve representing culture shock, should be extended to include not only the adjustment to the host culture but also the U curve representing the reverse culture shock. Therefore they created a W-curve to include the individuals return to the home culture also. Martin (1984) further observed that individuals who are successful in their adjustment to another culture have the most difficult time adjusting to their home culture when they return. Individuals can often struggle to keep the personal new parts of themselves that they gained while they were abroad (Gaw, 2000).

Further evidence that the process of reverse culture shock experienced by individuals can be akin to bereavement, involving stages of a grieving process, can be found in Pritchard (2011), who also compared reverse culture to a 'W-curve' where feelings fluctuate before reaching a more balanced state of well-being.

Research conducted by Rogers and Ward (1993) examining the experiences of individuals re-entering their own culture, established that reverse culture shock can influence the severity of the individual problems. This study also concluded positive significant correlations between reverse culture shock and depression and anxiety

The academic achievements of an individual returning home, can be negatively impacted by reverse culture shock and the stresses assimilated with the return to the home culture. Uehara (1986) found in his studies on academic achievements of individuals returning to studies that their results were lower than they were pre-departure, alongside higher scores on depression and anxiety measures. Furthermore, a study of Pakistani returned volunteers by Siddiqua (2010) individuals had feelings of feeling poles apart from their fellow peers, they

felt they did not conform to the conventional culture and faced rejection, developed personal issues arising from associated reverse culture shock. Individuals experienced cultural identity conflict, interpersonal difficulties, social withdrawal, anxiety and low mood.

Furthermore Sahin (1990) on conducting a similar study he found the individuals returning to study had less achievement and higher levels of depression and anxiety. Similarly Furukawa (1997) found that in a longitudinal study of Japanese high school student's substantial emotional distress even 6 months after their return from a foreign culture; neuroticism, emotion-oriented coping, and concurrently measured social support were found to significantly predict mental health during readjustment.

### **Social Support as a protective mechanism /moderator of Reverse Culture Shock**

Social Support is the psychological, physical and emotional comfort provided to an individual by a group of people that care, interact and support an individual in times of need. Members of an individual's social support network can include family and friends (Sarason, Sarason, and Pierce 1994). It is recognized that there is a need for this type of comfort and, it has been recognized that an individual's internal sense of identification with this network of individuals brought about by a sense of general contentment, comfort and autonomy (Tajfel, 1981)

Furthermore, it has been suggested Tajfel (1981, 1982) that the identity alongside an individual's sense of self worth can be derived from affiliation to, or separation from this social support network. High levels of social support lead to a better self-image (Allen, Amason and



Holmes, 1998). This group can help maintain and protect an individual's identity (Resbult and Buunk, 1993). Studies have shown that in times of stress an individual receives greater support (Conn and Peterson, 1989; Dunkel-schetter and Skokan, 1990).

It has been found that social support can buffer the negative effects of stress (Bonfiglio, 2005; Cohen and Wills, 1995), although the positive effects of social support have not been identified in other studies (Kahn and Byosiere, 1992). Vaaanen, Buunk, Kivimaki, Pentti, and Vahtera (2005) suggest that the social support of close female and male bonding can reduce an individual's stress levels. This is supported by Waite (2000) who suggests that the social support experienced in a marriage results in a higher level of immediate intimate social support and reduces stress.

The social support provided by friends and family is critical in helping an individual adapt to their new environment when they return home from a foreign culture. The adaptation process can create stress and difficulties in relationships. The social environment has changed for the individual and therefore new rules of interaction are established between friends and family (Martin, 1986). The social support the individual left in the foreign culture must now be replaced. Individuals returning to the home culture expressed difficulties about fitting back into their group of friends at home, and felt they did not have a cohesive group of friends like they did in the foreign culture (Sussman, 1986). Reentering the home culture can be a traumatic experience for the individual and the social support network in the home culture.

The time spent with family members has a positive effect on emotional adjustment (Selmer and Shiu, 1999). In studies of returning college students Raschio (1987) found that personal conflicts arose from an individual's awareness of changes in themselves and others;

and the physical and cultural difference between the foreign and the home country.

Returning individuals sought support and receptivity from family and friends to decrease the impact of reverse culture shock.

Conversely, friendships and social networks can be negatively impacted, as friends and individuals in the social network may be unable to give level of social support required. This can be dependant on the length of time abroad, and whether the changes in the individual and the friends left behind are hard to overcome (Uehara, 1986). Martin (1984) found that relationships with friends are negatively influenced through study abroad. In her research of US expatriates re-entering their home culture after residing overseas Sicola (2005) found that communication behaviors and perception learnt while abroad continued to be inherent in the individual after returning from the foreign culture, making it more difficult for the individual to fit back in.

Further supporting evidence suggests that social support is not always effective as a moderator of reverse culture shock; Lester (2001) found that an individual's sense of loss, longing, sadness and alienation can be impacted by not finding the level of social support they need, and have feelings of loss, and experience a sense of disenfranchised grief.

In a qualitative study Stowe (2003) found that ten individuals returning from a foreign culture all described some amount of experiencing reverse culture shock when returning home, only five felt they had successfully readjusted to being home, with both meaningful friends and work that mattered to them. The five remaining volunteers who described continuing feelings of reverse culture shock did not have meaningful friends and work that mattered. The study strongly suggests that in finding roles and relationships that are meaningful, ensures the

experiences of reverse culture shock may be diminished and eliminated. This is supported by Sharts-Hopco, Regan-Kubinski, Lincoln and Heverly (1996) who observed a negative correlation between the level of available social support and the level of psychological distress.

The social support experienced by group membership might have a moderating effect on stress. Schachter (1964) reported a relationship after conducting an experiment where participants received an electric shock in a group situation, and the remaining members received it alone. The participants who received the shock within a group setting found the experience less stressful than the participants who experienced the shock alone.

Cummins (1988) observed that church membership had a mediating effect on stress as a result of being a member of that group. Stone, Cross, Purvis and Young (2004) noted that the support that members receive as part of a religious community had a stress buffering affect on both members giving and those receiving the support

Conversely Krause (2006) suggested that being a member of a church is not enough to reduce stress. He conducted a study of a group of church-goers, and found that simply receiving support from church members was insufficient to reduce stress; he noted that the close friendships and bonds formed within the church community offered closeness, a social support network in times of crisis, and therefore providing a stress buffer to the member. In effect it appears that the benefit gained by becoming a group member is achieved when that group membership is perceived as close and the benefits are within that sub social networks form as a result of the church membership.

Research is divided on how social support might reduce stress (Krause, 2006, Shcachter, 1964 and Tajfel, 1981). Cohen and Wills (1985) support the view that social support acts a buffer with the 'Stress buffering hypothesis' suggesting that social support helps reduces the impact of stress by altering an individuals appraisals of the situation and can enhance the coping strategies used. Solomon (1985) and Munroe and Steiner (1986) both reported strong links existing between social support and psychopathology.

It has been stated by Williams and Barclay (2004) that because there is not clear specific definition of what constitutes social support , the term lacks contextual sensitivity in its vague generic definition, and therefore the validity of many studies into social support cannot be uphold . To this effect Social Support can be defined as the support provided through the behaviors and actions of others, O'Reilly (1998) distinguished the social support network as the group of contacts providing the support. Cutrona and Russell (1987) supported this view, stating that it is important to distinguish between the types of support offered, it can be aid-related support relating to tangible help provided by a person with a social support network or and appreciation-related social support relating to perceived emotional support available to an individual. In order to ensure there are no difficulties relating to the definition of social support, the present study intends to use 'The Short Form Social Support Questionnaire' (SSQR) (Sarason, Sarason, Shearin, and Pierce, 1987) as it contains both a scale for available social support (SSQN), and social support satisfaction (SSQS). Scores on both the availability and satisfaction scales have been shown to be negatively correlated with depression and anxiety, and to be positively correlated with extroversion (Sarason, Sarason, Shearin and Pierce, 1987). The SSQSR demonstrates good internal reliability in measuring perceived stress, (Sarason, et. al., 1987), and high external validity (Sarason, Sarason, Potter and Antoni, 1985).

## **Gender as a factor of Reverse Culture Shock**

Another variable which may affect reverse culture shock is the gender of the individual (Christofi and Thompson, 2007), There is no conclusive evidence as to whether gender can be determined as a factor in stress-related studies. Research is divided on exactly how stress can be determined by gender; Stoney Davis and Mathews (1987, 1990) suggest women and men react differently in stressful situations, and conclude women react more strongly to stress and experience higher perceived levels of stress. In the same vein, Vitaliano, Maiuro, and Russo (1990) support this view and suggest that the differing stress levels between men and women are due to the differing coping methods between the genders. Males are seen to use more problem-focused coping, with females relying on emotion focused coping. Conversely Folkman and Lazarus (1980) and Hamilton and Faggot (1988) in studies observed no gender differences in perceived stress levels

Some research findings are in agreement that women are more prone to stress than men. Arroba and James (2002) reported that the relationship between gender and stress is varied and complex but women do experience more stress than men. Melhinsh (1998) and Philips and Segal (1996) concluded that since most women work longer hours each day than men and duties at home are not equally shared, women tend to experience more symptoms of occupational stress than men.

Research into reverse culture shock is however divided on whether gender is in fact a variable which may affect reverse culture shock. In studies by Rohrilick and Martin (1991) it was noted that women were significantly more satisfied after returning to their home culture than men, conversely in studies by Gama and Pedersen (1977) it was observed that more

reverse culture shock problems were experienced by Brazilian women than Brazilian men after returning from the US.

### **Personality as a protective mechanism /moderator of Reverse Culture Shock**

Another factor which may cause an individual to experience more reverse culture shock is the characteristics of personality (Huff, 2001). Personality is an individual's values, preferences, needs, stable dispositions or emotional characteristics.

The Five Factor Model of Personality developed by Costa and McCrae (1992) to study the process of stress has been applied to varying populations. The five-factor model of personality (Costa and McCrae, 1992) describes each individual's personality make-up using five independent personality characteristics. "Neuroticism" refers to the degree to which individuals experience negative emotions and how susceptible they are to psychological distress. "Extraversion" involves tendencies toward interpersonal interaction, positive emotions, sociability, assertiveness, and warmth. Those who score high on "Openness to Experience" seek out and enjoy new experiences and are intellectually curious. "Agreeableness" refers to characteristics including sympathy, trust, consideration for others, and the ability to work cooperatively with others. Individuals who score highly on "Conscientiousness" tend to be attracted to order, control, and achievement. They are industrious and persistent.

McCrae and Costa (1991) have argued that conscientiousness, openness and agreeableness have an 'instrumental' relationship to an individual's well-being, and that the personality traits of conscientiousness, openness and agreeableness will result in positive

outcomes for the individual. As These traits are higher in positive affect (attentive, interested, alert, excited feelings) and lower in negative affect (distressed, upset, nervous) Costa and McCrae (1980, 1992) and McCrae and Costa (1991) have argued that conceptually positive affect can be similar to the personality trait extraversion, and negative affect is very like neuroticism.

Further research in the area of personality traits by Watson and Tellegen (1985) and Terracciano (2003) supports the view that extraversion is related to positive affect and neuroticism is related to negative affect. To further support this area of research a study conducted by Van Dierendonck et al (2005) observed that personality traits are found to be underpinned by autonomy, mastery of an individual's environment, personal growth, life-purpose, positive relations with other individuals and self-acceptance. Furthermore, he supported Costa and McCrae (1980, 1992) by recognizing that neuroticism had a negative relation to all aspects of an individual's psychological well-being, and consequently found the personality trait of extraversion shared a positive relationship with all aspects of psychological well-being. Conscientiousness was found to share a positive relationship with personal growth, life-purpose; openness shares a positive relationship with autonomy, and agreeableness as a personality trait in an individual shares a significant positive relationship with the individuals positive relations with others.

Various attempts have been made to identify factors that predispose individuals to stress such as reverse culture shock. Akinboye and Adeyemo (2002) established a link between stress and the personality traits of individuals finding that some people are generally more stress prone than others, dependant on their measure of personality traits.

Similarly Riolli and Savicki (2003), Raedeke and Smith (2004) reported that personality traits have a tendency to moderate the effect of stressful situations on an individuals. Certain personality traits may buffer or enhance more negative outcomes than others. These findings can be compared with those of Kokkinos (2007) who reported that personality traits can be associated with stress dimensions, in which the environment and personality of the individual are considered.

Most people experience psychological distress or negative affect in real or perceived stress , but they vary widely according to the individual in the amount of negative affect reported in stress response, and the perceived amount of stress to which they feel they have been exposed to. Personality variables are identified as an important part of predicting psychological distress (Baghy and Rector, 1998). The literature provides support relating to personality traits which can influence the degree to which the individual may seeks social support when confronted with a stressful event (Houston and Zola, 1991).

In relating these finding to reverse culture shock, Swagler and Jome (2005) applied the Five Factor Model of Personality to investigate how personality traits can influence cultural adjustment for an individual. Swagler and Jome (2005) found that low levels of neuroticism and high levels of agreeableness, conscientiousness to a host culture were correlated with high levels of psychological adjustment to the new culture. High scores on extraversion as well as being male were correlated with high levels of sociocultural adjustment. Openness to experience was not correlated with either type of adjustment. One such measure of personality traits is the Big Five Inventory (BFI), which will be used in the present study to measure the personality traits of the participants.



### **Age as a factor affecting reverse culture shock in an individual**

Martin (1984) identified that individuals tend to spend time abroad during an age period when they are forming their core values, beliefs, lifestyle habits, and sense of identity. Gullahorn and Gullahorn's (1963) observed in their studies that children and adolescents are more susceptible to reverse culture shock than adults. It is suggested that children and adolescents experience the greatest influence in identity beliefs and values while residing in the host culture. Thus requiring an individual to reconcile their newly gained values, with the realities and demands of the home culture. (Martin, 1984) posited that individuals often not fully conscious of the changes that have taken place until they return home.

There has been relatively little research in the area of reverse culture shock resulting from an individuals return to their home country following a lengthy work assignment abroad. The majority of the research to date has been in relation to the initial culture shock an individual feels on arrival in the host country. Furthermore the studies have mainly involved returned students and sojourners who are from the younger population.

Studying reverse culture shock among returned volunteers has implications for improving the understanding of the effects of reverse culture shock and the factors at play within an individual. Understanding environmental and personal influences of reverse culture shock may hold benefits for Organizations sending individuals to new cultures as part of a work assignment. There is a need to know the environmental and personal factors influencing reverse culture shock, to ensure that in the future organization can help forecast the degree of reverse culture shock experienced by an individual dependent on social support networks

present in the home culture, personality type, gender and age. Such information may ensure there are less frequent cases of extreme reverse culture shock in the future.

The specific relationships considered by the present study were whether statistically significant negative correlations exist between available social supports and reverse culture shock, and also whether a significant negative correlation exists between satisfactions with social support and reverse culture shock. Furthermore, this is a study to investigate whether personality type is a determining factor in reverse culture shock, the present study investigated whether a statistically significant correlation existed between the personality type dimensions of Openness, Conscientiousness, Extroversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism and reverse culture shock. In addition the present study intends to employ an independent samples design to determine whether there are any significant differences between the dependent reverse culture shock for the independent variable of active church member, and the measured variables of gender and age.

H1. There will be a significant correlation between Reverse Culture Shock and Social Support Availability

H2. There will be a significant correlation between Reverse Culture Shock and Social Support Satisfaction

H3. There will no significant difference between Church members and non Church Members in the Reverse Culture Shock Scale scores

H4. There will be a significant difference between males and females in the Reverse Culture Shock Scale scores

H5. There will be a significant correlation between Reverse Culture Shock and Neuroticism

H6. There will be a significant difference between ages of participants in the Reverse Culture Shock Scale

## **Methodology:**

### **Materials**

Each participant was asked to complete an online questionnaire which was available at <http://kwiksurveys.com/>. The questionnaire consisted of an introduction sheet (Appendix 1), a personal and demographic questionnaire (Appendix 2), and 3 self-report questionnaires. These questionnaires were the Reverse Culture Shock Survey Questionnaire(RCC) (Siddiqua, 2010) (Appendix 3), and the Big 5 Personality Inventory Questionnaire(BFI) (John and Srivastava, 1999) (Appendix 4), and the 6 item Social Support Questionnaire, short form (SSQSR) (Sarason, Sarason, Shearin and Pierce, 1987) (Appendix 5).

**Introduction Sheet:** The introduction sheet fronted the research questionnaire. The introduction sheet provided the participant with information about the author, a brief overview of the research topic, an indication of what was required of the participant, and the researchers contact details for queries in relation to the research. The participants were made aware they could withdraw from the study at any time. A final not of thanks concluded the introduction sheet.

**Demographics:** The demographic characteristics of participants were collected via a demographic questionnaire developed by the researcher. Characteristics addressed by the questionnaire were (a) age, (b) gender, (C) marital status, (d) living accommodation (e) employment and (f) church membership. These characteristics were chosen based upon a review of related literature.

Reverse Culture Shock: Reverse Culture Shock was measured by means of a Reverse Culture Shock Scale (Siddiqua, 2010) consisting of a 15 item self-report questionnaire. The statements are based on a 5 point Likert scale in which a numerical value is applied to each answer choice. These values are then summed up and divided by 15, producing an index score ranging from 1 to 5. The scoring range from the Reverse Culture Shock Questionnaire is 1 to 5, the score of 1 indicating low reverse culture shock experienced and index score of 5 indicating higher reverse culture shock experienced by the individual.

Personality. The Big Five Inventory (BFI) developed by Costa and McCrae (1992) was used to assess the five personality dimensions. It is a 44 item self-report scale designed to measure the personality factors of the OCEAN model. Openness to Experience (O), Conscientiousness (C), Extraversion (E), Agreeableness, (A) and Neuroticism (N). The BFI is scored by means of a Likert type scale in which a numerical value is applied to each answer choice. These values are then summed up according to a scoring sheet which applies a score of 1 to 5 in a positive direction for certain questions, and the remaining questions scored in a negative direction from 5 to 1 (Appendix 6). The BFI is scored by averaging the items according to the B5 domain.

Social Support: The type of social support received by the returned volunteers was assessed by the Social Support Questionnaire Short Form which is a self report questionnaire consisting of 6 items, consisting of 2 parts. Each part corresponds to two distinct scales; the number of social support individuals available (availability scale) and the satisfaction scale. The first part of each item asks participants to list the amount of people they feel are available to be called on as a support in a variety of situations. It is the results of this section (maximum 54) divided by 6, which provides the number of individuals available in the Social Support

network (SSQN). Scores on this scale range from 1 to 9. The second part of each item asks participants to rate the quality of the support they receive on a 6 point Likert scale. This provides the Social Support Satisfaction score (SSQS). The SSQS score is calculated by summing the total answers (maximum 36) and dividing by 6. SSQS scores range from 0 to 6. Scores on both the number and satisfaction scales have been shown to be negatively correlated with depression and anxiety, and to be positively correlated with extroversion (Sarason, Sarason, Shearin & Pierce, 1987). The SSQSR demonstrates good internal reliability in measuring perceived stress, (Sarason, et. al., 1987), and high external validity (Sarason, Sarason, Potter and Antoni, 1985).

Feedback: The participant is given a space at the end of the online questionnaire to provide feedback which they feel may be relevant to the research.

## **Apparatus**

Analysis of data was conducted on one computer (A Dell Latitude Laptop, model number D630 TP359 A02), running the SPSS (Version 12) application to perform the data analysis.

## **Participants**

This study involved 43 participants (35 female, 8 male). All participants were Irish adults between the age of 17 and 64 years of age (Mean = the 25-34 year age group).

Participants were selected by means of a sample from the membership lists of the [REDACTED] Group. All the participants chosen had returned to their home country in the previous year. All participants took part in the study on a voluntary basis.

## **Design**

A correlational design was employed to examine the relationship between the measured variable of reverse culture shock and social support, and reverse culture shock and personality type. An independent samples design was used to test whether there was a significant difference in the dependent variable of available social support, and satisfaction with social support for the independent variable of active church membership and gender.

## **Procedure**

The researcher sent an email to a representative of [REDACTED] requesting a sample of returned volunteers who would be willing to complete the research. [REDACTED] is a group supporting Irish development workers/volunteers returning from overseas assignments. The email explained the nature of the research, and requested permission to access their group of members. The online questionnaire was made available to [REDACTED] by the researcher. The [REDACTED] group distributed the online questionnaire to development workers/volunteers by email. [REDACTED] targeted individuals who had returned to their home country in the previous 12 months. The email from [REDACTED] to the participants consisted of an introduction to the

researcher and the research, and contained a link to the online questionnaire. The online questionnaire gave a brief overview of the purpose of the research to investigate the relationship between reverse culture shock, social support and personality type. The participants were given written instructions on how to complete the online questionnaire. Each online Questionnaire consisted of 4 separate questionnaires, the Reverse Culture Shock Questionnaire, BFI, SSQSR and a questionnaire to establish personal and demographic information. The online questionnaire also contained instructions on how to complete each individual questionnaire. Once the participants had completed the on line questionnaires they were thanked for taking the time to participate and were invited for any input they felt might help the researcher. Data was then collated by the researcher, scored and inputted for analysis using SPSS software.



## Results

The participants in this study were made up of Male 19% (N=8) and female 81% (N = 35). The mean scores, and standard deviations as calculated for the variables of reverse culture shock (RCC), social support satisfaction (SSQS), social support availability (SSQN) and the five personality dimensions of the Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI) – Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism are displayed in Table 1. Table 1 also shows the minimum and maximum scores and obtained in each of the tests.

**Table 1.** *Breakdown of Descriptive Statistics for RCC, SSQS, SSQN and the five dimensions of Big Five Personality Inventory.*

|  | <b>N</b> | <b>Minimum</b> | <b>Maximum</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Std. Deviation</b> |
|--|----------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Reverse Culture Shock Scale</b>                     | 43       | 1.2            | 3.8            | 2.71        | 0.74                  |
| <b>Social Support Questionnaire Satisfaction Scale</b> | 37       | 1              | 5              | 2.11        | 1.16                  |
| <b>Social Support Questionnaire Availability Scale</b> | 38       | 1              | 9              | 3.49        | 2.04                  |
| <b>Openness Scale</b>                                  | 43       | 2.9            | 4.6            | 3.93        | 0.37                  |
| <b>Conscientiousness Scale</b>                         | 43       | 2.44           | 4.89           | 3.76        | 0.79                  |
| <b>Extraversion Scale</b>                              | 43       | 2.29           | 5.00           | 3.73        | 0.65                  |
| <b>Agreeableness Scale</b>                             | 43       | 2.44           | 4.89           | 3.69        | 0.57                  |
| <b>Neuroticism Scale</b>                               | 43       | 1.25           | 4.38           | 2.94        | 0.81                  |

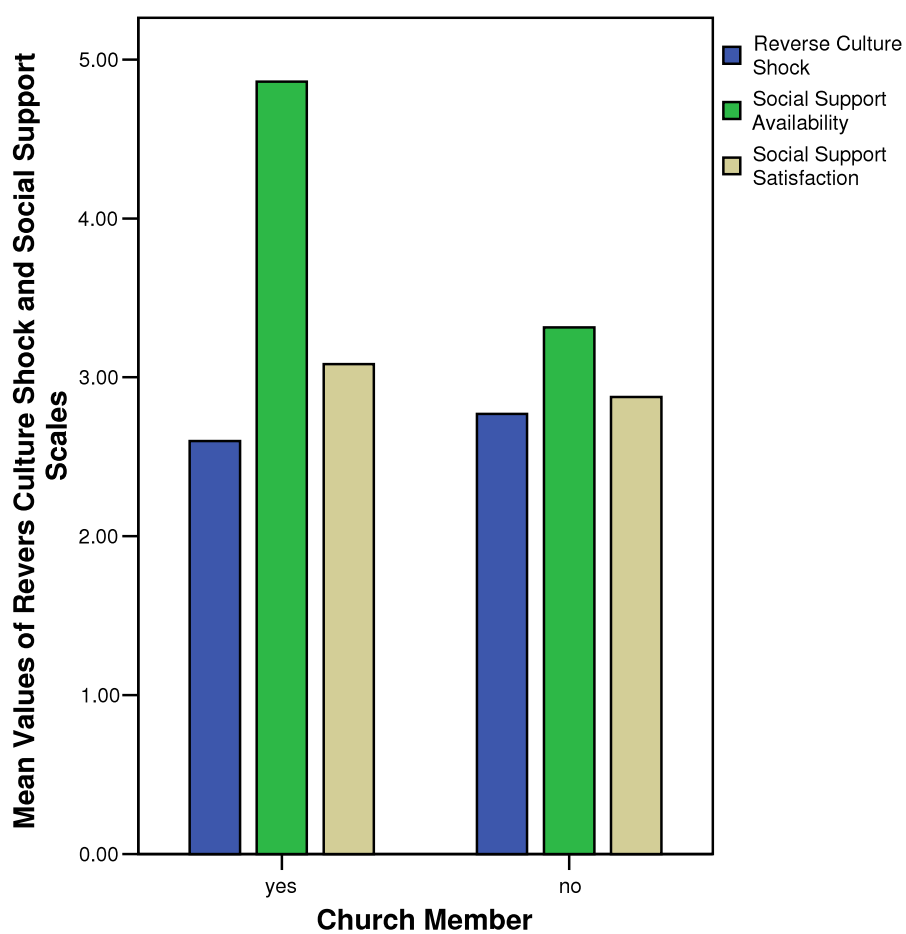
The majority of the participants tested reported an average level of reverse culture shock (Mean = 2.71, SD = 0.74) and an average levels of social support satisfaction (Mean = 2.11, SD 1.16). However participants generally reported low levels of social support availability (mean = 3.49, SD 2.04).

The majority of the participants reported high levels of Openness (Mean = 3.93, SD = 0.37), Conscientiousness (Mean = 3.76, SD =0.79), Extraversion (Mean = 3.73, SD = 0.65), Agreeableness (Mean = 3.69, SD 0.57) and Neuroticism (Mean = 2.94, SD = 0.81) in the Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI).

The results of the present study consisted of an analysis of the relationship between the measured variables of reverse culture shock, social support availability, social support satisfaction and individual's personality dimensions by means of a Kendal's tau\_b correlations. Additionally a series of Mann Whitney U tests were used to determine whether any differences existed in the dependent variables of reverse culture shock, and the independent variables of active church membership, gender, and age.

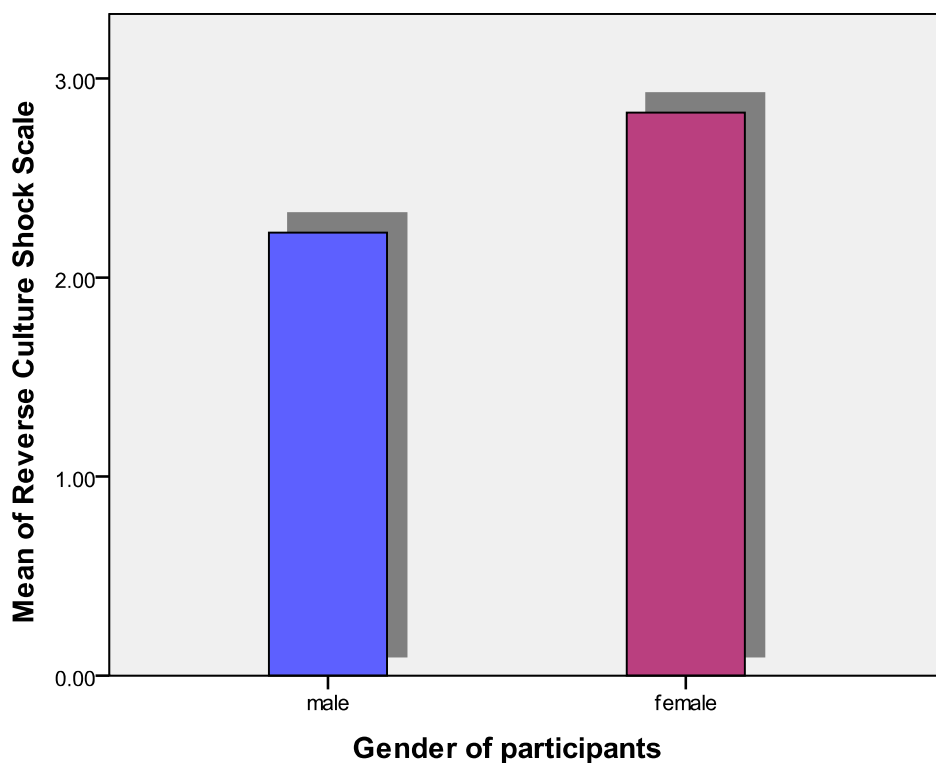
The Mann Whitney U test indicated that no significant differences existed in reverse culture shock between active church members and non-church members (U= 125.5,  $p > 0.05$ , 2 tailed). These results suggest that active church membership was not a factor in determining whether reverse culture shock was experienced by the participants surveyed. Furthermore the Mann Whitney U test indicated that no significant differences existed in social support satisfaction between active church members and non-church members (U= 83,  $p > 0.05$ , 2 tailed). These results suggest that active church membership was not a not a determining factor in social support satisfaction by the participants surveyed.

However a Mann Whitney U test did indicate a significant difference in social support availability between active church members and non-church members ( $U= 445$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , 2 tailed). These results suggest that active church membership is a factor in determining social support availability by the participants surveyed. These results are illustrated graphically in Table 2.



**Table 2.** Mean values of Reverse Culture Shock, Social Support Satisfaction and social support availability scores for Church members and non-church members.

A Mann Whitney U test indicated that there was significant differences between males and females in reverse culture shock ( $U= 74.5$ ,  $p <0.05$ , 2 tailed), suggesting that gender is a determining factor in reverse culture shock among the participants surveyed. The result is displayed graphically in Table 3.



**Table 3.** *Mean values of Reverse Culture Shock for genders of participants.*

A Kruksal-Wallis Test indicated that there was no significant difference in reverse culture shock across the age groups of the participants who took part in the study (Chi-Square = 6.48,  $df >.05$ ). The figures are displayed in Table 4.

**Table 4.** A *Kruskal Wallis test compares Reverse Culture Shock across the age groups*

| Kruskal Wallis - AGE |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
|                      | Reverse Culture Shock |
| Chi-square           | 6.480                 |
| df                   | 4                     |
| Asymp. Sig.          | .166                  |

A Kendal's tau\_b correlation coefficient indicated that a significant weak negative correlation existed between reverse culture shock and social support availability (tau\_b = -.289,  $p < 0.01$ , 1 tailed). A Kendal's tau\_b correlation test indicated that a significant strong negative correlation exists between reverse culture shock and social support satisfaction. (tau\_b = -.469,  $p < 0.01$ , 1 tailed). When the results of the relationship between reverse culture shock, social support availability and social support satisfaction are considered, it supports prior research indicating that there exists a correlational relationship between reverse culture shock and social support satisfaction and availability. An overview of the result obtained in the Kendal's tau\_b tests in this study are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** *Kendals Tau\_b correlation results between Reverse Culture Shock and the Social Support Availability and Social Support Satisfaction*

|                 |                             |                         | Reverse Culture Shock | Social Support Availability | Social Support Satisfn. |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Kendall's tau_b | Reverse Culture Shock       | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000                 | -.289(**)                   | -.469(**)               |
|                 |                             | Sig. (1-tailed)         | .                     | .007                        | .000                    |
|                 |                             | N                       | 43                    | 38                          | 37                      |
|                 | Social Support Availability | Correlation Coefficient | -.289(**)             | 1.000                       | .388(**)                |
|                 |                             | Sig. (1-tailed)         | .007                  | .                           | .001                    |
|                 |                             | N                       | 38                    | 38                          | 37                      |
|                 | Social Support Satisfaction | Correlation Coefficient | -.469(**)             | .388(**)                    | 1.000                   |
|                 |                             | Sig. (1-tailed)         | .000                  | .001                        | .                       |
|                 |                             | N                       | 37                    | 37                          | 37                      |

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

A Kendal's tau\_b correlation coefficient indicated that a significant weak negative correlation existed between reverse culture shock and the personality dimension agreeableness (tau\_b = -.307, p<0.01, 1 tailed).

A Kendal's tau\_b correlation test indicated that a significant strong positive correlation exists between reverse culture shock and the personality dimension of neuroticism. (tau\_b = .572, p <0.01, 1 tailed). When the results of the correlational relationship between reverse culture shock and personality type it supports prior research indicating that there exists a correlational relationship between stress and personality type. An overview of the result obtained in the Kendal's tau\_b tests of the relationship between reverse culture shock and neuroticism and agreeableness are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6.** *Kendals Tau\_b correlation results between Reverse Culture Shock and the Big Five Personality Invenotry dimension of Agreeableness and Neuroticism.*

|                 |                       |                         | Reverse Culture Shock | Agreeableness | Neuroticism |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Kendall's tau_b | Reverse Culture Shock | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000                 | -.307**       | .572**      |
|                 |                       | Sig. (1-tailed)         | .                     | .003          | .000        |
|                 |                       | N                       | 43                    | 43            | 43          |
|                 | Agreeableness         | Correlation Coefficient | -.307**               | 1.000         | -.352**     |
|                 |                       | Sig. (1-tailed)         | .003                  | .             | .001        |
|                 |                       | N                       | 43                    | 43            | 43          |
|                 | Neuroticism           | Correlation Coefficient | .572**                | -.352**       | 1.000       |
|                 |                       | Sig. (1-tailed)         | .000                  | .001          | .           |
|                 |                       | N                       | 43                    | 43            | 43          |

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

A Kendal's tau\_b found no significant relationship between reverse culture shock and Conscientiousness, extraversion, and openness. and an overview of the results obtained in the Kendal's tau\_b tests of the relationship between reverse culture shock and conscientiousness, extraversion and openness are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7.** *Kendals Tau\_b correlation results between Reverse Culture Shock and the Big Five Personality Inventory dimension of Extraversion, Conscientiousness and Openness*

|                 |                       |                         | Reverse Culture Shock | Extraversion | Conscientiousness | Openness |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|----------|
| Kendall's tau_b | Reverse Culture Shock | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000                 | -.165        | -.164             | .038     |
|                 |                       | Sig. (1-tailed)         | .                     | .068         | .067              | .367     |
|                 |                       | N                       | 43                    | 43           | 43                | 43       |
|                 | Extraversion          | Correlation Coefficient | -.165                 | 1.000        | -.044             | .000     |
|                 |                       | Sig. (1-tailed)         | .068                  | .            | .345              | .500     |
|                 |                       | N                       | 43                    | 43           | 43                | 43       |
|                 | Conscientiousness     | Correlation Coefficient | -.164                 | -.044        | 1.000             | -.158    |
|                 |                       | Sig. (1-tailed)         | .067                  | .345         | .                 | .078     |
|                 |                       | N                       | 43                    | 43           | 43                | 43       |
|                 | Openness              | Correlation Coefficient | .038                  | .000         | -.158             | 1.000    |
|                 |                       | Sig. (1-tailed)         | .367                  | .500         | .078              | .        |
|                 |                       | N                       | 43                    | 43           | 43                | 43       |

A section of the questionnaire gave the participants the opportunity to give feedback of information they felt may be relevant to the researcher. The feedback produced most relevant to the research is represented in Table 8.



**Table 8.** *Results of the feedback section of the questionnaire.*

|   |
|---|
| <p>I've always noticed no matter how helpful my friends or family are, when it gets to pulling yourself out of a slump it's up to yourself (mentally, physically, what ever way works best). Put it this way: your friends/family help you get up, but you are the one who has to do the walking. Friends and family help support you and push you along the way but its you who's putting the energy into it. That's why i answered 'me' in some of the questions above because i know, no matter how helpful my friends or family are sometimes you are your own solution.</p>  |
| <p>My life has changed radically since I returned home as a volunteer from Cambodia. It has been a very traumatic time in my life. Although I do feel I am getting enough support from those around me I am struggling to return to any form of normality. I am unable to work and am currently out on sick leave. I have been diagnosed with depression and a possible stress disorder. I know I will be ok but its going to take time. My time in Cambodia overwhelmed me and I feel I have a story to tell about it.</p>   |
| <p>The biggest difficulty I would have with reverse culture shock is the lack of moral and intellectual understanding people have with regards to the way the world and people work. Ignorance is bliss and nobody cares. This goes for people both at home and abroad and of all nationalities. Adjusting back to "normal" after extraordinary experiences can be difficult. I speak when spoken to when it comes to the topic of my travels/experiences as most people I find don't want to know the in-depth nature of my involvement.</p>   |
| <p>This experience of coming home after living in a developing country for 2 years has been one of the toughest times for me yet. I have never felt this level of frustration, isolation or at times desperation. My health has been affected severely and since coming home I have been sick the majority of the time (asthma, very run down, colds, etc). I have described this experience as being an observer and not a participant-I feel very much on the peripheral of life here and after almost 6 months home, I feel no closer to being part of society or just life. It is a very strange feeling yet I am still thankful that I am home and around my friends and family again. Being away from them, was a lot harder than this.</p> |
| <p>Its not up to any one else to get me out of the dumps. It has to be up to me. I rely on exercise and confiding in my therapist. I usually keep my problems to myself and do not talk about them to my friends.</p>   |
| <p>I'm going in psychoanalysis four times a week. He has become the one who helps me most with problems and knows and accepts most about me</p>   |
| <p>When I came back, I found the people who I am closest to to be really amazing. My problem was that I felt alienated from people who I am friends with, but not super close with, and it changed my perspective on them, and I haven't really gone back to being pearticularly close to them again. I feel quite different as a person around them, and it has taken me a really long time (maybe 6 months) and that's perfectly ok and that it's a natural thing because I am really different myself now. I did have a huge crisis of confidence when I came back, and I found that seeking help in the form of regular counselling was the best way to deal with this.</p>   |
| <p>I think it all depends on what your last mission was and/or how things went for you or what you had expected the job to be. Sometimes, it is very hard to explain to those at home how things were as they see you as their friend or family member. There can be many places that are very rural and it depends on who was there with you and if they are friendly, it can be fine. Then you could be happy to be in another city, but yet much lonelier.</p>   |

## Discussion

The aim of the present study was to investigate whether statistically significant correlational relationships existed between reverse culture shock, social support and personality traits. This investigation took the form of a series of Kendal's tau<sub>b</sub> correlational studies which examined the relationships between the measured variables of reverse culture shock and social support availability; reverse culture shock and social support satisfaction and reverse culture shock and personality traits. In addition the present study examined the effects of church membership on reverse culture shock and finally the current study investigated whether any differences existed in the dependent variables of reverse culture shock for the variable of gender and age.

The results of the present study found statically significant differences in the dependent variables of reverse culture shock for the measured variable of gender. These finding supports Stoney Davis and Mathews (1987, 1990) who suggested women and men react differently in stressful situations, and concluded that women react more strongly to stress and therefore experience higher perceived levels of stress. This view is shared by Gama and Pedersen (1977) who observed that more reverse culture shock problems were experienced by Brazilian women than Brazilian men returning to their home culture from the US. However the current study was unable to control the gender sample of the participants, the female to male ratio was 4:1 which is not representative of the male and female population. Future studies could ensure the sample group is more evenly spread across the genders, with the inclusion of participants working hours. It has been suggested that women tend to experience more symptoms of stress than their male counterparts as most women work longer hours each day than men and that the home duties are not equally shared between the genders (Philips and Segal,1996). This extra

stress of working hours could be an indication for the current results, producing more stress, which may be unrelated to reverse culture shock. Future studies could take this factor into account by the addition of a question about working hours; this would control for the possibility of confounding variables, and increase the accuracy of study in this area.

With regard to the relationship between social support and reverse culture shock, the present study found a significant negative weak correlation existed between availability of social support and reverse culture shock, and a significant strong negative correlation was found to exist between the participants satisfaction with social support and reverse culture shock. The findings in this study are consistent with the trend in the majority of the research into the area of reverse culture shock (Selmer and Shiu, 1999, Raschio 1987, Stowe, 2003, Shcatcher, 1964), has resulted in the finding that meaningful relationships and a social support networks ensure the experiences of reverse culture shock may be diminished and eliminated. The feelings of identification and self worth of an individual can be derived from an affiliation to a social support network (Allen, Amazon and Holmes, 1998). This study supports the hypothesis that available social support and levels of psychological distress are negatively correlated (Sharts-Hopco, Regan-Kubinski, Lincoln and Heverly, 1996).

Notwithstanding this, the present study found no statistical differences in reverse culture shock in those participants who identified themselves as church members compared to the non church members. These results are consistent with Krause (2006) who stated that church membership was not a predictor of social support. However the current study did find there was a significant difference between reverse culture shock and availability of social support between church members compared to non-members, but no difference in reverse culture shock. These results are significant and further clarify Krause (2006) who suggested

that church membership increases the availability of a social support network but does not increase the satisfaction with social support. However Krause (2006) did suggest that high levels of social support, experienced as a result of friendships formed from church membership are correlated with low levels of stress. Overall the current study can be interpreted as broadly supporting the view that there are certain aspects of social support that have a stress buffering effect on members (Stone, Cross, Purvis and Young, 2004). While the present study found a correlational relationship existed between social support satisfaction and social support availability with reverse culture shock it does not provide any data as to whether any of these variables can be considered a predictor of reverse culture shock. In prior studies (Selmer and Shiu, 1999, Stowe 2003 and Schachter, 1964) it was found that levels of social support were predictors of reverse culture shock. This is an area which could be further researched.

The results from the present study found statistically significant positive correlation existed in the relationship between reverse culture and the personality trait of neuroticism. The finding of a statistically significant correlation between reverse culture shock and neuroticism lends support to Swagler and Jome (2005), who observed higher levels of neuroticism being correlated with low levels of psychological cultural adjustment. The implications of these findings are that higher levels of neuroticism as a personality trait in an individual can be considered to be a predictor of the psychological distress of reverse culture shock. Additionally the present study found a statistically significant negative correlation existed between the personality trait, agreeableness and reverse culture shock. The finding of a significant negative correlation between the personality trait agreeableness and reverse culture shock lends support to McCrae and Costa (1991) who stated agreeableness in an individual was associated with positive effect, the findings in this study also support Swagler and Jome (2005) who suggested that a high levels of agreeableness in an individual were correlated with

high levels of psychological adjustment to a new culture. This could have implications relating to the recruitment of individuals serving overseas. Further research is required in this area in order to determine which personality traits are more vulnerable to the stresses of the initial culture shock in the host culture and then at a later stage reverse culture shock when returning home. This future research would be of particular importance to an organization at the initial stages of recruiting for an overseas assignment, as some individuals are more vulnerable to the effects of reverse culture shock, and therefore less employable. It would be a consideration following on from these findings that a further longitudinal study is completed to further determine the exact nature of the relationship between reverse culture shock and personality traits of the returned volunteer.

The present study found no significant statistical relationship between reverse culture shock and the participants. This finding does not support Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) who identified that adolescents are more susceptible to reverse culture shock than adults. However the present study only requested the participant choose from one of five scales of age groups (17-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64), therefore making it impossible to extract data about adolescents and their relationship with reverse culture shock. Future research can overcome this issue by asking the participants for their definitive age, rather than requesting the individual to pick from a scale.

██████████ suggested that the researcher include a “feedback” option in design of the online questionnaire, this option was duly inserted by the researcher, and it was an optional requirement for the participant. The feedback section produced 8 responses, approx 19% of the sample population of 43 participants. The participants’ statements give an insight into the experiences of returning home, the experience of reverse culture shock, becoming disillusioned

with their home culture on return to Ireland. The words the participants used to describe their feelings were “frustration, isolation”; “tough times”; “alienated” “I am really different now”; “strange feelings” “slump” “diagnosed with depression” “health affected” and “life has changed radically”. The themes running through the participants statements correlate to those themes discussed by Gaw (2000) in his literature review, he includes a list of symptoms including cultural identity issues, and social withdrawal, depression, and anxiety, feelings of alienation, disorientation, stress, anger, hostility, helplessness and discrimination.

The purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between reverse culture shock, social support and the personality characteristics of returned volunteers. Results from this study showed that reverse culture shock can be correlated with social support and personality traits of the individual, this provides support for previous studies by Swagler and Jome 2005, Selmer and Shiu, 1999, Raschio 1987, Stowe, 2003, Shcatchter, 1964, and Sharts-Hopco, Regan-Kubinski, Lincoln and Heverly , 1996.

In conducting this study a number of difficulties arose. Small proportions (6.5 %) of the questionnaires were not fully completed by some participants, leaving a lot of unanswered questions. This could be due to the online questionnaire giving the participants the option of skipping questions they did not feel like answering. It is suggested in future studies, in order to overcome this difficulty, that the questions on the questionnaire are not labeled ‘optional’. The Social support Availability questionnaire did not yield as many answers the other questionnaires, this could be because it the last to be listed at the end of the online questionnaire, or maybe because the questions involved more detailed thinking, requesting the participants to list members of their social support network and was therefore time consuming.

The sample of participants for the present study was chosen by means of membership of **Comhlamh**. **Comhlamh** is a group supporting Irish development workers/volunteers returning from overseas assignments. For this reason the sample size resulted in only 43 usable questionnaires. These broke down to a ratio of approximately 4:1 female to male, given that only 8 questionnaires were returned by male participants and 35 by female participants, it would be considered unsafe to generalize the results to the overall male and female populations respectively. Future research can overcome this issue by using a larger sample. Use of a sufficiently large sample would allow for more robust testing of internal consistency and reliability measures, which would confirm that the instruments used were measuring correctly. It is suggested future research employs a randomized sampling technique drawing participants from various sending organizations, NGO's, charities and missionaries in Ireland.

This current study involved returned volunteers who had returned to the home culture between one month and one year ago, some accuracy in measuring reverse culture shock could be lost due to the lengthy time period between return to the home culture and the participation in the present study. The design of the present study only allowed for the levels of reverse culture shock and social support to be measured once, and did not take into account the fluctuation of measured variables. In future studies it is suggested that a longitudinal design is adopted in order to track participants' levels of reverse culture shock and social support over an extended period of time.

Further longitudinal qualitative studies involving individual interviews may result in a better understanding of the various levels of reverse culture shock, and may be more effective

in finding what causes the differences within individuals. Studies asking open-ended questions would provide better results than the current multiple choice questionnaire.

University Volunteer Programmes, International corporations, sending agencies and missionaries are very adept at preparing individuals to enter into a foreign culture they tend to omit repatriation programmes for those experiencing reverse culture shock. Training Programs for individuals going overseas should include repatriation training for the returning volunteer. It is important that the organizations responsible for the repatriation program fully understand the effects of reverse culture shock, and the stress experienced by individuals reimmersing themselves into the home culture (Murray, 1973). Each individual should be informed about reverse culture shock as part of the repatriation training (Frazee, 1997).

In conclusion, the results from the present study fit into the majority of previous research into the relationship between reverse culture shock, social support and personality traits. The current study highlights the need for further longitudinal research to be conducted in the effects of reverse culture shock on returned volunteers. The results of the present study are consistent with the majority of the literature in this field, and have provided evidence that the investigation into the effects of social support and personality traits in buffering reverse culture shock are warranted. Once the constructs of the stress of reverse culture shock are understood and highlighted, the effects can then be minimalised. The present study has provided direction for future research in this area, and contributes to the overall body of knowledge in relation to the effects of social support and personality traits on reverse culture shock among returned volunteers.



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## Appendix 1

This survey looks at Reverse Culture Shock and Reverse Culture Shock

The survey has been designed in order to provide information to the researcher examining the relationship between these measures

Please help by answering the questions to the best of your ability.

There is no “right” or “wrong” answer to these questions. We are very interested in your personal answers, however as your answers are **strictly anonymous**

Please do not pause for too long over any one question.

If you don't want to answer any particular question, feel free not to answer it. You may withdraw from the study at any time.

The research is being undertaken as part of a final year project for the undergraduate degree in Psychology at Dublin Business School, School of Arts. If you would like to contact me regarding this questionnaire, or any matters arising from it, please do, I can be contacted at XXXXXXXX

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank you for the time which you have taken to participate in this study.

Gemma Baker

## Appendix 2

**Personal Details**

For this section please select the answer in each question that best describes you:

Age \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Are you?**

Male  Female

**2. Would you describe yourself as?**

- a) Single                       b) Married                       c) Separated/Divorced   
d) Not Married, in relationship

**3. Do you**

- a)                      Live alone                       b) Live with Partner                       c) Live with family  d)  
   other

**4. Are you**

- a) Employed                       b) Student                       c) Unemployed

,

**5. Are you an active member of the church?**

- a) Yes                       b) No

## Appendix 3

**Reverse Culture Shock Questionnaire**

Here are a number of statements. Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which **you agree or disagree with that statement.**

| <b>1</b>             | <b>2</b>             | <b>3</b>                      | <b>4</b>          | <b>5</b>          |
|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Disagree<br>Strongly | Disagree<br>a little | Neither agree<br>nor disagree | Agree<br>a little | Agree<br>strongly |

**The 15 statements are:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I have low mood.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel anxious.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel lonely and isolated.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ I have feelings of inferiority.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ I have feelings of alienation.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ I have feelings of shyness.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ I have trouble making friends.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ I have relationship problems.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ I have personal/ethical dilemmas.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ I have academic performance difficulties.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel boredom.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ No one wants to hear.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ I can not explain myself.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ People misunderstand me.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ I have loss of sleep.

## Appendix 4

## How I am in general

Here are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. For example, do you agree that you are someone who *likes to spend time with others*? Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which **you agree or disagree with that statement.**

| 1<br>Disagree<br>Strongly | 2<br>Disagree<br>a little | 3<br>Neither agree<br>nor disagree | 4<br>Agree<br>a little | 5<br>Agree<br>strongly |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|

### I am someone who...

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1. _____ Is talkative</p> <p>2. _____ Tends to find fault with others</p> <p>3. _____ Does a thorough job</p> <p>4. _____ Is depressed, blue</p> <p>5. _____ Is original, comes up with new ideas</p> <p>6. _____ Is reserved</p> <p>7. _____ Is helpful and unselfish with others</p> <p>8. _____ Can be somewhat careless</p> <p>9. _____ Is relaxed, handles stress well.</p> <p>10. _____ Is curious about many different things</p> <p>11. _____ Is full of energy</p> <p>12. _____ Starts quarrels with others</p> <p>13. _____ Is a reliable worker</p> <p>14. _____ Can be tense</p> <p>15. _____ Is ingenious, a deep thinker</p> <p>16. _____ Generates a lot of enthusiasm</p> <p>17. _____ Has a forgiving nature</p> <p>18. _____ Tends to be disorganized</p> <p>19. _____ Worries a lot</p> <p>20. _____ Has an active imagination</p> <p>21. _____ Tends to be quiet</p> <p>22. _____ Is generally trusting</p> <p>23. _____ Tends to be lazy</p> <p>24. _____ Is emotionally stable, not easily upset</p> <p>25. _____ Is inventive</p> <p>26. _____ Has an assertive personality</p> <p>27. _____ Can be cold and aloof</p> | <p>28. _____ Perseveres until the task is finished</p> <p>29. _____ Can be moody</p> <p>30. _____ Values artistic, aesthetic experiences</p> <p>31. _____ Is sometimes shy, inhibited</p> <p>32. _____ Is considerate and kind to almost everyone</p> <p>33. _____ Does things efficiently</p> <p>34. _____ Remains calm in tense situations</p> <p>35. _____ Prefers work that is routine</p> <p>36. _____ Is outgoing, sociable</p> <p>37. _____ Is sometimes rude to others</p> <p>38. _____ Makes plans and follows through with them</p> <p>39. _____ Gets nervous easily</p> <p>40. _____ Likes to reflect, play with ideas</p> <p>41. _____ Has few artistic interests</p> <p>42. _____ Likes to cooperate with others</p> <p>43. _____ Is easily distracted</p> <p>44. _____ Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature</p> |
|--|--|

## Appendix 5

### **Social Support Questionnaire (Short Form)**

Instructions:

The following questions ask about people in your environment who provide you with help or support. Each question has two parts. For the first part, list all the people you know, excluding yourself, whom you can count on for help or support in the manner described. Give the persons initials, their relationship to you (see example below). Do not list more than one person next to each of the numbers beneath each question.

For the Second Part, Circle how *satisfied* you are with the overall support you have.

If you have had no support for a question, circle the words 'No One' **but still rate your level of satisfaction.**

Please answer all questions as best you can. All your responses will be kept confidential

EXAMPLE:

**1. Who do you know whom you can trust with information that could get you in trouble?**

|        |                  |                |                |
|--------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| No one | 1) TL (brother)  | 4) KL(father)  | 7) PN (friend) |
|        | 2) SK (employer) | 5) JR (friend) | 8)             |
|        | 3)               | 6)             | 9)             |

**2. How satisfied?**

|                    |                      |                        |                           |                         |                       |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 6 – Very Satisfied | 5 – Fairly Satisfied | 4 – A little Satisfied | 3 – A little Dissatisfied | 2 – Fairly Dissatisfied | 1 – Very Dissatisfied |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|

**1. Whom can you really count on to be dependable when you need help?**

|        |    |    |    |
|--------|----|----|----|
| No one | 1) | 4) | 7) |
|        | 2) | 5) | 8) |
|        | 3) | 6) | 9) |

**2. How satisfied?**

|                    |                      |                        |                           |                         |                       |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 6 – Very Satisfied | 5 – Fairly Satisfied | 4 – A little Satisfied | 3 – A little Dissatisfied | 2 – Fairly Dissatisfied | 1 – Very Dissatisfied |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|

**3. Whom can you really count on to help you feel more relaxed when you are under pressure or tense?**

|        |    |    |    |
|--------|----|----|----|
| No one | 1) | 4) | 7) |
|        | 2) | 5) | 8) |
|        | 3) | 6) | 9) |

**4. How satisfied?**

|                    |                      |                        |                           |                         |                       |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 6 – Very Satisfied | 5 – Fairly Satisfied | 4 – A little Satisfied | 3 – A little Dissatisfied | 2 – Fairly Dissatisfied | 1 – Very Dissatisfied |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|

**5. Who accepts you totally, including both your worst and best points?**

|        |    |    |    |
|--------|----|----|----|
| No one | 1) | 4) | 7) |
|        | 2) | 5) | 8) |
|        | 3) | 6) | 9) |

**6. How satisfied?**

|                    |                      |                        |                           |                         |                       |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 6 – Very Satisfied | 5 – Fairly Satisfied | 4 – A little Satisfied | 3 – A little Dissatisfied | 2 – Fairly Dissatisfied | 1 – Very Dissatisfied |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|

**7. Whom can you really count on to care about you, regardless of what is happening to you?**

|        |    |    |    |
|--------|----|----|----|
| No one | 1) | 4) | 7) |
|        | 2) | 5) | 8) |
|        | 3) | 6) | 9) |

**8. How satisfied?**

|                    |                      |                        |                           |                         |                       |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 6 – Very Satisfied | 5 – Fairly Satisfied | 4 – A little Satisfied | 3 – A little Dissatisfied | 2 – Fairly Dissatisfied | 1 – Very Dissatisfied |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|

**9. Whom can you really count on the help you feel better when you are down in the dumps?**

|        |    |    |    |
|--------|----|----|----|
| No one | 1) | 4) | 7) |
|        | 2) | 5) | 8) |
|        | 3) | 6) | 9) |

**10. How satisfied?**

|                    |                      |                        |                           |                         |                       |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 6 – Very Satisfied | 5 – Fairly Satisfied | 4 – A little Satisfied | 3 – A little Dissatisfied | 2 – Fairly Dissatisfied | 1 – Very Dissatisfied |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|

**11. Whom can you really count on to console you when you are very upset?**

|        |    |    |    |
|--------|----|----|----|
| No one | 1) | 4) | 7) |
|        | 2) | 5) | 8) |
|        | 3) | 6) | 9) |

**12. How satisfied?**

|                    |                      |                        |                           |                         |                       |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 6 – Very Satisfied | 5 – Fairly Satisfied | 4 – A little Satisfied | 3 – A little Dissatisfied | 2 – Fairly Dissatisfied | 1 – Very Dissatisfied |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|

**Appendix 6**

(removed cover letter to preserve anonymity)