



**Staying close while living apart:
Sri Lankan Expatriates and their Families
- Preliminary Results -**

Ishanka Karunaratne
Doctoral student
r.karunaratne@stud.uni-goettingen.de

Wirtschaftswissenschaftliche Fakultät
Professur für Personalmanagement mit dem Schwerpunkt China/ Asien

Prof. Dr. Dr. Fabian J. Froese

 Georg-August-Universität
Göttingen

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Sri Lankan expatriates and their families

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List of abbreviation

Acronym	Definition
LS	Life satisfaction
JS	Job satisfaction
MS	Marital satisfaction
Dpn.	Depression
SIE	Self-initiated Expatriates
OE	Organizational Expatriates
Sign.	Significant
N.S	Non significant
S.D.	Standard deviation

Executive Summary

- **Sample:** 248 dyads of Sri Lankan expatriates and spouses
- **Located in:** Australia and the Middle-East
- **Purpose:** Examining the effects of geographically living apart on life and job satisfaction, marital satisfaction, and depression.
- **Findings:** - Life satisfaction, marital satisfaction, job satisfaction, and depression vary across spouse location (i.e. living together and living apart from the families).
 - Job satisfaction and life satisfaction differ with the country which expatriates are living.
- **Implications:** Management of host country organizations needs to facilitate expatriates to accompany their families abroad in order to ensure their stay abroad and mitigate early return.

Background of the study

Globalization of Business

- Demographic changes (e.g. ageing populations, low fertility rate) in major economies have created lucrative work opportunities abroad for Sri Lankan workers.
- Organizations continue to expand globally (e.g. Merges & Acquisitions) and face skills shortages locally, many employers require a mobile workforce.
- Immigration as a means to encounter global skills shortage.
- Employees' separation from families poses a new challenge to International Human Resource Management (IHRM).

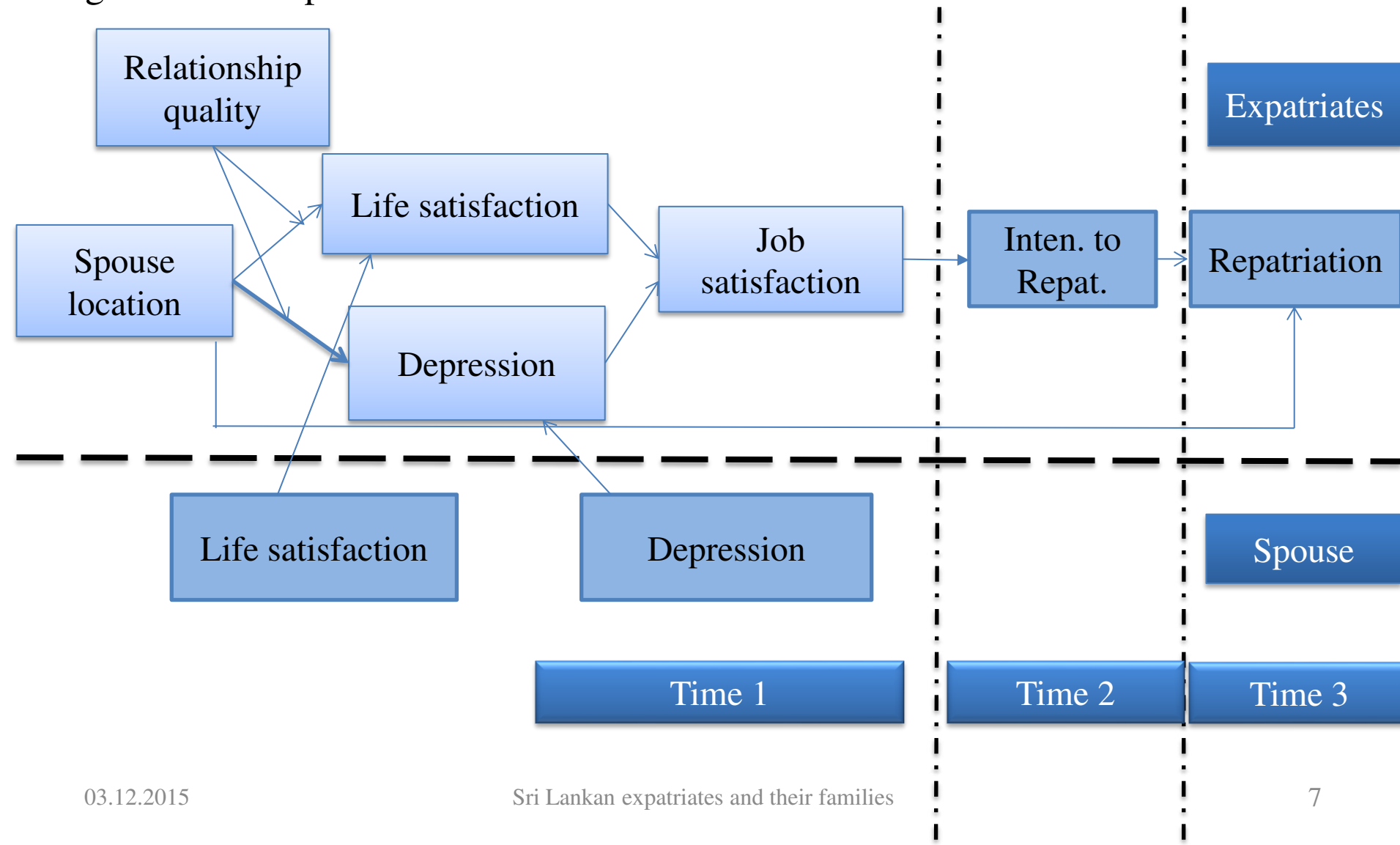
Cont... Background of the study

Family as a significant determinant of expatriate stay abroad

- Family has emerged as a significant source of explaining individuals' work attitudes and behaviours (Rothausen, 1999).
- Before the international assignment, expatriates and their spouse/partners share their household responsibilities.
- The international assignment disturbs well established relationships, impose new burdens on expatriates and their families (Hearn, Jyrkinen, Piekkari, & Onionen, 2008; Mäkelä & Suutari, 2011; Richardson, 2006).
- The importance of the family for successful international assignments is recurring topic in expatriates literature (e.g. Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010; Harrison, Shaffer, & Luk, 2005; Hearn et al., 2008; Hechanova, Beehr, & Christiansen, 2003; Mäkelä & Suutari, 2011; Shaffer & Joplin, 2001).

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



Research Method

- **Sample**
 - 248 Sri Lankan Expatriates and their spouses/partners
- **Participants**
 - We received 313 responses from expatriates and 283 responses from their spouses/partners from both the online and paper –pencil survey.
 - of those, 248 pairs matched based on unobtrusive codes
 - 81 – living and working for Australia
 - 167- living and working for the Middle-east
- **Survey method and duration**
 - The online survey was conducted using the survey platform ‘Unipark‘ from 8th July 2015 to 30th September 2015.
 - The survey contained two parts (part 1 : expatriate and part 2 : spouse/partner)
 - Both surveys were provided in English and Sinhala.
 - Mostly, the participants were contacted through E-Mail and Facebook.

Variable Measures

Table 1: Measures; independent and mediator variables

Variable	No of items	Reference	Survey
Spouse/partner location	1	-	Expat & Spouse
Life satisfaction	5	Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985)	Expat & Spouse
Depression	8	Manning, M. R., Osland, J.S., & Osland, A. (1989)	Expat & Spouse
Marital satisfaction	5	Nortan, R (1983)	Expat & Spouse
POS	6	Eisenberger R., Huntington R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986)	Expat.
MPQ	4	Peltokorpi, V., & Froese, F.J. (2012)	Expat.
Spouse support	7	Vinkour, A.D. & Van Ryn, M. (1993).	Expat.
Co-worker support	7	Herbourne, C.D., Stewart, A.L. (1991)	Expat.

Cont...variable measures

Table 2: Measures; moderators, dependent and control variables

Variable	No of items	Reference	Survey
Communication frequency	5	O’Leary, M.B., Wilson, J.M., & Metiu, A. (2014).	Spouse
Dyadic trust	5	Larzelere, R.E., & Huston, T.L. (1980)	Expat. & Spouse
Visit frequency	1	Seltzer, J.A. (1991). Journal of Marriage and the Family, 53:79-101.	Expat.
Job satisfaction	3	Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1979	Expat.
Adjustment	14	Black, J.S., & Stephens, G.K. (1989)	Expat.

gender, education, tenure/rank/seniority, previous work experience in abroad, family demographics.

i.e. All scaled items featured a 6-point Likert scale .

Survey Results

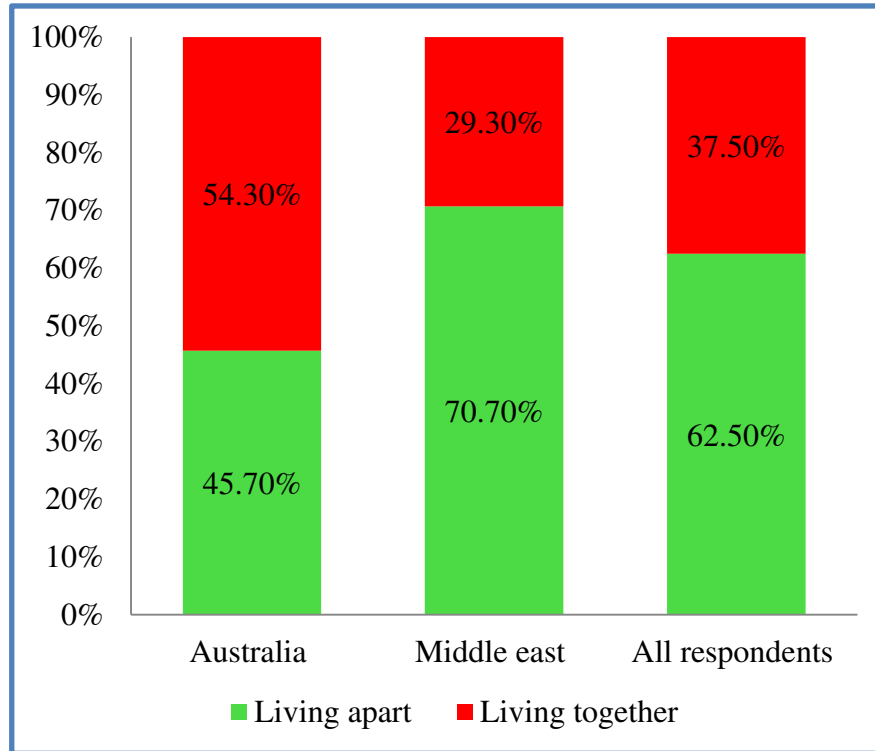
Preliminary data analysis -I

The following sub section provides you the results of demographic data analysis of our main study.

- This section contains two parts
 - Part 1: demographic data analysis of expatriate survey
 - Part 2: demographic data analysis spouse/partner survey
- The results of this analysis help to better decision making and generalization of final results.

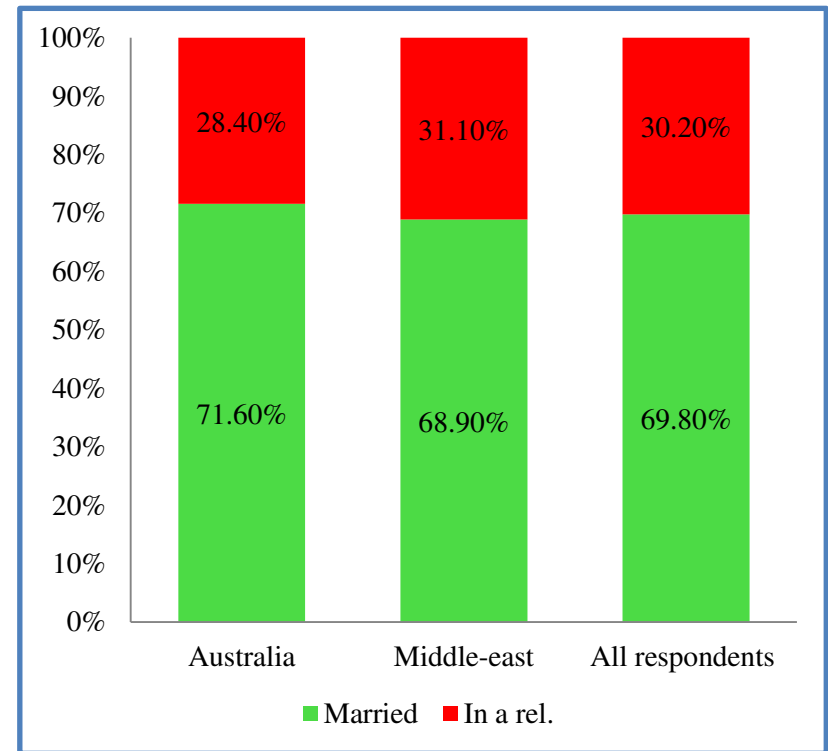
Demographic data analysis (expat. survey)

Figure 2: Spouse location



- 62.5% - living apart
- 37.5% -trailing spouses.
- This is vary across countries.

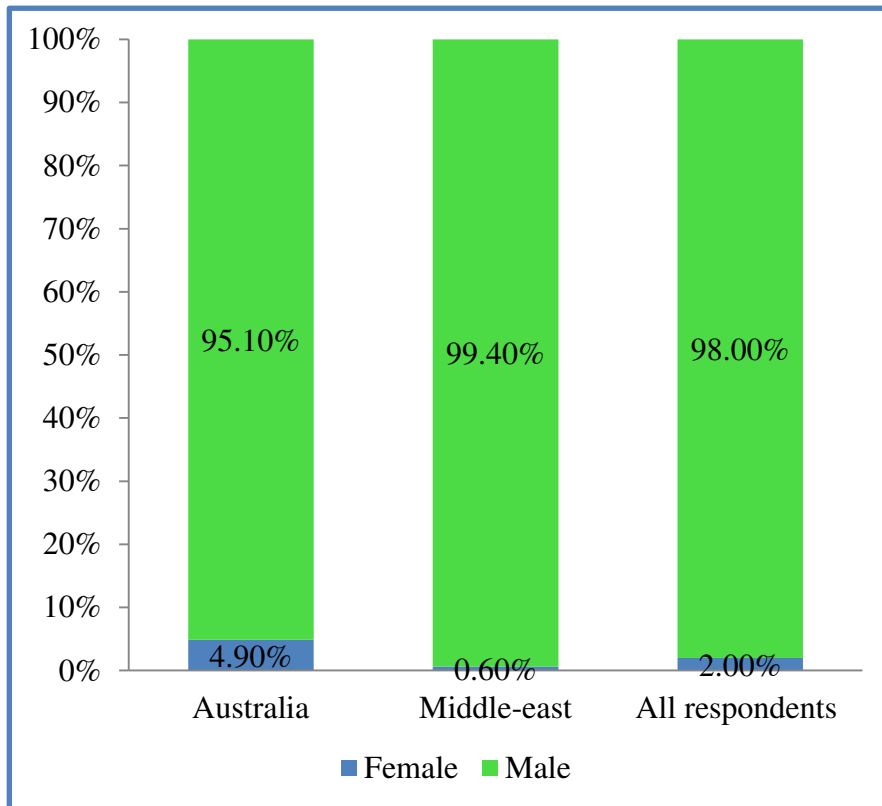
Figure 3: Marital status



- Most were married (70%).
- 65% had children.

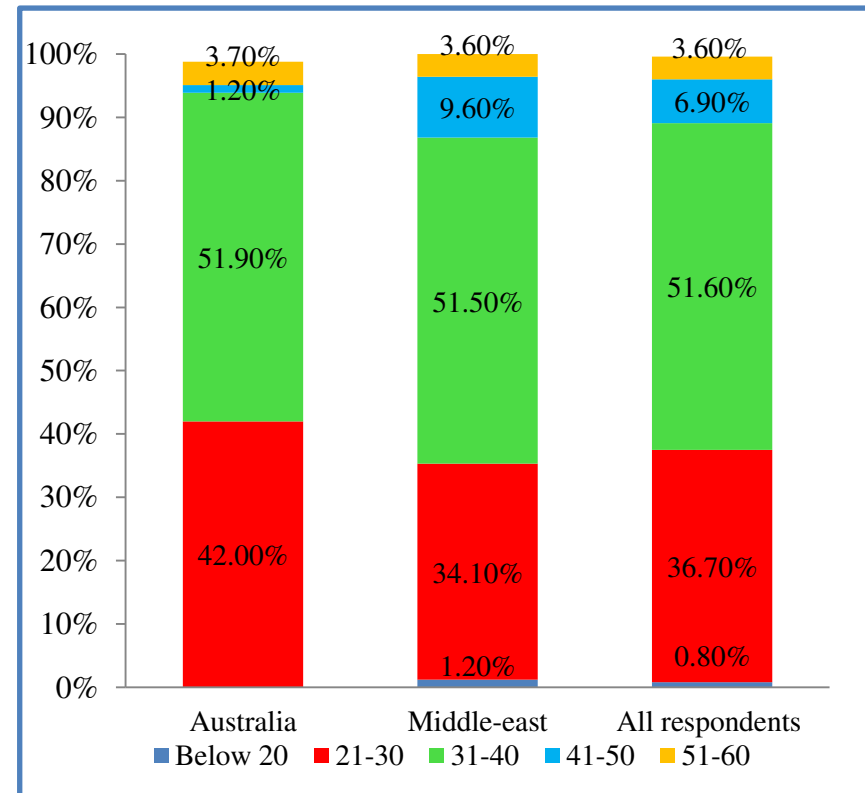
Demographic data analysis (expat. Survey)

Figure 4: Gender



- Most (98%) were male
- 5 female expatriates

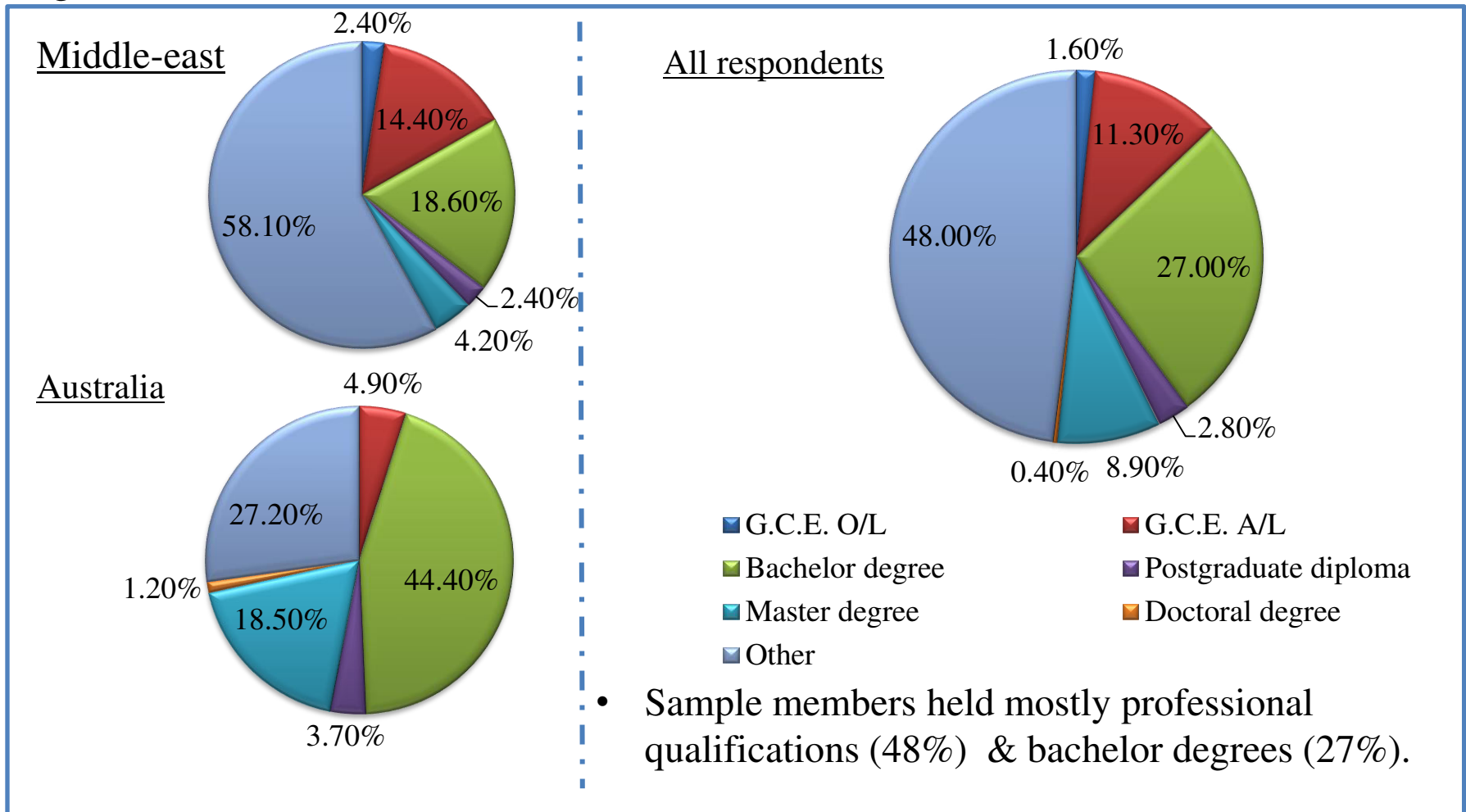
Figure 5: Age



- 52% were aged 31-40
- 37% were aged below 30.

Demographic data analysis (expat. survey)

Figure 6: Education



Demographic data analysis (expat. survey)

Figure 7: Dual citizenship

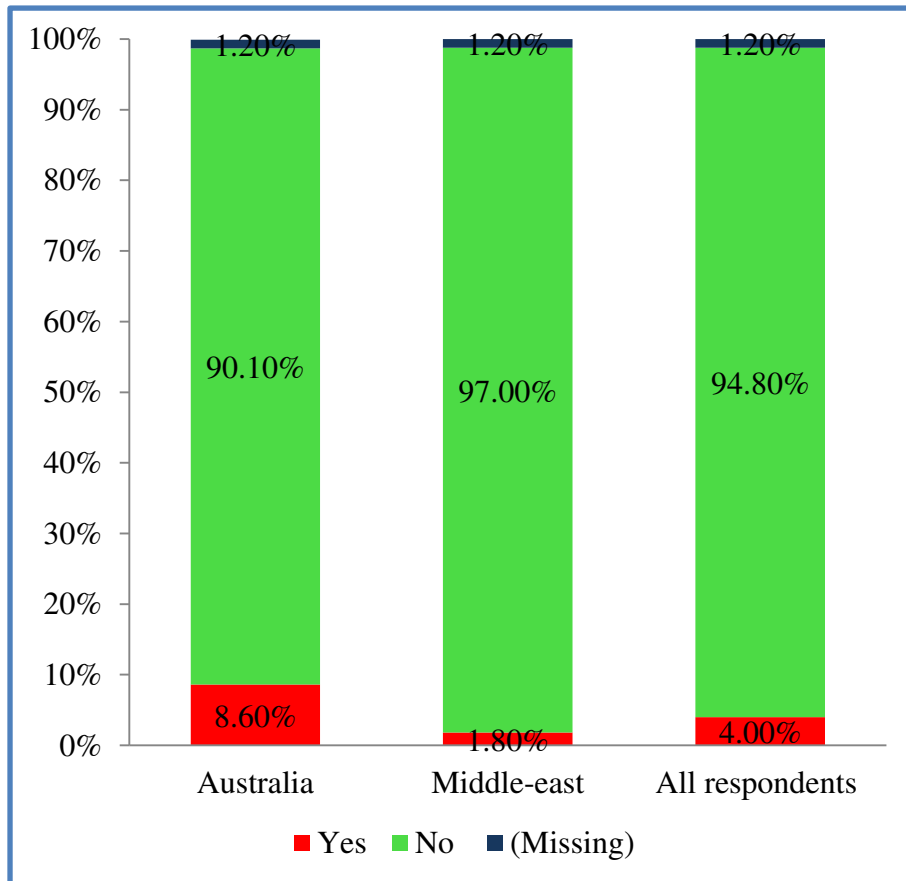
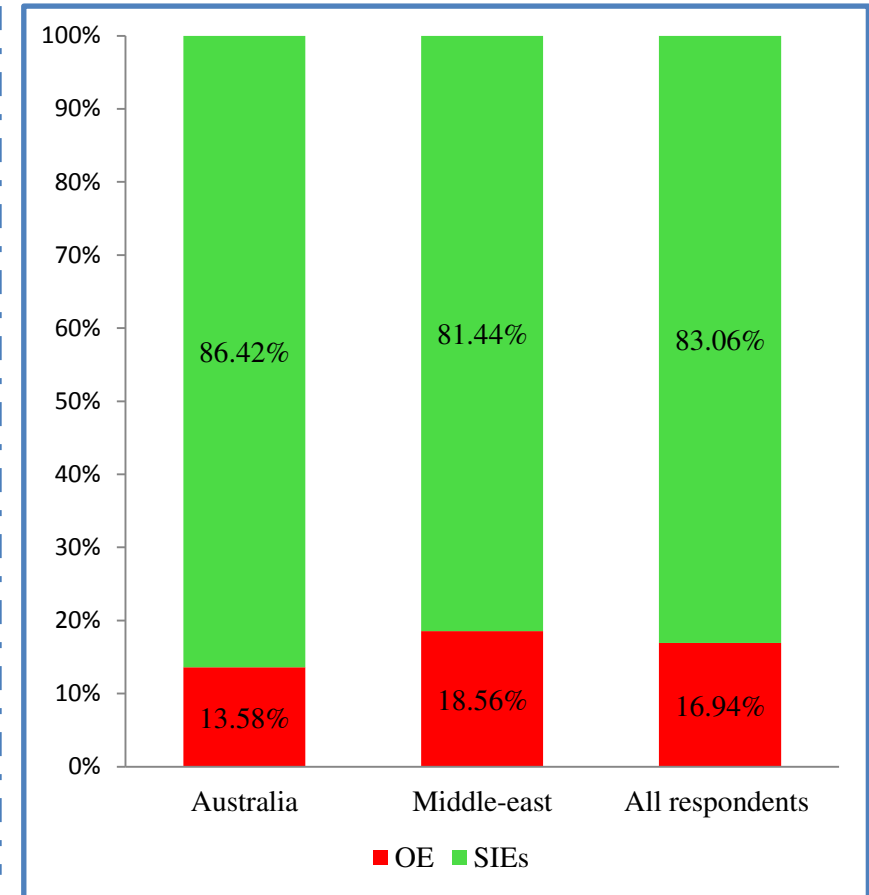


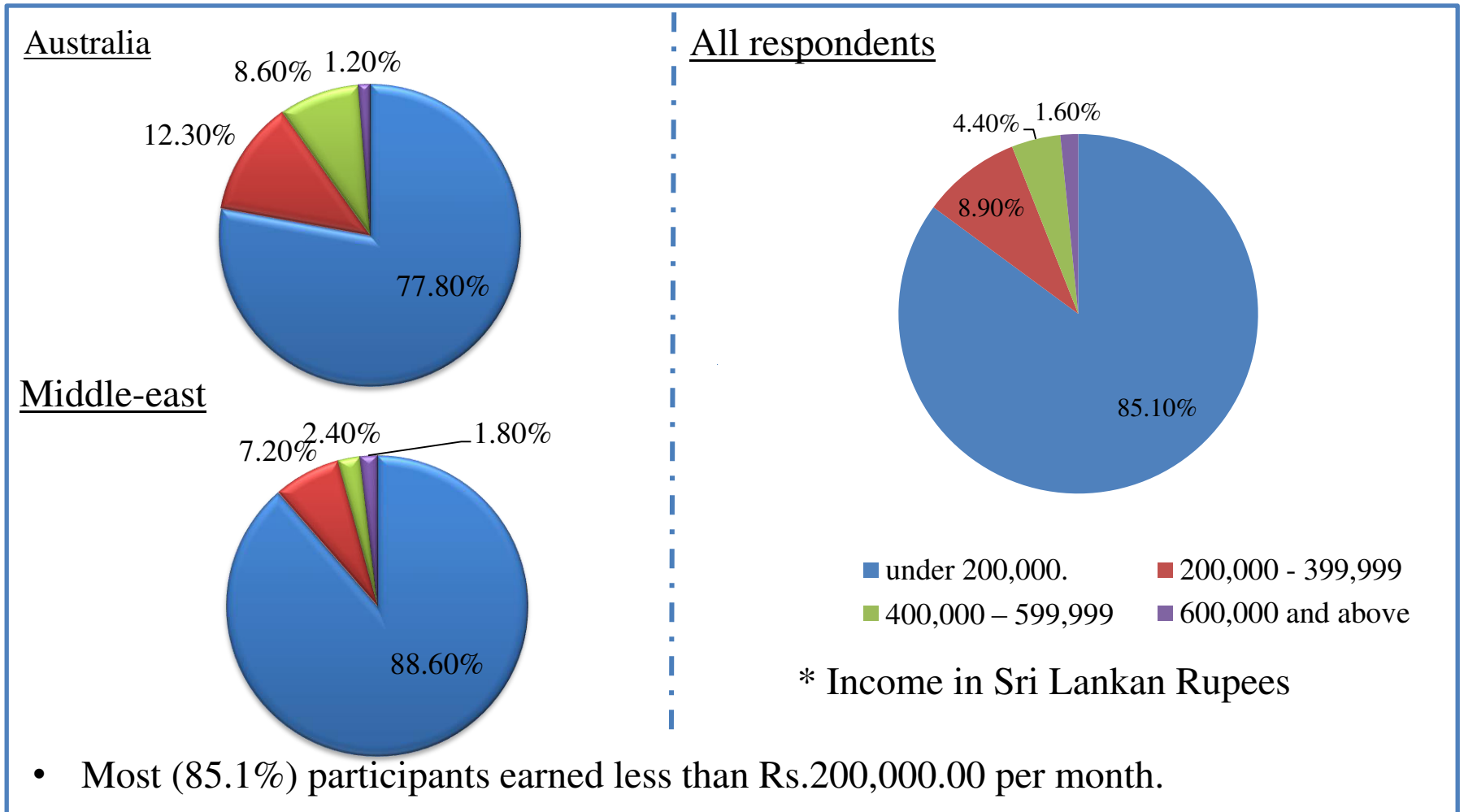
Figure 8: Type of expatriates



- Some expatriates (4%) had dual citizenship.
- About (83%) were SIEs

Demographic data analysis (expat. survey)

Figure 9: Monthly average income



Demographic data analysis (spouse survey)

Table : 3 Sample characteristics - spouse

	N=248	%
Education		
G.C.E.(Ordinary Level) examination	11	4.44%
G.C.E. (Advanced Level) examination	114	45.97%
Bachelor degree	41	16.53%
Postgraduate diploma	4	1.61%
Master degree	13	5.24%
Other (e.g.ACA, ACCA, CIMA, CMA, Dip.in HRM)	65	26.21%
Age		
Below 20	1	0.40%
21-30	126	50.81%
31-40	97	39.11%
41-50	14	5.65%
51-60	7	2.82%
Income (Monthly, LKR)		
under 200,000.	212	85.48%
200,000 - 399,999	22	8.87%
400,000 – 599,999	4	1.61%
600,000 and above	4	1.61%
Employment		
Employed	182	73.39%
Unemployed	64	25.81%

Survey Results

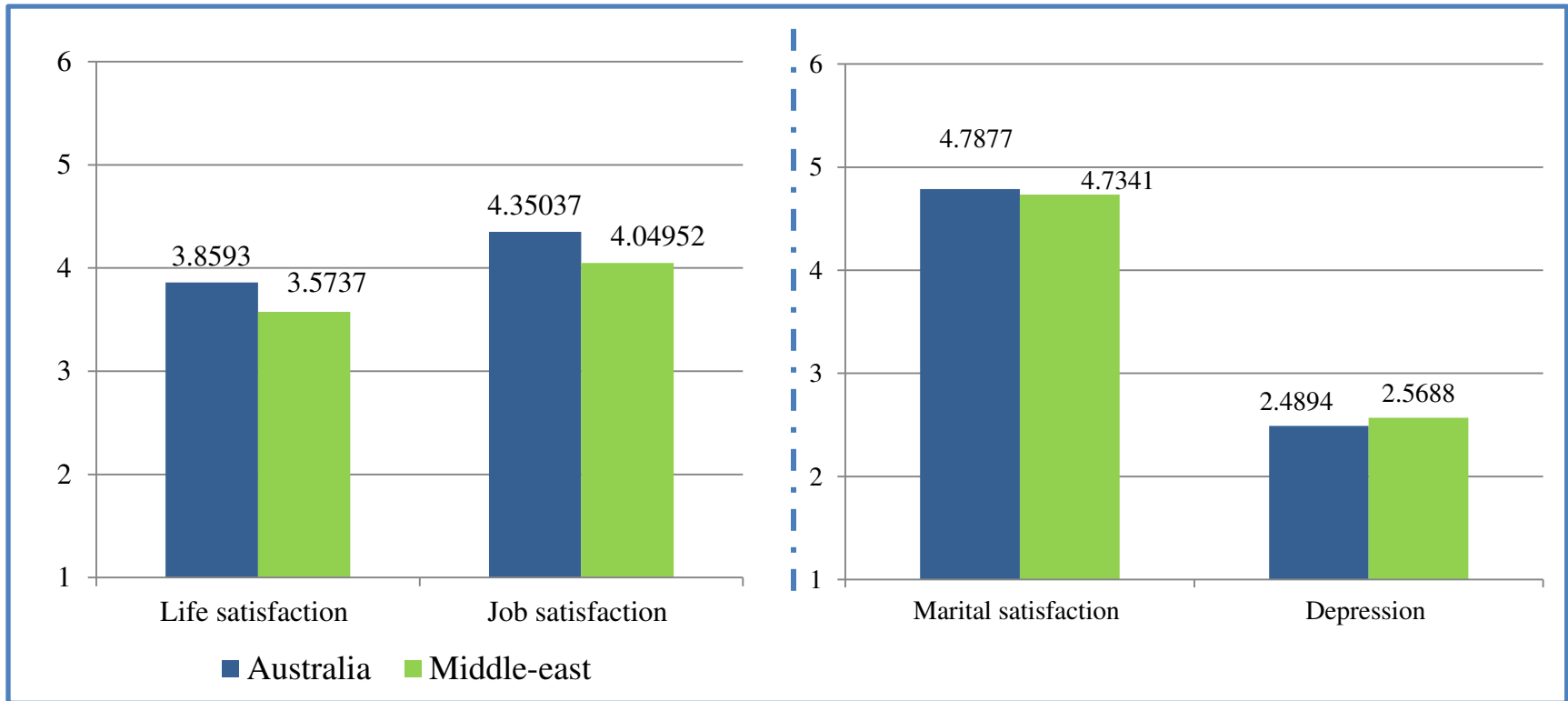
Preliminary data analysis -II

The following section refers to results of mean comparison.

- We used independent sample T-test in order to determine whether there is statistical evidence that the associated population means are significantly different.
- we performed independent sample T- test with the country of living (e.g. Australia and the Middle-east), and spouse location (e.g. Living together and living apart).

Mean comparison (based on the country)

Figure 10: mean comparison - 1



- Expatriates who are in Australia were reported high level of JS & LS.

- No significant mean difference of MS & Dpn. in terms of the country of living.

Results of Independent sample T-test

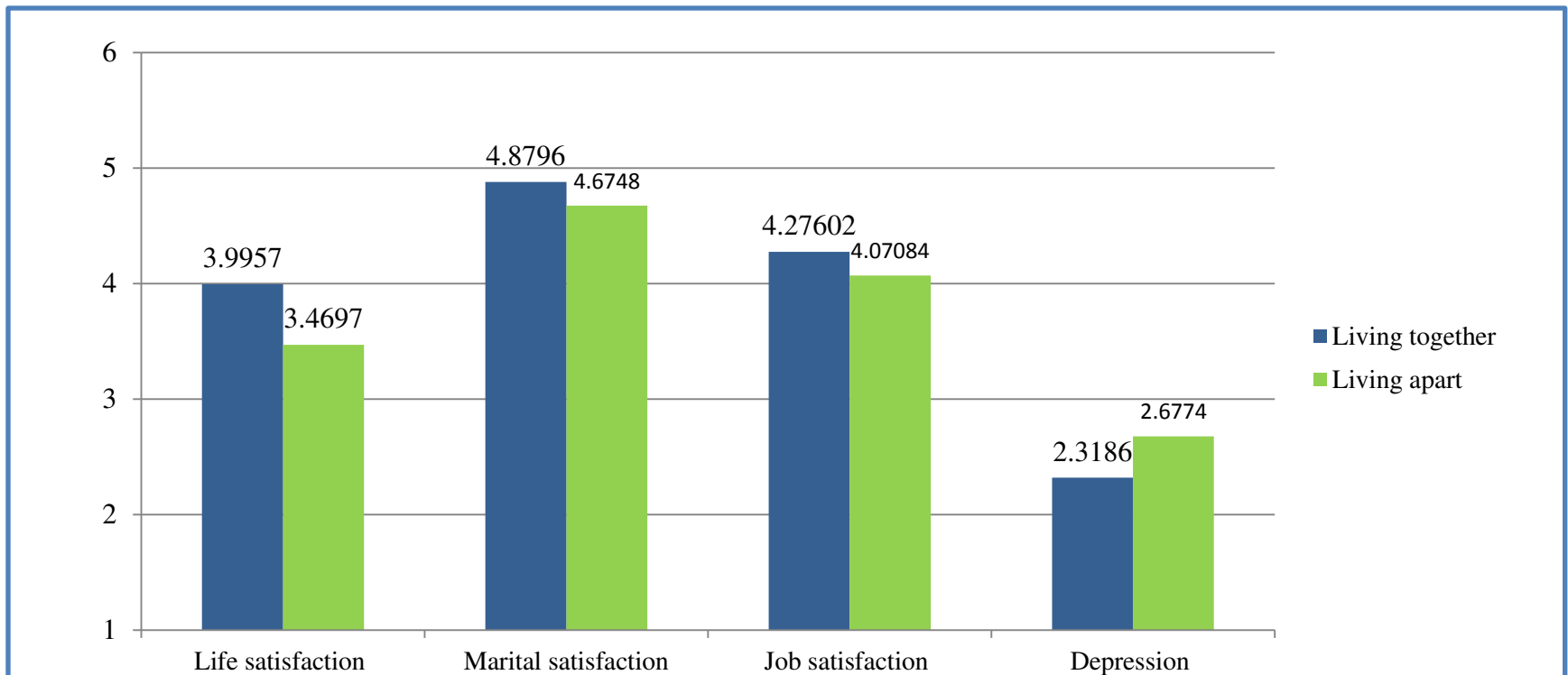
Table 3: summarized results of independent sample T-test (country comparison)

Variable	Expat. Location	Mean	S.D.	Sign. (p)	Remarks
Life satisfaction	Australia	3.8593	0.6391	.001	There is a significant difference in mean LS between two groups
	Middle-east	3.5737	0.586		
Marital satisfaction	Australia	4.7877	.71298	.554	There is <u>no significant</u> difference in mean MS between two groups
	Middle-east	4.7341	.64395		
Job satisfaction	Australia	4.35037	.836722	.005	There is a significant difference in mean JS between two groups
	Middle-east	4.04952	.747756		
Depression	Australia	2.4894	.71292	.371	There is <u>no significant</u> difference in mean Dpn. between two groups
	Middle-east	2.5688	.62444		

N.B. Statistically significant = $p < .05$

Mean comparison(based on spouse location)

Figure 11: mean comparison - 2



- Expatriates who were living together reported high level of LS, MS, & JS.
- Eexpatriates who were living apart reported high level of Dpn.

Results of Independent sample T-test

Table 4: summerized results of independent sample T-test (comparison on spouse location)

Variable	Spouse location	Mean	S.D.	Sign. (p)	Remarks
Life satisfaction	Living togther.	3.9957	.64335	.000	There is a significant difference in mean LS between two groups
	Living apart	3.4697	.50944		
Marital satisfaction	Living togther.	4.8796	.64142	.019	There is a significant difference in mean MS between two groups
	Living apart	4.6748	.67117		
Job satisfaction	Living togther.	4.27602	.796670	.047	There is a significant difference in mean JS between two groups
	Living apart	4.07084	.776791		
Depression	Living togther.	2.3186	.53109	.000	There is a significant difference in mean Dpn. between two groups
	Living apart	2.6774	.68518		

N.B. Statistically significant = $p < .05$

Conclusion

- Global labour market is becoming more diverse with migrant workers.
- Individuals decision of work abroad highly depend on family related factors.
- Living apart from family seems to be a significant determinant of stay abroad.
- Results of the comprehensive statistical analysis of this study and follow-up survey will significantly improve the quality of the outcomes.

Appendices

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