
INTERNATIONAL WORKERS DRINKING ABROAD? EXAMIN-
ING THE MOTIVES FOR ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND ITS
CONSEQUENCES

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Biographical note

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Abstract

This investigation has the purpose of examining the motives for alcohol consumption by international workers, the contexts associated with such consumption and the consequences that it may have on perceived stress, general satisfaction, performance and withdrawal intentions. Data was collected through an online survey aimed at international workers, resulting in a sample of 204 respondents, spread across 40 different host countries. The results of this investigation indicate that social motives are those that most often lead international workers to alcohol consumption. Drinking with mixed-sex friends and drinking in bars are the most common consumption contexts among international workers, although the participants reported a lower consumption when compared to their consumption before the assignment. The results show that the alcohol consumption is a positive predictor of the assignment withdrawal intentions but is not a predictor of self-reported performance nor overall satisfaction with the assignment. This study is, as of today, one of the first to analyze the reasons for alcohol consumption by international workers, as well as the contexts in which that consumption may occur and the consequences that it may have.

Keywords: International workers, alcohol consumption, perceived stress level, general satisfaction, performance, withdrawal intentions.

Resumo

Esta investigação tem como objetivo examinar os motivos do consumo de álcool por parte dos trabalhadores internacionais, os contextos associados a esse consumo e as consequências que o consumo poderá ter sobre o stress percebido, satisfação geral, desempenho e as intenções de abandono da missão. Os dados foram recolhidos por via de um inquérito online destinado a trabalhadores internacionais, resultando numa amostra de 204 participantes, distribuídos por 40 países de acolhimento diferentes. Os resultados desta investigação indicam que os motivos sociais são aqueles que mais vezes levam os trabalhadores internacionais ao consumo de álcool. Beber com amigos de ambos os géneros e beber em bares são os contextos de consumo mais comuns entre os trabalhadores internacionais, embora os participantes tenham relatado um menor consumo durante a missão do que anteriormente. Os resultados apontam para o consumo de álcool como um preditor das intenções de abandono da missão, mas não como um preditor do desempenho nem da satisfação geral com a missão. Este estudo é, ao dia de hoje, um dos primeiros a analisar os motivos do consumo de álcool por trabalhadores internacionais, bem como os contextos em que o consumo ocorre e as consequências que poderá acarretar.

Palavras-chave: Trabalhadores internacionais, consumo de álcool, stress percebido, satisfação geral, performance, intenções de abandono.

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1. Introduction

Today, there are countless companies that focus on internationalization, as their main strategic goal in order to allow sustained growth. Their presence at a global scale is thus manifested in a number of ways, notably through the development of trade relations in other countries, up to the opening of subsidiaries in those countries.

Such activities often involve the use of international workers, who leave their country of origin, to move to another country with the purpose of living and working there. In this sense, there has been an increasing expectation by the companies on their employees to accept challenges at an international level (Bolino, Klotz, & Turnley, 2017; Collings, 2014).

According to Kang and Shen (2018), this type of international workers takes on several roles within the organizations where they operate, either as knowledge agents or as strategic points of connection between the company's headquarters and its international subsidiaries, causing the success of their mission to become a crucial factor for the success of the organization (Dowling, Festing, & Engle, 2008).

Given the importance that the international workers have for the organizations in which they operate, the present research aims to contribute to the knowledge about international workers in several different ways. The purpose of this study is to examine what are the motives that may lead to alcohol consumption by international workers and in what contexts does this consumption take place.

In that sense, through the application of a Four-Factor model, used by Cooper (1994), it is intended to understand what are the motives for alcohol use among international workers. In addition to that, as a result of a research suggestion in an article by Wurtz (2018), the contexts involved in the alcohol consumption will be addressed, in order to understand with whom and where the international workers adopt such behaviors, thereby constituting the original contributions of this investigation.

Furthermore, this investigation also has the purpose to analyze the relationship between alcohol consumption and various consequences that may arise from it, namely, it is intended to know the relationship that such consumption has with the perceived stress level, general satisfaction with the assignment, self-reported performance and the withdrawal intentions of the international workers.

That being said, this approach leads to the following research questions:

1. What are the motives for alcohol consumption and its contexts among international workers?

2. What is the relationship between alcohol consumption and general satisfaction with the assignment?
3. What is the relationship between alcohol consumption and perceived stress level?
4. What is the relationship between alcohol consumption and assignment withdrawal intentions?
5. What is the relationship between alcohol consumption and self-reported performance?

The conclusions and findings of this research may support companies with the necessary knowledge to handle situations that can arise from alcohol consumption, since the international workers' well-being should be a priority for organizations that use these kind of human resources. Companies should also bear in mind that for workers who are constantly facing the challenges of working abroad, excess substance use may reduce their ability and awareness when dealing with and overcome them (Galaif, Newcomb, & Carmona, 2001).

2. Literature review

2.1. Motives for alcohol consumption

The World Health Organization defines substance use as the harmful use of psychoactive substances, in which alcohol is included (World Health Organization, 2019). Such a definition leads and portrays the context of this investigation where the consumption of alcohol by international workers in the course of their period outside their country of origin is addressed.

According to Wurtz (2018), living and working in another country poses a number of challenges, resulting in international workers consuming more alcohol when compared to domestic workers. Truman, Sharar, and Pompe (2011) also state that international workers experience a greater risk of problems associated with the consumption of alcohol, which is seen as a way to reduce tension, even if it is just momentary (Belogolovsky, Bamberger, & Bacharach, 2012).

There are several motives that can lead international workers to consume alcohol, however, the literature on alcohol consumption by this specific group of workers is still sparse and poorly explored. In an investigation aimed to know the motivations of alcohol use among adolescents, Cooper (1994) used a measure based on a conceptual model of Cox (1988), which, from what is known to date, has not yet been tested on international workers, as a way to know their motivations to consume alcohol. The measure has four factors, each containing a set of motives that could lead to alcohol consumption. The factors are: social motives, which translate into motives like drinking to celebrate, to enjoy a party and to make social gatherings more fun; coping motives, which include motives like drinking to forget worries, because it helps when feeling depressed, and to forget problems; enhancement motives, such as drinking because it is exciting, fun and to get high; and conformity motives, like drinking to be liked, to fit in the group and not to be left out.

The results of a study by Cooper (1994) point to a positive relationship between these motives and alcohol consumption, namely, it was found that drinking for enhancement motives was associated with heavy drinking, while drinking for social motives was positively associated with the quantity and frequency of the consumption. In addition, individuals who drink due to coping motives presented a greater risk of drinking problems, and finally, drinking by conformity, despite being negatively associated with the usual

amounts and frequency of consumption, came out as positively associated with contexts where alcohol consumption may occur.

Given the aforementioned evidence (Cooper, 1994), one would expect that social, enhancement, coping and conformity motives would be positively related to the consumption of alcohol among international workers.

2.2. Contexts of alcohol consumption

Regarding the context in which consumption may occur among expatriates, Wurtz (2018) suggests that future research on this subject should take into account the social dimension of the consumption and the circumstances surrounding these behaviors: whether the individual engages in such behavior alone, with family members, with business partners, with friends, among others. The social contextualization of the consumption may be linked to complex phenomena of acceptance and facilitation, such as in Korea, where alcohol consumption in a social setting or during a meal is seen as a facilitator in establishing business relationships (Kim & Kim, 2008).

One can also analyze the social context by addressing family issues, that is, the weight and influence that the family may have on the consumption behaviors of the international workers. Being an international worker represents a considerable professional and personal challenge, largely due to the phenomenon of intercultural adjustment that the person faces, in terms of psychological adjustment, directly related to the person's well-being, and socio-cultural adjustment, related to the adjustment with the work, interaction with locals and with the society in general (Black et al., 1991).

Wurtz (2018) states that friends and family with whom the international worker gets along in the country of origin often serves as a refuge, helping to overcome difficult and demanding periods at work. In their absence, given the fact that the worker is on an international assignment, stress levels might increase, which may prompt the use of substances, such as alcohol, as a way of coping. Earlier research has shown that satisfaction with family relationships and family support are facilitators of expatriates' adjustment (Cieri, Dowling, & Taylor, 1991; Shaffer & Harrison, 2001). Hence, international workers accompanied by the family are expected to consume less alcohol, at least for coping motives; whereas separated expatriates might use alcohol not only to socialize with other expatriates and locals but also to cope with the hurdles of the assignment.

The findings of an investigation carried on by Cooper (1994) point out a relationship between the various motives that may lead to alcohol consumption and the contexts where the consumption may occur. First, the results support that drinking for enhancement motives is positively associated with consuming in settings where heavy alcohol consumption would be tolerated and encouraged, namely, in bars or with same-sex friends. The results also shown that consuming alcohol for social motives was associated with drinking at celebratory and social occasions, such as parties and with groups of friends. In addition, drinking to cope was positively associated with solitary drinking, and drinking due to conformity motives was positively associated with drinking alcohol in parties, where pressures to conform would be more significant.

Given the aforementioned evidence, one would expect that social motives to drink, among expatriates, to be positively associated drinking at parties; drinking with same-sex friends and with mixed-sex friends. Enhancement motives to drink alcohol are expected to be positively associated to heavy alcohol consumption; drinking at bars; and drinking with same-sex friends. When expatriates drink for coping, this is expected to be positively associated to heavy alcohol consumption; drinking in solitary at home; drinking with same-sex friends and mixed-sex friends. Finally, conformity motives to drink, among expatriates, are expected to be positively associated to social alcohol consumption in parties; and drinking in business gatherings and negatively associated to drinking solitary at home.

2.3. Alcohol consumption and perceived stress

Acting in an international context, taking into account all the specificities associated with it, can be highly challenging, so it is not surprising that stress levels tend to be higher among international workers when compared with workers acting in the national context (Anderzen & Arnetz, 1999). International workers are known to experience more stressors when compared to their home-based peers, mostly due to reasons like living in other country, being separated from family and friends, having to adapt to a new job in a different country, coping with fears over their career progression and a possible repatriation, and various other reasons related with the family situation, such as children education and potential career disruption for a working spouse (Shortland & Cummins, 2007). The results of an investigation by Silbiger and Pines (2014) that focused on expatriates in 32 different countries, revealed a high level of stress among the sample, also

showing a relationship between stress and the importance of expatriate work, revealing a positive correlation between them, that is, the more important the work, the more stress.

Although the impact of stress on alcohol consumption by international workers is still overlooked, the results of a recent investigation made by Wurtz (2018) showed that: (1) stress does have an effect on substance use such as alcohol, given that expatriates experiencing moderate to high stress levels use more substances, (2) female expatriates consume lower levels of substances regardless of their stress levels, and (3) male expatriates consume more substances when they experience higher stress levels. Furthermore, the results of that same investigation also indicated that in a sample of 208 expatriates in whom stress was measured, 55% reported feeling sometimes stressed and 8% reported feeling considerably stressed. Also, according to Tung (1998), some expatriates sought to cope with the isolation of living and working abroad by consuming alcohol as a way of relieving their stress.

Given these findings, one would expect the level of perceived stress to be positively associated to alcohol consumption among international workers.

2.4. Alcohol consumption and general satisfaction with the assignment

The impact of alcohol use on the general satisfaction that the international worker has with his assignment is a field not yet explored in the literature associated with this type of working context. The research carried out so far addresses the satisfaction of international workers in the sphere of their activity by defining it as a positive emotional state related to their own work (Froese and Peltokorpi, 2011). The satisfaction is affected by a series of predictors such as intercultural adjustment (Bhaskar-Shrinivas, et al., 2005), the distance to their national culture, which was found to have a negative impact on the worker's satisfaction with his assignment, as well as their manager's nationality, since international workers acting under the coordination of foreign managers in relation to the country of destination show greater satisfaction with their work (Froese & Peltokorpi, 2011).

Still according to Froese and Peltokorpi (2011), the international worker's satisfaction with the work is related to lower turnover trends (Birdseye & Hill, 1995) and lower intentions of leaving the assignment (Shaffer & Harrison, 1998), as well as a greater motivation for challenges and intentions to complete the assignment (Downes, Thomas, & Singley, 2002).

It is also verified that the general satisfaction, related to a positive attitude and appreciation towards the assignment, is expected to be influenced by variables related to work, but also by variables external to work (Pinto, Cabral Cardoso, & Werther, 2017). In general terms, cultural differences and the consequent difficulties in adjusting to the host country might reduce expatriates' satisfaction with the assignment, and thus lead to the consumption of alcohol, potentially seen as a way of coping with potential problems and situations of high tension. Thus, and according to this evidence, one would expect the satisfaction with the assignment to be negatively associated to alcohol consumption among international workers. In addition, it would also be expected that assignment satisfaction would be negatively associated to perceived stress; alcohol consumption; drinking for coping and drinking for conformity.

2.5. Alcohol consumption and self-reported performance

According to Harrison and Shaffer (2005) job performance depends on the amount of time, energy and effort that the expatriate devotes to the job. The factors that can influence the performance of international workers have been studied in the literature. For instance, Bhatti, Battour, Ismail, and Sundram (2014) found that personality traits, such as extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism positively influence expatriate adjustment, which in turn influence expatriate performance. Furthermore, according to Shen and Jiang (2015) research indicates that expatriate performance is contingent on a range of factors relating from families to host environments. In addition, a study by Andresen (2015) has also found that community embeddedness is positively related to international worker's job performance.

However, the impact that alcohol consumption may have on the international workers' performance is still barely known. The relationship between alcohol consumption and performance is visible if one looks at other social groups. In a study of military personnel on active duty, Fisher, Hoffman, Austin-Lane, and Kao (2000) found an association between heavy drinking and loss of productivity at work, as well as an increase in late arrival to work and working below the normal levels. On the other hand, and in the academic circle, the findings from Aertgeerts and Buntinx (2002) reveal no significant association between alcohol abuse and academic performance. Regardless of the social group, the relationship that alcohol can have with performance should be taken into

account, specially among the international workers, whose performance is often decisive for the success of the companies they work for.

That being said, and bearing in mind the evidence related to alcohol consumption and the motives that can lead to it, one would expect assignment performance to be negatively associated to perceived stress; alcohol consumption; drinking for coping and drinking for conformity.

2.6. Alcohol consumption and assignment withdrawal intentions

According to Carmeli (2005), withdrawal intentions comprise several distinct dimensions that connect with each other, as the thoughts of withdrawal, the search intentions and the own withdrawal intentions. Mobley (1982) and Mobley et al. (1978) define "withdrawal" as a process that has several distinct constructs, related to each other, referring to the intentions of withdrawal and also to the withdrawal construct as an action, that is, to actual carrying on the act of withdrawal.

To Carmeli (2005) withdrawal intentions assume various forms and dimensions, which can be related to the position, organization and occupation. In this sense, intentions of withdrawing the position are defined as the intentions that the individual has to abandon the current position in the near future. The intentions of withdrawing from the organization are related to the intentions that the individual has to leave the company in the near future, and finally, the intentions of withdrawing from the occupation are related to the intentions that the individual has to abandon his current career/occupation in the near future (Carmeli, 2005). These last dimensions, according to Blau (2000), are of a greater difficulty when compared to the intentions of withdrawing the organization, since the individual can easily seek employment in another entity, continuing in the same career field.

In the international context, such withdrawal intentions are likely to constitute a genuine concern for organizations, especially if these intentions result in the withdrawal action itself, given the strategic importance that the international workers have for the companies in which they operate.

The literature often points to a number of challenges that an international worker faces in the course of the assignment, which might result in an increase in the consumption of substances, such as alcohol (Wurtz, 2018). This behavior may contribute to the increase of the intentions to withdraw from the assignment.

Although the effect that alcohol consumption has on the international workers' withdrawal intentions has been overlooked, if one looks at the empirical evidence on the alcohol consumption and its motives, one would expect withdrawal intentions to be positively associated to perceived stress; alcohol consumption; drinking for coping and drinking for conformity. In addition, one would expect self-reported performance and assignment satisfaction to be negatively related to assignment withdrawal intentions.

2.7. Theoretical model and hypotheses

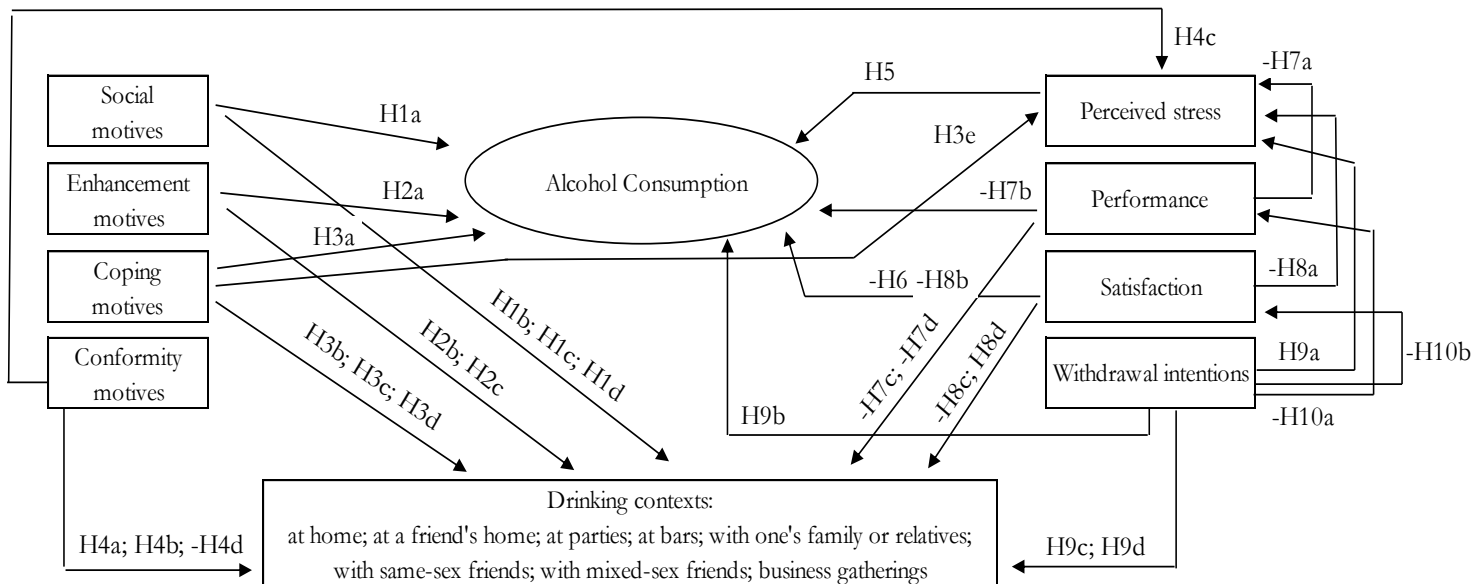


Figure 1 – Theoretical model and proposed hypotheses

H1: Social motives are positively associated to (a) alcohol consumption among international workers; notably (b) drinking at parties; (c) drinking with same-sex friends; and (d) drinking with mixed-sex friends.

H2: Enhancement motives are positively associated to: (a) heavy alcohol consumption among international workers; notably (b) drinking at bars; and (c) drinking with same-sex friends.

H3: Coping motives are positively associated to: (a) heavy alcohol consumption among international workers; notably (b) drinking in solitary at home; (c) drinking with same-sex friends; (d) drinking with mixed-sex friends; and (e) perceived stress.

H4: Conformity motives are positively associated to: (a) social alcohol consumption in parties; (b) drinking in business gatherings and (c) perceived stress; while (d) is negatively associated to drinking solitary at home.

H5: The level of perceived stress is positively associated to alcohol consumption among international workers.

H6: The satisfaction with the assignment is negatively associated to alcohol consumption among international workers.

H7: Assignment performance is negatively associated to (a) perceived stress; (b) alcohol consumption; (c) drinking for coping and (d) drinking for conformity.

H8: Assignment satisfaction is negatively associated to (a) perceived stress; (b) alcohol consumption; (c) drinking for coping and (d) drinking for conformity.

H9: Assignment withdrawal intentions are positively associated to (a) perceived stress; (b) alcohol consumption; (c) drinking for coping and (d) drinking for conformity.

H10: Assignment withdrawal intentions are negatively associated to (a) assignment self-reported performance and (b) assignment satisfaction.

3. Methodology

In order to achieve the proposed objectives, this investigation adopts a quantitative methodology, with the collection of primary data obtained through a survey. Thus, this chapter aims to address the procedure and sample, the measures that were used and the way that the data analysis was made.

3.1. Procedure and sample

The survey targets international workers, who are currently living and working outside their country of origin. It was written in english, in order to have a higher geographical application and shared online, in international workers' groups in various social platforms and websites. It was also shared on LinkedIn, where, in addition to posting the survey, direct approaches were made to workers whose situation was within the scope of this investigation.

In total, 204 participants completed the survey, which resulted in a sample composed of 123 (61,2%) female and 78 (38,8%) male international workers, living and working in 40 different host countries, located in Africa, Asia, Europe, North America and South America. This sample of international workers is constituted by 35 (17,2%) corporate expatriates, 143 (70,1%) self-initiated expatriates and 26 (12,7%) trailing spouses. United Kingdom, United States of America, Portugal, Canada and France were the main countries of origin. The vast majority of participants are graduated (91,7%), their average age is 33,87 (SD = 10,15), and their current position is as follows: 121 (59,3%) reported that they are currently occupying technical, academic or staff positions, 52 (25,5%) middle management positions, and 31 (15,2%) upper management positions. Regarding the family situation, 116 (56,9%) reported being married or living with a partner and 152 (74,5%) don't have children. Lastly, 122 (59,8%) reported being separated from the family. Table 1 summarizes the sample demographics.

Sample Demographics

		<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age				33,87	10,15
Time in the assignment (months)				19,55	20,28
Time living and working abroad (years)				6,69	8,85
English language proficiency				3,80	,51
Gender					
	Female	123	61,2%		
	Male	78	38,8%		
Education					
	Non graduate	17	8,3%		
	Graduate	187	91,7%		
Present marital status					
	Not married nor living with a partner	88	43,1%		
	Married/living with a partner	116	56,9%		
Family accompaniment					
	No	122	59,8%		
	Yes	82	40,2%		
Family situation					
	Without children	152	74,5%		
	With children	52	25,5%		
Present position					
	Technical, Academic or Staff	121	59,3%		
	Middle management	52	25,5%		
	Upper management	31	15,2%		
Home continent					
	Africa	11	5,4%		
	Antarctica	1	0,5%		
	Asia	23	11,3%		
	Australia and Oceania	9	4,4%		
	Europe	116	56,9%		
	North America	36	17,6%		
	South America	8	3,9%		
Host continent					
	Africa	21	10,3%		
	Antarctica	0	0,0%		
	Asia	35	17,2%		
	Australia and Oceania	0	0,0%		
	Europe	126	61,8%		
	North America	8	3,9%		
	South America	14	6,9%		

n = 204

Table 1 - Sample demographics

3.2. Research measures

Alcohol consumption. Aware of possible limitations such as social desirability and the consumption concealment (Zaldivar, Molina, Rios, & Montes, 2009), a measure of self-reporting alcohol consumption was used as the way of knowing the patterns of alcohol consumption. Therefore, the consumption was measured through an adaptation of the self-reporting version of the AUDIT: The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test, an instrument developed by the World Health Organization (2001), where participants were confronted with a series of questions, to which they had to answer using a Likert scale varying between the values (0) and (4). The scale contains 10 items, such as “How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?” and “How often do you have six or more drinks on one occasion?”. The full scale and questionnaire is in Appendix 1.

Social context of alcohol consumption. In addition to knowing the patterns of alcohol consumption by international workers, it was also sought to know the quantity and social context associated with that consumption. For that, an adaptation from Cooper (1994) measurement was used. The participants were confronted with several social contexts where the consumption was likely to occur, such as: “Drinking at home”, “Drinking at bars” and “Drinking at a friend’s home”, to which they had to answer in comparison with their patterns before the assignment, through the choice of one of the three possible answers: “No drinking or does not apply”, “Yes, but consumption is lower than before the assignment”, or “Yes, and consumption is higher than before the assignment”.

Motives of alcohol consumption. To know the reasons that could be in the origin of the alcohol consumption among international workers, the measurement used by Cooper (1994) was employed. In this study, the four main groups of motives that could lead to the consumption were kept, and include: social motives, coping, enhancement and conformity. Overall, the scale contained 20 items, such as “To be sociable” and “To forget worries”. Participants were asked to respond through a Likert scale varying between values (1) meaning “Never / Almost never” and (5) meaning “Always / Almost always”.

Perceived stress level. An adaptation of Silbiger and Pines (2014) was used to measure the perceived stress level, on a scale containing 1 item. Participants were asked what was their perceived level of stress in the present assignment, to which they had to answer through a 7 point Likert scale, varying from (1) corresponding to “Much lower than I expected”, to (7) corresponding to “Much higher than I expected”.

General satisfaction with the assignment. In order to measure the overall satisfaction with the assignment, an adaptation of Bonache (2005) scale made by Pinto, Cabral Cardoso & Werther (2012) was used. Thus, the participants were confronted with four statements related to their general satisfaction with the assignment. The items were: "I am satisfied with my present international assignment", "I would take the same international assignment again", "This international assignment measures up to my expectations" and "My overall satisfaction with the present assignment is excellent". The responses were given through a Likert scale, varying between the values (1) corresponding to "Strongly disagree" and (5) corresponding to "Strongly agree".

Performance. Following an instrument used by Vandenabeele (2009) the self-reported performance was measured by four items regarding their performance, that were: "In my opinion, I contribute to the success of my employer organization", "I think I am performing well within this organization", "I think I am a good employee" and "On average, I work harder than my colleagues". Participants respond through a Likert scale, with (1) corresponding to "I totally disagree" and value (5) corresponding to "I totally agree".

Assignment withdrawal intentions. The withdrawal intentions from the assignment were measured through a scale following the adaptation of Carmeli (2005) from Pinto, Cabral Cardoso & Werther (2012). Participants were confronted with the following statements: "I think a lot of leaving my present assignment", "I am actively looking for an alternative to my present assignment" and "As soon as it is possible, I will leave my present assignment". Answers were given through a Likert scale that varies between (1) corresponding to "I totally disagree" and (5) corresponding to "I totally agree".

3.3. Data analysis

In order to test the hypotheses, descriptive, correlational and linear regression analysis were conducted through the use of the statistical software IBM SPSS®. Firstly, the measurements were computed and the reliability of the scales were determined, through Cronbach's α , before its use. Then, the descriptive statistics and correlations between the research variables were computed, as shown in Table 4. Non-parametric correlational analyzes were performed to determine inter-correlations among the research variables. Finally, several regression analyzes were conducted in order to test the hypotheses. To this purpose, respondents' demographic variables entered in Step 1, while the predictors

entered in step 2, such as: alcohol consumption (AUDIT), the motives that could lead to alcohol consumption (social motives, enhancement motives, coping motives and conformity motives), the various contexts where consumption may occur, and also the perceived stress level, assignment satisfaction and assignment self-reported performance.

4. Results

4.1. Alcohol consumption and drinking contexts

Table 2 shows the percentages for the reasons triggering the alcohol use among international workers. Firstly, when analyzing the **social motives** that could lead to alcohol consumption, it is possible to observe that 21,3% of the participants reported that never or almost never consumed alcohol to be sociable and 30,9% reported that some of the time the reason for their consumption was to celebrate. On the other hand, 25,3% reported that half of the time the motive that led them to consume alcohol was to enjoy a party, and 25,8% reported that most of the time alcohol consumption was for making social gatherings more fun. Finally, 5,1% reported that always or almost always consumed alcohol as a way of improving parties and celebrations.

Regarding the **enhancement motives**, it was found that for 52,8% of the participants “getting high” was never or almost never a motive for alcohol consumption. It can also be seen that 32,6% reported that some of the time they consume alcohol because it is exciting, and that 23,6% reported that half of the time they consume because it is fun. Most of the time, 19,1% drink alcohol because it gives them a pleasant feeling, and lastly, 9,6% consume because they like the feeling.

The **conformity motives** listed saw most of the response rates in the "never or almost never" range. For instance, 82,6% of the respondents reported never or almost never consuming alcohol in order to prevent others from kidding with them, while 23,6% reported some of the time consuming alcohol to not to be left out, and 14% reported that half of the time consumed in order to fit in the group, and 2,8% reported consuming, most of the time, because they were pressured by others. Finally, only 0,6% reported always or almost always consuming to be liked.

Finally, the **coping motives** also presented a large percentage of respondents in the range of "Never or Almost never" category. For example, 56,7% of the respondents reported that never or almost never drink with the motive of forgetting their worries, and 29,8% stated that they some of the time consume for the motive of cheering up when in bad mood. For 20,8% of the participants, the question of feeling self-confident is, half of the time, a motive for consumption, while 8,4% considered that most of the time the motive for their consumption is because it helps when feeling depressed. Finally, 2,8%

reported that always or almost always the motive for consumption was to lead them to forget about problems.

In sum and from a broader perspective, social motives were those that presented the highest percentage in the range of "Always/Almost always" and "Most of the time" categories, which indicate that social motives are the main trigger to the consumption of alcohol by international workers. On the other hand, the conformity motives showed the lowest percentage in the "Always/Almost always" and "Most of the time" categories and also presented the highest percentage of answers in the "Never/Almost never" categories, which mean that rare are the occasions in which the alcohol consumption is triggered by conformity motives.

Motives for Drinking	Social Motives					Enhancement Motives				
	To be sociable	To celebrate	To enjoy a party	Make social gatherings fun	Improve parties and celebrations	Likes the feeling	It is exciting	It is fun	To get high	Gives a pleasant feeling
Never/Almost never	21,3	6,2	17,4	12,4	13,5	25,3	45,5	21,9	52,8	22,5
Some of the time	34,8	30,9	27	33,7	32,6	27,5	32,6	27	19,1	27
Half of the time	24,7	23,6	25,3	21,9	19,1	19,1	11,8	23,6	12,9	23
Most of the time	17,4	26,4	23	25,8	29,8	18,5	7,9	19,1	12,4	19,1
Always/Almost always	1,7	12,9	7,3	6,2	5,1	9,6	2,2	8,4	2,8	8,4
Motives for Drinking	Coping Motives					Conformity Motives				
	To forget worries	Helps when feel depressed	To cheer up in a bad mood	To feel self-confident	To forget problems	Because others pressure	So that others do not kid	To fit in the group	To be liked	To not be left out
Never/Almost never	56,7	52,8	41	44,9	57,3	79,8	82,6	59	75,3	63,5
Some of the time	22,5	20,2	29,8	23	21,9	9,6	10,1	21,9	18	23,6
Half of the time	11,2	15,7	17,4	20,8	11,2	6,7	4,5	14	3,9	5,6
Most of the time	6,7	8,4	9,6	8,4	6,7	2,8	1,7	3,4	2,2	6,2
Always/Almost always	2,8	2,8	2,2	2,8	2,8	1,1	1,1	1,7	0,6	1,1

Notes. Valid percentages. $n = 178$

Table 2 – Motives for drinking

Regarding the drinking contexts and quantities shown in Table 3, it is possible to verify that according to what was reported by the participants, two contexts immediately stand out due to the high percentage of responses in the “No drinking or does not apply” option, namely, the context of business gatherings, where “No drinking or does not apply” had 39,3% of responses, and drinking with family or relatives, that had 45,5%. Although all the contexts listed have a percentage of response that points to a lower consumption during the assignment when compared to the pre-assignment, three contexts stand out for presenting more than half of the answers in the option "Yes, but consumption is lower than before the assignment, being: "Bars", "Same-sex friends" and "Mixed-sex friends", all of them with 53,9% of the answers. In some contexts, namely at home, with family or relatives and in business meetings, the percentage of answers in the "No drinking or does not apply" option is even higher, being 31,5%, 45,5% and 39.3%, respectively, than in the "Yes, and consumption is higher than before the assignment" option.

Overall, such results show that going abroad to an international assignment led to a decrease in the quantities of alcohol consumed by international workers, in the various contexts where it typically occurs when they are at home. On the other hand, one can also see that drinking with “Mixed-sex friends” is the main context for alcohol consumption among international workers, with 16,9% of answers in the “No drinking or does not apply” option and 83,1% in the sum of both “Yes, but consumption is lower than before the assignment” and “Yes, and consumption is higher than before the assignment”.

Drinking Context and Quantity	Home	Friend's Home	Parties	Bars	Family or Relatives	Same-sex Friends	Mixed-sex Friends	Business Gatherings
No drinking or does not apply	31,5	25,8	21,9	20,2	45,5	21,9	16,9	39,3
Yes, but consumption is lower than before the assignment	42,1	48,9	53,9	47,8	44,9	53,9	53,9	38,2
Yes, and consumption is higher than before the assignment	26,4	25,3	24,2	32	9,6	24,2	29,2	22,5

Notes. Valid percentages. $n = 178$

Table 3 – Drinking contexts

4.2. Motives for alcohol consumption

For this analysis, Table 4 presents the mean, standard deviation and correlations for the research variables.

Regarding alcohol use (AUDIT), when analyzing the correlations with the demographic variables, one can notice that it correlates positively and significantly with gender ($r = 0.263$; $p < .01$) and english fluency ($r = 0.212$; $p < .01$). This means that male international workers are the ones who consume more alcohol. In addition, international workers who are fluent in english, tend to consume more alcohol as well.

One can observe that alcohol use shows a significant and negative correlation with marital status ($r = -0.259$; $p < .01$) and family abroad ($r = -0.219$; $p < .01$). It also shows a positive correlation, with the home region ($r = 0.166$; $p < .05$) and a negative correlation with the host region ($r = -0.162$; $p < .05$), which reveals that international workers who are not married nor living with a partner and don't have their family abroad are the ones who consume more alcohol.

Alcohol consumption presented a significant and positive correlation with some of the motives that can lead to it, namely, with social motives ($r = 0.453$, $p < .01$), enhancement motives ($r = 0.548$, $p < .01$), and coping motives ($r = 0.424$; $p < .01$). On the other hand, the conformity motives were found not to be significantly correlated with the consumption. It is also important to mention that the social motives are the most common motives for alcohol consumption in this sample (mean values ≥ 2.5 out of 5). Social motives are significantly and negatively correlated with age ($r = -0.186$; $p < .05$), marital status ($r = -0.181$; $p < .05$), and present position ($r = -0.181$; $p < .05$). In addition, social motives also have a positive and significant correlation with the drinking quantity and settings ($r = 0.464$; $p < .01$). These results mean that younger international workers, who are not married nor living with a partner and occupy technical, academic or staff positions are the ones who consume more alcohol due to social motives.

Similar to social motives, the enhancement motives are also negatively correlated with age, although at a higher significance ($r = -0.202$; $p < .01$). Apart from that, enhancement motives for alcohol consumption have a positive and significant correlation with gender ($r = 0.181$; $p < .05$), english fluency ($r = 0.200$; $p < .01$), drinking quantity and settings ($r = 0.421$; $p < .01$) and social motives ($r = 0.717$; $p < .01$). Enhancement motives also have a negative and significant correlation with the marital status ($r = -0.232$; $p < .05$), family abroad ($r = -0.161$; $p < .01$) and months in the assignment ($r = -0.172$; $p < .01$).

Regarding coping motives, age is significantly and negatively correlated with alcohol consumption ($r = -0.253; p < .01$), similar to what happens in the consumption motives previously explored. In addition, coping motives are significantly and negatively correlated with the marital status ($r = -0.275; p < .01$), family abroad ($r = -0.275; p < .01$), children ($r = -0.167; p < .05$), host region ($r = -0.179; p < .05$), present position ($r = -0.148; p < .05$) and months in the assignment ($r = -0.180; p < .05$). On the other hand, the coping motives present a positive and significant correlation with gender ($r = 0.167; p < .05$), perceived stress ($r = 0.187; p < .05$), drinking quantity and settings ($r = 0.346; p < .01$), and with both consumption motives already mentioned, namely, social motives ($r = 0.519; p < .01$) and enhancement motives ($r = 0.612; p < .01$).

One verifies that conformity motives, have not shown any significant correlation with the other research variables, not even with alcohol consumption. The exception is found in the drinking quantity and settings, where these motives show a significant and positive correlation ($r = 0.187; p < .05$) and in the remaining alcohol consumption motives analyzed in this investigation, that are, social motives ($r = 0.324, p < .01$), enhancement motives ($r = 0.180; p < .05$) and coping motives ($r = 0.393; p < .01$).

Finally, in analyzing self-reported performance in the assignment, assignment satisfaction, and assignment withdrawal intentions, one sees that none of these variables is significantly correlated with alcohol consumption, nor with the social motives and enhancement motives for alcohol consumption. Regarding the coping motives, there is a significant and negative correlation with the assignment self-reported performance ($r = -0.160; p < .05$) and assignment satisfaction ($r = -0.175; p < .05$), as well as a significant positive correlation with the assignment withdrawal intentions ($r = 0.228; p < .01$). Lastly, when looking at the conformity motives, one can observe that there is a significant and negative correlation with the assignment self-reported performance ($r = -0.188; p < .05$).

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
1. Age	33,87	10,15																						
2. Gender	0,39	0,49	-0,003																					
3. Education	0,92	0,28	0,056	-0,088																				
4. Marital Status	0,57	0,50	.325**	-0,087	0,095																			
5. Family Abroad	0,40	0,49	.430**	-0,022	-0,042	.613**																		
6. Children	0,25	0,44	.600**	-0,033	-0,027	.350**	.507**																	
7. Home Region	0,57	0,50	-0,013	0,132	-0,012	0,001	0,028	-0,013																
8. Host Region	0,62	0,49	-.185**	-.158*	-0,018	0,068	0,069	-0,049	.252**															
9. Present Position	1,56	0,74	.342**	0,129	-0,052	.195**	.279**	.305**	0,066	-0,114														
10. Months in the Assignment	19,55	20,28	.271**	0,016	0,073	.201**	0,134	.158*	-0,058	-0,103	0,042													
11. Years Abroad	6,69	8,85	.480**	-0,012	0,087	.271**	.267**	.349**	-0,093	-0,100	.298**	.271**												
12. English Fluency	3,80	0,51	0,058	-0,057	0,010	-0,001	-0,030	0,039	-0,066	-.201**	-0,019	.138*	0,056											
13. Perceived Stress	4,44	1,46	0,111	0,018	0,101	-0,051	-0,066	-0,049	0,043	-0,065	0,031	.213**	0,094	-0,115										
14. AUDIT	6,11	4,87	-0,145	.263**	-0,138	-.259**	-.219**	-0,041	.166*	-.162*	0,023	-0,055	0,052	.212**	-0,082	0,874								
15. Drinking Quantity and Settings	1,93	0,95	-.155*	.261**	0,008	-0,131	-0,105	0,004	0,053	-.198**	0,022	0,071	-0,020	0,129	.166*	.534**	0,830							
16. Social Motives to Drink	2,78	0,97	-.186*	0,137	0,015	-.181*	-0,109	-0,034	0,042	-0,050	-.181*	-0,104	-0,062	0,096	0,069	.453**	.464**	0,898						
17. Enhancement Motives to Drink	2,34	1,00	-.202**	.181*	-0,051	-.232**	-.161*	-0,068	0,048	-0,104	-0,100	-.172*	-0,017	.200**	0,068	.548**	.421**	.717**	0,883					
18. Coping Motives to Drink	1,89	0,92	-.253**	.167*	0,033	-.275**	-.275**	-.167*	0,002	-.179*	-.148*	-.180*	-0,137	0,069	.187*	.424**	.346**	.519**	.612**	0,896				
19. Conformity Motives to Drink	1,45	0,66	-0,142	0,077	0,048	-0,079	-0,007	0,015	-0,002	0,097	-0,118	-0,102	-0,005	-0,069	0,018	0,097	.187*	.324**	.180*	.393**	0,851			
20. Assignment Self-Reported Performance	3,87	0,76	0,004	0,028	0,127	.149*	.152*	-0,031	0,032	0,026	.170*	-0,043	.158*	0,066	-0,078	-0,062	-0,065	-0,052	-0,077	-.160*	-.188*	0,798		
21. Assignment Satisfaction	3,47	1,02	-0,043	-0,069	0,023	0,097	0,118	0,078	-0,044	0,121	0,044	-0,100	0,091	-0,043	-.339**	0,007	-0,088	-0,092	-0,031	-.175*	-0,038	.454**	0,925	
22. Assignment Withdrawal Intentions	2,44	1,22	-0,122	0,088	0,007	-0,062	-0,024	-0,102	0,110	-0,066	-0,119	0,000	-.148*	-0,068	.188**	0,143	0,121	0,113	0,095	.228**	0,062	-0,119	-.564**	0,863

Notes. $n = 178 - 204$. Gender (0 = Female; 1 = Male); Education (0 = Non graduate; 1 = Graduate); Marital Status (0 = Not married nor living with a partner; 1 = Married/living with a partner); Family Abroad (0 = No; 1 = Yes); Children (0 = No; 1 = Yes); Present Position (1 = Technical, Academic or Staff; 2 = Middle management; 3 = Upper management). Cronbach coefficients in the diagonal. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 4 – Descriptive statistics and Spearman correlations for the research variables

4.3. Hypothesis tests

Hypothesis 1 predicted that social motives are positively associated to: (a) alcohol consumption; (b) drinking at parties; (c) drinking with same-sex friends and (d) drinking with mixed-sex friends. As shown in Table 5, alcohol consumption is positively associated with social motives ($\beta = 0,351$; $p < .001$), thus confirming hypothesis 1a. Looking at Table 5, one is also able to notice that drinking at parties, drinking with same-sex friends and drinking with mixed-sex friends do not show any significant association with social motives, which does not support hypothesis 1b, 1c and 1d.

Hypothesis 2 stated that enhancement motives are positively associated to: (a) heavy alcohol consumption; (b) drinking at bars; and (c) drinking with same-sex friends. The results from the regression analyses shown in Table 5 show that heavy alcohol consumption is significantly and positively associated with enhancement motives ($\beta = 0,473$; $p < .001$), which supports hypothesis 2a. In addition, drinking at bars is also positively associated with enhancement motives ($\beta = 0,278$; $p < .01$), thus supporting hypothesis 2b. On the other hand, drinking with same-sex friends did not show any significant association with the enhancement motives. This being said, hypothesis 2c is not supported.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that coping motives are positively associated to: (a) heavy alcohol consumption; (b) drinking solitary at home; (c) drinking with same-sex friends; (d) drinking with mixed-sex friends; and (e) perceived stress. Table 5 shows that heavy alcohol consumption has a positive association with coping motives ($\beta = 0,521$; $p < .001$). On other way, drinking solitary at home, drinking with same-sex friends and drinking with mixed-sex friends did not show any significant association with coping motives. Finally, perceived stress is significantly and positively associated with coping motives ($\beta = 0,213$; $p < .001$). In that regard, only the hypothesis 3a and 3e are supported.

Hypothesis 4 indicated that conformity motives are positively associated to: (a) social alcohol consumption in parties; (b) drinking in business gatherings and (c) perceived stress; while (d) is negatively associated to drinking solitary at home. The results from the regression analyses shown in Table 5 do not support none of the above, so hypothesis 4 is not supported.

Predictors	Social Motives			Enhancement Motives			Coping Motives				Conformity Motives			
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Intercept	2,772***	2,373***	1,842**	2,093***	1,534**	1,007	2,593***	2,028***	1,934***	1,300*	1,944***	1,716***	1,705***	1,591***
<i>Demographics</i>														
Age	-0.246**	-0.182*	-0,079	-0,221*	-0,135	-0,066	-0,160	-0,065	-0,065	-0,092	-0,128	-0,074	-0,030	-0,037
Gender	0.140	0,077	0,022	0,137	0,052	0,041	0,152*	0,058	0,054	0,068	0,144	0,091	0,074	0,078
Education	0,032	0,079	0,053	-0,060	0,004	-0,006	-0,004	0,067	0,077	0,058	0,020	0,060	0,053	0,048
Marital Status	-0,121	-0,070	-0,072	-0,140	-0,072	-0,124	-0,115	-0,040	-0,027	-0,013	-0,127	-0,084	-0,081	-0,078
Family Abroad	0,022	0,064	0,074	-0,009	0,048	0,027	-0,083	-0,020	-0,006	-0,007	0,114	0,149	0,152	0,151
Children	0.204*	0.171*	0,134	0,091	0,046	0,027	0,072	0,023	0,027	0,043	0,064	0,036	0,000	0,004
Home Region	0,032	-0,006	0,001	0,016	-0,034	-0,051	0,008	-0,047	-0,044	-0,062	-0,026	-0,057	-0,056	-0,061
Host Region	-0,055	0,003	0,038	-0,095	-0,017	0,028	-0,157*	-0,071	-0,059	-0,052	0,016	0,065	0,035	0,037
Present Position	-0.152*	-0.148*	-0.153*	-0,090	-0,085	-0,064	-0,114	-0,108	-0,108	-0,102	-0,111	-0,108	-0,128	-0,126
Months in the Assignment	-0,069	-0,049	-0,079	-0,081	-0,054	-0,077	-0,117	-0,087	-0,080	-0,107	-0,015	0,002	-0,033	-0,040
Years Abroad	0,006	-0,063	-0,065	0,159*	0,066	0,052	0,018	-0,084	-0,078	-0,092	-0,055	-0,113	-0,127	-0,130
English Fluency	0,137*	0,080	0,063	0,195**	0,118	0,132*	0,039	-0,046	-0,063	-0,023	-0,033	-0,081	-0,090	-0,080
<i>Predictors</i>														
AUDIT		0,351***	0,232**		0,473***	0,360***		0,521***	0,497***	0,526***		0,294***	0,296***	0,303***
Drinking at home			0,038			0,148*			0,053	0,048			0,012	0,010
Drinking at a friend's home			0,014			-0,040			-0,074	-0,061			-0,090	-0,087
Drinking at parties			0,127			-0,020			0,020	0,027			0,104	0,106
Drinking at bars			0,204*			0,278**			-0,032	-0,050			-0,182	-0,187
Drinking with one's family or relatives			-0,061			0,084			-0,065	-0,047			0,056	0,060
Drinking with same-sex friends			0,008			-0,041			0,022	0,011			0,136	0,133
Drinking with mixed-sex friends			-0,014			-0,076			0,179	0,149			-0,044	-0,051
Drinking in business gatherings			0,107			0,004			-0,047	-0,083			0,142	0,133
Perceived stress										0,213***				0,054
<i>Overall F</i>														
<i>R</i> ²	2,471**	4,326***	4,151***	3,059***	7,255***	5,787***	2,886***	8,236***	5,353***	5,962***	1,192	2,288**	1,742*	1,683*
<i>Adjusted R</i> ²	0,134	0,228	0,324	0,161	0,332	0,400	0,153	0,360	0,382	0,420	0,070	0,135	0,167	0,170
<i>Change in R</i> ²	0,080	0,176	0,246	0,109	0,286	0,331	0,100	0,317	0,311	0,350	0,011	0,076	0,071	0,069
<i>Change in R</i> ²	0,134**	0,094***	0,095**	0,161***	0,171***	0,069**	0,153***	0,207***	0,021	0,038***	0,070	0,066***	0,032	0,002

Notes. Significant at: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; standardized β coefficients are reported for each step and after Z-score transformation, $n = 204$. Gender (0 = Female; 1 = Male); Education (0 = Non graduate; 1 = Graduate); Marital Status (0 = Not married nor living with a partner; 1 = Married/living with a partner); Family Abroad (0 = No; 1 = Yes); Children (0 = No; 1 = Yes); Present Position (1 = Technical, Academic or Staff; 2 = Middle management; 3 = Upper management).

Table 5 – Predictors of alcohol consumption motives

Hypothesis 5 states that the level of perceived stress is positively associated to alcohol consumption among international workers. However, as shown in Table 6, perceived stress is not a significant predictor of alcohol consumption. Thus, the results of the regression analysis do not support hypothesis 5.

Predictors	AUDIT		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Intercept	5.737*	7.008*	6,468
<i>Demographics</i>			
Age	-0.183*	-0.178*	-0.177*
Gender	0.180**	0.178**	0.179**
Education	-0.136**	-0.128*	-0.129*
Marital Status	-0,144	-0,149	-0,149
Family Abroad	-0,120	-0,121	-0,123
Children	0,095	0,091	0,090
Home Region	0,107	0,113	0,114
Host Region	-0,164*	-0.169*	-0.171*
Present Position	-0,011	-0,011	-0,012
Months in the Assignment	-0,057	-0,044	-0,045
Years Abroad	0.196**	0.200**	0.199**
English Fluency	0.163*	0.151*	0.153*
<i>Predictors</i>			
Perceived Stress		-0,075	-0,068
Assignment Satisfaction			0,024
<i>Overall F</i>	4.986***	4.712***	4.364***
<i>R²</i>	0,239	0,244	0,244
<i>Adjusted R²</i>	0,191	0,192	0,188
<i>Change in R²</i>	0,239***	0,005	0,000

Notes. Significant at: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; standardized β coefficients are reported for each step and after Z-score transformation, $n = 204$. Gender (0 = Female; 1 = Male); Education (0 = Non graduate; 1 = Graduate); Marital Status (0 = Not married nor living with a partner; 1 = Married/living with a partner); Family Abroad (0 = No; 1 = Yes); Children (0 = No; 1 = Yes); Present Position (1 = Technical, Academic or Staff; 2 = Middle management; 3 = Upper management).

Table 6 – Predictors of alcohol consumption (AUDIT) among international workers

Hypothesis 6 posits that the satisfaction with the assignment is negatively associated to alcohol consumption among international workers. The results from the regression analysis shown in Table 6, do not support this hypothesis, as the assignment satisfaction does not show any relevant significance. Thus, assignment satisfaction cannot be considered a predictor of alcohol consumption, not supporting Hypothesis 6.

Hypothesis 7 stated that assignment performance is negatively associated to (a) perceived stress; (b) alcohol consumption; (c) drinking for coping; and (d) drinking for conformity. The results of the regression analyses in Table 7 show that none of the predictors listed in hypothesis 7 have a significant association with the assignment self-reported performance. In this specific case, the only predictor with a significant association is having children ($\beta = -0.204$; $p < .05$), which is negatively associated with the assignment self-reported performance. This being said, the hypothesis 7 is not supported.

Hypothesis 8 predicted that assignment satisfaction is negatively associated to (a) perceived stress; (b) alcohol consumption; (c) drinking for coping; and (d) drinking for conformity. As shown in Table 7, perceived stress has a negative and significant association with the assignment satisfaction ($\beta = -0.331$; $p < .001$). The regression analysis results suggest that alcohol consumption, drinking for coping and drinking for conformity do not have significance on the assignment satisfaction. Therefore, only hypothesis 8a is supported.

Predictors	Assignment Self-Reported Performance				Assignment Satisfaction				
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Intercept	2,970***	3,223***	3,332***	3,562***	3,725***	4,940***	4,899***	4,941***	2,600***
<i>Demographics</i>									
Age	-0,055	-0,05	-0,067	-0,07	-0,086	-0,068	-0,063	-0,065	-0,030
Gender	0,072	0,07	0,087	0,098	-0,036	-0,045	-0,050	-0,049	-0,097
Education	0,124	0,134	0,122	0,129	0,019	0,054	0,057	0,068	0,005
Marital Status	0,087	0,08	0,066	0,058	0,024	0,000	0,004	0,012	-0,017
Family Abroad	0,166	0,165	0,154	0,168	0,092	0,088	0,091	0,077	-0,006
Children	-0,204*	-0,209*	-0,201*	-0,204*	0,044	0,026	0,024	0,036	0,136
Home Region	-0,032	-0,025	-0,015	-0,026	-0,066	-0,041	-0,044	-0,043	-0,031
Host Region	0,054	0,048	0,032	0,037	0,099	0,078	0,083	0,073	0,055
Present Position	0,112	0,112	0,111	0,099	0,051	0,050	0,050	0,042	-0,007
Months in the Assignment	-0,085	-0,07	-0,074	-0,078	-0,018	0,037	0,038	0,027	0,066
Years Abroad	0,117	0,122	0,141	0,123	0,025	0,042	0,037	0,015	-0,045
English Fluency	0,072	0,057	0,071	0,053	-0,039	-0,095	-0,099	-0,107	-0,133*
<i>Predictors</i>									
Perceived Stress		-0,092	-0,100	-0,087		-0,331***	-0,329***	-0,309***	-0,266***
AUDIT			-0,095	-0,046			0,027	0,036	0,059
Social Motives				0,056				-0,109	-0,137
Enhancement Motives				0,012				0,168	0,162
Coping Motives				-0,067				-0,135	-0,102
Conformity Motives				-0,131				0,075	0,140
Assignment Self-Reported Performance									0,491***
Overall F	1,889*	1,880*	1,855*	1,712*	0,682	2,432**	2,257**	1,898*	5,510***
R ²	0,106	0,114	0,121	0,143	0,041	0,143	0,143	0,156	0,363
Adjusted R ²	0,050	0,053	0,056	0,059	-0,019	0,084	0,080	0,074	0,297
Change in R ²	0,106*	0,008	0,007	0,022	0,041	0,102***	0,001	0,013	0,207***

Notes. Significant at: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; standardized β coefficients are reported for each step and after Z-score transformation, $n = 204$. Gender (0 = Female; 1 = Male); Education (0 = Non graduate; 1 = Graduate); Marital Status (0 = Not married nor living with a partner; 1 = Married/living with a partner); Family Abroad (0 = No; 1 = Yes); Children (0 = No; 1 = Yes); Present Position (1 = Technical, Academic or Staff; 2 = Middle management; 3 = Upper management).

Table 7 – Predictors of international workers' self-reported performance and satisfaction with the assignment

Hypothesis 9 expressed that assignment withdrawal intentions are positively associated to (a) perceived stress; (b) alcohol consumption; (c) drinking for coping and (d) drinking for conformity. As shown in Table 8, perceived stress is positively associated to the assignment withdrawal intentions ($\beta = 0,163$; $p < .05$). The alcohol consumption is also significant and positively associated to withdrawal intentions from the assignment ($\beta = 0,179$; $p < .05$). Regarding drinking for coping and drinking for conformity, none has a significant relation with the assignment withdrawal intentions, neither has drinking for social motives nor drinking for enhancement. In conclusion, only hypothesis 9a and 9b are supported.

Hypothesis 10 predicted that assignment withdrawal intentions are negatively associated to (a) assignment self-reported performance and (b) assignment satisfaction. The results from the regression analyses presented on Table 8 show that the assignment self-reported performance is not significant towards the assignment withdrawal intentions, except when the satisfaction with the assignment enters into the equation (in step 6). The assignment satisfaction appears as significant and negatively associated with the assignment withdrawal intentions ($\beta = -0,746$; $p < .001$). Such results only support the hypothesis 10b.

Predictors	Assignment Withdrawal Intentions					
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6
Intercept	3,889***	3,174***	2,847***	2,956**	3,309***	5,633***
<i>Demographics</i>						
Age	-0,129	-0,138	-0,106	-0,117	-0,122	-0,144
Gender	0,026	0,030	-0,001	0,002	0,008	-0,064
Education	-0,003	-0,020	0,002	0,001	0,009	0,013
Marital Status	-0,039	-0,027	-0,001	-0,008	-0,004	-0,017
Family Abroad	0,104	0,106	0,128	0,139	0,149	0,145
Children	-0,024	-0,015	-0,031	-0,024	-0,037	0,065
Home Region	0,108	0,096	0,076	0,076	0,074	0,051
Host Region	-0,137	-0,127	-0,096	-0,090	-0,088	-0,047
Present Position	-0,118	-0,118	-0,116	-0,120	-0,114	-0,119
Months in the Assignment	-0,024	-0,051	-0,043	-0,041	-0,046	0,003
Years Abroad	-0,006	-0,014	-0,050	-0,042	-0,034	-0,068
English Fluency	-0,067	-0,040	-0,067	-0,055	-0,051	-0,151*
<i>Predictors</i>						
Perceived Stress		0,163*	0,176*	0,173*	0,168*	-0,031
AUDIT			0,179*	0,190*	0,187	0,231**
Social Motives				-0,024	-0,020	-0,123
Enhancement Motives				-0,080	-0,079	0,041
Coping Motives				0,083	0,079	0,003
Conformity Motives				-0,029	-0,037	0,067
Assignment Self-Reported Performance					-0,062	0,305***
Assignment Satisfaction						-0,746***
Overall F	1,005	1,338	1,636	1,323	1,287	8,192***
R ²	0,059	0,084	0,108	0,114	0,117	0,472
Adjusted R ²	0,000	0,021	0,042	0,028	0,026	0,415
Change in R ²	0,059	0,025*	0,024*	0,006	0,003	0,355***

Notes. Significant at: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; standardized β coefficients are reported for each step and after Z-score transformation, $n = 204$. Gender (0 = Female; 1 = Male); Education (0 = Non graduate; 1 = Graduate); Marital Status (0 = Not married nor living with a partner; 1 = Married/living with a partner); Family Abroad (0 = No; 1 = Yes); Children (0 = No; 1 = Yes); Present Position (1 = Technical, Academic or Staff; 2 = Middle management; 3 = Upper management).

Table 8 - Predictors of international workers' withdrawal intentions

5. Discussion

Regarding the first research question – *What are the motives for alcohol consumption and its contexts among international workers?* - The results show that social motives were those that international workers reported as more frequent for alcohol consumption. In addition, it has been found that the social motives for alcohol consumption are negatively associated with age and present position, in that regard, younger international workers who occupy more technical positions are the ones that drink the most for social motives.

On the other hand, they are positively associated with having children. Social motivations are also strongly associated with alcohol consumption and have a positive relation with the consumption in bars.

The study findings indicate that age is also negatively associated with the enhancement motives. The years abroad are positively associated with this type of consumption, which has drinking at home and drinking in bars as main predictors, with the last context having a greater significance.

Coping motives were found to be positively associated with gender and negatively associated with the host region, that is male international workers drink more due to coping motives. In addition, the results support that none of the contexts under study demonstrates any significant association with this type of motives in particular. On the other hand, the perceived stress appears as a highly significant predictor, with a positive association, of the alcohol consumption due to coping motives, among international workers.

Finally, one can verify that the conformity motives are not significantly associated with any demographic variable. In addition, they also do not present any type of significance with any of the predictors, except for alcohol consumption itself.

In some ways these results corroborate the findings of Cooper (1994), but at the same time, they also go in an opposite direction. First, as in Cooper (1994), the consumption of alcohol for enhancement motives appears positively associated with drinking in bars. On the other hand, the alcohol consumption for social motives does not appear positively and significantly associated with the consumption at parties and with groups of mixed-sex friends. Also, in this study the consumption due to coping motives is not positively associated to drinking in solitary, and the consumption by conformity motives is not associated with the consumption of alcohol at parties.

If one looks specifically at the contexts of alcohol consumption analyzed in this research, it was found that drinking at bars is the context with the higher significance towards the drinking motives when compared to the other contexts listed, even though the alcohol consumption with mixed-sex friends was the context that was reported as the most common among international workers. Regarding the alcohol consumption in bars, although the results point out that international workers drink less during the assignment than before (Table 3), which is common to all other contexts, drinking in bars is significantly and positively associated with two motives for consumption, namely social motives and enhancement motives. When analyzing the other contexts, although there is the exception of the drinking at home that presents itself as a predictor of the consumption for enhancement motives, no other context presents a significant association to the consumption motives in analysis.

In answering the research question - *What is the relationship between general satisfaction with the assignment and alcohol consumption?* – the results show that general satisfaction with the assignment is not a significant predictor of alcohol consumption (Table 6) nor alcohol consumption predicts the general satisfaction with the assignment among international workers (Table 7), which suggest these variables are unrelated.

In answering the research question of knowing *What is the relationship between perceived stress and alcohol consumption?* - the results show that the perceived stress level does not predict alcohol consumption (Table 6) but predicts the general satisfaction with the assignment (Table 7). This suggests that while perceived stress can be disatisfying it does not involve, necessarily, a higher consumption of alcohol during the assignment. These results go some way against the findings of Wurtz's (2018) research, which points out that stress does have an effect on substance use during the course of expatriation and that expatriates experiencing stress at a medium or high level use more substances. However, such differences may be due to the fact that this investigation covers a large sample of international workers, and that only alcohol consumption was addressed, not consumption of substances as a whole.

Regarding the research question - *What is the relationship between alcohol consumption and assignment withdrawal intentions?* – one can observe that alcohol consumption is positively associated with the assignment withdrawal intentions, being a significant predictor. In addition, results also indicate that both self-reported performance and assignment satisfaction are significant and negative predictors of the assignment withdrawal intentions.

Lastly, in answering the research question - *What is the relationship between alcohol consumption and self-reported performance?* – the results support that alcohol consumption is not significantly associated with the self-reported performance, thus not being a predictor of it. On the other hand, it is important to mention that the results show that only the fact of having children is significant towards self-reported performance, being negatively associated with it, which might be related with the predominance of women in the sample.

5.1. Limitations and implications for future research

When looking at the findings of this research, there are several limitations that should be considered. Firstly, this study was aimed to international workers, a concept that can include corporate expatriates, self-initiated expatriates, and trailing spouses. All were represented in the sample used in this study, since all of them were living and working outside their country of origin. In addition, the participation on this research counted with a larger number of female international workers, than similar expatriate studies, and most respondents reported occupying a technical, academic, or staff position. These two characteristics conveys a distinctiveness to our sample that may account for the main findings. In most earlier studies, the sample is typically composed of corporate expatriates, largely men, and participants that occupy middle and upper management positions. Therefore, future research might extend our approach to a sample exclusively composed of corporate expatriates, in order to see if the results would be maintained.

Another limitation that should be taken into account is the fact that self-report measures were used for this study. Firstly, alcohol consumption was measured through a self-report measure via the application of an online survey, which can be subject to biases in the responses by the participants, for fear that the results may be disclosed and used for purposes other than the academic finality. Also, performance was also measured through a self-report instrument, which may have also caused biases in the results, influenced by the social desirability related to seeing alcohol as something socially undesirable that has an impact on performance. Thus, in the future, one suggests that other measures should also be used to measure consumption, hetero-reports from the family and/or closer friends. Regarding performance, it would also be interesting to obtain factual information about what the performance of the international worker is, through the direct manager, rather than resorting to self-report.

Another suggestion for future research is the analysis of specificities of the host country. For instance, it would be important to examine to what extent different host countries result in different patterns of alcohol consumption among international workers.

5.2. Theoretical contributions

This study presents several original contributions to the literature surrounding international workers. First, it is one of the first approaches to the motives that lead international workers to the consumption of alcohol and the possible contexts where that consumption may occur. In addition, it also contributes to the literature about the possible consequences of alcohol consumption by international workers by further our understanding of the association between alcohol consumption and stress, satisfaction, performance and withdrawal intentions. The consumption behaviors among international workers are, to this day, an area that remains largely unexplored, being this research an opportunity to open the way to new and original contributions in this field of growing interest to both organizations that employ international workers and societies in general, where with the increasing globalization, these workers are becoming more common.

5.3. Managerial contributions

This research contributes to the knowledge and understanding of the alcohol consumption among workers international. Thus, according to Wurtz (2018), this topic must be approached and prioritized by human resources managers, since alcohol consumption can have severe consequences, specially for those who work in dangerous environments such as factories or oil rigs. Although the results of this study point to a lower alcohol consumption during the assignment when compared to before the assignment, this subject is something that managers should pay attention to, in order to provide international workers with the necessary support to ensure their well-being.

This investigation also provides important information to companies and human resources managers as it can help them to better select international workers. The results of this study support that younger, less educated males with more years abroad tend to consume more alcohol. In addition, the results also indicate that the international workers who have children presented a lower self-reported performance. Hence, these predictors can be taken into account in order to ensure that the best candidate is selected. International

workers should be informed about these topics around alcohol consumption and companies should also provide support activities to combat alcoholism, through the creation of anonymous groups and follow-up sessions.

Lastly, and although the results have shown that alcohol is not a predictor of both assignment performance and satisfaction, alcohol consumption came out as a predictor of the international workers' withdrawal intentions. Thus, it is even more important to pay due attention to this issue, because if neglected it may result in an earlier return, something that can harm the company given the importance of this type of workers in today's business contexts.

6. Conclusion

This study has tested a four-factor model to understand what are the motives that lead international workers to consume alcohol. Thus, it was verified that the social motives are those that more often lead this type of workers to consumption, although, and despite all the challenges they face, the results of this investigation have shown that international workers tend to drink less alcohol while abroad. The findings also indicate that not all contexts of consumption are significantly associated to the consumption motives studied. One can see that drinking in bars is the most significant context, being positively associated to consumption for social and enhancement motives. On the other hand, drinking with mixed-sex friends was reported as the context that more often lead international workers to alcohol consumption.

This investigation also addressed several other variables related with alcohol consumption, namely, the international workers' perceived stress, the satisfaction with the assignment, the self-reported performance and the withdrawal intentions from the assignment. The results have shown that the perceived stress level is not a predictor of alcohol consumption among international workers. Also, the results support that alcohol consumption is not a predictor of the international workers' performance nor their satisfaction with the assignment, as this last one showed to be predicted by the self-reported performance. Lastly, it was concluded that the assignment withdrawal intentions are predicted by alcohol consumption.

Being this study the first to address the motives that can lead to the consumption of alcohol among international workers, the contexts in which that consumption may occur and the relationship between alcohol and various variables, one can verify that the results indicate that the alcohol consumption does not arise as a reaction to stress or dissatisfaction, but happens mostly due to social motives. It is also verified that the negative consequence that can come from alcohol consumption is related to the withdrawal intentions. It is important to convey this message to organizations in order for them to better manage their international workers, so that these can succeed in their work as well as improve their well-being in general.

Further investigation on this topic will help companies to deal better with alcohol consumption behaviours by international workers.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1 - Survey

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE

This survey is part of an investigation that is being carried out at the Faculty of Economics of Porto and is targeted to EXPATRIATES from culturally varied backgrounds. It examines health and substance use behaviours in relation to the present or last international assignment, depending on your situation.

The survey takes approximately **7 minutes** to complete. It contains a section with some demographic questions, important to characterize the sample, but not used to identify you in any way. Replies are totally anonymous. We ask you to fill the entire survey. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers, since it is your opinion that is important.

We deeply thank your participation. We also ask for your help in forwarding an invitation to participate in the survey to other EXPATRIATES.

For any doubts or further questions, please contact the main researcher: **Fábio André Nunes** - fac_nunes@hotmail.com. **University of Porto - Faculty of Economics** - Rua Dr. Roberto Frias 4200-464 Porto, Portugal (www.fep.up.pt).

Sincerely,

Fábio André Nunes

Do you wish to answer the survey?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Current situation

- ☐ I am a **corporate expatriate** (I am living and working temporarily abroad because my employer asked me to)
- ☐ I am a **self-initiated expatriate** (I am living and working temporarily abroad because I decided to. I found local employment by myself)
- ☐ I am a **trailing spouse** (I am living and working temporarily abroad because I followed the displacement of my spouse/partner)
- ☐ I am a **repatriate** (I have recently returned from an international assignment)
- ☐ I am an **international business traveller** (I live and work in my home country but I frequently travel abroad for work)
- ☐ I am an **immigrant** (I am living and working permanently in a country different from my birth country)
- ☐ I am a **domestic worker** (I am living and working permanently in my home country)
- ☐ **Other.** Please clarify: _____

Please indicate your **country of origin**: _____

Please indicate your **present location/country of destination**: _____

Regarding your current situation, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements, knowing that (1) stands for "Strongly disagree" and (5) for "Strongly agree".

	1 (Strongly disagree)	2	3	4	5 (Strongly agree)
1. I think a lot of leaving my present assignment					
2. I am actively looking for an alternative to my present assignment					
3. As soon as it is possible, I will leave my present assignment					
4. I am satisfied with my present international assignment					
5. I would take the same international assignment again					
6. This international assignment measures up to my expectations					
7. I would recommend this international assignment to a friend					
8. My overall satisfaction with the present assignment is excellent					
9. In my opinion, I contribute to the success of my employer organization					
10. I think I am performing well within this organization					
11. I think I am a good employee					
12. On average, I work harder than my colleagues					

Regarding your current situation, please indicate the frequency of your consumption according to the following questions:

	Never	Monthly or less	2-4 times a month	2-3 times a week	4 times a week
13. How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?					

	1 or 2	3 or 4	5 or 6	7 to 9	10 or more
14. How many drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?					

	Never	Once a month or less often	2-4 times a month	2-3 times a week	4 times a week or more often
15. How often do you have six or more drinks on one occasion?					
16. How often during the last year have you found that you were not able to stop drinking once you had started?					
17. How often during the last year have you failed to do what was normally expected of you because of drinking?					
18. How often during the last year have you needed a first drink in the morning to get yourself going after a heavy drinking session?					
19. How often during the last year have you had a feeling of guilt or remorse after drinking?					
20. How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because of your drinking?					

Please report the outcomes of the consumption behaviours:

	No	Yes, but not over the past year	Yes, over the past year
21. Have you or anyone else been hurt (mentally or physically) because of your drinking?			
22. Has a relative or a friend, a doctor or other health care worker been concerned about your drinking or suggested you cut down?			

For each of the following drinking situations, please sign the option that applies, knowing that (0) means “No drinking or does not apply”; (2) means “Yes, but consumption is lower than before the assignment”; and (4) means “Yes, and consumption is higher than before the assignment”:

	(0) No drinking or does not apply	(2) Yes, but consumption is lower than before the assignment	(4) Yes, and consumption is higher than before the assignment
23. Drinking at home			
24. Drinking at a friend's home			
25. Drinking at parties			
26. Drinking at bars			
27. Drinking with one's family or relatives			
28. Drinking with same-sex friends			
29. Drinking with mixed-sex friends			
30. Drinking in business gatherings (lunch/dinner/corporate events)			

Following is a list of reasons people sometimes give for drinking alcohol. Thinking of all times you drink while abroad, how often would you say you drink for each of the following reasons:

	Never/ Almost never	Some of the time	Half of the time	Most of the time	Always/ Almost always
31. Because it is exciting					
32. To be liked					
33. Because it makes social gathering more fun					
34. Because it improves parties and celebrations					
35. Because it helps enjoying a party					
36. To get high					
37. Because it helps when I feel depressed or nervous					
38. So I won't feel left out					
39. To forget worries					
40. To forget about problems					
41. To fit in the group					
42. To celebrate a special occasion					
43. Because it helps me feeling more self-confident and surer of myself					
44. Because it gives you a pleasant feeling					
45. Because it's fun					
46. Because others pressure me to drink					
47. So that others won't kid me about not drinking					
48. Because I like the feeling					
49. To be sociable					
50. To cheer up when I am in a bad mood					

Please provide the following information about you (just aimed to characterize the sample)

Gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ I prefer not to mention

Age: _____

Present marital status:

- ☐ Not married nor living with a partner
- ☐ Married/living with a partner

How many months have you been in the present assignment? _____

How many years have you lived and worked abroad? _____

Is your family accompanying you in the present assignment?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you have children?

- ☐ Yes. Ages: _____
- ☐ No

English language proficiency:

1	2	3	4
Poor/Basic	Limited/Conversational	Professional	Fluent/Proficient

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ☐ Non graduate (less than complete higher education)
- ☐ Graduate (bachelor, master or PhD)

What is your present position level?

- ☐ Upper management
- ☐ Middle management
- ☐ Technical, Academic or Staff

What is your level of stress in the present assignment?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Much lower than I expected	Lower than I expected	Somewhat lower than I expected	As I expected	Somewhat higher than I expected	Higher than I expected	Much higher than I expected

Thank you for participating!