

Family dynamics in a changing context: the Malagasy diaspora

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Abstract

Upon leaving Madagascar, the Malagasy diaspora faces significant changes in environment; however, research has shown little about how they cope with their new life. This study aims to explore how Malagasy family dynamics change when they move overseas. Building on existing work on immigration, it questions how the dynamics differ from that of *home* and how challenging it is for the Malagasy to live overseas. A retrospective cross-sectional study was conducted among a sample of 35 Malagasy members of diaspora families, aged 26 to 61, and living in 19 countries. Data was collected from social media platforms, using Google Form, within a time span of 15 days (Nov. 6-21, 2019). Results show that the diaspora status had a significant influence on chores distribution. Even if the family can afford household help, most of the chores still fell upon the female member (wife/mother). In terms of practices, 37.14% of the families who are speaking Malagasy at home consumed more Malagasy dishes compared to those who speak other languages. While 88.60% of the participants had health insurance, 68.60% of the Malagasy diaspora still trusted Malagasy home remedies for the treatment of mild ailments. Moreover, participants who have permanently settled in one country after leaving Madagascar have bigger adjustment problems and more acculturative stress than those who have moved from one country to another. Finally, 22.86% of the participants are not thinking of returning to Madagascar whereas 28.57% are hesitating and are mentioning social economic prosperity as a prerequisite for their return. Awareness of the host country's family dynamics, its gender politics, and cultural norms are recommended as coping measures for better adjustment.

Keywords: Family dynamics, Malagasy diaspora, immigration, changing context, acculturative stress management, gender studies, brain drain.

Introduction

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines immigration as the act of moving into a country other than one's country of citizenship, which will officially become one's new

country of residence (IOM 2020). A person who is immigrating for at least 12 months (UN 1998) is called an “immigrant”.

A migrant, on the other hand, is a person who is moving across an international border or within a State away from their normal place of residence (IOM 2020), no matter the reasons for their migration, duration of stay, or legal status (UN 2020). While some migrants move in search of work or economic opportunities, for family reunification or studies, others move to escape conflicts, persecution, human rights violations, or in response to climate change adverse effects.

The number of international migrants in 2019 was 272 million (52% male and 48% female). It represented 3.5% of the world’s population, with a high proportion of international working-age (20 - 64 years) migrants (74%) (IOM, UN Migration 2020). More than half, 141 million of them lived in Europe and Northern America.

As far as migration in Africa is concerned, nearly 19 million international migrants were moving both within and from their regions in 2019 (IOM, UN Migration 2020).

In Madagascar, more than 70% (IOM 2019) out of its 26.26 million (World Bank n.d.) inhabitants in 2018 are living in extreme poverty with development challenges in education, health, and nutrition. Those socio-economic environment issues drive a high number of Malagasy to seek opportunities in cities (Poulain and Rakotonirina 2014) and overseas (IOM 2019). IOM Madagascar states that 100,000 people migrate from rural areas to the capital Antananarivo every year. Around 32,075 (2.08%) of the Malagasy entire population are living overseas (UN, 2015). The largest Malagasy community overseas is in France (Razafindrakoto et al. 2017; Andrianimanana and Cuberes 2019).

Migration has been a key determinant of “population change” in several countries. This mainly occurs because of the presence of migrants in their host country and their wealth contribution through labour migration (IOM 2020). As migrants, the Malagasy diaspora is contributing to the economy of their host country while trying to adjust to their new life overseas.

The present paper tries to assess the effect of this changing context on the Malagasy diaspora family dynamics. The data informs about the Malagasy diaspora’s family life, acculturative

stress management, chore distribution, meal preparation, fresh produce use and Malagasy dish consumption, the impacts of international migration, and the Malagasy brain drain.

Hypothesis and research objectives

Assuming that the effect of a changing context for the Malagasy diaspora family dynamics is related to Malagasy diaspora's socio-demographic characteristics this paper attempts:

1. To explore the link between immigration as a “changing context” and family dynamics among the Malagasy diaspora.
2. To identify key determinants that influence the Malagasy diaspora family dynamics in a changing context.
3. To formulate recommendations for researchers and policymakers in the field of immigration regarding family dynamics in a changing context among the Malagasy diaspora.

Limitations of the study

As self-reported data, the responses on acculturative stress management, sports practice, and meal preparation may not be accurate. The participants might have changed their input because they were aware that their answers would be documented (Andriambeloso 2010).

The limitations of this research are that there is a lack of literature and studies on the family dynamics in a changing context, especially in terms of Malagasy immigration. Additionally, since this paper is a descriptive study, future research adopting an analytical study would be recommended to assess whether changing context truly deteriorates the family dynamics of the Malagasy diaspora.

1. Background overview

1.1 Family and immigration

International migration affects individuals, families, and societies. Family connections are among the most important means of coping mechanisms that help facilitate the transition of immigrants into their new country. Family, however, can become a source of conflict among family members (parents, siblings...) as some of its gender and generational roles, parents and children relationships, and the impact of moving from one sociocultural environment to

another (Booth ed. 1999) collide with the host country culture or the demanding working hours of the migrants.

1.2 Changing context and the Malagasy diaspora

Diasporas are considered as transnational ethnic groups defined by a common identity and attachment to a homeland (Adamson 2008). What makes a diaspora unique is the way its members are connecting: how it organizes itself and the intensity of its links with its home country (Razafindrakoto et al. 2017). It can collectively engage in some activities on its behalf as it can represent the home country in the host country.

Razafindrakoto et al. (2017) bring more explanation on the characteristics of a diaspora as follows:

- (1) The collective consciousness to claim an ethnic or national identity.

In the countries where both authors have lived or emigrated, the Malagasy community organizes events to celebrate Malagasy Independence Day (June 26th), Christmas, and New Year's Eve.

- (2) The presence of a political, religious, or cultural organization that represents the diaspora.

In Canada (Montréal and Québec City), the Malagasy diaspora meets at the Reformed church F.J.K.M. (*Fiangonan'i Jesoa Kristy eto Madagasikara*), or Catholic church or Lutheran church (Authors' Personal communications). The Malagasy from the states of New York, New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia, and the Washington D.C. area along with those from Canada organize the "*Rencontre Sportive Malagasy*" (RSM) (Malagasy Sports Event) in June or July. The events are "(1) to uphold and promote Malagasy values and traditions, (2) to strengthen the unity of the Malagasy in North America by encouraging the community support and participate in the annual RSM sports tournament, (3) to educate the public at large and enhance awareness about Madagascar through multiple cultural and educational events" (RSM DC n.d.).

2. Study design and data collection

This retrospective cross-sectional study focuses on the family dynamics and the changing context of the Malagasy diaspora. The authors selected two social media platforms that have Malagasy immigration exposure as study environments. The first one is Malagasy NoMads, a Facebook group. The second one is the Facebook page of the “*Direction de la Diaspora*” (Office of the Diaspora Affairs) of the Malagasy Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The authors also contacted some Malagasy whom they knew and who have lived outside Madagascar for a certain time to participate in the survey.

An online survey was conducted from November 6th through November 21st, 2019. The target population was the Malagasy diaspora from the age group 18 - 61 years and older and who preferably have lived at least twelve (12) months in their new host country.

The sampling was done by the Malagasy diaspora member’s enrolment in the Family Dynamics survey at their convenience. Participants completed an online self-administered Google Form questionnaire in which they were asked to fill three main sections related to their socio-demographic characteristics (gender, country...), their family life and dynamics (nutrition, chore distribution, hobbies and leisure, health, contact with family in Madagascar, and brain drain), and culture shock (the impacts of moving overseas as well as their acculturative stress management).

The final sample consisted of 35 Malagasy individuals representing 35 households, living in 19 countries across 4 continents.

In order to make the data more realistic and relevant, the participants were asked to record the information by specifying their answers in case they were not included in the selected range of predetermined answers.

The questionnaire had been pretested among a small sample of Malagasy diaspora from different countries to test the validity of the constructs.

3. Data assessment and analysis

The data were collected and entered through the Google Form questionnaire. Microsoft Excel pivot table was used for analysing family dynamics determinants. The bivariate, the proportions, the means, and the standard deviation (SD) were considered during the analysis

for descriptive statistics. The threshold level of significance chosen in this study was 0.05 (Andriambelosa 2006). Crosstabs were used to compare 2 categorical variables where Odds Ratio (OR) value determined the conclusion of the association.

4. Results and discussions

4.1 Characteristics of the sample

The study was conducted among the Malagasy diaspora members of the Malagasy NoMads group on Facebook and that of the Facebook page of the “*Direction de la Diaspora*” of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malagasy, and some of the authors’ Malagasy acquaintances who lived overseas but were not members of either the page or the group in November 2019 through an online survey.

The final sample included 35 (100%) Malagasy diaspora households and consisted of 26 (74.28%) female and 9 (25.71%) male participants. The age ranges from 26 to 61 years and older (mean 39.27, SD 8.97).

According to the UN International Migration Report (UN DESA 2017), “migrants are predominantly men”. IOM (2020) observes that the international immigration trend is 48% female. Malagasy female migrants, for example, represent 43% of the Malagasy overseas migrant population (UN DESA 2015). This study's sample is, however, predominantly female.

Twenty-two (62.86%) of the participants are married while 13 (37.14%) are not.

Two (5.71%) participants are former Third Culture Kids (TCK). At a younger age, they followed their parents when the latter moved overseas for work. They have moved from one country to another since and have learned a lot of cultures from their host countries. They are “adaptable and relate easily to a diversity of people” (Useem and Cottrell 1996). This group is the most comfortable with living overseas. They might speak the Malagasy language or not.

Citizenship: The Malagasy diaspora is not made of Malagasy citizens only. Twelve (34.29%) participants have dual citizenship, 20 (57.14%) are of Malagasy citizenship only, and 3 (8.57%) do not have Malagasy citizenship.

In terms of **education**, 62.86% have completed their Master's degree, 17.14% have a Bachelor’s degree and 8.57% finished high school.

Main professional activities: Seven (20%) participants are homemakers, 7 (20.00%) work in secondary sectors (IT, engineering...), and 60.00% in tertiary sectors (health, administration, accounting...).

The **household members** vary from 1 to 8 people (mean 3.10, SD 1.34). Twenty-two (62.85%) participants have about 1 to 5 children (mean 1.37, SD 1.42).

4.2 Characteristics of the diaspora families

The participants to the survey live in four continents (Europe, The Americas, Africa, and Asia) and 19 countries (Canada, Philippines, Madagascar, U.S.A, Ireland, Uganda, France, India, Malaysia, D.R.C., Uganda, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Belgium, Ghana, Senegal, Guinea, Burkina Faso, and the United Kingdom) (Figure 1).

Belgium, Burkina Faso, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, France, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, India, Ireland, Madagascar, Malaysia, Philippines, Senegal, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States

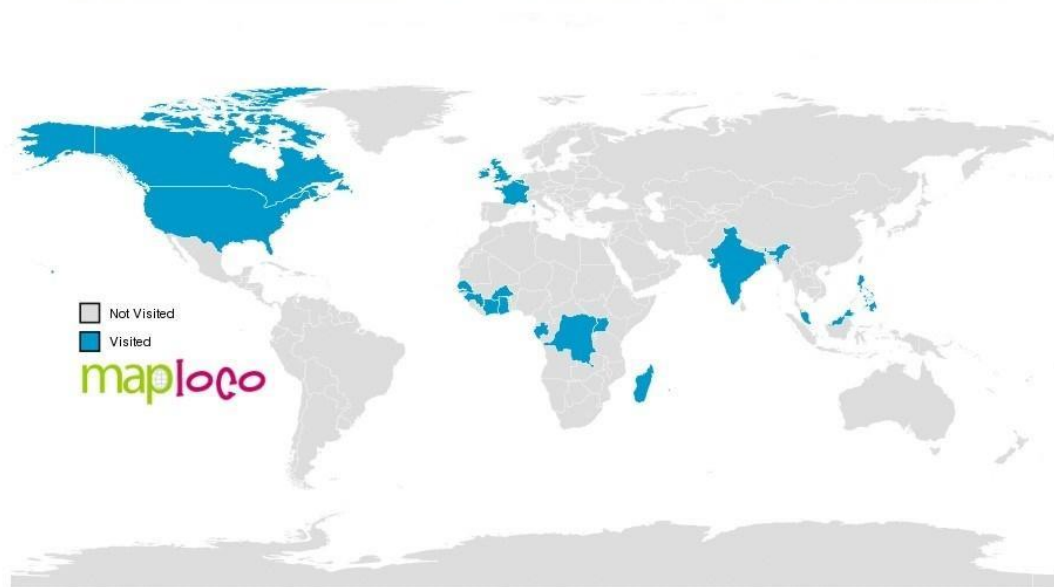


Fig. 1. Mapping of Malagasy Diaspora Participants Worldwide.

Referring to their diaspora status, they all left Madagascar and have lived in their current host country from one year to more than 21 years (mean 9.07, SD 5.25). They come from different ranges of migrations: there are 17 expatriates (48.57%), six students (17.14%), 11 immigrants (31.43%), and 1 diplomat (2.86%).

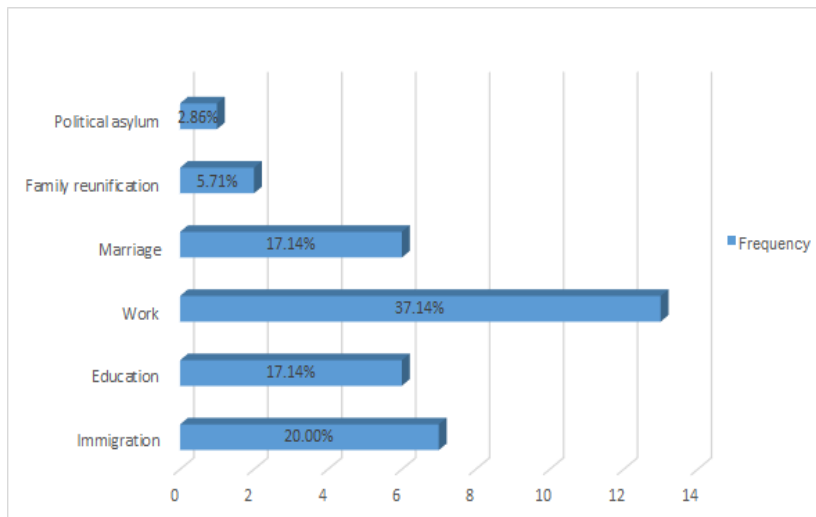


Fig. 2. Frequency of the Reasons why Participants Live Overseas.

The chart above (Figure 2) shows the six primary reasons why Malagasy people leave Madagascar. Thirteen (37.14%) of the participants left Madagascar because of work whereas 20.00% permanently immigrated to their host country. Six (17.14%) departed because of educational opportunities and six (17.14%) as a result of their marriage. Two (5.71%) of the participants emigrated for family reunification by following their parents either because of the latter's work or by leaving the country indefinitely.

The participants who self-initiated their expatriation (immigration and family reunification) are finding it easier to acculturate in the new host country. Participants who have lived in more countries show also better acculturative stress management in their new country than the ones who have lived outside Madagascar for the first time.

The number includes Madagascar as one country lived. Twenty-one (60.00%) participants have only lived in one country besides Madagascar. The rest have lived in several countries: 8.57% in 6 other countries whereas 11.43% in 3 countries since they departed from Madagascar. The chart below (figure 3) shows the frequency of countries each participant has lived in after they left Madagascar. The most travelled mostly indicate the Malagasy who work as expatriates. They move from one country to another one every few years when their contract expires. For some of them, Madagascar is still their country of residence.

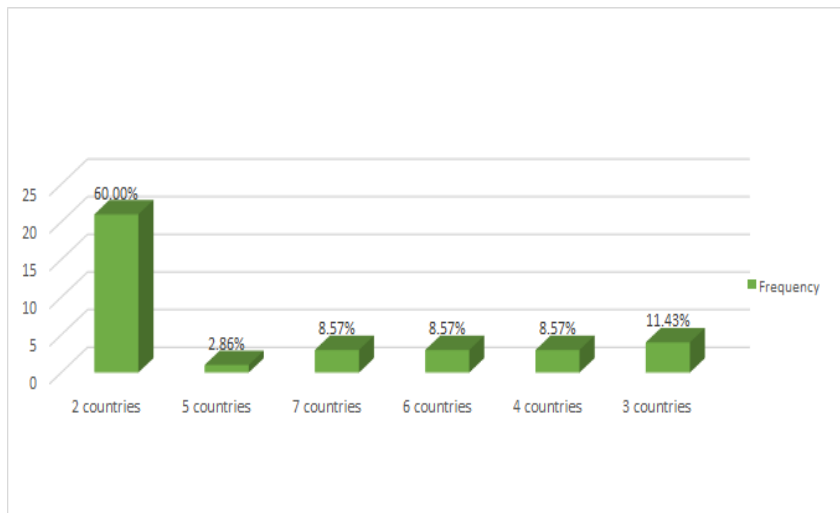


Fig. 3. Frequency of Countries Participants have Lived.

4.3 Family life and dynamics

Living outside Madagascar requires “identity negotiation” (Deaux 2006) from the Malagasy diaspora: the identity they brought from their home country and the identity the host country requires or indirectly forces them to follow. The adjustment to the settlement in the new country is changing some of the family dynamics at home and outside the home (Razafindrakoto et al. 2017).

4.3.1 Type of housing

The Malagasy diaspora families live in houses, apartments, or condominiums when they live overseas.

Eight (22.86%) participants can afford to own their housing. Among them, 11.43% are immigrants and students 5.71%. Meanwhile, 24 (68.57%) rent whereas 3 (8.57%) have their housing paid by their company. The results show that mostly Malagasy expatriates rent their apartment either on their own (37.14%) or through their companies (8.57%).

As for the type of housing, 19 participants (54.29%) live in apartments, 14 (40.00%) live in single-family detached houses, the rest (5.71%) live in either a single-family detached house or a townhouse.

4.3.2 Means of transportation

Among the challenges of living outside of Madagascar is the lack of public transportation in some countries. Studying the means of transportation the diaspora uses will bring more light on the diaspora life in their host country.

The diaspora families either drive their cars, take the bus or a taxi, or walk. Thirteen (37.14%) participants have a car. The expatriates drive the most (22.86%), followed by the immigrants (11.43%), and the students (2.86%). They either carpool with their partner, drive themselves or have a driver. Seventeen (48.57%) take public transportation (the bus or a subway). The immigrants (20.00%) are the biggest users of public transportation. The expatriates closely follow them (17.14%). The only group who uses taxis (regular taxis, Uber, or moto-taxi) are the expatriates (8.57%). Two (5.71%) walk: one diplomat and one student.

4.3.3 Use of appliances

One of the changes that a Malagasy diaspora family or an individual experiences while living outside Madagascar is the access to more appliances than they had in Madagascar. Table 1 shows the appliances each household uses.

Table 1: Distribution of Malagasy Diaspora Family by Appliances Used and Diaspora Status

APPLIANCES	DIASPORA STATUS				
	Diplo mat	Expatriate	Immigrant	Student	Grand Total
1- Refrigerator washing machine, microwave 3 - 4 appliances		11 (31.43%)	2 (5.72%)	2 (5.72%)	15 (42.86%)
2- Washing machine, dishwasher, dryer 5 - 7 appliances	1 (2.86%)	6 (17.14%)	9 (25.71%)	4 (11.43%)	20 (57.14%)
Grand Total	1 (2.86%)	17 (48.57%)	11 (31.43%)	6 (17.14%)	35 (100%)

The appliances are refrigerator, microwave oven, stove, A/C unit, heater, dishwasher, washing machine, and dryer. A household has 1 to 7 appliances. Eighteen (51.42%) participants use most of the appliances. Two participants (5.71%) added a vacuum cleaner and a fan to the list. The presence of these appliances in the house will considerably reduce the workloads on daily chores for a family.

4.3.4 Gender and chore distribution

The results demonstrate a disparity in the chore distribution among participants. The unmarried participants performed their daily chores by themselves ranging from 1 to 9 tasks (mean 5.62, SD 1.72) whereas the married participants are teaming up in chores ranging from 1 to 11 tasks (mean 4.34, SD 2.26). Only 31.82% of families have all its members involved in the household tasks. However, the married females are doing more chores than their husbands: mainly in cooking 16 (72.72%), ironing 15 (68.18%), helping children with their homework 16 (72.72%), and childcare 19 (86.36%). The most likely reason is that they unconsciously want to keep the “social order” (Andriambelosa 2007) that they used to have in their home country: women mainly do the chores. If they keep it this way, their culture will not be disrupted.

4.3.5 Malagasy diaspora family dynamics in having household help or not

Despite the presence of appliances in their homes, 11 (31.43%) participants have household help: 9 (25.71%) are expatriates while 2 (5.71%) are students. Eight (22.86%) are married participants while 3 (8.57%) are not. Three (8.57%) families have their household help live with them whereas the other 8 (22.86%) do not. The household help mainly does the housekeeping, cooks, and ensures childcare for families with young children.

The participants who can afford the service of household help are mostly located in countries where the nominal Gross Domestic Products (GDP) (worldometer.info 2020) is lower than U.S. \$3,000, as labour and the cost of life are cheaper in these countries than in the ones with higher GDP. This allows the Malagasy diaspora members to enjoy the same luxury of hiring household help as if they were in Madagascar.

4.3.6 Languages spoken at home

The Malagasy diaspora has less exposure to the Malagasy language when they live overseas. They need to use the language of the host country when they are either at school or work. At

home, nine (25.71%) participants reported that they speak Malagasy only. Table 2 shows the distribution between the citizenships of the members of the household and the languages spoken at home.

Table 2: Malagasy family diaspora distribution by citizenship and language(s) spoken at home

CITIZENSHIP(S)	LANGUAGES SPOKEN	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS (%)
Malagasy, Filipino	French, Malagasy, English, Taglish, Cebuano	1 (2.86%)
Malagasy, Canadian, French	Malagasy, French	7 (20.00%)
English	Malagasy, Irish, French	4 (11.43%)
Belgian, French	French	2 (5.71%)
Malagasy, Belgian	French, English, Dutch	1 (2.86%)
Malagasy, American, French	Malagasy	9 (25.71%)
Malagasy, American	Malagasy, English	1 (2.86%)
Malagasy, Belgian	Dutch	1 (2.86%)
GRAND TOTAL		35 (100%)

Churches have become an important part of the Malagasy diaspora, especially in the preservation of the Malagasy language and culture, as they “allow newcomers to maintain and express their identity and cultural characteristics and how they contribute or not to their broader integration” (Gélinas and Vatz-Laaroussi 2012). The second-generation Malagasy immigrants can then practice the Malagasy language (Rasoloniaina 2012) from the other church members and through the church liturgy and Bible reading.

4.3.7 Meal preparation and consumption

Another challenge the Malagasy diaspora faces is finding ingredients for a Malagasy dish. For this reason, the survey explores the diaspora's consumption and preparation of Malagasy meals.

Thirty-four (97.14%) of the participants claimed that they were consuming Malagasy dishes such as “*vary amin'anana*” (rice with greens), “*akoho rony*” (chicken soup), “*ravitoto sy henakisoa*” (ground cassava leaves and pork), “*romazava*” (greens and beef stew) ... Twenty-five (71.43 %) of the participants had rice as their staple food.

The Malagasy diaspora adopts different types of meal preparations. One (2.86%) participant had a cook. Twenty-seven (77.14%) prepared their dish before each meal whereas four (11.43%) prepared theirs once a week and three (8.57%) had a lunch option at their workplace canteens or brought homemade sandwiches.

Regarding Malagasy meal consumption frequency, 13 (37.14%) households eat Malagasy meals every day. Nine out of 13 (25.71%) are of Malagasy citizenship and four had dual citizenship. Six (17.14%), however, ate Malagasy meals once a month, and one (2.86%) once a year.

All Malagasy diaspora families are still using fresh produce when preparing meals however their frequency differs. Twenty-three participants (65.71%) use them at every meal. Expatriates (10 (28.57%)) are the fresh produce top users, followed by the immigrants (eight (22.86%)). Fourteen (40%) female participants are likely to report this use of fresh produce. Only 2.86% of the participants are rarely using fresh produce.

4.4 Determinants of the changing context

The Malagasy diaspora family determinants associated with the chores (cooking) distribution that are significant are the age of the participants ($p=0.034$), household size ($p=0.008$), number of children ($p=0.002$), marital status ($p=0.000$), and the diaspora status ($p=0.000$). No factors associated with the participant significantly influence the family dynamics (education, profession, gender, length of stay abroad...). Table 3 shows the determinants influencing the chore “cooking”.

Table 3: Determinants of “changing context” influencing the chores “cooking” among Malagasy diaspora families

Determinants	Cooking				P
	Family Members n (%)	Non-Family Members n (%)	OR* *	[CI]*** 95%	
Age of participant (years)					
≤ 40	9 (45.00)	11 (55.00)	0.55	[0.31 – 0.95]	0.034
>40	9 (60.00)	6 (40.00)			
Education Level*					
≤Bachelor's Degree	5 (45.45)	6 (54.55%)	0.80	[0.45 – 1.39]	NS*** *
>Bachelor's' degree	13 (51.17)	11 (45.83%)			
Number of children					
≤ 1	9 (42.86%)	12 (57.14%)	0.42	[0.24-0.74]	0.002
>1	9 (64.29%)	5 (35.71%)			

* **Education Level:** ≤ Bachelor= Bachelor, and High School. >Bachelor=Master, Ph.D.

****OR:** Odds ratio

*****CI:** Confidence Interval

******NS:** Not significant

4.5 Link between the changing context and the family dynamics by chores

The association between the diaspora status as the changing context and the family dynamics chores cooking is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Association between the diaspora status as changing context and family dynamics regarding cooking

	COOKING				p
	Family Members n (%)	Non-Family Members n (%)	OR* *	[CI]*** 95%	
Diaspora Status*					
- Expatriates	6 (33.33)	12 (66.67)	0.21	[0,12 0.38]	0.000
- Not Expatriates	12 (70.59)	5 (29.41)			

***Diaspora status:** expatriates: diplomat and expatriates. Not expatriates: immigrants and students

****OR:** Odds ratio

*****CI:** Confidence Interval

Among the 18 families holding the diaspora status as expatriates, 33.33% of them were having meals cooked by a family member, mainly a wife or a mother, whereas 12 (66.67%) by non-family members. The association between the diaspora status and the chore “cooking” was highly significant (p=0.000). The expatriates, for example, have more household help than the immigrants and the students.

The association between the diaspora status and the other chores was highly significant: cleaning (p=0.000), laundry (p=0.005), drying (p=0.000), dishwashing (p=0.0003), making the bed (p=0.042), mopping (p=0.000). However, helping children with homework was merely significant (p=0.046) and there was no significant association between diaspora status and ironing, childcare, and grocery shopping.

4.6 Hobbies and leisure

Twenty-seven (77.14%) participants practiced sports. About 22.22% of them are “Running and Walking”, 14.81% preferred walking only while 7.41% preferred running. Others

(18.52%) combined walking or running with other cardio training (bicycle), bodybuilding, or relaxation (yoga)... The rest (22.86%) said that they do not have time to practice sports.

The main hobbies of Malagasy diaspora families are traveling and eating out (74.29%), listening to music, reading, visiting historical and/or cultural monuments (54.29%).

4.7 Health

Thirty-one participants (88.60%) have health insurance. The 11.40% who do not have health insurance, use either natural remedies or go to a private hospital and buy medicine out of pocket or go to a free clinic at their workplace.

Despite their health insurance, 24 (68.60%) participants are still using home remedies to cure certain ailments. The most popular home remedies are the mixture of lemon, ginger, and honey (20.83%) for cough, “*ravintsara*” (16.66%), eucalyptus (8.33%) ... About 31.40% of the participants are not using home remedies because of the unavailability of the products, the unfamiliarity of their usage, the preference for modern medicine, or because they have not been sick yet.

5. Changing context

5.1 Acculturative stress

While living far away from Madagascar, 14 (40.0%) of participants mentioned isolation as their biggest challenge (both for the adults and their children). This might lower their self-esteem and make their adjustment to their new country difficult. Participants feel homesick as they miss family gatherings in Madagascar. Some feel that their family ties are broken.

Apart from isolation, Figure 4 shows other main issues that participants encountered.

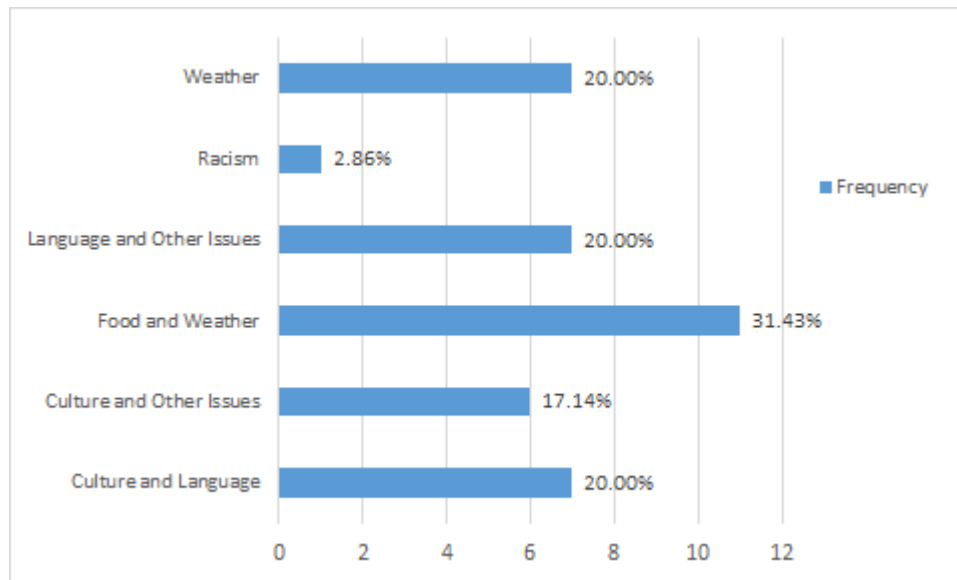


Fig. 4. Causes of Acculturative Stress for the Participants.

Two (5.71%) find unemployment as a hindrance to their adjustment. Developed countries usually do not accept educational credentials from developing countries like Madagascar (Ramboarison-Lalao et al. 2012; Mayne 2013; Puplampu and Tettey 2005). As a result of the isolation in the host country, the immigrant finds it difficult to get social support to find a job (O'Connor and Crowley-Henry 2015) and must take a job that is much under their qualification to make ends meet.

Another negative impact of expatriation is identity negotiation. It “is a continuing process of situating oneself - of defining the self in relation to other people and other groups, as taking place in a larger societal umbrella” (Deaux 2006). A participant describes negotiating identities as making a lot of compromises and sacrifices so that one’s actions will not be offensive.

5.2 Positive impacts of expatriation

Despite the negative impacts, the positive results of expatriation encourage the diaspora members to keep on living overseas.

Self-improvement and self-discovery (intellectual, linguistic, and emotional capacity) (28.57%), freedom (financial, less sexual harassment) (14.29%), better healthcare, and customer service (8.57%) are among the benefits the diaspora enjoy from living outside Madagascar.

5.3 Acculturative stress management

The Malagasy diaspora adopts different methods to manage their acculturative stress. First is the need for “emotional refueling” (Akhtar 1999). In other words, like a toddler who longs for her mother’s support, it is essential for a Malagasy diaspora member “to recharge the internal battery of symbiotic dual unity” to boost his or her confidence (Item. 1999). Diaspora members then often return to their motherland to recharge emotionally. Participants in this study mention how uplifting a trip back to Madagascar is and how it can boost their morale when they go back to their host country.

Next, 3 (9.68%) participants rely on their family emotional support while overseas. Then, 31 (88.57%) of participants reported that there are Malagasy communities in their areas. Five (16.13%) are exchanging experiences with them through Facebook or associations.

Most importantly, another method to manage acculturative stress is to give back. The Malagasy diaspora has “survivor’s guilt”. “We felt guilty for surviving while others have not. In addition, we mourn the loss of loved ones, of the homeland, of continuity” (Awad 1995 qtd. in Akhtar 1999). This might explain the desire to help those who are still in Madagascar (friends and family) by sharing some ideas that might help them or by wiring money to them. Remittances from the Malagasy diaspora are estimated at the US \$ 370.2 million in 2019 only (UN DESA 2019). Unfortunately, the survey did not include the statistics of the non-profit organizations run by diaspora members to help their fellow citizens back in Madagascar.

5.4 Brain drain

The Malagasy diaspora represents elites from Madagascar. This sample includes 62.86 % with a Master's degree and 5.71% Ph.D. holders.

Figure 5 shows how many participants would like to return and live in Madagascar. The reasons why participants prefer to stay overseas are the improved lifestyle in terms of education for the children, security, safety mainly for women, customer service, and health care.

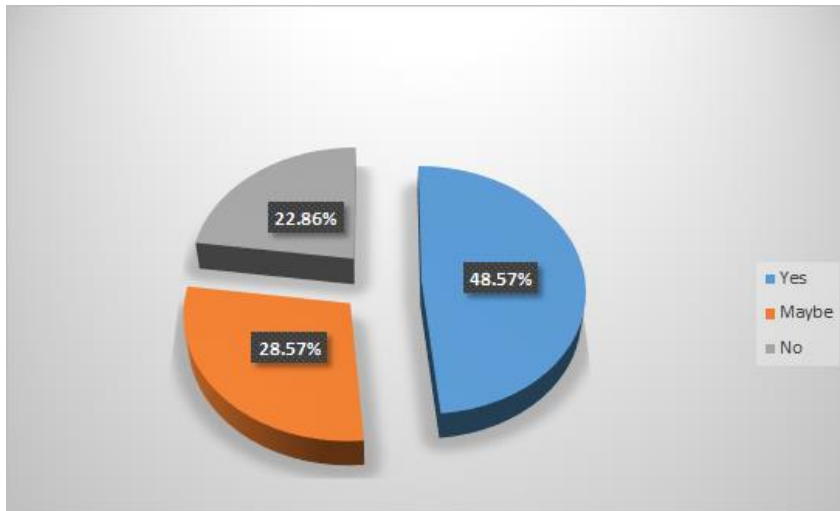


Fig. 5. Planning to return and live in Madagascar one day.

Participants highlighted 4 major conditions for their returning to Madagascar: (1) security and political stability (20.00%), (2) material comfort (10.00%) since they are used to life overseas, (3) socio-economic prosperity (45.00%) including job perspective, better educational and healthcare systems, facilitated investment for Malagasy citizens, enhanced health security at retirement, and the last one (4): less corruption (10.00%).

6. Recommendations

For an individual or a family to successfully acculturate in a host country, the authors, along with the participants are giving the following recommendations:

6.1 At the level of the Malagasy diaspora individual and family

Families and individuals who are leaving Madagascar should be fully prepared to face immigration in order to avoid acculturative stress.

First, they need cultural and psychological preparations. They should be aware of the negative and positive impacts of migration and should understand the cultural norms of the country. Above all, they must adjust their family gender dynamics by reducing the mother or wife's chore burden during acculturation. Resources are mostly available online and should guide through the preparation stage. Secondly, linguistic preparations, namely learning the host country's language before departure, are crucial. Finally, networking with both the local Malagasy community and non-Malagasy family associations is key to share experiences, get

accustomed to local culture and language (on social media or in-person), and get social support.

6.2 At the level of the Malagasy government

The Consular Services of a Malagasy embassy or consulate should facilitate administrative paperwork such as passport renewal. They should also help by posting information about the host country on their website. They could encourage and organize the partnership between the Malagasy authorities and non-governmental organizations or other international institutions in the Malagasy diaspora immigration awareness. Finally, they should improve the existing communication channels to promote government commitment in helping Malagasy family acculturation while overseas.

Conclusion

“Immigration is not a ‘done deal’ but instead a part of one’s life that continues to have relevance in years and indeed generations to come.” (Deaux 2006). The impact of Malagasy culture on family dynamics remains an ongoing silent burden for Malagasy women while overseas and even if she is the breadwinner in the family. Despite the availability of several modern appliances in the household, 51.43% Malagasy women still ensure most of the chores at home in their host country (48.57% are cleaning, 51.42% are cooking for their families). However, awareness of the new host country’s family dynamics and culture can adjust the Malagasy diaspora family dynamics and can help each family member to cope with acculturation and to empower women and mothers.

A diaspora made of Malagasy elites, the participants to the survey mention that they are actively participating in the economy of their host country and that of Madagascar. They also mention socio-economic stability among their conditions to return and live in Madagascar.

Even though 40% of the participants mentioned isolation as the major negative impact of immigration, 51.43% positively enjoyed their changing contexts in terms of self-improvement, freedom, better healthcare, and customer service. However, the repercussions of the changing context on the Malagasy family dynamics could be prevented if the individual or the family is aware of the family dynamics of the host country, its gender politics, and its cultural norms before departing Madagascar or upon arrival in the new country. It is therefore

recommended that authorities, other entities, and Malagasy diaspora networking platforms should partner so that the diaspora member can successfully acculturate in the host country.

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