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Running Head: HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON DRAWINGS

Haitian Children's House-Tree-Person Drawings:  
Global Similarities and Cultural Differences

by

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Psychology in the Department of Clinical Psychology  
at Antioch University New England, 2015

Keene, New Hampshire



Department of Clinical Psychology

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**HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON DRAWINGS:  
GLOBAL SIMILARITIES AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES**

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### Dedication

I am dedicating this doctoral dissertation to the memory of my parents: My Father, Theophilus Adegbemile Ajayi, an inspiring community leader and statesman, who celebrated education and whose last assignment on earth was reading the 500-page *History of the Yorubas* by Samuel Johnson; and my sweet mother, Eunice Oluropo Ajayi, who called me a psychologist since I was eleven years old.

This dissertation is also dedicated to my husband and life partner, Funso Afolayan, a pillar of strength, courage, and support for me. And to all my children: Tobi, the first sign of my strength; Tomi, my only girl; Tolu, the most sought after; and Tinu, the adorable one. Thanks to all of you for putting up with me these past five years, and for constantly reminding me that I am still Mom, when I said, “don’t talk to me, I’m studying,” and Tomi replied, “I will talk to you, you are my Mom.” Love and kisses to all of you. I hope to be Mom for a long time.

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## Table of Contents

Abstract .....	1
Chapter 1 .....	3
Statement of the Problem.....	3
The Effects of Trauma on Children .....	4
How Trauma Manifests in Children .....	5
How Trauma Affects Children's Development .....	6
Understanding Haiti .....	7
Haiti's 2010 Earthquake Disaster .....	7
Historical and Cultural Background of Haitian Children .....	7
Haitian Children's Situation Before and After the Earthquake .....	10
Religious Beliefs.....	11
Ecological Context in Recovery .....	13
The Purposes of the Study .....	16
Current Multicultural Assessment Practice .....	16
House-Tree-Person (HTP) Test .....	17
HTP Drawings as an Outlet for Children's Input .....	19
HTP as a Technique to Reduce Barriers in Children's Research .....	19
Direct Assessment of Children Made Possible by HTP Drawings.....	20
The Potential of HTP Drawings for Determining Global Common Factors .....	21
Israeli Study .....	21
Wenchuan-China Study .....	23
Global Common Factors.....	25
Research Questions .....	27

Definitions of Terms .....	28
Child Poverty .....	28
Continuous Trauma.....	28
Disaster .....	29
Psychological Adaptation .....	29
Maladaptation .....	30
Coping.....	30
Resilience.....	30
Summary .....	32
Chapter 2: Method .....	33
An Overview of an Archival Study .....	33
Setting .....	34
Participants.....	35
Measures .....	36
Clinicians' Contemporary Use of HTP.....	36
Criticisms of HTP .....	37
HTP Adapted for the Present Study.....	38
Procedures.....	40
Administration of HTP with Haitian Children.....	42
Hypotheses and Research Questions .....	43
Hypotheses .....	43
Research Questions.....	43
Data Analysis.....	43

Holistic Interpretation of Drawings .....	43
Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Interpretations.....	44
Step 1 – Step 6 .....	45
Author's Biases.....	46
Quality Control .....	46
Summary .....	48
Chapter 3: Results .....	50
Overview of Methods and Results.....	50
Cluster 1: Vulnerability and Powerlessness.....	62
Cluster 2: Resiliency .....	64
Cluster 3: Well-Being .....	65
Cluster 4: Aggression.....	66
Cluster 5: Sublimated Idealization and Fantasy.....	67
Cluster 6: Self-Efficacy and Agency .....	69
Cluster 7: Trauma .....	70
Similarities and Differences between Haitian, Israeli, and Chinese Studies .....	71
Chapter 4: Discussion .....	78
Cluster 1: Vulnerability and Powerlessness.....	83
Cluster 2: Resilience .....	84
Cluster 3: Well-Being .....	85
Cluster 4: Aggression.....	86
Cluster 5: Sublimated Idealization and Fantasy.....	86
Cluster 6: Self-Efficacy and Agency .....	88



Cluster 7: Trauma .....	88
Limitations of the Study.....	89
Future Directions .....	91
Self-Reflections.....	92
Conclusion and Recommendations.....	93
References.....	98
Appendix A: Interpretation of Drawings (Tables 9-17) .....	111
Appendix B: Process Notes on Crisis Counseling in Haiti.....	120
Appendix C: Permission to Use Examples of Drawings from Case 2 and Case 4 .....	126

## List of Tables

Table 1: Proverbs about Haitians' Interdependence .....	32
Table 2: Interpretation of Drawings for Case 1 .....	54
Table 3: Interpretation of Drawings for Case 2 .....	56
Table 4: Interpretation of Drawings for Case 6 .....	58
Table 5: Interpretation of Drawings for Case 10 .....	59
Table 6: Master List of Themes and Their Frequency and Percentage .....	61
Table 7: Comparison of Haitian, Israeli, and Chinese Studies .....	75
Table 8: Key Findings.....	82

### Abstract

The issues of rising terrorism, violence, and scarcity of basic needs will increase in the coming decades, and children that need psychological services in disaster areas around the world will also increase (Alim, 2008). The study utilized the House-Tree-Person (HTP) projective test to examine the adaptation and maladaptation of Haitian children who lived in extreme urban poverty, broken infrastructure, and relocation camps in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake. The 43 participants of the original archived data set provided 129 protocols of house, tree, and person drawings (Roysircar & Colvin, 2015). Out of that dataset, the present study used 39 HTP protocols from 13 Haitian child participants, ages 7 to 9 years old. The 39 HTP drawings protocols were coded using a Jungian Interpretative Design (Furth, 2002). These coded results were analyzed with a modified qualitative methodology of the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The Jungian Interpretative Design revealed adaptive (“tree has some fruits”) and maladaptive presentations (“the man is holding a machete in his left hand”), and an overall impression (“this person portrays a sense of agency and action”) of the drawings. Seven superordinate and subordinate clustered themes emerged from the IPA: Vulnerability and Powerlessness; Resiliency; Aggression; Well-Being; Sublimated idealization and Fantasy; Self-Efficacy and Agency; and Trauma. The superordinate and subordinate themes from the Haitian children's drawings were compared with themes from two international HTP studies: an Israeli study (Nuttman-Shwartz, Huss, & Altman, 2010) of children who experienced forced re-settlement; and a Chinese study (Wang, Xu, & Wang, 2010) with children who experienced an earthquake (Wenchuan earthquake). The three studies' participants and their stressful environment were comparable. Themes unique to Haitian participants included depiction of naked persons that indicated poverty and fruit-bearing trees in planters, indicating thriving

despite insufficiency. The themes that the three studies had in common, called Common Global Factors (CGFs), were holes in the trunks of trees or damaged trees that indicated trauma. The implications of GCFs, culture-specific differences, and continuous trauma of children must be addressed in clinical assessment, treatment planning, and intervention of researchers/practitioners in international settings.

*Keywords:* Haiti, disaster, trauma, vulnerability, resilience, global common factors, culture-specific differences, Jungian interpretative analysis, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, House-Tree-Person (HTP) test

Haitian Children's House-Tree-Person Drawings:  
Global Similarities and Cultural Differences

**Chapter 1**

**Statement of the Problem**

Haitian children continue to experience trauma because of human-made disasters, natural disasters, poverty, and disease outbreak. Many children across the globe experience situations similar to the children in Haiti. According to Alim (2008), the issues of rising terrorism, violence, and scarcity of basic needs will increase the number of children and families living in poverty as well as their feelings of insecurity.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2012) reported that upwards of 30 million children in 35 industrialized nations live in poverty. The percentage of children living in poverty varies from country to country. For developing nations, UNICEF has provided poverty information by country rather than given a general estimate of children in poverty in these developing countries. In Haiti, 55% of the population lives below the international poverty line of \$1.25 per day. It is estimated that nearly 500,000 Haitian children between the ages of 6 and 11 do not attend school (Lunde, 2008).

In addition to human-made disasters (such as, armed conflict, genocide, industrial accidents, or terrorism), disease outbreak (e.g., cholera), and natural disasters (i.e., tsunamis, earthquakes, and flooding) will contribute to the growing problem of children living in poverty in the 21st Century (UNICEF, 2012). However, there is little research on how catastrophic events influence poor children's mental and physical well-being and development (Masten & Osofsky, 2010; Roysircar, Podkova, & Pignatiello, 2013). This gap in the research may be due in part to the difficulties of researchers in obtaining data on children. One difficulty is that

researchers use data provided by a child's mother or caregivers (Devora & Fryrear, 1976; Terr, 1998; Tharinger & Stark, 1990; Yama, 1990). Parental data does not account for the child's first-hand experience because of the simple fact that the child is not reporting the information. As such, the child's mother or caregiver will introduce her or his bias, as the adult believes to be the child's experience of the traumatic event.

### **The Effects of Trauma on Children**

Traumatic events are characteristically complex with every traumatic moment different from the next. Disaster triggered trauma is more complex because of its sudden and unexpected nature. This type of event may cause children to experience life threatening situations, physical violation, and witness injury or death of a caregiver or loved one. How children respond to disaster and its aftermath is based on both intrinsic and extrinsic factors within the child and in each child's environment (Masten & Narayan, 2012).

This study investigated the global common factors and cultural differences in the House-Tree-Person (HTP) drawings of children experiencing continuous trauma. Pertinent to this study, is how the global common factors and cultural difference could inform mental health services for Haitian children and children in similar situations. The study compared themes from Haitian children's HTP drawings with Israeli Nuttman-Shwartz et al. (2010) and Chinese Wang et al. (2010) studies to generate the global common factors as well as culture-specific differences.

The study used House-Tree-Person (HTP) drawings to elicit the experiences of Haitian children in order to develop an understanding of how Haitian children have been impacted by traumatic events. In addition, The study sought to gain an understanding of the global common factors in the HTP projective drawings of a 2012 sample of Haitian children (Roysircar et al.,

2013b) and of samples of children living in Israel (Nuttman-Shwartz et al., 2010) and Wenchuan-China (Wang et al., 2010) who experienced human-made and natural disasters similar to the Haitian children.

**How trauma manifests in children.** A traumatic event is usually violent and catastrophic and it hurts a person's body or harms his or her mind (National Institute of Mental Health, 2013). The reactions that trauma-exposed children exhibit varies according to the onset, frequency, intensity, and duration of the trauma. Individuals may experience trauma because of the way certain events leave unforgettable and distressing memories with those who witnessed them (van der Kolk, Weisaeth, & Van der Hart, 2007). Other important defining factors about how a child experiences trauma are the child-intrinsic factors, which may include prior exposure to trauma, loss, or continuous trauma, or a history of psychopathology. Extrinsic factors such as, surrounding posttraumatic physical, family, community, and cultural environments, also affect children's reaction to traumatic events (Masten & Narayan, 2012). It is important to assess for child intrinsic factors, such as prior history of trauma, and extrinsic factors, such as poverty and continuous trauma, both of which could exacerbate the adverse effects of trauma on children's well-being. Therefore, children's thoughts, actions, or inaction during traumatic events may lead to feelings of confusion, guilt, regret, and/or anger afterwards.

Changes that occur after a traumatic event, which could cause family relocation, a new caregiver, and disruptions in normal community life, such as school attendance, provide another layer of complexities to an already chaotic situation. The traumatic event, its aftermath, and trauma reminders may cause emotional and behavioral fluctuations and functioning. Over time, some of the school aged children, who are the focus of this study and who experienced a traumatic event may experience persistent traumatic grief, depression, anxiety, or posttraumatic

stress disorder (Salloum & Overstreet, 2012). These psychological difficulties may be evident by the children's obsession with trauma details, being hypervigilant, or aggressive, or by their experiencing concentration problems, distractability, nightmares, night terrors, and/or developing a preoccupation with danger and trauma reminders (Wooding & Raphael, 2004).

**How trauma affects children's development.** Trauma and post-trauma adversities can impair children's development (Masten & Osofsky, 2010). Trauma can adversely influence children's acquisition of developmental competencies and their ability to reach crucial milestones in important domains, such as cognitive functioning, emotional regulations, and interpersonal relationships (Masten & Narayan, 2012). Trauma exposure and post trauma changes may cause behavioral changes and developmental disruptions in the form of regressive behavior, reluctance or a lack of capacity to participate in developmentally appropriate activities. This behavior change may include children leaving home at an early age and engaging in sexual promiscuity. In addition, traumatic experience could cause biological responses that eventually alter the normal course of a child's neurobiological maturation (Masten & Narayan, 2012). Thus, a child's exposure to multiple traumatic experiences or continuous trauma places him or her at greater risk for significant neurobiological disturbances, such as impairments in memory, emotional regulation, and behavioral regulation. With memory, emotional, and behavioral impairments come reduction in intellectual attainment and development (Masten & Narayan, 2012). A traumatic event and its aftermath could lead to family dysfunction, separation, and attachment disruption that may fundamentally impact a child's growth and development. Trust formation, identity formation, and social development of a child may be weakened because of traumatic events and its aftermath (Terr, 1998).



However, when children's trauma symptoms are treated soon after the traumatic event, it is less likely that they will develop Posttraumatic Stress Disorder or any other psychopathology (Terr, 1998). However, most Haitian children, who have continuously suffered from adverse events, have not received any mental health services (Désir, 2015).

### **Understanding Haiti**

**Haiti's 2010 earthquake disaster.** In 2010, an earthquake struck Haiti, which exacerbated the already dire conditions of many Haitian children. Many male breadwinners left their families in order to look for work after the earthquake destroyed homes, communities, and infrastructure; others left in order to escape the overwhelming burden of caring for their family without the financial means (Roysircar, 2013). Haiti has a long history as a patriarchal society where Haitian families depend on men to act as heads of household and model the role of men in society (Roysircar, 2013). Consequently, when these men abandoned their families, the entire family, especially the children, suffered (Roysircar, 2013; United States Agency for International Development, 2012; United States Department of State, 2011). The majority of Haitian children, including participants of the House-Tree-Person measurement study done in 2012 (Roysircar et al., 2013b), had experienced several traumatic events, almost yearly hurricanes, the 2010 earthquake, and the subsequent cholera epidemic (Masters, 2013).

While many Haitian children lost their fathers in the wake of the earthquake, others lost both parents. An unknown and unprecedented number of children went into orphanages, adding to the 40% of Haitian children already inhabiting them. Other children became street dwellers and child laborers known as *restavék*. Still others began living in a "clustered household," known as *lakou* (Hoffman, 2011, p. 160).

**Historical and cultural background of Haitian children.** National political trauma,

poverty, and Haitian people's courage have been recurring themes throughout Haiti's history. Haiti, a country with a population of about 8.3 million people, gained its independence from the heroic acts of the slaves who revolted against French aristocrats (Nicolas, 2010). The Jacobin revolutionaries and Black peasantry of Saint Domingue, also referred to as "the Pearl of the Antilles," later to become *Haiti the Great Land* (Nicolas, 2010), combined forces in a revolution that started in 1791. Two years later, the revolutionary commissioner issued an emancipation decree in Northern Saint Domingue. Toussaint Louverture, a Black general, became Lieutenant Governor and Commander in Chief in 1796. In January 1804, Toussaint Louverture declared Saint Domingue a new republic, called Haiti (Blackburn, 2006).

The years of the revolutionary war (1791-1804) devastated the plantations of Haiti. Subsequent foreign intrusions and occupation disrupted the process of rebuilding the plantations and Haiti's agricultural economy (Blackburn, 2006). Farmer (2011) asserted that Haiti was born into a hostile environment where, though free, its people continued to be "re-shackled politically and economically" (p. xi). Haiti's former colonizer, the French government, extorted a reparation agreement from Haitian elites. In 1925, the Haitian elites paid the French government F150 million, which is an estimated \$30.43 million, for the loss of property to the French (Farmer, 2011). According to Farmer, the people of Haiti continued to pay this money until they completed the payment with interest in the 1950s.

France and its powerful allies—The United States, Britain, Spain, and Belgium—did not recognize Haiti as a free nation. It was not until 1862, under President Abraham Lincoln, when the United States recognized Haiti as a free and independent nation. Isolation, exclusion, and unfair trading conditions with foreign nations maintained the absurd condition of Haiti as a free-but-failure-to-thrive nation and is often described as the poorest nation in the Western

hemisphere. There were multiple, successive coups, one of which led to the United States Marines' occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934. During this time, the U.S. Treasury took over Haiti's treasury and the United States' President Woodrow Wilson wrote Haiti's constitution. In an effort to quell the Haitian rebellion against this U. S. occupation, the U.S. Marines killed about 3,250 Haitians in an attempt to restore order. The foreign occupations of Haiti and foreign regulation of the Haitian economy contributed to Haiti's abject poverty (Blackburn, 2006).

The people of Haiti experienced few, short, intermittent democratic governments. Most of Haiti's governments were born out of coups, including a 29-year long "family dictatorship" (Farmer, 2011, p. 139) of Francois Duvalier and Jean-Claude Duvalier. In addition, there were several autocratic governments described by Lundahl (1989) as "predatory governments" (p. 2), whose interest was to loot the public treasury for personal wealth. Government instability and corruption led to the neglect of infrastructure, technological development, and education.

Ecological disaster accelerated deforestation and hurricanes, and rainy seasons claimed many Haitian lives. There were incidences of soil erosion, which hindered crop production. These natural disasters further depleted the resources of the nation. The people of Haiti faced a dire situation of food scarcity leading to two food riots in 1984 and 1986 (Lundahl, 1989).

Many years of government neglect and poverty continually affected the quality of living in Haiti. Children were particularly affected; about 25% of the children suffered from malnutrition and many children, 5-years-old and younger, died of acute respiratory infections and diarrhea. Most of these children and their parents had no access to basic health care (Farmer, 2004). This was the situation Haitian people faced prior to the January 12, 2010 earthquake. Things became even worse around the Port-au-Prince area after the earthquake.

**Haitian children's situation before and after the earthquake.** On January 12, 2010, a magnitude 7.0  $M_w$ <sup>1</sup> earthquake with an epicenter near Léogâne struck Haiti (Chelys website, 2010). The situation after the earthquake became chaotic and severely hopeless. Many children lost their parents; some of those who lost their parents had no other caretakers and were thus, sent to orphanages. Some children took up home with relatives while others had to live on the street.

Schwartz (2012) noted that widespread corruption of government officials and orphanages led to providing services for children of affluent families to the neglect of the needy. Thousands of people worldwide donated money ranging from \$20 to \$40 per month to sponsor children in Haiti's orphanages. Unfortunately, most of the money went to the orphanage owners while the remainder of the funds went to individuals who already had the means to provide for their children. Schwartz described this as "snatching charity from the mouths of the needy" (p. 152). There have been reports of maltreatment and abuse of children by a number of individually owned orphanages and those owned by religious groups (Schwartz, 2012).

Hoffman (2011) reported that 1 in 10 children are living in *restavèk*, which refers to when a child lives with and works for a family who is financially more stable than the child's former household. Although this is child labor, children tended to view *restavèk* as a form of self-improvement, formal learning, and upward social mobility. In her interviews with some of the children in *restavèk* living arrangements, Hoffman discovered that the children only regretted that their employer would not allow them to go to a formal school to learn. According to Hoffman, many of these children reported a preference for being in an orphanage because of the educational opportunities provided by orphanages.

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<sup>1</sup>  $M_w$  is the seismological symbol to denote the *moment magnitude scale*.

There are two other forms of living arrangements. One is *lakou*—a term used to describe children living in clustered family. Hoffman (2011) posited that many Haitian children in this arrangement were there because they may have been fleeing abuse—either in their family of origin or for economic reasons. Despite all the odds against Haitian children, they have easier access in most cases to their extended family. In a collectivist culture like that of Haiti, an extended family lives close together. In the case of Haiti, poverty and economic necessities actually force people to have a *lakou* living arrangement. This is unlike the Western society where a nuclear family lives alone and at a distance from its extended family. While the privacy of people living in a *lakou* living arrangement is compromised, the social interaction and communal support is positive. *Lakou* is a traditional, multiple-care giving system for informally training children in social norms and life skills.

The final living arrangement is when children are simply living on the street. According to Hoffman (2011), some of the children living on the street experienced gang fights, sexual assault, or police brutality. However, Kovats-Bernat (2006) asserted that the children living on the street have been forced to earn important life skills for survival and sustainability. These children also organized themselves into social networks and groups. Following the earthquake, these three living situations, *restavék*, *lakou*, and street dwelling have become more prominent.

**Religious beliefs.** The Haitian people are generally religious. Haitians trace the meaning they create about situations and circumstances to their culture, which includes their religion. They also trace their good health and well-being to their religion (Schwartz, 2012). Most of the population ascribes to both Catholicism and Voodoo. Haitians believed in *Iwa* or spirit possession of individuals (Nicolas, DeSilva, Grey, & Gonzalez-Eastep, 2006; Roysircar, 2013; Schwartz, 2012). Haitians use demons or *djab* to explain misfortune or psychopathology

(Nicolas et al. 2006; Schwartz, 2012). They also believe that a *bokor* or witch doctor could cast a spell or sorcery on an individual, which may result in sickness or death (Nicolas et al., 2006; Schwartz, 2012). When someone has a vehicle accident, a Haitian believes it may be caused by *ogoun* the spirit of iron and war (Nicolas et al., 2006; Schwartz, 2012).

Myers (2000) reported that religious people are less prone to depression and demonstrate higher levels of happiness. According to Pargament (2001), people often turn to their faith as a resource of solace and support in stressful times. Pargament's studies showed that measures of religiousness corresponded to active rather than avoidant forms of coping. Empirical studies (Pargament, 2001) of many groups dealing with major life stressors, including a natural disaster, show that religion and spirituality are generally helpful to individuals' coping, especially when they have the fewest resources and are facing situations over which they do not have control. Because religion focuses on the unique domain of the sacred, ultimate truth, and deep connectedness, especially in societies that put a high value on religion, it could serve individuals well in the form of higher self-esteem and better psychological adjustment (Pargament, 2001). Such individuals seem to be more aware of their human limits and perceive a need for transcendence from a restrained human reality to one that is more ultimate.

Pargament (2001), however, cautioned that there are many forms of religious coping, and some are more helpful than others. While some religious practices could help individuals reframe a stressful event into a larger, more benevolent system of meaning in ways that promote health and well-being, other religious and spiritual coping practices could be more problematic. Pargament argued that some spiritual struggles have led to higher levels of psychological distress, decline in physical health, and higher mortality rates. Religion also could be a force of destruction or coercion of individuals. Therefore, psychologists and other health care providers

will serve their clients well if they familiarize themselves with research on the dual nature of religion, so that they can consider religion's protective and risk factors in their treatment plan.

In a religious nation, such as Haiti, it could be imagined that its people might interpret the many years of hardship and the earthquake, which caused an already desperate situation to become dire, as being permitted by God to further strengthen Haitian people. As a nation that has suffered for centuries, Haitians might just believe that they would have to overcome hard times. Such a courageous stance will likely trickle down to the children.

According to Myers (2000), belonging to a religious group provides social support, a sense of meaning, connectedness, and purpose to its members. Haitian children learn to be religious from the religious names given to them, such as Dieuseul, Dieusibon, Jesula, Mercurieu, and Marie (Apollon & Pierre-Victor, 2013). They learn to have infinite hope in God no matter what they are experiencing. Haitian children learn to look at the positives and not to dwell on the negative aspects of life. The traditional Haitian religion encourages Haitians to master both the forces of good and the forces of evil for maintenance of balance and equilibrium (Schwartz, 2012). They believe in the power of the ancestors (their departed relatives) as legislators, and that they usher them on in life (Alexandre, 2013; Apollon & Pierre-Victor, 2013; Bellegarde-Smith, 2013). Religion is the source of strength for Haitians in the face of adversity.

**Ecological contexts in recovery.** Situations of absolute poverty and severe deprivation, such as those being experienced by the Haitian children, are known to negatively affect people's happiness and overall well-being (Gordon & Nandy, 2012). The United Nations defined absolute poverty as, "a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education, and information. It

depends not only on income but also on access to social services” (as cited in Gordon & Nandy, 2012). Contrary to Myers’ (1992) position that poverty and wealth had failed to make people happy, those who experience absolute poverty and, therefore, severe deprivation of basic needs, can put wealth into good use. According to Gordon and Nandy, severe deprivation of basic human needs could have serious adverse effect on individuals’ health and well-being, as well as negatively impacting child development. Absolute poverty causes increased psychological stress that taxes the cognitive resources of individuals experiencing absolute poverty (Mullainathan, 2011). The author explained how those experiencing absolute poverty focus on current financial problem and are constantly distracted and unable to make effective decisions and plan for their future. Because such individuals spend too much time and energy deciding what needs to meet and which one to leave out, they lack concentration and self-control. The individuals, therefore, find themselves debt-trapped, or struggling with diseases, and other situations that do not bolster happiness and overall well-being (Mullainathan, 2011).

Consideration of the ecological context of how a disaster impacts children and their recovery is central to disaster work. Equally important to the researcher’s understanding of the Haitian children’s experience is ecological theory, as described by Masten and Osofsky (2010). The knowledge of the vulnerability of the community affected by a disaster will inform what such a community would need to recover from the disaster. The type of infrastructures and their quality could determine the intensity of how a disaster would affect the people. A vulnerable community may be inadequately prepared for meeting the needs of children during a disaster.

Masten and Osofsky (2010) suggested that variability in responding to disaster victims, based on cumulative exposure in severity or intensity and in consideration of multiple traumatic experiences, would be more effective than a uniform response strategy. For example, it is



important to consider the context of the people exposed to a disaster. Haiti, for instance, has been struggling with poverty, instability, and government neglect of infrastructure and citizens' well-being before the 2010 earthquake.

While recovery after a disaster is tailored to bring a much needed relief to the community impacted by a disaster, the unintended also happens. There could be adversity in the recovery context in which, for instance, a temporary location, such as camps, could expose children and adults to violent acts of sexual assault and rape. There may be corruptions and inadequacies in the distributions of supplies to meet the community's basic needs. The unfortunate post-disaster adversities in the family and the community in the form of violence and neglect are crucial in the recovery of a community after a disaster (Masten & Osofsky, 2010).

There are some protective environmental factors that, when capitalized on, could bring timely recovery for the community and the children in particular. First, reuniting the children with their parents or adults who have attachment bonds with them could start the healing process for the children. Second, restoration of normalizing context, routines, and activities, such as schooling, playing, and activities that nurture hope, meaning, as well as a sense of agency and community is pertinent to recovery after a disaster (Masten & Osofsky, 2010).

Community acceptance of the children after the disaster, as reported by Masten and Osofsky (2010), could help in recovery. Sensing the emotional needs of the children either to talk about the disaster or to shield them from information that they do not need is a laudable community effort. Therefore, Masten and Osofsky believed that restoring community resilience after a disaster should be prioritized. The restoration of cultural and community practices that support families and children, including religious practices, could be helpful in recovery (Masten & Osofsky, 2010).

### **The Purposes of the Study**

The primary purpose of the study was to investigate the global common factors as well as culturally specific factors in the House-Tree-Person (HTP) drawings of children experiencing continuous trauma and the relevance of these factors in providing treatment for Haitian children and children in similar situations.

There were other purposes for the study. First, I wished to verify the cross-cultural validity of the HTP instrument for Haitian a small sample ( $N = 13$ ) children between the ages of 7 and 9. This cultural validity required cultural modifications of established criteria for interpretations of features in children's drawings, as delineated by Buck (1973), Groth-Marnat (1997), and Oster and Crone (2004). Second, I wished to determine the capacity of the HTP instrument in revealing the likelihood of adaptive and maladaptive coping skills of children in an international setting who had faced adversities.

### **Current Multicultural Assessment Practice**

The American Psychological Association (APA), in its Multicultural Guidelines (APA, 2003), emphasizes the importance of conducting an assessment that takes into consideration multicultural issues. Self-awareness of one's worldview as a researcher and that of the participants is crucial when conducting an interpretative analysis. When interpreting assessment results, researchers must acknowledge the interdependence culture of non-Western participants who seek harmony with others and conform with social and group norms; this tends to be in contrast to Western cultures in which autonomy is valued (APA, 2003). Culturally appropriate skills in psychological testing should take into consideration the language in which the testing was normed (APA, AERA, NCME, 1999). Also, the researcher should consult with a trained translator when administering a test to an examinee whose first language is not English (AERA,

APA, NCME, 1999). Any interpretative analysis done with the data collected ought to consider diversity and strengths of the participants (Lopez, Salas, Arroyo-Jurado, & Chinn, 2004).

### **House-Tree-Person Test**

Buck (1948, 1981) designed the House-Tree-Person Test (HTP) as an assessment tool for adults to assist clinicians in collecting data about “the sensitivity, maturity, flexibility, efficiency and the degree of interaction of that personality with its environment-both specific and general” (Buck, 1981, p. 320). It is intended to reveal the presence or absence of emotional indicators signifying maladaptive and adaptive adjustment. The general projective drawing factors, such as detailing, distortions, disproportions, omissions, line emphasis, and transparencies, as well as symbols and featuring of clouds and the sun could point to either positive patterns or distress patterns. Buck asserted that the house, tree, and person are familiar stimuli. Buck cautioned that clinicians must interpret each drawing as a whole and only interpret different aspects of the drawings if these were to be important to the individual.

In addition, The HTP assesses “an individual’s degree of personality integration, cognitive maturity, and interpersonal connectedness” (Oster & Crone, 2004, p. 92). Due to the neutrality and the familiarity of the concepts of a house, a tree, and a person, individuals ultimately project their feelings and psychological state into the creation of these three concepts (Devora & Fryrear, 1976, 2006; Groth-Marnat, 1997; Groth-Marnat & Roberts, 1998). The HTP is also useful in research for locating “common factors in an identified group of people” (Oster, & Crone, 2004, p. 92). Examiners, therapists, and researchers use the HTP projective instrument in psychological assessment and planning of treatment for children between the ages of 3 to 15 years (Bluestein, 1978).

The HTP became a child measure when Diamond (1954) took an aspect of the Thematic

Apperception Test (TAT) and combined it with HTP. Participants were instructed to make up a story about a house, a tree, and a person, in which the three objects have the ability to speak to one another. The participants were also asked questions about the type of house, tree, and person they had drawn (Diamond, 1954 as cited in Killian, 1985). As seemingly simple and commonplace as a house, a tree, and a person are, they have a high potential of arousing children's emotions and psychological state. When this kind of evocation happens, clinicians can use these rich psychological materials for therapeutic work with the client (Burns & Kaufman, 1970; Koppitz, 1968). The utility of the HTP drawings is the test's focus on the child's inner psychological world, which is not always the focus of other non-projective assessment tools (Burns & Kaufman, 1970; Koppitz, 1968).

The house drawing indicates a self-portrait of how an individual perceives relationships; the tree drawing reveals self-reflection and interpersonal relationships; the person drawing reveals the conscious and unconscious representation of the self. Klepsch and Logie (1982) use the Human Figure projective drawing with children as an instrument to measure personality, self-in-relation to others, attitudes, and group values.

It is important to note that the HTP was not standardized for children and a non-clinical population, two features of the present study. In addition, Buck (1948) based the HTP development on psychoanalysis, for which the understanding and interpretation of the pathological states of individuals are central to its introspective traditions and intervention techniques. Buck developed the HTP first as an intelligence assessment instrument for adults, but later used it to gain insight into the conditions of adults with moderate to severe psychopathology. Buck conducted two studies to standardize HTP for the two uses. The first study spanned 11 years from 1933 to 1944. Buck recruited 140 Caucasian adults whose

intelligence had been previously measured and fell within a designated range. The second study on psychopathology, known as the 1945 University of Virginia Hospital Study, was with 150 Caucasian adults. Buck used these studies to develop an interpretive and quantitative interview scoring system. The HTP technique consisted of a two- phased approach. First, the participants completed a freehand drawing of the house, tree, and person. Second, the assessor administered a 64-item questionnaire, known as Post-Drawing-Interrogation, to the participants.

**HTP drawings as an outlet for children's input.** Haitian children who are suffering from societal neglect and recovering from the 2010 earthquake are the primary stakeholders in the research, other than our profession. Haitian children will benefit the most from this study because it gave some of them an opportunity to share their experiences through their HTP drawings. This is particularly helpful in cases when individuals may not have a command of language to express their thoughts and feelings (Cohen, Hammer, & Singer, 1988; Drummand, 1983). Subsequently, the information inferred from the HTP drawings will make the HTP more applicable to children of Haitian descent. According to Tharinger and Stark (1990), in the process of assessing and treating children who are suffering from social and emotional problems, it is important that researchers give priority to the information obtained from the children themselves.

**HTP as a technique to reduce barriers in children's research.** First, HTP projective drawings allow researchers to study children who have experienced potentially traumatizing events without having to rely exclusively on the accounts of their caregivers or other adults (Terr, 1998). HTP was used in Sri Lanka to assess for anxiety of children after the 2004 Tsunami (Dewaraja, Sato, & O'Gawa, 2006). It was also used in different trauma studies in various parts of the world, such as Australia (Groth-Marnat, 1997), Hungary (Le Corff, Tivendell, & LeBlanc,

2013), and Vietnam, (Yama, 1990). Second, the HTP projective drawing is an effective instrument for collecting data directly from children (Oster & Crone, 2004). Third, as an assessment instrument designed to collect data directly from children, the HTP has the potential to reduce and/or remove biases that are inherent in other children-focused research. In the context of cross-cultural research, in which the researcher and the child have different primary languages, the HTP may potentially diminish distortions in understanding that may occur as each party verbally communicates in a secondary or tertiary language. According to Terr, when mental health professionals obtain accurate information regarding children's psychological difficulties and these children are able to receive appropriate services, the prognosis for these children to recover improves. Fourth, the application of the HTP projective instrument would potentially shed light on aspects of how Haitian children have adapted to environmental adversities.

The present study utilized data from Roysircar and colleagues' (2013b) study. In collecting the data, the instructions were provided by a trained Haitian-English translator, who only spoke Créole to the children. The instructions in Créole were, "Draw a house, a tree, and a person." HTP drawings could reduce the barriers of culture and language because of the minimal involvement of language in the administration of the HTP projective instrument (Tharinger & Stark, 1990; Yama, 1990).

**Direct assessment of children using HTP drawings.** Caregivers who have experienced a disaster may not be attentive to their children's psychological needs due to their own psychological suffering (Roysircar et al., 2013). Children's HTP projective drawings may provide an interpretive description of the child's inner needs and experiences to mental health providers, who could explain the results to the caregivers. Themes emerging from the Haitian

children's HTP drawings could have implications for evidence-based psychotherapies, specifically for children who are experiencing trauma (e.g., Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy; Mindfulness Informed Psychotherapy, Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction, and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy). Parents often feel helpless as they watch their children suffer because of the experience of trauma. An appropriate assessment will bolster sound conceptualization and effective treatment and will also help prevent children's experience of developmental disruptions in a continuous trauma environment (Terr, 1998).

**The potential of HTP drawings for determining global common factors.** In the present study, I attempted to identify in children's HTP drawings some fundamental interpretative components that might be considered global common factors (GCFs) of child trauma, or universal features, or at best archetypes. To do so, I compared the HTP drawing interpretations of Haitian children with the interpretations of two studies on drawings of a sample of children from Israel (Nuttman-Shwartz et al., 2010) and Wenchuan-China (Wang et al., 2010) who had experienced similar trauma as many of the Haitian children. The qualitative method of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of the Haitian children's HTP drawings informed the themes of GCFs as adaptive and maladaptive indicators. The provision of GCFs might assist therapists in understanding preferred coping strategies of continually traumatized children.

**Israeli study.** The Israeli study conducted by Nuttman-Shwartz et al. (2010) focused on the experience of Israeli children from the Gush Katif area of the Gaza strip. The Israeli government ordered a forced relocation of 8,000 residents in 2005, including 12 children (9 girls and 3 boys) between the ages of 7 and 9 years who were the participants in the Nuttman-Shwartz study. The government could no longer guarantee the safety of the residents of the Gaza strip

because of terrorism linked to Palestine and, therefore, re-settled them.

The Israeli children experienced a human-made disaster (e.g., war, acts of terrorism, and changes in borders). In addition, they experienced uncertainties because of their relocation to temporary resettlements. The government relocated them to their temporary site two years before the commencement of the Nuttman-Shwartz et al. (2010) study. The children were also reallocated to a school near their temporary residence.

The Israeli children were from the close-knit Gush Katif community, which had a strong sense of shared history related to the Holocaust. The Gush Katif community belonged to the national religious movement in Israel that subscribed to a strong ideology and the practice of faith. Orthodox Zionist Judaism is central to the Gush Katif community's daily life.

In order to understand the responses of their participants to the forced relocation, the researchers instructed the participants to draw any house. The children spontaneously drew not only houses but also trees and people. Nuttman-Shwartz et al. (2010) saw the house drawings as a space that provides protection, love, and warmth. Therefore, the researchers used the projective drawing of a house to indicate that the Israeli children who lost their homes because of forced relocation would experience a sense of physical loss and psychological difficulties. Thus, Nuttman-Shwartz et al. examined how latency age children coped with their losses.

The researchers' interpretive analysis of the children's house drawings resulted in three themes: Ideology and faith, trauma, and integrative perspectives. The ideology and faith theme symbolized the children's sense of belonging to the Gush Katif community and its collective experiences. The children portrayed their ideology and faith by adding the Israeli flag and the Gush Katif community flag to their drawings of a house. In addition, the children wrote solidarity slogans on their drawings, such as "Gush Katif Forever—Whatever Happens, We Are



Here to Stay” (Nuttman-Shwartz et al., 2010, p. 400). Some of the drawings also showed playgrounds with children playing. Nuttman-Shwartz and colleagues identified trauma patterns from the expression of fear, distancing, depression, uncertainty, and insecurity depicted in the children's drawings. These expressions are described below.

The trauma indicators in the drawings included weak and fragile house structure, superficial drawings, depiction of birds as if descending on the house to destroy it, enclosed clouds as a sign of danger, and abandonment as shown in rays of sun not reaching the house. An integrative theme synthesized both the ideology and faith theme with individual trauma theme. The drawings showed palm trees, which are the cultural symbol of wholeness and community for Gush Katif. Furthermore, the children included broken tree trunks indicating that the relocation was experienced as a threat to the community life, the children having left behind their land and residence. The flag was a strong presence of ideology and the Star of David was a symbol of protection. The researchers interpreted the integrative drawings as signifying emotional disturbance and the drawers' openness to assistance rather than coping alone. A general pattern in the children's drawing was that they drew their former houses in Gush Katif not the temporary ones to which they relocated as a way of revealing what their desires were as opposed to their current living situation.

**Wenchuan-China study.** The Wenchuan-China study conducted by Wang et al. (2010), focused on determining differences between the psychological state of children from the Wenchuan area epicenter of the May 12, 2008 8.0 Mw earthquake and children from non-affected areas of Beijing and Xiamen, China. Although the duration of the earthquake was two minutes, about 69,195 deaths were blamed on it, while 18,392 people were unaccounted for. Out of the 69,195 deaths, 68,636 casualties were from the Wenchuan County. About 80% of the

buildings in the Wenchuan County area were destroyed leaving 4.8 million people displaced. Children alongside adults witnessed the death of their loved ones including one or both parents of children who survived the earthquake.

Wang et al. (2010) recruited 197 children of ages 9 to 13 years to participate in the Wenchuan earthquake study one year after the catastrophic event. Seventy-one participants (42 boys and 29 girls) were from the epicenter area of Wenchuan County, while 126 of the participants (56 boys and 55 girls) were from the non-affected areas of Beijing and Xiamen in China.

Analyses were done in the Wenchuan study to evaluate the mental health disparity between participants from the epicenter of the earthquake and those from the non-affected areas along the dimensions of indicators of psychological trauma, regression, anxiety, depression, interpersonal adaptation, maladaptation, such as severe anger, aggression, defensive mechanisms in dealing with trauma and negative emotions.

Wang et al. (2010) found that the psychological trauma caused by the earthquake and its negative impact continued to affect the mental health of children in the epicenter of the earthquake disaster area one year after the earthquake. The Wenchuan earthquake study found that the 71 participants from the epicenter of the disaster had significant psychological trauma as indicated in their drawings. The House drawings of the 71 participants from the disaster area had smaller house doors with curtains on the windows that the researchers interpreted as indicators of anxiety. They also reported drawings of piles of collapsed walls of House drawings and blood stained walls drawings, which the researchers interpreted as indicators of psychological trauma. In addition, the researchers identified drawings of trees with scarred trunks and trees with sharp tips indicating sexual abuse. The drawings of the 71 participants also included blood stained bark

of trees, broken trunks, pruned trees, trunks with caves in them, and trees with broken crowns. The person drawings included those with missing nose, mouth, and chin, which the researchers interpreted as maladaptive and interpersonal difficulty indicators. There were drawings that revealed the teeth of persons drawn, which the researchers interpreted as indicative of aggression. The researchers concluded that the mental health of the 71 participants from the Wenchuan area was worse than those children from the non-affected areas of Beijing and Xiamen area.

**Global common factors.** The present study sought to examine themes found in Haitian children's HTP drawings and to compare them across cultures. The researcher based her interpretation of the drawings on the interpretative design principles of Furth (2002). Furth used focal points, symbols, complexes, progression, and regressions in drawings to reveal both conscious and unconscious meanings. These terms of interpretative design principles are briefly described below.

**Focal points.** Focal points are important elements or the center that draws the most attention in a drawing. What a drawing is signaling makes itself known through focal points. What the researcher's attention focuses on in a drawing are the focal points. A look at the focal points systematically helps to evaluate the psychological content of a drawing. A drawing is divided into components and the researcher then searches for focal points in each component. The researcher then synthesizes all the components in a meaningful way (Furth, 2002).

**Symbols.** Symbols represent unconscious or less readily available material of the drawer. This material may be in a form of a difficulty or an adaptation. When the researcher follows the lead of the symbols, it illustrates a connectedness or an aspect of a complex.

**Complexes.** Complexes could be either positive or negative feelings that emerge from the

unconscious, which manifests itself in a drawing. It does not matter where the researcher begins interpretation; whether through colors, shapes, sizes, or direction of movement, complexes are intertwined with their components in a delicate pattern. Researchers have their own complexes which they must be aware of and control when interpreting a drawing. This is what Furth (2002) called the "vulnerable sides" of the researcher (p. 101), which are projected onto others without the researcher being conscious of it.

*Progressions and regressions.* Progressions are used in describing psychic energy as they are portrayed in a drawing. Furth (2002) equated progressive energy to flowing water that cannot be stopped. It flows from a higher level to a lower level. Regressions are the opposite of progressions. It is seen psychologically as a backup in which the psychic energy associated with one part of the drawing is channeled or stored in other parts of the drawing. There must be both a progressive and regressive movement of energy in a drawing. This explains the principle of constancy which states that the sum total of energy remains constant.

Unconscious meanings are archetypal or a pattern of an individual's behavior. When symbols from a drawing come from a collective level of the unconscious they are manifested through symbols and complexes. It is important to spend time observing the drawing before its unconscious meanings are revealed. Furth (2002) believed that the unconscious is the seat of creativity from where the drawer draws. Drawings from the unconscious represent raw materials that are connected to the individual's complexes.

Conscious interpretation is how unconscious contents are revealed in a drawing. The conscious and the unconscious experiences create an interplay inside a drawing. When a clinician asks certain questions, she or he brings the unconscious content of the client's drawing into the client's conscious awareness. In this study, the researcher looked for focal points,

symbols, and complexes, similar to Furth's (2002), of projected experiences in Haitian children's drawings. This researcher presented the similarities between Haitian children's drawings and those of the Israeli and Chinese studies. She presented similarities in the two studies as global common factors (GCFs). Moreover, The researcher utilized identified GCFs as universal indicators (both adaptive and maladaptive) in the HTP drawings of Haitian children to suggest possibilities of how Haitian children have coped for the past three years following the earthquake. According to Yama (1990), interpretations of HTP drawings should be similar across cultures. Yama found global characteristics from his Vietnamese participants that were independent of cultural differences. However, in the situation of adverse events (e.g., disasters) and individual and societal responses to ecological crises, the context, culture, issues of politics and power, value system/religion, resources, community, and the time factor are expected to reveal group-specific experiences that are the outcome the people-context interactions (Roysircar, 2013; Roysircar et al., 2013b).

### **Research Questions**

The researcher addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the themes that emerge from HTP drawings that portray the psychological states of Haitian children?
2. What are the themes that emerge from the HTP drawings that reveal the positive and negative coping of Haitian children?
3. Are the themes from Haitian children's HTP drawings comparable cross-culturally with that of HTP drawings from children living in crises conditions in Israel and China?
4. What global common factors (GCFs) can be drawn from the cross-cultural studies that were examined?
5. What are the themes that are unique to children living in Haitian contexts that make them different from the Israeli and Chinese children?

**Definition of Terms**

**Child poverty.** The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) measured child poverty by the number of children living in a household where the disposable income is lower than half of their nation's median income (UNICEF, 2012). The General Assembly (GA) of the United Nations defined child poverty as deprivation of basic needs of life, such as nutritious food, potable water, sanitation facilities, and access to healthcare. The GA also asserts that deprivations of education opportunities, security, and/or adequate shelter are harmful to children (United Nations General Assembly, 2006). In an effort to help measure child poverty, UNICEF developed a 14-item list to assess what children have access to in the home (e.g., food, books, games; cf.). UNICEF considers what is on the list to be fundamental to fostering normal child development. Haitian children, who are participants in this study lived in the type of circumstances listed by UNICEF as the measure of child poverty and, therefore, met UNICEF's definition of poverty. The UNICEF considers an absence of two items from this list of household necessities for children to be an indication of child poverty.

**Continuous trauma.** It is the experience and impact of living in contexts of realistic, current, and ongoing danger such as protracted political or civil conflict or pervasive community violence (Eagle & Kaminer, 2013). Continuous trauma has four characteristics. First is the context of the stressor conditions, which takes into account the experiences of individuals living under conditions of continuous trauma exposure. In the case of Haitian children they live in the context of poverty, community insecurity, and geographical location in the pathway of active and severe hurricanes. Second is the temporal location of the stressor conditions, in which the continuous traumatic is current and anticipated in the future. Third is the complexity of discriminating between real and perceived or imagined threat. While a hurricane occurs yearly in

Haiti, the severity of this from year to year is unpredictable (Master, 2013). Fourth is the absence of external protective systems, in which there is a failure of the usual systems of law and order causing a compromise in the normal operation of the society. Lundahl (1989), described the successive governments of Haiti as predatory, in which bribery and corruption led to the neglect of infrastructure, the healthcare system, and basic citizens' rights and protections (Farmer, 2004).

**Disaster.** There are three categories of disasters: natural disasters (i.e., earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, or floods), human-made disasters (i.e., armed conflict, genocide, industrial accidents, school shootings, or terrorism), and disease outbreak (Masten & Osofsky, 2010). Natural disasters are catastrophic events that overwhelm local resources, forcing communities to seek national and/or international disaster assistance. The event is usually unexpected and causes great damage to property and threatens human life (Jacobs, Leach, & Gerstein, 2011; Vos, Rodriguez, Below, & Guha-Sapir, 2010). Human-made disasters are intentional or unintentional events that are manifested by one or more individuals and are hazardous to public safety. The perpetration of war, terrorism, genocide, and mass shootings are examples of intentional events while industrial accidents serve as an example of an unintentional event. A disease outbreak is a deadly disease of an epidemic proportion, such as the cholera outbreak in Haiti following the 2010 earthquake.

**Psychological adaptation.** For the purpose of the study, adaptation refers to how well Haitian children adjusted to their environment following the 2010 earthquake. One source for revealing the children's level of adaptation were their HTP drawings. The researcher use the term *positive adaptations* as a construct similar to how Masten and Powel (2003) described children's adaptive patterns as being indicative of resilience. An individual with resiliency features must be in the process of overcoming adversity or risk.

**Maladaptation.** Maladaptation is a faulty or inadequate adaptation. It is a survival mechanism that is more harmful than helpful. While it may serve a function at some point in an individual's life, it could be more of a problem, hindrance, or dysfunction later in life. For this study, it is important to understand if the Haitian children have been using maladaptive ways to cope with their environment after the 2010 earthquake.

**Coping.** For the purpose of this study, coping reflects how Haitian children manage adversities, such as experiencing chronic poverty and societal/familial instability as well as enduring increased hardship in multiple social/psychological domains in the aftermath of the earthquake. My evaluation of coping for Haitian children included assessing: (a) self-perception, (b) self-efficacy, (c) agency, (d) social involvement with others, and (f) positive overall functioning (cf. Garmezy, 1991).

**Resilience.** One of the character strengths that Haitian children might have been operating from is *strengths of courage* (Peterson, 2006). The courage and bravery from their history is represented in Nèg Mawon, the symbol of Haiti. Nèg Mawon is a statue of a runaway slave holding a machete in his right hand and a conch shell in his left hand. He is blowing into the conch he is holding to gather fellow Haitians in preparation for battle against their oppressors (Farmer, 2011). Peterson described the strength of courage as positive traits entailing ways of accomplishing goals in the face of either internal or external oppositions. According to Peterson *corrective strength of character* is what provides people with the opportunity to reveal their best and rise to the occasion demanded by their hardship when they face adverse situations.

The Haitian children's resilience to adversity is a manifestation of their competency (Garmezy, Masten, & Tellegen, 1984). Haitian parents tend to teach children to be stoic from a young age. When a child falls, the child is encouraged to get up and to continue playing. No



adult or caretaker will pacify a child by coddling him or her (Prudent, 2013). From childhood onwards, Haitians learn to be responsible for their own safety. They also learn interdependence with others as a foundation for resilience and not as a sign of weakness. The proverbs that depict meanings given to interdependence are in Table 1.

The literature confirms the possibility of resiliency among children in the face of adversity (Garmezy, 1991; Masten & Powell, 2003; Masten & Osofsky, 2010). Resiliency, as conceived by Garmezy (1991, 1993) and Garmezy and colleagues (1984), is understood in the light of avoidance of negative outcomes from the experience of adversities. Adaptive patterns are seen in resilient children instead of maladaptation. Garmezy and colleagues (1984) see protective factors as a means of making child resiliency possible or as ways of ameliorating the effect of adversities. Garmezy framed child resiliency from dispositional attributes and external factors. Therefore, both personal competency or absence of behavioral problems and external supports are crucial to his model of child resiliency (Garmezy, 1991, 1993; Garmezy, Masten, & Tellegen, 1984). Ryff and Singer (2002) describe resiliency as a way of thriving under challenges, a showcase of human strength and well-being.

Table 1

*Proverbs Associated with Haitian Meaning of Interdependence as a Foundation for Resilience*

Proverbs	Interpretations of Proverbs
<i>Ti moun fwonte leve devan bawon</i>	The impertinent grows up in the cemetery
<i>Nan pwen mamman nam pwen papa sa ki mouri zafe a yo</i>	There is no mother, there is no father; if you die you're on your own
<i>Le ou pa jwenn manman ou tete grann</i>	When you don't have your mother you nurse from your grandmother
<i>Pise krapo ogmante la rivye</i>	The frog's pee adds to the river
<i>Nen pran kou, je kouri dlo; je pran kou, nen kouri dlo</i>	The nose is hurt, the eyes water; the eye is hurt, the nose runs
<i>Min ampil, chay pa lou</i>	Many hands make a load lighter

*Note.* Prudent (2013) presented at the second annual conference on Haitian mental health, May 3–4, 2013

### Summary

Child poverty is an unfortunate reality of the global community and this phenomenon is expanding. Haitian children living in poverty are experiencing additional hardships resulting from the earthquake that occurred on January 12, 2010. Although disasters are prevalent throughout the world, few researchers are conducting research on the impact that disasters have on children's well-being. The HTP projective test appears to be a more culturally sensitive instrument because it minimizes linguistic demands and eliminates parent/teacher/clinician report biases. Chapter 2 describes the method for the study, including an overview of the study as an archival study, as well as the study participants, measures, procedures, research hypotheses, and a qualitative research method utilized to draw themes from the interpretations of the house, tree, and person drawings.

## **Chapter 2: Method**

The primary purpose of the study was to inquire into the global common factors (GCFs) as well as culturally specific factors in the House-Tree-Person (HTP) drawings of children experiencing continuous trauma. The findings of this study are relevant to how to provide treatment for Haitian children and children in similar situations.

This chapter includes information on the original study that provided the data for the present study, its participants, measures, and procedures. The IPA method for analyzing interpretations of the HTP drawings is explained.

### **An Overview of an Archival Study**

This is an archival study of previously collected data. The data used are comprised of an archived dataset from the Antioch Multicultural Center for Research and Practice (MC Center). The director of the MC Center, Gargi Roysircar, Ed.D., granted the present researcher permission to utilize the data for the study. An archival study has unique advantages and disadvantages. Researchers perform archival studies by analyzing data collected by other researchers or practitioners. Henceforth, those researchers who conduct archival analyses will be referred to as secondary researchers. The secondary researcher analyzing these data is able to maintain an unbiased stance because he or she has no previous contact with the dataset and, therefore, can evaluate the data objectively. Second, archival studies are more cost effective than other methods. Last, archival studies can expedite the research process (Zaitow & Fields, 1996).

For the purpose of full disclosure, I was involved in developing the design of the study and data collection while completing a special proficiency practicum on disaster mental health services in May 2012 in Blanchard, Haiti. I was also a part of the six-member research team of the MC Center that developed the criteria for measuring positive adaptation and distress

responses. From these criteria, items and their rating system were developed for each of the protocols: the house, tree, and person. I was a member of one of the three pairs of individuals who rated each child participant's three drawings. The psychometric properties and results of the factor analyses of the Haiti House-Tree-Person (H-HTP) test were presented at the 2013 APA conference in Hawaii (Roysircar et al., 2013b). Therefore, I was not a typical secondary researcher of an archival study; I am aware of my biases in favor of the conceptualization of the study and in my perspective of the data contents. I monitored these biases and reflected on them in Appendix B.

There are some disadvantages in using an archival dataset. First, data may be outdated at the time of analysis, which may render it irrelevant to the issues being examined or to current times. However, because the data for the original study was collected in 2012, it is expected to reveal pertinent information on the mental health of disaster-affected Haitian children. Second, the data collected by the primary researchers may be affected by their methods and, therefore, beyond the control of the secondary researcher. Third, the dataset may be specific to the original study and may limit the kind of analysis that the secondary researcher might perform on the dataset. It is incumbent on the secondary researcher at the time of interpretation to make sure that conclusions from the archival data are transferable and valid (Mertens, 2010; Zaitzow & Fields, 1996).

### **Setting**

Disaster Shakti, an arm of the MC Center of Antioch University New England, joined with Partners in Development (PID), which is a religiously affiliated non-governmental organization (NGO). PID has one of its clinics in Blanchard, which is on the outskirts of

Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The NGO provides medical care to men, women, and children. Such services include providing multivitamins to children, conducting prenatal clinics for pregnant women, and facilitating diabetic, cardiac, and HIV/AIDS clinics. The clinic also provides financial support for Haitian children and their families by supplying them with school supplies and necessities. Some children are also matched with sponsors in the United States who pledge to support a child by sending \$30.00 per month. Through PID, the sponsor sends money to the child's caregiver.

Canaan, where some of the participants lived, is a suburb of Croix-des-Bouquets, which is on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. It is a hillside relocation camp for those who lost their homes in the 2010 earthquake. Canaan lacks running water, sanitation services, and electricity. Damien, another town where some participants lived, is a former, government-run pig farm that became a relocation camp with better living conditions than Canaan. Blanchard is the community of Terre Noire. Once an old farm area, Blanchard is now a community of about 120,000 people and the location of the PID primary care clinic. Blanchard was less affected by the 2010 earthquake than other areas around Port-au-Prince (BBC World Service; Roysircar, 2013).

### **Participants**

Forty-three children ( $N = 43$ ) participated in the original study (Roysircar et al., 2013b) and were between the ages of 6 and 15. There were 22 boys and 21 girls. These children were from three townships, Canaan ( $n = 10$ ), Damien ( $n = 13$ ), and Blanchard ( $n = 20$ ). Out of the original participants, the present research studied 13 children between ages 7–9. All children who participated in the study were neatly attired and appeared happy and active.

## **Measures**

According to Groth-Marnat (1997) and Howe, Burgess and McCormak (1987), drawings have long been used as psychological assessment tools for gaining further information regarding an individual's subjective inner world. The projective drawings allow the client to express himself or herself in a highly personal manner. As such, the clinician must interpret these materials with care because they could possess unexpected trauma indicators (Eyal & Lindgren, 1977). Similarly, individuals may project idealized versions of their lives or avoid projecting environmental threats into the drawings (Jolley & Thomas, 1998). This reaction could be sublimation, unrealistic optimism, or even resilience (Malchiodi, 1998). Furthermore, researchers have noted identifiable themes and patterns in drawings of children in similar situations, such as children who are chronically ill (Oster & Crone, 2004).

## **Clinicians' Contemporary Use of HTP**

In recent years, several versions of HTP projective instrument have emerged. Some of the versions were modified for usage with children. In particular, the original Post-Drawing-Interrogation (P-D-I) posttest measure, which now has multiple versions, has been modified to be suitable to administer to children. Current researchers and clinicians place more emphasis on using HTP projective drawings as part of a larger assessment battery (Furth, 2002; Groth-Marnat & Roberts, 1998; Oster & Crone, 2004; Tharinger & Stark, 1990).

Clinicians use the HTP projective drawings to initiate discussions about psychological states such as self-perception, security, and ego strength, or resilience. A clinician can enhance the usability of the HTP drawings by allowing the drawer to freely comment on his or her drawing, especially within a context where there is no language and/or cultural barrier between the clinician and the client (Garland, 2005).

### **Criticisms of HTP**

There are multiple criticisms for the HTP, including the lack of standardization of the HTP scoring, psychometric concerns about reliability and validity, doubts about its empirical and statistical verification status, and its ambiguity. Because drawings are not standardized, it is difficult to measure them accurately. The most extensively used psychological tests, such as Rorschach Inkblots, Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2), Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory-III (MCMI-III), Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-IV (WISC-IV), Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-IV (WAIS-IV), have standardized administration, scoring, and interpretation procedures for specific populations and age groups (Groth-Marnat, 2009). Conversely, HTP has none of these measurement features. Therefore, critics of HTP would not recommend it for diagnosis (Groth-Marnat, 2009; Hammer, 1958; Machover, 1949; Malchiodi, 1998).

There is, however, a consensus regarding a type of reliability particular to the HTP. There are patterns of stability and consistency in the children's drawings and clinicians' agreement on scoring features in drawings and scoring criteria (Crawford, Gross, Patterson, & Hayne, 2012; Jolley & Thomas, 1998). However, the validity of the HTP has been negligible at best or inconclusive (Garland, 2005). Although Crawford et al. (2012) acknowledged that projective drawing tests are among the top ten most frequently used psychological assessments, they cautioned researchers and practitioners to consider the lack of validity of projective tests. Yates et al. (1985) found that interpretations of drawings based on common situations or a particular environment, such as a hospital or clinical environment, lend themselves to holistic interpretation. Administering the HTP to participants with the same group values could also have the same holistic interpretation. Klepsch and Logie (1982) also found that a comparison of

studies from similar groups could indicate the similarities and differences of such groups (Klepsch & Logie, 1982; Jolley & Thomas, 1998). For the present study, I had hypothesized that group comparison could strengthen the validity of the HTP by providing common factors to look for in groups living in similar situations.

In considering the ambiguity in projective drawings, scholars asserted that researchers and practitioners should never use information from a drawing in isolation, but in combination with other evidence (Buck, 1948, 1981; Jolles, 1971; Jolley & Thomas, 1998). Swensen (1968) concluded in his studies that assessment drawings could be used empirically only for global assessment of emotional disturbance in children, such as, within a battery of tests rather than as a measure of personality traits and emotional state. In addition, Swensen (1968) reported that drawings are just clinical observations and not empirical studies (cited in Vass, 1998; cited in Jolley & Thomas, 1998). Vass (1998) and Jolley and Thomas recommended further research that could provide understanding of the utility of projective drawings.

Vass (1998) believed that the methodologies of previous researchers were inappropriate for a projective drawing instrument. He said that previous researchers investigated one drawing characteristic at a time. For instance, Machover (1949) stated that:

...it is not intended, for the present, to construct a check-list of "signs" which can be used mechanically to establish differential diagnosis. Stress is laid primarily upon interrelated patterns of traits as they may reflect the dynamics of symptoms organization in a particular diagnostic category (as cited in Vass, 1998, p. 612).

### **HTP Adapted for the Present Study**

Children from different ethnic groups, cultures, religious groups, and sociocultural backgrounds are able to express their thoughts and feelings through drawing. The study provided



culturally adapted interpretations of the House-Tree-Person (HTP) drawings, which took into account the lived experiences of the Haitian children and cultural values.

Some of these lived experiences are interdependency or description of self as connected to others, as well as the acceptance of complexities and difficulties of life because adversity has been part of Haiti long before the earthquake. Despite recurring hardships, some of which are attributed to Haiti's geographic location, Haiti's is a culture of resilience, adaptation, and action. "Behind mountains, more mountains" is the English translation of "Deye mon, gen mon," which is a popular proverb in Haiti that sums up the recurring hardships of its people and their ability to persevere.

Understanding of resilience was based on the definition provided by Masten and Powell (2003). The authors refer to patterns of positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity. These patterns of resilience include psychosocial competence, which Masten and Powell described as "a track record of effective performance in developmental tasks that are salient for people of a given age, society or context, and historical time" (p. 5). Adaptive patterns in Haitian children included peer relations and socialization, internal adaptation, and general well-being. Patterns that appeared contrary to these aforementioned adaptive patterns were interpreted as maladaptive coping behaviors.

Resistance was another factor considered in Haitian children's drawings. Prudent (2013) described resistance as an unconscious process that leads to behaviors and attitudes that look inefficient and pathological from an outsider's point of view. Haitians have a preference for action and problem-solving over reflecting and feeling their suffering. They have also cultivated behaviors for adapting to scarcity. In addition, Haitians have learned to acknowledge and accept their social structures. For instance, they believe that all of life happens in a cluster of class, and

that power keeps people separated from each other. Finally, Haitians have faith in God as their ultimate protector (Prudent, 2013). Haitian children's drawings were interpreted on the basis of the above understanding of Haitian worldviews.

The researcher based her interpretation on the work of Furth (2002), whose interpretative design principles revealed conscious and unconscious meanings in HTP drawings by considering symbols, focal points, complexes, progression, and regression. The drawings were interpreted as a whole rather than in parts (Buck, 1948; Machover, 1949).

The post-drawing questions posed to the Haitian children in Creole did not elicit information that could have enhanced the researcher's understanding of the drawings. For instance, when the children were asked the question "What did you draw? Why did you draw it this way?" most of them said they drew a house because "you asked me to draw a house." Therefore answers to the two questions for each drawing of the house, tree, and person was excluded from the interpretive analyses.

### **Procedures**

Prior to the commencement of this study, the Disaster Shakti research team received approval from the Antioch University New England, Institution Review Board (IRB). Once in Haiti, the Disaster Shakti research team (including the present author) provided the PID staff with the informed consent and assent forms, which had been translated into Creole by the PID staff prior to our arrival in Haiti.

The informed consent form provided information about our purpose as counselors at the PID Blanchard clinic, and that the study would examine how children feel, think, and manage their problems. The informed consent form further explained that children's drawings would be examined for indicators of the ability to carry on as usual even when faced with difficult

circumstances. The informed consent form sought permission from the parents for their children to participate in the study. The drawing activities and the interview questions that the children would be asked after the drawings were explained. The form further explained the rights of the child participants and the confidential and anonymous nature of the study. The consent form provided contact information for the PID director and the chair of Antioch University's IRB in case the parents or child participants had questions. The parents were also informed that their children could opt out of the study at any time because participation was voluntary.

An assent form for children was provided in addition to the parents' informed consent form. The assent consent consisted of a brief introduction to the researchers and what they wanted to study: that they wanted to learn about how children feel and think. The children were informed about the drawings they would be asked to do and that they could choose to not continue with the study at any time if they no longer wanted to participate. The researchers who prepared this document used simple and child-friendly language to explain that the choice to participate was that of the children. We also promised the participants confidentiality by stating on the assent form the following: "Your parents and the other children will not know your answers to our questions."

When the PID tap-tap bus arrived to pick up the children at the Canaan tent city as well as at Damien and Blanchard, two of the research team members checked the signed or thumb-marked informed consent forms at the community site, and only those children who showed these signed forms boarded the bus and were brought to the PID clinic to participate in the study.

The researchers assigned participant IDs to all the drawings to distinguish participants' identities, age, sex, and village name. Participant information was kept separate from the HTP drawings. This procedure ensured participants' anonymity. The dataset is stored at the

Multicultural Center in a locked cabinet. Confidentiality is protected by limiting access to the drawings only to Gargi Roysircar, Ed.D. and her research team that operates under the auspices of the MC Center.

**Administration of HTP with Haitian children.** To overcome the language barrier, Disaster Shakti utilized PID's English–Creole translators. The Disaster Shakti clinicians trained the translators to assist with the test administration and data collection. Over the course of the administration of the HTP, the Disaster Shakti research team seated 4–5 participants per table, and provided each child three pieces of drawing paper and colored crayons with the instructions in Creole by translators to draw a house, a tree, and a person. These instructions were presented one at a time. That is, each child was provided a sheet of paper and prompted, "Please draw a house, any house on this sheet of paper." The child was then provided a second sheet of paper with the prompt "Now draw a tree." Finally, the child was provided with a sheet of paper and prompted, "Now draw a person." The children were given crayons instead of the conventional no. 2 pencil to draw with the plan that they could keep their crayons after the data was collected. The crayons were appealing to the Haitian children who drew their pictures with interest.

One hundred and twenty nine HTP drawings were collected; that is, drawings of one house, one tree, and one person were collected from each of 43 participants. As recognition for their participation as well as interest in drawing, the children were told that they could keep the crayons they used for their drawings and were also provided drawing paper to take home. Following the completion of the children's drawing, the research team interviewed each child individually. With the aid of the translator, the child was asked, (a) "What did you draw?" and (b) "Why did you draw it this way?" The Disaster Shakti researchers found that these questions did not elicit information from the children that could be analyzed.

## Hypotheses and Research Questions

**Hypotheses.** There were four research hypotheses tested in the study:

1. HTP drawings of Haitian children participants will reveal their psychological state.
2. Themes in the adaptive category will outnumber those of the maladaptive category.
3. There will be similarities between the Haitian study and Israeli and Chinese studies.
4. There will be differences between the Haitian study and Israeli and Chinese studies.

**Research questions.** In addition to the above hypotheses, the study sought answers to the following research questions:

- Question 1. What are the themes that emerge from HTP drawings that portray the psychological states of Haitian children?
- Question 2. What are the themes that emerge from the HTP drawings that reveal the adaptive and maladaptive coping of Haitian children?
- Question 3. Are the themes from Haitian children's HTP drawings comparable cross-culturally with those of HTP drawings from samples of children living in crises conditions in Israel and China?
- Question 4. What global common factors (GCFs) can be drawn from the cross-cultural studies examined?
- Question 5. What are the themes that are unique to children living in Haitian contexts that make them different from the Israeli and Chinese children?

## Data Analysis

**Holistic interpretation of drawings.** First, I used Furth's (2002) interpretation criteria and principles on the HTP drawings of the Haitian child participants to conduct an interpretative analysis. I conducted all analyses by hand. For instance, the I viewed a drawing as a whole; then

identified the focal points, complexes, and progressions and regressions on the drawings (Furth, 2002). I examined how the drawing revealed a child's patterns of conscious and unconscious behavior by using the principles of equivalence (Furth, 2002). The principle of equivalence states that there is an existence of opposites (e.g., happy/sad, light/dark), which produces a balanced effect in the drawings. Opposites indicate where psychic energy might concentrate in one part of the drawing as opposed to another. The parts that have more psychic energy are signaled by symbols and complexes and catch the attention of the researcher as focal points with psychological contents. I researcher examined and interpreted each drawing based on the understanding that focal points are different in each drawing. A drawing was divided into components or parts; such as, in the case of a house drawing, one part was the inside of the house, and another part the landscape or outside of the house. Focal points were searched for in each component (inside, outside) before synthesizing all information gathered.

Once I had derived an interpretation of the house, the tree, and the person drawings in a case, my interpretation was recorded on a case-by-case basis in Microsoft Word. I separated the information gathered in the interpretation process into adaptive and maladaptive categories. An adaptive category included drawings that had indicators of positive adjustment. These included a child's positive self-perception, self-efficacy, agency, social involvement with others, and overall functioning. The maladaptive category included drawings that showed indicators of aggression or possible dysfunctions as projected in the children's drawings, such as anger, aggression, violence, emotional constriction, withdrawal, sexual violations, and denials.

**Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of interpretations.** I conducted an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009), a qualitative methodology approach, on the interpretations of each of the 39 drawings in order to determine

themes within the adaptive and maladaptive domains. My choice of IPA was based upon my interest in gaining understanding of the participants' unique and personal constructions.

I followed the five cyclical steps to IPA:

Step 1: I separated the interpretation of one case of a house, tree, and person drawings (i.e., three drawings) into preliminary themes that best captured the essentials of the drawings (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008).

Step 2: I used a master list of themes from 13 cases of house, tree, person drawings (i.e., 39 drawings) to identify more instances of the preliminary identified themes found in Case 1 or new themes. I grouped the themes together as clusters. I accomplished this by looking for connections between the themes in order to meaningfully cluster them together (e.g., Cluster 1, Cluster 2, Cluster 3).

Step 3: I tabulated the clusters of themes in a summary table.

Step 4: I looked for new themes to add to the clustered themes from the remaining 13 cases.

Step 5: I categorized the themes as superordinate or subordinate based on the richness of the themes.

Step 6: Finally, I explored the connection between the superordinate and subordinate themes of the Haiti study and themes from the Israeli and Chinese studies.

I focused on themes that represented underlying conditions: The possibility of common responses among a homogenous group, such as children who have experienced a disaster; crucial phenomena, such as continuous trauma; and important action and interactions that were based on meaning making and cultural nuances. These indicators were used to compare the themes from the Haitian study with those of the Israeli and Chinese studies (Fade, 2004; Nuttman-Shwartz et

al., 2010; Wang et al., 2010). The researcher used the superordinate and subordinate themes from the Haitian children study to compare with themes from the Israeli and Chinese studies.

I considered how the participants' culture and emotions influenced their constructions of a house, tree, and person. As such, she was able to reveal enduring themes based on similarities and differences in the HTP drawings both within this study and the Israeli and Chinese studies (Nutman-Shwartz et al., 2010; Wang et al. 2010). I categorized the similarities between the three studies as global common factors (GCFs) for traumatized children ages 7 to 9 years. To organize these GCFs, She presented the focal points, complexes, symbols, progressions, and regressions (Furth, 2002) in 4 of the 13 Haitian children's drawings (a house, a tree, and a person drawing x 4 children = 12 drawings) information in Chapter 3. See Appendix A for the remaining interpretative analyses of 27 drawings for a total of 39 drawings. I verified whether any of the Furth indicators of the Haitian drawings matched the indicators of the Israeli and Chinese drawings.

**Author's biases.** I used a self-reflection process to write down her thoughts and reactions about her understanding and biases of Haitian culture that may have affected my interpretations. She did this journaling to acknowledge her interpretive role and worldview (see Appendix B). This self-practice was based on the philosophy that understanding, including self-understanding, requires interpretation.

### **Quality Control**

Psychological research using qualitative methodology, such as the use of IPA for the present study, demands that the investigator demonstrate that the information from the research is believable and trustworthy, which can be accomplished by implementing quality control. Guba and Lincoln (1989) described the following five criteria for judging the quality of qualitative



research: Dependability, credibility, confirmability, transferability, and authenticity or transformative criteria (as cited in Mertens, 2010). These criteria are briefly discussed. Credibility is a criterion in qualitative research (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, as cited in Mertens, 2010). The following strategies ensured the credibility of the study. Prolonged and sustained engagement is crucial for quality control. I needed to stay involved in the community of interest. I immersed myself in the Haitian community during my practicum in Haiti; my attendance of a two-day annual conference on Haitian mental health conference 2013, and a one day conference in 2015, both organized by Haitian researchers; and by her reading of the literature on Haiti.

In addition, processes of analysis must be transparent (Mertens, 2010). In order to develop a full and accurate picture of the phenomena being studied, I asked clarifying questions from Haitian psychologists and researchers at the 2013 Haitian Mental Health Conference. Member check is an interactive process that the researcher utilizes to develop consensus by revisiting the facts, experiences, beliefs, and values of the data collected (Mertens, 2010). I made efforts to check with the work of other Haitian researchers, such as, Nicolas (2010) and Prudent (2013). Such efforts to converse with Haitian authors have been to understand how some Western constructs could translate into the Haitian experiences. Moreover, the focus was extended to understand the meanings that the Haitians make for their experiences.

In progressive subjectivity, the researcher reflects on his or her own thought process (Mertens, 2010). I kept a diary log of her thoughts during the course of the analyses of the data for this study. Central to transferability is the careful description by the researcher of the context, culture, time, and place of the research (Mertens, 2010). This is because the burden of transferability is on whoever (another researcher, practitioner, or student) utilizes this research in future work. Dependability entails detailing the steps in the protocol I used. I made efforts to

detail the steps I followed in my data analysis earlier in this chapter (cf. Data Analysis in Chapter 2). Confirmability means the data and their respective interpretations are traceable to their sources. Therefore, the logic behind the interpretation of the data must be made known by the researcher (Mertens, 2010).

Transformative criteria, also known as multicultural validity, are developed as a response to social justice and human rights. Kirkhart (2005 as cited in Mertens, 2010) described multicultural validity as “correctness and authenticity of understandings across multiple, intersecting cultural contexts” (p. 260). The multicultural criterion pertinent to the study is that the study was based in a community. This research requires knowing the community well enough to link the research outcomes to beneficial action in that community. I connected with the Haitian community by attending the 2013 and 2015 conferences about Haitian mental health, which was organized by the Haitian community in Boston. There, I met with notable scholars and leaders of Haitian communities. These scholars and leaders addressed some of the questions the researcher had regarding constructs and interpretation. For instance, I wanted to develop an understanding about whether what Haitians call *discouragement* is the same as the concept of depression, a cultural diagnostic translation discussed by Roysircar (2013) in her presentation of her family therapy intervention with a grieving Haitian family in the PID Clinic in Blanchard, Haiti. Dr. S. Prudent and Dr. G. Nicolas agreed that discouragement was the same as the construct of depression that exists in Western cultures (personal communication, May 3, 2013). Moreover, Dr. G. Nicolas explained at the conference that resilience is described as iron or *fe* in French-Creole language (personal communication, May 2, 2013).

### **Summary**

The participants of the archival study were 13 Haitian children ages 7–9, who were living

in Canaan, Damien, and Blanchard, townships located on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince. This area was hit by the 2010 earthquake, and so were its people who were mostly very poor. In the aftermath of the earthquake, the people of the affected communities lived in tent cities or damaged concrete huts. A culturally informed HTP interpretation was conducted on Haitian children's drawing. I analyzed my interpretations of the drawings using the IPA method (Smith et al., 2009) to develop themes from her interpretations of the children's HTP drawings. IPA is a repeated, inductive cycle of examining experiential materials with an outcome of emerging commonality and nuances that form themes and patterns first in single cases and then in subsequent ones (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008). The use of IPA considered the participants' emotions, thoughts, culture, value system, and environment, as these may have influenced their drawings.

### **Chapter 3: Results**

This chapter provides an overview of the methods used to analyze the HTP drawings of Haitian children, aged 7 to 9 years, and the results of the analyses and interpretive meanings given to the drawings. Clusters of themes and subthemes are then summarized and exemplified by participant responses. Similarities and differences of the study in comparison with one Israeli study and one Chinese study of children's HTP drawings are highlighted. The chapter concludes with a summary of the results.

#### **Overview of Methods of Analyses**

I utilized the Jungian drawing interpretation design from the work of Furth (2002). Furth's methods followed the caution of Buck (1948, 1981), the developer of the HTP projective test, that each drawing must be interpreted as a whole except in cases where specific aspects of a drawing are important to an individual's personality composition. In addition to the explicit features of the interpretation design, such as the focal points and symbols in drawings, attention must be paid to that which is not as obvious, including interpretations of complexes, progressions, and regressions in a drawing (Furth, 2002). These less overt features aided the researcher in categorizing signs of psychological adaptation and maladaptation and later in developing themes and subthemes.

#### **Focal Points and Symbols in HTP Drawings of Study Participants**

I started her Jungian interpretative analyses by searching participants' drawings for focal points. In addition, symbols present within the drawings were recorded and considered for meaning.

**House.** Focal points common amongst the house drawings suggested both adaptive and maladaptive coping of participants two years after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. Adaptation was

indicated in house drawings with doors, windows, pathways, or some form of decoration. House drawings with a partially flat roof suggested creativity, by ensuring a roof over one's house even when presented with insufficient resources. The focal point of a chimney on the roof of a house in a tropical region demonstrated idealization rather than the reality of living experiences in Haiti. Houses that were slanted as if about to fall over and those without windows, doors, or pathways showed maladaptation.

**Tree.** Common focal points of tree drawings were trees with fruits on them. Lush trees with many leaves revealed adaptive coping in the face of adversity. Trees planted inside planters indicated creativity despite insufficient resources. Maladaptation was shown in tree drawings with holes in their trunks, as well as through cut, dead, or damaged trees (e.g., broken branches or no leaves).

**Person.** Drawings of persons in action indicated agency and self-efficacy (Groth-Marnat & Roberts 1998; Oster & Crone, 2004). Within participants' drawings, there were focal points involving two people interacting with one another by holding hands, and one focal point of a boy playing soccer while accompanied by an adult observer, appearing to enjoy himself despite being half naked and barefooted. These focal points revealed well-being and relationships.

**Symbols.** The most common symbol in the drawings of the participants was the flag of Haiti on the roof of the house. The Haitian flag is primarily indicative of community and national solidarity. The flag is a reminder of the historical act of bravery of the founding fathers of Haiti, which may help summon participants' courage in their time of adversity. In addition, there were drawings involving the sun. One drawing in particular showed the sun shining on the flag of Haiti, perhaps revealing a brighter future for the country destroyed by the 2010 earthquake.

### **Individuality in HTP Drawings of Study Participants**

There were individual drawings with unique focal points. One of the participants drew a refrigerator outside of the house, revealing creativity in the ability to turn the refrigerator, in a country with inconsistent electrical supply, into a storage device. Another participant drew a shower house with someone bathing separate from the main house, indicative of well-being and contentment and suggestive of psychological adaptation in a water stressed country. Forty percent of the people in Haiti have access to clean water; only one in five Haitians have access to sanitary toilet. This poses challenges to good hygiene practices (Creative Commons website). In addition, one participant drew a blonde girl. The creation of a person so different from oneself may reveal dissatisfaction with the self or internalized oppression (Blackburn, 2006). In other words, the participant may have wished to be like a white person of European descent rather than a black Haitian person. Person drawings highlighting the genitals or tree drawings with holes in the trunk may have reflected sexual and nonsexual trauma.

### **Less Overt Features in HTP Drawings of Study Participants**

Complexes, or less overt elements of the drawings, took the form of positive and negative unconscious manifestations. Complexes are intertwined with components of a drawing in a delicate pattern. Researchers also have their own complexes which influence their interpretation of the drawings; thus they must be aware of their vulnerable side and control it. In one of the drawings, a car was drawn in front of a big and beautiful house that had no passable pathway or road. This is indicative of an idealized life rather than reality, perhaps one in which this participant longed to have a car and adequate living space because the children were all living in camps and temporary tents at the time of the drawing. Another participant drew two individuals to represent the person drawing. One person was an adult and the other was a child; however, the

adult was smaller than the child. This may indicate the inability or incapacitation of an adult to provide care for the child. There were drawings with negative complexes; for example, drawings which highlighted a person's genitals may indicate a history of personal violence such as sexual assaults (Yates & Crago, 1985). There were drawings with missing body parts such as a nose, mouth, and legs, which show vulnerability, powerlessness, and lack of agency. In addition, participants often projected their traumatization onto trees by drawing trees with holes on their trunks or with broken branches and other form of defects (Bluestein, 1978). The holes in some participants' trees could suggest the loss of parents, loved ones, or a different form of tragedy.

The focal points, complexes, regression, and projections informed the overall impressions. The patterns formed, when the overall impressions were analyzed, led to the categorization of 2 of the 13 cases as adaptive, another 2 cases as maladaptive, and the remaining 9 cases as having mixed overall impressions of both adaptive and maladaptive indicators. The overall impressions were further categorized into different themes and the themes were subsequently arranged into superordinate and subordinate clusters through the use of the IPA qualitative method (see next section). See Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 for the interpretation of the drawings of 4 cases. Additionally, Appendix B contains the remaining interpretations of the drawings of 9 cases and Appendix C contains example of drawings from Case 2 and Case 4.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Table 2

*Interpretation of Drawings for Case 1*

Drawing	FP1	FP2	FP3	FP4	FP5	FP6	Symbol	Overall Impression	
House	Two thirds of House roof is flat	No pathway to the House	Environment has a rootless tree with arm like branch.	A refrigerator is drawn outside of the house. It is by the tree	A single stem, floating flower is drawn on one of the four compartmentalized sections of the house	The House has two small windows and a large door	Flag on the roof of House symbolizing national pride.	<b>Adaptive</b> The drawer seems to be using pragmatic ways for meeting his or her needs in the midst of lack, as indicated in drawing a refrigerator outside of the house. The refrigerator may also be for storage.	<b>Maladaptive</b> Lack of pathway leading to the door, small windows gives an impression of the dwellers of the house being closed off.
Tree	A mango tree with roots, but no ground, so roots are exposed.	Tree has a branch that is at a 90 <sup>0</sup> angle to the tree, shaped like a club.	A branch is shaded instead of where the fruits could grow on the main tree. This branch is like a tree itself, only attached to the side of the main tree.	Two yellow fruits protrude from the side branch.	Tree's main branch has 20 fruits both green and yellow (yellow [13] more than green [7]).		Fruits symbolizes life.	The tree is well nourished and fruitful. Tree feels healthy and thriving despite lack of grounding.	The tree has a feeling of being ungrounded.
Person	A man whose scalp seems to	The man is holding a machete or a club on his	The man seems to be giving directions	Both hands of the man are stretched out as if	The man's two eyes were very far from each other and are close to	The man seems to be dressed in respectable	The man's parted lips symbolize someone	Hands widely open probably trying to be	Action, aggression, anger. Commanding,



## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

<b>Drawing</b>	<b>FP1</b>	<b>FP2</b>	<b>FP3</b>	<b>FP4</b>	<b>FP5</b>	<b>FP6</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Overall Impression</b>	
	have been cut and it's covering where the nose should have been drawn.	left hand.	with his right finger pointed.	battle- or action-ready.	the ears.	and neat attire.	who is giving a verbal command.	assertive and showing physical strength, confidence, and power.	openness in conflict.

*Note.* FP is the acronym for Focal Point. Focal Point varies for House, Tree, and Person

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Table 3

*Interpretation of Drawings for Case 2*

<b>Drawing</b>	<b>FP1</b>	<b>FP2</b>	<b>FP3</b>	<b>FP4</b>	<b>FP5</b>	<b>S 1</b>	<b>S 2</b>	<b>S 3</b>	<b>Overall Impression</b>	
House	There is no door to the house.	There are pathway/steps to the house.	There is a floating flower in the environment of the house.	There are decorations in the house.	The person seems to be engaged in physical exercise in the house.	Heart shaped symbol and "Love me" words in one of the three heart shape symbols. Two of the heart shapes are smaller and joined. Together.	There is a bulb in the house symbolizing electricity that is inadequately provided in Haiti. IT indicates hopefulness and light that over powers darkness.	National flag showing solidarity and affiliation.	<b>Adaptive</b> The house drawing is suggestive of resilience, optimism, and expression of love. The flag symbolizes connectedness and community solidarity.	<b>Maladaptive</b>
Tree	Mango tree is planted in a planter full of potting soil.	Tree has some fruits (8 ripe mangoes)	Tree has four branches; a part of a leaf is drawn separate from the branches. The four other branches are bare with no leaves.	Tree trunk looks solid but a little bent to the left of the paper.	Two of the four branches are thick with two lines to depict their thickness while the other two are thin with one line each to show they are thin.	Tree is placed at the center of the paper.	Tree being planted in a planter could symbolize lack or inadequate land for planting.	The tree in a planter symbolizes idealized tree. The fruits on the tree symbolizes thriving life.	The drawer seems to be making do with what he or she has to meet his or her needs, despite insufficient resources. Thus he or she has	

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

<b>Drawing</b>	<b>FP1</b>	<b>FP2</b>	<b>FP3</b>	<b>FP4</b>	<b>FP5</b>	<b>S 1</b>	<b>S 2</b>	<b>S 3</b>	<b>Overall Impression</b>
Person	A person with the inscription of "Maman" meaning mother.	The person is pregnant.	The baby is transparently shown in the person's stomach with a line division passing through the baby's genitals.	The person's legs seem too thin to support the large upper part.	The pupil of the left eye is darker than the right eye.	Earrings decorate the person's ears.	The person's eye pupil to the right side of the paper is darker than the left side.		a sense of agency and self-efficacy and resiliency.  With no clothing on but earring on "mother" and her baby look healthy,

*Note.* FP is the acronym for Focal Point. Focal Point varies for House, Tree, and Person. S stands for Symbol.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Table 4

*Interpretation of Drawings for Case 6*

<b>Drawing</b>	<b>FP1</b>	<b>FP2</b>	<b>FP3</b>	<b>FP4</b>	<b>FP5</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Overall Impression</b>	
House	A flower is growing on top of the roof of the house; this may also be the flag of Haiti without drawing its borders.	There is a potted flower in the surroundings of the house.	The house has a path that leads to it.	The house has no door but has a small window.	This house looks like a tent in that it has two noticeable pillars on both sides.	The wall of the house to the right side of the paper is decorated with colored/fancy stones.	<b>Adaptive</b> The house is empty, but as if relationships are desired there. Everything desirable about the house is outside of it (decoration and flower/plant)	<b>Maladaptive</b>
Tree	A floating tree without roots.	A tree with its top/crown cut off.	It has four branches with leaves. The upper two branches are fuller than the bottom two branches.	The shapes of all the four branches are all different from one another.	The tree is drawn at the bottom part of the paper.	The tree has six holes in its short trunk as if the holes covered all the length of the trunk.		The tree is traumatized. It appears that it is dead wood.
Person	The person's genitals are highlighted.	The person's nose is missing.	The left eye is mostly hidden under the person's hair.	The person has a big open mouth with teeth showing.	The person has no neck.	The person's hands look like a penis..	The size of the individual indicated some confidence.	This person seems to be traumatized, may be sexually abused, or may have experienced some other personal violation

*Note.* FP is the acronym for Focal Point. Focal Point varies for House, Tree, and Person.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Table 5

*Interpretation of Drawings for Case 10*

Drawing	FP1	FP2	FP3	F5	FP4	Symbol1	Symbol2	Overall Impression
House	House with a large door and windows.	House decorated with flowers.	House has a chimney in a tropical country.	Crosses shown on windows of the house	Half of the house has a flat roof.	Heart shaped love sign drawn on the environment of the house.	Flag as a community and national solidarity and pride symbol.	<p><b>Adaptive</b> An idealized house with a chimney in a tropical country. Internal and external desire for relationship, warmth, love, aliveness, and festivity, but there is no path to the house.</p> <p><b>Maladaptive</b> The house feels ungrounded.</p>
Tree	A tree with a fallen mango fruit.	Tree has right branch on 90° angles to trunk, like a club.	Upper part of tree shaded while the lower part is blank.	There is phallic structure of the tree and branch.	Tree has four leaves below close to the root (two on each side).	Small size	Ground not demarcated but root has soil.	<p>Insufficient resources; however, the tree is making do with what it has because the trunk looks solid and strong.</p> <p>The phallic shape may symbolize something sexual.</p>
Person	Two people. The person on the left is bigger than the person on the right.	Nipples, and big belly button of the person on the left are shown.	The head and face of the person on the left do not look human. The head is shaped like a hibiscus flower.	Various color used	The legs of both people are disproportionately longer than the body.	The hands are wide which may symbolize ability to manage struggles.	The presence of two people may symbolize object-relatedness.	<p>The person on the right appears happy and playful in the picture</p> <p>The person on the left may need help because of traumatic experiences.</p>

*Note.* FP is the acronym for Focal Point. Focal Point varies for House, Tree, and Person.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

### **Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis**

Furthermore, the application of Smith et al.'s (2009) method of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) informed the analysis of the focal point descriptions of the study's HTP drawings. IPA's iterative and inductive cycle of analyses was repeatedly used to analyze the drawings in order to produce a comprehensive analysis of the data with superordinate and subordinate themes. These themes were further organized into theme clusters.

I identified 19 themes, which were organized under 7 thematic clusters. See Table 6 for the master list of themes and case ID's that provided support for the clustered themes and individual themes. The superordinate themes were a function of the frequency of theme occurrence. Six or more cases are categorized as superordinate while five or less themes are subordinate themes. See Table 6 for the superordinate and subordinate themes and their frequencies and percentages.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Table 6

*Master List of Themes and Their Frequency and Percentages*

<b>Clustered Themes</b>	<b>Frequency and %</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Case IDs</b>
Vulnerability and Powerlessness	8 (62%)	Inadequate Housing and Poverty Voiceless-ness and Powerlessness Self-Dissatisfaction	4, 2, 10, 11, 4, 6, 11 5, 4
Resiliency	7 (54%)	Fragility & Instability Nakedness and Lack of Resources Fruitlessness and Destruction Thriving in the Face of Insufficiency Community Affiliation and Solidarity	4, 6 2, 3, 10, 11 1, 2, 10 2, 3, 7 1, 2, 3, 7, 8 10, 13
Well-Being	5 (38%)	Fruitfulness Good Relationship Contentment	1, 2, 10 2, 8 7, 2,
Aggression	5 (38%)	Violence Anger & Aggression	1, 9, 7, 10 6, 7
Sublimated Idealization and Fantasy	5 (38%)	Idealizing Prosperity & Hopefulness Imaginary House	3, 7, 10 5, 1
Self-Efficacy and Agency	4 (31%)	Action Creativity	3, 13 1, 2
Trauma	4 (31%)	Nonsexual Trauma Sexual Trauma	11, 6 6, 9

*Note.* Frequency of Clustered Themes and of each Theme. Numbers in parentheses

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

### **Cluster 1: Vulnerability and Powerlessness**

Vulnerability and powerlessness mean susceptibility to being wounded or hurt and inability to produce an effect; suggestive that one lacks power and is helpless. About 62% (8 out of 13) of the cases in this study presented indicators of vulnerability and powerlessness in their drawings. This cluster has six themes (a) Inadequate Housing and Poverty, (b) Voiceless-ness and Powerlessness, (c) Self-Dissatisfaction, (d) Fragility and Instability, (e) Nakedness and Lack of Resources, and (f) Fruitlessness and Destruction.

**Inadequate housing and poverty.** Inadequate Housing and Poverty were suggested in drawings with poor house structure or a lack of means. Case 4's drawing of a house was an uninhabitable and unreal house, which was drawn toward the right edge of the paper, but tilted toward the left of the paper as if about to fall off a cliff. The house had no foundation, door, or windows and resembled a tent or a shack, without a path leading up to it.

**Voiceless-ness and Powerlessness.** Voiceless-ness and Powerlessness were demonstrated in drawings through the lack of components suggestive of advocacy by others or survival. Case 4's drawing of a person with a missing mouth and legs were examples of voiceless-ness and powerlessness. The person seemed to feel voiceless, powerless, and without agency. Case 6 also indicated powerlessness through a missing nose and a covered left eye. Case 11 suggested poverty through a drawing of a naked boy playing soccer. The boy was in the company of a person with adult features; however, the adult was drawn smaller in size than the boy.

**Self-dissatisfaction.** Self-Dissatisfaction was suggested through person drawing, which depicted people unlike the artist, body anomalies, or exaggerations. Case 5's person drawing depicted a girl with a disproportionately large head relative to her body. Her mouth was far from



## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

her nose and placed on her chin. This girl had yellow (i.e., blonde) hair, as though she was of European descent. Cases 1 and 10 indicated small sizes of person drawings, and Case 9's drawing of a small window was indicative of negative evaluation of self, such as low self esteem.

**Fragility and instability.** Vulnerably delicate, frail, and lack of stability or firmness depict drawings under this theme. Case 9 exemplified the Fragility theme. The house for this case was unstable, and the coconut tree was fragile with one thin line representing the tree trunk. The coconut tree had no roots, soil, or planter, and, therefore, lacked major resources to thrive. Case 4 had a drawing of a house tilted to the left toward the edge of the paper as if delicate and about to fall from a cliff. Case 6 also had a drawing of a house that looked like a tent with only two pillars into the ground. The tent appeared fragile because it had no foundation or any solid wall.

**Nakedness and lack of resources.** The person drawings in Cases 2, 3, 10, and 11, showed naked people indicative of poverty, in which basic needs of clothing are not met. Case 2 had a drawing of a naked pregnant woman. Case 3's person seemed to be clothed, yet the child drew dots indicating breasts and a belly button. Case 10 and 11 both drew two people, for Case 10, one of them was naked, as evidenced by the depiction of nipples and a big belly button. These people seemed to lack basic resources, such as clothing, to protect them.

**Fruitlessness and destruction.** This theme is indicative of unproductivity and an act of demolition or annihilation. Cases 4, 8, and 9 showed fruitless trees, while Cases 5 and 12 demonstrated destruction. Case 4 had a drawing of a tree without roots or fruit and few leaves; yet the tree encompassed the entire paper. Case 8 had a drawing of two palm trees, one big and the other small. The roots of the trees were showing without soil covering them. Although the two trees had many palms, they had no fruit. Case 9 drew a stem-like coconut tree with no fruit.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Case 12 exemplified the destruction theme in the drawing of a withering tree. The tree's roots were exposed and it had many bare branches, with one branch having just four leaves. The tree, though big, is fruitless. The tree had no soil, indicating malnourishment. Another example of destruction was found in Case 5, in which the tree appeared more like cut, dead wood due to its lack of roots, crown, or fruit.

### **Cluster 2: Resiliency**

For the Haitian children it is the strength of collective courage, hopefulness, and thriving in the face of insufficiency. Two themes are clustered under resiliency: (a) Community Solidarity and Affiliation and (b) Thriving in the Face of Insufficiency.

**Community solidarity and affiliation.** Community solidarity is a union arising from common responsibilities and interest. Affiliation denotes association by common interests and purposes. For instance, the Haitian flag is a national symbol and connection to the outside world. Eight out of the thirteen participants (Cases 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 13) drew the flag of Haiti on the roof of the house drawing. The Haitian flag within these drawings suggested community solidarity and national affiliation. In Case 7, the participant depicted experiences and relationship features within and outside of the house. More specifically, Case 7's house with a door indicated accessibility, while a person looking outside through the window depicted a desire to interact with the external world. Furthermore, flowers planted in the house surroundings were indicative of love for nature.

**Thriving in the face of insufficiency.** Thriving in the Face of Insufficiency was demonstrated through prosperity despite inadequate resources. Case 3 showed that, despite the inadequate nourishment for the tree, it was still able to produce fruits. To explain further, despite sparse soil (an indicator of insufficiency), the tree was still able to produce fruit (an indicator of

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

thriving). The tree, in part bare, also had both ripe and unripe fruits. The pregnant woman and the fetus in the person drawing for Case 2 seemed to be thriving in spite of lacking means.

Although the pregnant woman was naked, she had on earrings; her body shape was realistic, indicating strength and health; and her large belly featured with a well-formed baby suggested that her pregnancy was thriving too. The boy playing soccer in Case 7 appeared happy as he played soccer barefooted and half-naked, as evidenced by a smile on his face.

### **Cluster 3: Well-Being**

Well-being is when a person is in a good and satisfactory condition of existence, in which the person is flourishing. Well-being as a construct has five elements consisting of positive emotion, engagement, meaning, positive relationships, and accomplishment (Seligman, 2011). The cluster of Well-Being included three themes: (a) Fruitfulness, (b) Good Relationships, (c) Contentment.

**Fruitfulness.** Fruitfulness was demonstrated through trees producing fruits, indicative of availability of environmental and community resources and thriving life. Case 1's main branch had 20 green and yellow (i.e., unripe and ripe) fruits. This tree also had a branch that looked like another tree protruding at a 90° angle. This branch also had two ripe fruits on it. The tree was well nourished and fruitful indicating thriving and blossoming. Case 2 drew a mango tree, which was planted in a planter and had eight ripe fruits. In Case 8 the fruits on the tree drawn were looking healthy, symbolizing adequate community resources.

**Good relationships.** Good Relationships indicate positive connection, association, or involvement among individuals depicted by symbols of love and positive community interactions. As part of the house drawing, Case 2 drew three conjoined heart shaped symbols. The largest heart contained the words, "Love me." This house drawing indicated life satisfaction,

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

healthy living, good relationships, as well as community solidarity and affiliation as shown by the flag of Haiti drawn on the roof of the house. Case 8 also exemplified the Good Relationship theme through the depiction of decorations and flowers in the house. Case 8 also showed two individuals holding hands while walking. It seemed they are in unity.

**Contentment.** Contentment is the state of satisfaction or ease of mind. The house drawing for Case 7 showed indicators of a Contentment theme. The house surroundings had flowering plants. The house had electricity and the flag of Haiti. The tree for Case 7 also included two people, with one on each side of the tree. The people seemed content with what they have. The person drawing for Case 7, a smiling boy playing soccer, appeared joyful and happy. Case 2 had a drawing of a naked pregnant woman wearing a noticeable earring and looking content. Case 2 also had a drawing of a house in which a man was engaged in exercising as if wanting to maintain good health and overall well-being.

### **Cluster 4: Aggression**

Aggression is the overt or suppressed hostility either innate or resulting from continued frustration and directed outward or against oneself. It is characterized by its form, which includes physical, social, or relational aggression or by the motivations behind the aggressive act. The two categorizations of aggression, proactive and reactive aggression, increases the risk of delinquent behavior. Reactive aggression increases the risk for social anxiety and depression (Tucker et al., 2015). This cluster included two themes: (a) Violence and (b) Anger and Aggressiveness.

**Violence.** It is the infliction of swift and intense or injurious physical force, action, or treatment, such as the use of weapons, and causing blood shed. The drawing of the person from Case 1 revealed a man whose scalp seemed to have been cut and was hanging down over his face where the nose should have been not clear. The man in the drawing was holding a machete in his

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

left hand, depicting violence, and seemed to be giving directions with his right finger pointed.

The man's parted lips symbolized someone giving a verbal command. The drawing also showed that the man was commanding with open hands, as if in conflict. Case 9 drew a person whose left hand looked like a lobster's claws (or male sex organ). Case 7 indicated a person whose neck was painted red as if blood was coming out of the neck. The person also has a red mark on the cheek. Case 10 showed a person whose legs and hands seemed to be detached from the body.

**Anger and aggressiveness.** Anger is a strong feeling of displeasure and hostility aroused by a wrong, while aggression is an overt or suppressed hostility either innate or resulting from continued frustration and directed outward or against oneself (Tucker et al., 2015). In Case 6, the person was depicted as angry and aggressive. The person had a big open mouth with his or her teeth showing. In addition, Case 7 had a drawing of a tall thin tree with spike-like coconut fruits on each of its five branches. It seemed as if the fruits could hurt someone if they were to be held. In both Cases 4 and 6, intense coloring was used in the house drawings, which indicates intense affect (Crawford et al., 2012; Furth, 2002; Oster & Crone, 2004) Case 6 in particular showed both chromatic and achromatic coloring, in which intense coloring was used for the roof and light coloring and broken lines for the main frame or body of the house. This may indicate negative self-evaluation. Cases 12 had anthropomorphic designs, in which human characteristics were attributed to the house, such as the door was in the shape of open mouth, indicative of anger and scary feelings.

### **Cluster 5: Sublimated Idealization and Fantasy**

Idealization is the representation of something as ideal that may not be real, while fantasy is an imagined or conjured up sequence fulfilling a psychological need. Fantasy is a way of enhancing the sense of self in relation to the other. Idealizing and fantasizing are a form of

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

meaning-making and ability to play while experiencing the self of the play as the self that one is currently (Oppenheim, 2012). The Sublimated Idealization and Fantasy cluster included two themes: (a) Idealizing Prosperity and Hopefulness and (b) Imaginary House.

**Idealizing prosperity and hopefulness.** It means exalting perfection or excellence of prosperity, such as images that did not match one's reality. Hopefulness indicates a show of promise or aspiration for success. Case 3 exemplified the theme of Idealizing Prosperity. The house drawing for Case 3 had a large car in front of the house. The car was parked where there was no road or designated path. There were also flowers and a rootless plant in the area surrounding the house. The participants of the study were from temporary re-location camps made of tents, where they were settled after the 2010 earthquake. At the time of data collection in 2012, none of the participants came from adequate living situations. Despite this, there were signs of optimism and idealization in the house drawings. For example, the house in Case 7 had electricity as indicated by the drawing of a light bulb hanging from the ceiling, whereas in reality electricity is infrequent or available for limited periods of time each day in Haiti. A light bulb is an indication of light over-shadowing darkness, depicting hopefulness. In addition, Case 10 had a drawing of a house with a chimney, an unnecessary element in a tropical country. The house is beautiful and well-decorated with flowers.

Case 3 depicted a strong case of hopefulness for the country of Haiti, as the sun was drawn shining directly on the flag. Given that the sun helps to sustain life and growth, this depiction may represent hope for Haiti. Also a car was drawn in front of the house, although there was no path leading to the house.

**Imaginary house.** It is a house only existing in imagination or fancy, but not real. Case 5 is an example of an imagined house, in which two houses were drawn with no doors or windows.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

There were floating flowers as part of the house. The houses, plants, and flowers gave an impression of an imagined, but unreal, neighborhood because plants can grow naturally only with roots in the soil. Case 1 had a drawing of a big, beautiful house in which the flowers and plants were floating. It was an idealized house or a dream house from a participant who at the time of drawing was living in a temporary tent at a camp.

### **Cluster 6: Self-Efficacy and Agency**

Self-efficacy is a person's belief about his or her ability and capacity to accomplish a task or deal with the challenges of life in his or her environment. Self efficacy and agency involve using cognitive, social, and behavioral skills in organizing related actions to serve different and numerous purposes (Bandura, 1982; Garmezy, 1991). The cluster of Self-Efficacy and Agency included two themes: (a) Action and (b) Creativity.

**Action.** The Action theme was shown through drawings, which depicted movement of some sort. Case 3, for example, had a person with a hand poised for action. The people drawn in both Cases 3 and 13 demonstrated agency, as depicted by the action of walking to a particular place or by open hands. In Case 8, the large size of the two persons demonstrated high self esteem, optimism, and hopefulness.

**Creativity.** It is the ability to transcend traditional ideas, rules, and patterns and to create meaningful new ideas. It demonstrates originality, progressiveness, and imagination. In Case 1, the house drawing included a refrigerator drawn on the outside of the house. This depicted a form of originality, as the refrigerator was perhaps turned into a storage device and placed outside of the house rather than used for its intended purpose of refrigerating and preserving food items inside the home. It seems that the inadequacy of electricity in Haiti or experience with a broken down refrigerator may have inspired this creative type of recycling a large appliance. The

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

roof of the house in Case 1 showed one third of the roof covered with corrugated sheet and two thirds of the roof covered with what appears to be a slab or some form of flat surface. The child participant improvised to make sure that the entire roof was covered. Case 2 had a drawing of a fruitful tree that was planted inside a planter, which was indicative of creativity and resourcefulness in a situation of insufficiency. Case 9 has a large roof for the house drawn, which is also indicative of creativity.

### **Cluster 7: Trauma**

Trauma is defined as an experience that produces psychological injury or pain. It is an unusual event that is extraordinary, stressful, or disturbing and is experienced as frightening, upsetting, or distressing by almost everyone (Fullilove et al., 1993). The Trauma cluster involved two themes: (a) Nonsexual Trauma and (b) Sexual Trauma.

**Nonsexual trauma.** It means nonsexual maltreatment, such as physical, emotional, and psychological neglect and traumatic losses, which are portrayed by a drawing of holes in the trunk of trees (Bluestein, 1978; Brown, 2012). Case 11 is an example of the Nonsexual Trauma theme with the drawing of a large tree with a hole in its trunk. As big as this tree was, it had no roots and was not planted in soil. Case 6 had indicators of a traumatized tree; the tree was dead wood appearing to float in the air, with the top cut off and with no roots. The tree had many holes (six total) covering the entire length of its short trunk.

**Sexual trauma.** It refers to rape, sexual assault, repeated threatening acts of sexual harassment, non familial childhood sexual abuse, and incest including the psychological aspects of the experience that make coping difficult. Sexual contact is traumatic when the person involved feels a sense of fear, helplessness, injury, or threat of injury (Roth & Lebowitz, 1988). The person drawn in Case 6 seemed to be traumatized. The exposure of the child's genitals and



## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

the drawing of hands that look like the male sex organ suggest sexual trauma. Case 9 has a drawing of a person with highlighted nipples, belly button, and genitalia, which are also indicative of sexual trauma. Case 10 Tree drawing has phallic structures. Case 11 Person drawing also has phallic structured nose, which may be indicative of child sexual trauma.

### **Similarities and Differences Between Haitian, Israeli, and Chinese Studies**

There were global similarities and culture-specific differences in the comparative analysis of the findings from the Haitian children's drawings and those of the Israeli and Chinese children (See Table 7). Vulnerability and powerlessness were portrayed in the Haitian and Chinese participants' drawings as evidenced by pictures with missing noses, mouths, and legs. Both Haitian and Israeli participants' drawings showed fragility in their drawings of trees and houses. There were some Haitian child participants' house drawings with unstable and tilted houses and trees with holes in them. Israeli participants' house drawings with black birds and clouds descending on the house or damaged palm tree indicated vulnerability of individuals as well as of a nation because the palm tree symbolizes the community symbol of the Gush Katif people of Israel.

The sublimated idealization and fantasy clustered themes in the Haitian participants' drawing are similar to those of the Israeli participants. Haitian participants living in temporary tents drew big beautiful houses. One of the participants drew a car in front of a big mansion. In addition, some of the house drawings had light bulbs in them in a nation with scarce access to electricity. These were the ways in which the Haitian participants were fantasizing a better living condition. Similarly, Israeli participants, who were living in temporary caravan sites, also drew their former houses in Gush Katif instead of their temporary residence when asked to draw a house. The Israeli participants drew their former houses as a way of constructively coping with

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

what was lost due to forced relocation. Moreover, the Israeli participants drew playgrounds with children playing and houses full of people.

The Haitian national flag is a symbol of national and community affiliation and solidarity like those of the Israeli study (Nuttman-Shwartz et al., 2010). However, the Haitian flag depicted more of the reminiscence of the courage and bravery of Haiti's founding fathers, therefore, providing assurance of overcoming obstacles and surviving hard times. On the other hand, the Israeli flags were drawn together with the Gush Katif community, indicating both national and community allegiance. Here, the Israeli flag and the Star of David symbolized national, communal, and ideological affiliation and solidarity. The Israeli participants relied on their ideology and faith for coping in hard times (Nuttman-Shwartz et al., 2010). The Haitian flag seemed to symbolize the power of history, while the Israeli flag symbolized the power of faith.

Self-efficacy and agency are shown differently in both Haitian and Israeli participants' drawings. In the Haitian participants' drawings action and creativity are depicted. There were drawings of people walking and poised for action. Also creativity is shown in a Haitian participant's drawing of a refrigerator outside of the house. The Israeli participants showed agency in their drawings with indicators of scholastic achievement.

In addition, unlike the Haitian participants experience, Israeli participants depicted well-being differently. While the Haitian participants showed indicators of fruitfulness and contentment, the Israeli participants showed indicators of openness to assistance and connectedness. Similar to Haitian participants experience, Chinese participants showed indicators of interpersonal adaptation and social desirability.

The Haitian participants' drawing differed from both Israeli and Chinese participants' drawings by indicating poverty through drawings of naked persons. Poverty was not a theme in

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

the Israeli children participants' drawings. However, the Israeli participants portrayed fear, anxiety, and abandonment by drawing black birds descending on a house to destroy it and by drawing enclosed clouds. Authors of the Chinese study described participants' excessive dependency ways of coping as indicative of anxiety (Wang et al., 2010). However, Haitians may see dependency as a positive coping mechanism for survival. For instance, Haitian children learn interdependence with others as a foundation for resilience and not as a sign of weakness (Prudent, 2013). In addition, there are some Haitian proverbs (see Table 1) that highlight dependency as a survival strategy. Finally, the *Lakou* living arrangement in a clustered household demonstrates dependency, in which children are taken to relatives; these children are economically viable to be part of their household because they will be child laborers. This is a form of survival strategy for ensuring that the basic needs of the children (i.e., food, shelter, and clothing) are met. The Chinese participants drew curtains with the houses, which was also seen as an indicator of anxiety. For the Haitians, curtains on windows and doors were ways of ensuring privacy in the living space shared by members of large family units, or they could be fantasized decorations.

Haitian, Israeli, and Chinese participants portrayed anger and aggression in their drawings. However, the Chinese participants portrayed aggression through drawings of collapsed piles of walls with blood stains and trunks of trees with blood stains, which were different from Haitian drawings of weapons and fruits with spikes as indicative of anger and aggression. The Chinese participants conveyed violence by revealing teeth with open mouth, similar to Haitian participants' drawing.

There were differences in how resiliency was depicted in the three studies. Haitian participants showed resiliency in their drawings with the symbol of the sun shining on the flag of

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Haiti—a hopeful symbol for the future. They also drew thriving trees that were fruitful despite insufficient resources of soil and roots. In addition, one Haitian participant drew a child playing soccer; the child was half naked and was without shoes yet played happily, which could convey resiliency.

The Israeli participants' drawing showed shared coping and optimism through drawing houses full of people and the playground with children playing in them (Nuttman-Shwartz et al., 2010). For Chinese participants' drawings that had emotional and personal adaptation indicators, such as positive moods, conveyed resiliency themes.

Holes drawn in trees by both the Haitian and Chinese participants indicated trauma. Haitian participants portrayed sexual trauma, such as sexual assaults and harassments, by highlighting the genital area of their person drawings. On the other hand, the Chinese portrayed sexual trauma by drawing sharp tips of branches. The Israeli participants portrayed national trauma rather than individual trauma by drawing damaged palm trees because the palm tree is a national symbol.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Table 7

*Comparison of Haitian, Israeli, and Chinese Children Studies*

<b>Haitian Superordinate and Subordinate Themes</b>	<b>Global Similarities</b> Haiti vs. Israeli and Chinese children's drawings	<b>Cultural Differences</b> Haiti vs. Israeli vs. Chinese children's drawings
<b>Themes</b>		
<b>Vulnerability and Powerlessness</b>		
Inadequate Housing and Poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fragile trees and houses in Haitian and Israeli participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haitian participants drew naked person indicating poverty</li> </ul>
Voiceless-ness and Powerlessness		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Israeli participants drew black birds descending to destroy a house, indicating insecurity. They also drew enclosed clouds revealing depression</li> </ul>
Self-Dissatisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persons with missing nose, mouth, and legs in Haitian and Chinese participants Drawings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chinese participants drew curtains as part of the house drawing. This was interpreted as demonstrating anxiety. For Haitians curtains is a sign for privacy in a large household typical of Haitian family units</li> </ul>
Fragility & Instability		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chinese participants drew indicators of excessive dependency as a form of vulnerability. In Haiti dependency is seen as a positive means of survival</li> </ul>
Nakedness and Lack of Resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chinese Participants' drawings showed interpersonal difficulties.</li> </ul>
Fruitlessness and Destruction		
<b>Resiliency</b>		
Thriving in the Face of Insufficiency		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haitian participant drew sun shining over the flag of Haiti showing hopefulness. Some Haitian participants drew fruitful trees despite inadequate resources for the trees as an indicator of optimism. A person drawing of a boy playing soccer with barefoot and half naked yet happy</li> </ul>
Community Affiliation and Solidarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flags as symbols of community and national affiliation and solidarity for Haitian and Israeli participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Israeli children drew houses full of people and children playing as indicators of shared coping and optimism for the future</li> <li>• Chinese participants drawings showed indicators of emotional and</li> </ul>

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

		interpersonal adaptation Israeli participants' drawing of flag is also for ideological affiliation and solidarity
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For Haitian participants the flag is a reminiscence of the courage and bravery of their founding fathers</li> </ul>
<b>Well-Being</b>		
Fruitfulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both Haitian and Chinese participants' drawings have indicators of good relationship and interpersonal adaptation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haitian participants drew fruitful trees, and indicators of contentment</li> <li>• Israeli participants showed indicators of openness to assistance</li> </ul>
Good Relationship		
Contentment		
<b>Aggression</b>		
Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anger, violence, open mouth showing teeth in Haitian and Chinese participants' drawings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chinese participants drew piles of fallen walls stained with blood. Chinese participants also drew blood stained trunks of trees.</li> </ul>
Anger and Aggression		
<b>Sublimated idealization and Fantasy</b>		
Idealizing Property and Hopefulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although Haitian and Israeli participants were living in temporary tent, participants drew houses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haitian participants drew light bulbs although electricity is rare in Haiti. One participant drew a car in front of a big house to idealize a life of comfort</li> <li>• Israeli participants drew their former houses with playground and children playing before the forced relocation. A way of fantasizing the former good living conditions they left behind in Gush Katif</li> <li>• Chinese participants used regressive defensive mechanisms</li> </ul>
Imaginary House		
<b>Self-Efficacy and Agency</b>		
Action		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action shown in Haitian participants' drawing of persons walking, gesturing, acting. Creativity is shown in Haitian drawing of a refrigerator outside of the house as a storage</li> </ul>
Creativity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency is demonstrated in Israeli participants drawings of scholastic indicators</li> </ul>

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

<b>Trauma</b>		
Non Sexual Trauma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nonsexual trauma Indicated with holes in trees and broken trees in Haitian and Chinese Participants drawings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chinese participants used drawings of sharp tips of tree branches to indicate sexual trauma, such as sexual assault</li> </ul>
Sexual Trauma		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haitian children highlighted genital area as an indicator of sexual trauma</li> </ul>

*Note.* Comparison of Haitian Children Superordinate and Subordinate Themes with Israeli (Nuttman-Shwartz et al., 2010), and Chinese (Wang et al., 2010) studies

### **Summary**

The data analysis produced a total of 19 themes, which were organized into four superordinate and three subordinate thematic clusters. The 7 thematic clusters identified were (a) Vulnerability and Powerlessness, (b) Resiliency, (c) Well-Being, (d) Anger and Aggression, (e) Self- Efficacy, (f) Sublimated Idealization and Fantasy, and (g) Trauma. The Haitian study findings were compared with those of the Israeli and Chinese studies for similarities and differences.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

### **Chapter 4: Discussion**

The primary purpose of the study was to investigate the global common factors (GCFs) as well as culturally specific factors in the House-Tree-Person (HTP) drawings of children experiencing continuous trauma and the relevance of these factors in providing treatment for Haitian children and children in similar situations. The study compared themes from Haitian children's HTP drawings with the Israeli study by Nuttman-Shwartz et al. (2010) and the Chinese study by Wang et al. (2010) from which I generated global common factors as well as culture-specific differences.

The secondary purpose of this study was to verify the cross cultural validity of the HTP instrument for Haitian children, ages 7 to 9. In other words, if the HTP instrument could adapt to cultural modifications in Haitian children's drawings, which are different from the established criteria in children's drawing (Buck, 1973; Groth-Marnat, 1997; Oster & Crone, 2004). In addition, the study inquired into the capacity of the HTP instrument in revealing adaptive and maladaptive coping skills of children in international settings who are experiencing continuous trauma.

In conceptualizing the study, I recognized the role of history in understanding the lived experiences; and meaning-making beliefs of Haitian child participants. These participants have experienced a natural disaster, such as an earthquake; and human-made disasters, such as poverty and slow re-building of housing and community. This study could increase understanding about children globally who are in similar situations. The following research questions guided the study:

Question 1. What are the themes that emerge from HTP drawings that portray the psychological states of Haitian children?



## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

- Question 2. What are the themes that emerge from the HTP drawings that reveal the adaptive and maladaptive coping of Haitian children?
- Question 3. Are the themes from Haitian children's HTP drawings comparable cross-culturally with those of HTP drawings from samples of children who have lived in crisis conditions in Israel and China?
- Question 4. What global common factors (GCFs) in Haitian child participants drawings as compared to Israeli and Chinese studies can be drawn from the cross-cultural studies?
- Question 5. What are the themes that are unique to children living in Haitian contexts that make them different from the Israeli and Chinese children?

The present author used Jungian interpretation principles (Furth, 2002) and Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; Smith et al., 2009), a qualitative method, to interpret (Furth, 2002) and then analyze (Smith et al., 2009) the Haitian children's drawings and to answer the above research questions. The present author used these methods to analyze 39 drawings from 13 Haitian child participants. The drawings were obtained from archival data of the Antioch Multicultural Center for Research and Practice. The Center's Director, Dr. Gargi Roysircar, released the drawings, which she has included in her study, using a quantitative scoring system (Roysircar & Colvin, 2015). Major findings in the Haitian children study are corroborated by existing literature (Buck, 1948; Bluestein, 1978; Groth-Marnat, 1997; Groth-Marnat & Roberts 1998; Machover, 1949; Oster & Crone, 2004; Yates et al., 1985). The implications of the results and future directions in research are discussed in this chapter.

IPA methodology (Smith et al., 2009) has features that were valuable to the researcher in the course of the analysis. First, the IPA iterative and inductive cycle was useful in the

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

identification of emergent patterns and themes. Second, the abstraction technique of IPA was useful in identifying patterns between emergent themes and in developing both superordinate and subordinate themes. Third, the bracketing technique was helpful in maintaining an open mind after analyzing the first case for the possibility that new themes could emerge in subsequent cases. Fourth, the *hermeneutic circle*, in which there is movement from the parts to the whole and with the possibility of a new whole emerging at the end of the analysis, ensured maintenance of flexibility in identifying themes and mapping the interrelatedness of themes (Smith et al., 2009). Fifth, IPA cross-case analysis was valuable for comparing the superordinate clusters and subordinate themes in the Haitian children's drawings with themes from the Israeli (Nuttman-Shwartz et al., 2010) and Chinese (Wang et al., 2010) studies. IPA emphasizes both convergent and divergent commonalities, while still maintaining individual nuances. The commonalities and individual nuances were useful in understanding the similarities and differences in the three studies. Sixth, I utilized polarization, which is an IPA technique for identifying different relationships between emergent themes by focusing on differences instead of similarities. The IPA principle of polarization was also useful in generating the global common factors, especially in comparing the themes from the Haitian children's drawing with the Israeli and Chinese children's drawings. Finally, the IPA principle of a *double hermeneutic* is applied to the present research and was instrumental in how I interpreted what the participants were thinking at the time they made the drawing (cf. Smith et al., 2009). These interpretations were nonetheless informed by the literature review of the history of Haiti as well as knowledge I gained when I attended a conference on Haitian mental health in May of 2013 (The Haitian Mental Health Network, 2013). The knowledge I gained from the literature reviews and during the May 2013 and 2015 Haitian Mental Health conferences provided me with an understanding of key cultural

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

concepts, such as relationships, meaning-making, values, and principles of lived experience. This understanding contributed to ensuring that I abided by the principles of lived experience and meaning-making, which are central to IPA and well represented in the present study.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Table 8

*Key Findings*

<b>Novel Findings</b>	<b>Findings Corroborated by Prior Research</b>
Participants drew naked person using dots to highlight the breasts and belly button.	Haitian participants used chromatic and achromatic coloring to indicate emotions. ● (Crawford, Gross, Patterson, & Hayne, 2012)
Participants drew fruitful trees with planters could mean thriving in spite of insufficiency.	Haitian participants drew houses that were unstable and inhabitable. They also drew fragile trees with thin trunks. ● (Nuttman-Shwartz et al., 2010)
Curtains on doors and windows were used for concealing privacy in Haitian household, but interpreted as an indicating anxiety in Chinese culture.	Participants in the Haitian, Israeli, and Chinese studies drew trees with either holes, scars, or damaged branches indicating trauma. ● (Bluestein, 1978)
Haitian children drawing of a light bulb in a country with inconsistent electricity symbolizes, hopefulness: light overshadowing darkness.	Haitian participants highlighted genitalia areas, or drew phallic structures as hands, nose, or branches in trees, indicating sexual trauma. ● (Oster & Crone, 2004)
Dependency seen in Haitian culture as means of surviving and thriving (i.e. <i>Lakou</i> children sent to other relatives clustered household by parents that are unable to care for them).	There were indicators of idealization and fantasy in Haitian children's drawing such as drawing a big house with a car in front of it for children who at the time were living in tents at a temporary camp. ● (Nuttman-Shwartz et al., 2010; Oppenheim, 2012)
Sunshine drawn directed to the flag of Haiti as a symbol of hope for a better future.	There were indicators of well being, self-efficacy and agency in Haitian participants drawings, such as two people walking and portrayed as having positive connections. There were also drawings of fruitful trees and community interactions. ● (Bandura, 1982; Eyal & Lindgren, 1977; Seligman, 2011)
Creativity demonstrated in Haitian	Haitian participants drew small size houses

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

participants drawings including refrigerator drawn outside for storage and drawings of improvised roofs.

and persons indicating low self-esteem or intimidation.

● (Wang et al., 2010)

Haitian participants drawings had indicators of aggression, such as an opened mouth with teeth showing, a person holding a weapon, and a person with an opened scalp.

● (Groth-Marnat & Roberts, 1998; Koppitz, 1984; Wang et al, 2010)

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*Note:* The Table is a summary of key findings, including novel findings and findings corroborated by prior research.

### **Cluster 1: Vulnerability and Powerlessness**

The themes that comprise this cluster have to do with indicators of vulnerability and powerlessness in Haitian participants' drawing. Due to active and severe hurricanes and mudslides, protracted political instability, criminal violence, and many years of continuous trauma, Haiti has come to be known as the poorest country in the Western hemisphere. Consequentially, the poverty and lack of adequate living spaces experienced by Haitian child participants were prevalent themes in their drawings (Blackburn, 2006; Hoffman, 2011). Poverty as portrayed in the drawing of a naked person was not found in the literature that this researcher reviewed. The inadequate housing was portrayed in Case 4 drawing of a groundless house and a rootless tree, which may indicate lack of resources to support the child who drew the house and the tree. The dwellers of the house may also be closed off as implied by the absence of a pathway to the house.

Voicelessness and powerlessness were frequently indicated in Haitian participants' drawings. Cases 4 and 6 drew a person without a mouth or nose. It is essentially impossible for a person to exist without a mouth. Moreover, survival would be difficult without one's sense of smell or ability to breathe steadily. According to Oster and Crone (2004), omitted body parts are

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

indicative of lack of symbolic function of the body part. For example, the omission of the feet may portray a lack of independence because feet symbolize mobility.

An indicator of powerlessness was depicted in the drawing of an adult of a smaller size than the child drawn beside the adult. The relative smaller size of the adult may suggest that the adult was not effectively able to care for the boy. This also may indicate the powerlessness of the adult to fulfill the role of a parent. Similarly, Wang et al. (2010) and Oster and Crone (2004) found that the small self-portrait could indicate low self-esteem or intimidation.

### **Cluster 2: Resilience**

There were indicators of resiliency in the Haitian participants drawing. Case 2 has a drawing of a naked pregnant woman wearing a pair of earrings. The drawing shows that the woman was healthy and so was her baby. Other examples of thriving in the face of insufficiency are the drawings of a boy playing soccer half-naked with no shoes on and a fruitful tree that was growing out of a planter.

Community resiliency is different from individual resiliency and the importance of restoring community life as soon as possible post-disaster aligned with the findings of the study, with some drawing showing symbols of community affiliation and solidarity (Bonanno, Galea, Bucciarell, & Vlahov, 2007; Bowman & Roysircar, 2011; Lightsey, 2006). Sixty-two percent of Haitian participants (8 out of 13) drew the flag of Haiti as a symbol of national and community affiliation, solidarity, and courage.

The three cultures represented in the Haitian, Israeli, and Chinese studies depicted resiliency differently because of the differences in their lived experiences and continuous trauma. While poverty is woven into the experiences of both human-made and natural disasters of Haitians, the depiction of poverty does not seem to be the case in the Israeli and Chinese studies.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Essentially, the flag connotes slight differences in both Haitian and Israeli studies. Community support has been destabilized by poverty in Haiti, resulting in compromising a traditional family structure. Fathers are mostly absent from homes either because of inability to provide for their families or because they were separated in order to find greater economic opportunities to provide for their family (Roysircar, 2013). In other words, the Haitian Flag symbolized the courage of Haitian people's founding fathers, while for the Israeli participants, national, communal, and ideological solidarity was representative of the current era. At current times, Israelis have to overcome struggles together and support each other in the face of terrorism and war. These are political, religious, and governmental processes. Therefore, there is cohesion within the Israeli community, which differs from the Haitian societal structures because both foreign-owned and local non-government organizations (NGOs) serve the community instead of the government of Haiti. Hoffman (2011) reported that between 3,000 and 10,000 NGOs helped the Haitian people because the government had failed in its responsibilities to its citizens.

### **Cluster 3: Well-Being**

Well-being was demonstrated in the drawings of Haitian children in 38% of the cases, in which they drew fruitful trees, including trees that were planted in a planter indicating productivity, good relationships, and positive connection. Living in Haiti has many challenges that make well-being difficult to attain because most Haitian are preoccupied with struggling to make ends meet. For instance, the water and sanitation systems in Haiti are one of the most dire in the Western hemisphere (Creative Commons website). Access to an improved sanitation facility is at 24 % in the urban areas and 10 % in the rural areas of Haiti. Well-being becomes

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

rare in Haiti, where an estimated 80 % of the people live below the poverty line (Creative Commons website). What seems to be prioritized is how to survive from day to day.

In a situation of continuous trauma, such as it exists in Haiti and Israel, preoccupation with safety and other basic life sustaining efforts might compromise the attainment of well-being. Balancing life in order to promote positive emotions, engagement, meaning, positive relationships, and accomplishment might be harder to practice.

### **Cluster 4: Aggression**

The Aggression theme cluster includes themes of violence, aggressiveness, and anger in 38 percent of the cases. Haiti experienced several years of natural or human-made disasters, and disease outbreak, such as hurricanes, mudslides, the earthquake; wars, political instability, neglect of infrastructure, and cholera outbreaks, respectively. Children living under conditions of poverty, such as living on the street, might have to learn to survive by demonstrating aggression in efforts to protect themselves from potential dangers. While aggression may be seen as maladaptive, it may be what is necessary for the children to ensure their security, protection, and existence. Scarce access to both mental and physical health suggests that children demonstrating aggression may need health care (Désir, 2015; Farmer, 2004). Aggressive behavior of Haitian children or children in similar conditions of violence all over the world may find themselves in situations in which the children and youth are hurt or end up in the juvenile judiciary system.

### **Cluster 5: Sublimated Idealization and Fantasy**

Themes of sublimated idealization and fantasy were prevalent in the Haitian children's drawing. Although all of the Haitian participants were living in tents at a temporary camp location, most of them drew real houses. An example of a fantasy house was the one drawn in Case 3. The house is big like a mansion and a car is parked in front of it; however there is no



## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

road or path leading to the house. In the same drawing, rays of sun are shining over the flag of Haiti. There are floating flowers and plants in the environment surrounding the house. The child who had drawn this picture seemed to be hopeful for a better future for himself or herself and for Haiti as a nation (Oppenheim, 2012). Ennew et al. (2002) found in their study that Bosnian and Herzegovinian children living in institutions drew idealized wish houses of their former houses before the 1991–1995 war; these were dream houses rather than the institutions where they actually lived in post-war.

As a symbol of hopefulness, there were also drawings of light bulbs in the house drawings. Electricity supply in Haiti is not reliable, there are frequent blackouts due to many years of infrastructure neglect and low power supplies, which have caused limited basic amenities (Farmer, 2004, 2011).

In comparison, the focus of idealizing for Israeli participants was not about basic needs for living, such as electricity and transportation as was the case in the Haitian drawings, rather, the drawings reminded them of the standard of living that the children had lost. These standards included family togetherness, children playing in playgrounds, and a house full of family members. The Israeli participants used idealization as a means to distance themselves from their losses because of the relocation. Conversely, the Haitian participants drew from their inspiration of what good living should be.

Chinese child participants indicated regressive defensive mechanisms in the form of negative emotions, such as anger, aggression, and anxiety in their drawings in order to distance themselves from the earthquake disaster that destroyed their city and property, as well as killed loved ones (Wang et al., 2010).

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

### **Cluster 6: Self-Efficacy and Agency**

In cases 3, 8, and 13 of Haitian participants' drawings of a person indicated hands that were poised for action, agency through people walking, or individuals with open hands. Burns (1987) found that drawings with actions reflect clients' underlying well-being more profoundly than static drawings. The action-oriented drawings, according to Burns, help researchers or therapists generate hypotheses that are associated with feelings that surround the entire drawing.

Creativity as a theme was prevalent in the drawings of the Haitian participants. In Case 1 while one third of the roof of the house were corrugated sheets, the remaining two third was a structure that looked like a flat surface. Also, in Case 1 the artist drew a refrigerator outside the house, changing its usage from the preservation of food items to storage. This was either because the refrigerator was broken, or possibly inconsistent electric supply made the refrigerator useless. Creativity in the Haitian participants' drawing seemed to be motivated by insufficiency of resources and by the demand for improvisation in order to meet needs.

### **Cluster 7: Trauma**

There were both nonsexual and sexual trauma themes in the Haitian participants drawings. Case 11 is a drawing of a large tree with a hole in its trunk. Additionally, Case 6 resembles a dead piece of wood with the top cut off and holes covering the entire length of its short trunk. Bluestein (1978) observed that his clients were projecting the defects they feel about themselves into their drawing of damaged trees whose branches were broken, and with holes or scars on their trunks.

Sexual trauma was depicted in Haitian children's drawings. Case 6 is a drawing of a person with highlighted genitals and hands that resemble the male sex organ, which is suggestive of sexual trauma. Furthermore, in Case 9 dots are used to highlight the nipples, belly

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

button, and genitalia. Emphasis below the waist is suggestive of sexual preoccupation (Malchiodi, 1997). Oster and Crone (2004) found that images of genitalia or female figures with phallic shapes on their dresses, positioned between the legs are indicative of sexual abuse. Lastly, Case 10 is a phallic structured tree, while Case 11's person drawing has a phallic structured nose. Oster and Crone (2004) also confirmed drawings of phallic shapes in trees as indicative of sexual trauma.

In comparing Haitian participants' drawings with those of the Israeli and Chinese studies, Chinese participants also drew indicators of sexual and non-sexual characteristics. While the sexual trauma indicators of Haitian participants were drawings of highlighted genitalia and phallic structures, according to Wang et al. (2010) the Chinese participants drew sharp pointed trees as indicators of sexual trauma.

Surprisingly, there were no trauma indicators in the Israeli participants' drawings, as reported by the authors of the study (Nuttman-Shwartz et al., 2010). The authors expressed that this may be due to the time lag of two years between the study and the forced relocation. Thus the Israeli children might have been experiencing a different type of trauma from that experienced by Haitian children. The Israeli children's trauma while continuous originated from acts of terrorism and wars. On the other hand, historically and presently, the continuous trauma of Haitian children is the result of a combination of human-made and natural disasters.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study used archival data that was collected in Haiti in 2012. Although I was part of the research team that collected the data, using it for the present study made it impossible to develop baseline measures of drawings for the participants. Thus, I could not develop an understanding of the participants' mental health statuses before the earthquake and before this

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

study was conducted. Therefore, I relied on the historical experiences of continuous trauma among the Haitians to partially understand how to interpret the drawings, which is in accordance with Furth (2002) and IPA (Smith et al., 2009) method of interpretation and analysis.

Another limitation of the study was the difference in language and culture of the research team and the participants. Because HTP is a non-verbal projective test, the effects of a language barrier may have been mitigated. However, the effects of the use of translators have not been taken into account. Also the HTP test was administered in groups rather than individually. Children could have copied from each other or may have been influenced by the members of their groups. However, the author noted that the children in the groups that she led were attentive to instructions and concentrated on their own paper, crayons, and drawings.

Moreover, I educated myself about the culture and history of Haiti in order to understand the participants' meaning-making processes and lived experiences. I attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Haitian Mental Health Conference, in May 2013 and 2015 (The Haitian Mental Health Network, 2013; 2015). Most of the presenters at the conference were Haitian researchers and practitioners. The conference provided me with the understanding of Haitian cultural nuances. Through the conference, I was introduced to the work of the Haitian authors that enriched her study.

Finally, the reliability and validity of HTP as a projective instrument has been questioned. Critics have argued that HTP is ambiguous and that it is overly reliant on the administrator's clinical observation of participants (Jolles, 1971; Thomas & Jolley, 1998). They warned that researchers should base their interpretations on the overall drawing rather than attaching significance to a particular feature, except if it has personal significance to the participant. Buck (1948, 1981) cautioned clinicians not to adhere strictly to general meanings of

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

features, because some features may not have the same meaning for a particular participant. In response to this criticism, I had taken the stance of Vass (1998) and Klepsch and Logie (1982) by using HTP drawing in my study for the global assessment of emotional disturbance in Haitian children and comparing the outcome of her study with results from an Israeli and a Chinese study. In addition, I the stance of analyzing Haitian children's drawings in their holistic form rather than in parts (Buck, 1948; Thomas & Jolley, 1998), finding interrelatedness of patterns and general impressions of adaptation and maladjustment in the Haitian children's drawings. I did not use a checklist of items, as recommended by Machover (1949) and Thomas and Jolley (1998).

### **Future Directions**

In the future, using a more reliable instrument, such as KidNET, which is an evidence-based instrument for gathering data about children in disaster areas, could strengthen the study. Moreover, the Kinetic House-Tree-Person test, for which the participants are instructed to draw a house, a tree, and a person on a single sheet of paper, may facilitate the participants' projection to the pictures drawn. One depicted feature may evoke projections of another. The Kinetic House-Tree-Person test could also help the researcher to see patterns more readily. In addition, the common global factors derived from this study need further exploration in order to understand their potential usefulness and implications in responding to children's mental health in disaster situations all over the world. Moreover, a study with a larger sample might provide results that will further help in the understanding and treatment of children in a continuous trauma environment in the diverse cultures of the world. Finally, an understanding of how House-Tree-Person test reveals children's inner workings in the absence of trauma will help expand our knowledge about children in non-trauma situations.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

### Self Reflections

Undertaking this research has been a personal journey for me because I was able to identify with Haitians in Haiti. I was in Haiti with other colleagues from Antioch University New England on a psychological service and research trip led by Dr. Roysircar, chair of this dissertation committee as well as my academic advisor. While I was in Haiti, most Haitians mistook me as Haitian and would speak Creole to me even when I indicated that I was not Haitian and I did not speak Creole. It was difficult for them to believe me because we share a similar race, as well as cultural and ancestral ties. I felt a sense of belonging and comfort with Haitians. I carried a full load of clients for counseling and had no drop-outs. I advocated for additional services from PID for a client with cognitive disability who was pregnant but did not know how she got pregnant. I sang and taught children Nigerian songs when I did group work with them. When Dr. Roysircar went to PID the following year in 21013, she told me that the PID staff referred often to me and asked her why I had not come with the new team (Gargi Roysircar, personal communication, September 2, 2013). When I was in Haiti, I felt validated and recognized as a mental health practitioner, an empathic person, and a social justice advocate. I am hoping to continue doing international work.

Haitians subscribe to a collectivist worldview just like in my original Yoruba culture in Nigeria, West Africa. As a result of years of African presence in the new world, I observed many similarities in the gods, goddesses, and spirits that are venerated in Haiti. They are like the indigenous people in Yoruba land, Nigeria. For example, *Ogoun* in Haiti is the god of iron, and *Ogun* in Yoruba land is also the god of iron. This partially explains why in a sense I could not convince Haitians in Haiti that I am not a Haitian. We are historically and genetically connected.

As I was examining the Chinese study (Wang et al., 2010) and saw how the authors

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

interpreted the use of curtains in houses as a sign of anxiety, I immediately knew that for Haitians it could not have been a sign of anxiety. It is more of a way of survival in less than adequate living arrangements and space. Curtains are a sense of fostering human dignity and providing privacy in a small living space shared by large family of both nuclear and extended family members. I remember growing up in Nigeria and seeing people in such living conditions, where a husband and wife living in a one-room apartment with some extended family or their own children used curtains for privacy. They used a long and wide curtain to shield their bed area for privacy, while the other family members slept in the space outside of the curtain. Dr. Roysircar commented (Gargi Roysircar, personal communication, March 5, 2015) that in addition to using curtains for reasons of privacy and modesty, decorations bordering doors, window, and walls symbolize temple art, representing the religiousness or spirituality of Hindus.

I had the opportunity to visit China four years ago to see and learn firsthand about their living conditions. In China, family size consists of a father, mother, and one child. This might explain why the author interpreted the use of a curtain in that setting as a depiction of anxiety. Most Chinese families could afford individual space for members of their smaller family compared to Haitian families. The observations done through psychological processes related to a single object—a set of curtains or window and door decorations have revealed a meaning making that seemed to have enriched the present study. It is important to note that there are other aspects of Haitian culture that I am not aware of, about which I remained curious throughout the course of the study.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

One purpose of the study was to investigate global common factors and cultural differences in the House-Tree-Person (HTP) drawings of children experiencing continuous

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

trauma. The study compared themes from Haitian children's HTP drawings with themes from Israeli and Chinese studies (Nuttman-Shwartz et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2010).

The similarities among the three studies and their cultural differences have important implications for mental health responders to disasters worldwide. The findings signify that idealizing and fantasizing are universal defense mechanisms for coping with continuous traumatic situations. Idealizing is a way of distancing oneself from the current situation being faced and also for holding a hopeful belief of a better future. The HTP projective instrument can help researchers and practitioners identify aggression in the participants' or clients' drawings with indicators of violence. Such depictions could suggest aggression in the drawer's life. Another global phenomenon is the depiction of trauma by drawing holes on trees, or scarred or broken trees (Bluestein, 1978). The defective tree is a projection of the drawer as traumatized. Two out of the three studies (the present Haitian study and the Chinese study) have drawings of defective trees. While the Israeli study has no trauma theme in the drawings of the participants, according to Nuttman-Shwartz et al. (2010), it showed a defective palm tree. Because the palm tree is a community symbol for the Gush Katif people, this may indicate a traumatized community that has experienced continuous and intergenerational trauma. The Haitian national flag was prevalent in the drawings of the children, in which 62% of the house drawings had the Haitian flag as a symbol of community solidarity and national affiliation. The national and ideological flag symbol was also prevalent in the Israeli study sample (Nuttman-Shwartz et al., 2010).

The cultural differences demonstrated the importance of why researchers and mental health disaster workers should understand the specific lived experiences and history of the people in disaster areas who are also undergoing continuous trauma. Specific collective histories



## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

provide context for understanding the people's responses to a disaster; which, in turn, guide treatment planning and interventions.

On the basis of the findings in the present study the researcher maintain that the above highlighted global common factors and the consideration of continuous trauma might potentially offer important implications to providing mental health treatment to children in disaster areas and other kinds of trauma -inducing contexts which cause prolonged and ongoing threat.

Continuous trauma characterizes the lived experience of the Haitian child participants and many other children in disaster communities all over the world. Therefore, modifications of existing therapeutic approaches for working with trauma-related conditions are implied. Mental health professionals should bear in mind that contrary to the usual treatment of trauma, which is based on the premise that the trauma occurred in the past and the client is not presently in the environment of trauma, for children in a continuously traumatized environment, the trauma is in the present and in the future. Therefore, after treatment, the mental health professional should be cognizant of the reality that the client is going back to the environment of trauma. How then can mental health professionals plan their treatment and interventions to reflect this reality?

The Vulnerability and Powerlessness clustered theme was about two third or 62% of the indicators found in the Haitian children's drawing. Nuttman-Shwartz et al. ( 2010) and Wang et al. (2010) also found indicators of vulnerability. The high prevalence of vulnerability and powerlessness in the Haitian children's drawing was unexpected, taking into consideration the documented act of bravery, courage, and resiliency of the Haitian people. This finding indicates that the Haitian children in the study were likely vulnerable because of the effects of living in the context of continuous environmental trauma.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

For the study, I hypothesized that adaptive indicators would be more than maladaptive indicators, with the mindset that cases with adaptive indicators would not have maladaptive indicators and vice versa. However my findings demonstrated 69 % of cases with both adaptive and maladaptive indicators and only 15 % each for either adaptive or maladaptive indicators. This result implies that adaptation and maladaptation are intricately intertwined. For example, trauma is needed for resilience to occur. Mental health practitioners working with Haitian children and children in similar situations of continuous trauma in highly unpredictable environments should consider being flexible in employing the two constructs, adaptation and maladaptation or trauma and resilience in order not to pathologize defensive adaptation used for survival and thriving.

Self-preservation responses to a threatening environment could also be pathologized. Martín-Baró (1989) described four processes of those who live in extreme fear: (a) a sensation of vulnerability; (b) exacerbated alertness; (c) a sense of impotence or loss of control over one's life; and (d) an altered sense of reality making it impossible to objectively validate one's own experiences and knowledge. Martín-Baró (1989) also cites the work of Samayoa (1987) on cognitive and behavioral changes that could occur because of continuous contextual trauma, in which amongst other things, individuals might use selective inattention, idealization, and ideological rigidity. The caution for mental health professionals is that there are some responses that are adaptive in the context of continuous trauma and maladaptive in a different environment.

The study showed that 62 % of the Haitian children's drawings of the House had the flag of Haiti on rooftops. Kesebir, Luszczynska, Pyszczynski, and Benight (2011) stated that "faith in one's cultural worldview is a major epistemic and existential security provider" (p. 834). This has implications for both disaster response emergency workers and mental health professionals.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Restoration of normalcy to the community is known to bring relief to those in a disaster area (Bonnano et al., 2007; Bowman & Roysircar, 2011). Therefore, community-rebuilding ought to be a priority in providing relief for children in disaster areas. At the individual clinical level, reduction of aggressive and violent behaviors, stabilizing the mood of the children affected by disaster, and teaching them interpersonal skills are important in the personal recovery journey.

From the study, I found that the HTP test revealed the psychological state of children in disaster situations, whether as a result of natural disasters, such as earthquakes, or human-made disasters, such as terrorism, war or governmental neglect. I found that understanding the history and lived experiences of participants shed light on the meaning-making processes of different cultures. The results of the study may provide understanding to mental health providers about observable patterns of behavior through drawings for purposes of clinical assessment, treatment planning, and intervention.

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## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

## Appendix A: Interpretation of Drawings (Tables 9–17)

Table 9

*Interpretation of Drawings Case 3/27*

<b>Drawing</b>	<b>FP1</b>	<b>FP2</b>	<b>FP3</b>	<b>FP4</b>	<b>FP5</b>	<b>Symbol 1</b>	<b>Symbol 2</b>	<b>Overall Impression</b>	
House	A house with windows and doors.	No path to the house but a car is parked in front of the house.	The environment has a rootless plant and a floating flower beside it.			There is a national flag on top of the roof of the house.	The sun is shining on the Flag and the house.	<b>Adaptation</b> With the car parked in front of this house and the floating plant and flower, the house gave an impression of an ideal rather than a real house located somewhere. The flag indicates solidarity and affiliation. Indicating hope, growth, and movement.	<b>Maladaptive</b>
Tree	A mango tree with a fallen unripe mango fruit.	The topmost part of the tree is bare.	There are some ripe/yellow fruits on the tree.	There is a fruit that is different from others with a shaded border.	There are four branches, two on each side.	The root is short and shallow with sparse soil.	The trunk looks strong and solid.	The tree is not having adequate Nourishment from the ground. However, the tree is still thriving indicating resiliency shown by the fact that the tree has fruits.	
Person	A person that looks like a child with no neck.	The person is painted in orange color from head to toes including the clothing	Though seemed clothed, there are dots indicating the breasts and belly button.	The hand on the right side of the paper is longer than the left, as if the person is carrying an object.	The person's hands are poised for action.	It seems as if this person is walking somewhere with one leg in front of the other.		The person portrays a sense of agency and action.	This person may also be vulnerable as indicated with the dots depicting the breasts and belly button.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Table 10

*Interpretation of Drawings Case 4/43*

<b>Drawing</b>	<b>FP1</b>	<b>FP2</b>	<b>FP3</b>	<b>FP4</b>	<b>FP5</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Overall Impression</b>		
<b>House</b>	A house tilted to the left toward the edge of the paper as if about to fall from a cliff.	The house seems to be floating and without foundation.	The house has no window nor door.	No path leads to the house.	The house resembles a tent with intense coloring.	The drawing of the house is positioned toward the right edge of the paper.	<b>Adaptive</b>	<b>Maladaptive</b> House seems to be uninhabitable and unreal.	
<b>Tree</b>	Tree with no roots.	It has four branches and cone shaped trunk	The tree leaves are scanty.	Tree has no fruit.	The tree is floating.	The tree occupied the center of the paper.			The tree gave an impression of a dead tree.
<b>Person</b>	A person with no legs.	The person's hands protrude from the cheeks.	The hands look like rakes.	Both hands are different from each other.	The fingers are drawn differently for both hands. The person's fingers on one hand are vertical and the other hand horizontal.	Big nose and no mouth with hair drawn as if to support heavy burden/load.			The person looks mysterious. It is doubtful how the person can exist without a mouth. The person seems to feel voiceless, powerless, with no agency.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Table 11

*Interpretation of Drawings Case 5/42*

<b>Drawing</b>	<b>FP1</b>	<b>FP2</b>	<b>FP3</b>	<b>FP4</b>	<b>FP5</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Overall Impression</b>	
<b>House</b>	Two houses, one bigger than the other.	Two plants, one inside a planter (half of the planter is shown); the other with no roots.	Two flowers one inside a planter, the other just floating.	The two houses both have no doors or windows.	Houses have no path or space to get to them.	The planter potentially indicates holding and structure.	<b>Adaptive</b> The houses, plants and flowers gave an impression of an imagined, but unreal neighborhood with general sense of life and brightness.	<b>Maladaptive</b> House feels closed off.
<b>Tree</b>	A Tree with leaves like palm fern.	The tree looks more like cut wood.	Tree has no roots	Tree has no top/crown.	Tree has eight branches with leaves	The tree is fruitless	Sturdy trunk gives feeling of ego strength and resilience	The tree looks like it's dead. The tree has a general feel of coldness and barrenness given colors and lack of crown and root.
<b>Person</b>	A girl with yellow hair.	The head of the girl is disproportionately bigger than the rest of the body.	The mouth is far from the nose and as if in the chin.	The girl has big ears.	The person's hand toward the right side of the paper is bigger than the one on the left.	This person has a yellow hair, probably imitating blonde European hair.	Person is healthy and generally positive.	The Person might be wishing she was another person.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Table 12

*Interpretation of Drawings Case 7/35*

<b>Drawing</b>	<b>FP1</b>	<b>FP2</b>	<b>FP3</b>	<b>FP4</b>	<b>FP5</b>	<b>Symbol 1</b>	<b>Symbol 2</b>	<b>Overall Impression</b>	
House	House has a door.	The House has Electricity/ a light bulb whereas in reality electricity is infrequent in Haiti.	House has a person in it looking outside.	House has a path to it.	House's surrounding has planted flowers.	Light bulb symbolizing hope.	House has a flag of Haiti on top of it, by the side as symbol of national pride.	<b>Adaptive</b> Community affiliation and adequate relationship within and outside of the house. There are signs of optimism and idealism in the house.	<b>Maladaptive</b>
Tree	A coconut tree with five branches joined together.	There are two people by the tree, one person on each side. The person on the left side of the paper is smaller in size than the one on the right side.	The tree has roots going into the ground although some of the roots are showing on the ground.	The tree is tall and thin.	The tree has five coconut fruits, one on each branch. It has ferns.		The tree has a spike-like fruit on each of its five branches	The people are content with what they have. There appears to be environmental and community resources available.	
Person	The person's neck is painted red.	The person is playing soccer. There is a second smaller ball by the side.	The person's two feet are different from one another.	The person has a red mark on the cheek.	The person is drawn at the bottom of the paper.		A tree, in form of the sun, is shining close to the person but not on him.	The person seems to have joy and happiness as indicated with the smile and playing soccer. There is warmth and carefreeness expressed in the drawing	

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Table 13

*Interpretation of Drawings Case 8/32*

<b>Drawing</b>	<b>FP1</b>	<b>FP2</b>	<b>FP3</b>	<b>FP4</b>	<b>FP5</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Overall Impression</b>	
<b>House</b>	A compact house with flowers joined to its sides.	The house has no door.	The house has two windows.	There is a V-shaped object at the center of the house that resembles a curtain.	The house has a path leading to it.	Haitian Flag is drawn on top of the roof of the house.	<b>Adaptation</b> Affiliation and solidarity and interactions with the environment	<b>Maladaptive</b> Angry feel of anthropomorphized indicators.
<b>Tree</b>	Two palm trees, one big and the other small.	The root of the tree is visible with no soil covering it.	Fruits on the trees	The two trees have many ferns.	The trunk is large with scars	Scarring on large tree trunk can symbolize trauma	The trees are strong and healthy. They are closely together with a sense of positive interactions.	
<b>Person</b>	Two females holding hands.	It seems as if the two people are walking together and were about to cross the road.	One of the people seems to be pointing to where they are going and also talking about it.	There were paved road in front of the two people as they walk.	The two people were drawn in large size.		The two people appear to be friendly and in unity and connectedness. They appear to be strong and confident, indicating general sense of self-esteem, optimism, and hopefulness.	The two people's facial expression appears to be ambiguous.

Table 14

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

*Interpretation of Drawings Case 9/29*

<b>Drawing</b>	<b>FP1</b>	<b>FP2</b>	<b>FP3</b>	<b>FP4</b>	<b>FP5</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Overall Impression</b>	
House	House with a small door and a window.	Window has curtain/ drapes.	No path to the house.	House is close to the right side of the paper and slanted to the right, like floating without foundation.	Faint lines of exterior of house.	The roof of the house is painted dark color. Roof vs structure of the house may symbolize discrepancy between fantasy and reality.	<b>Adaptation</b>	<b>Maladaptive</b> There is instability about the house. Structure. It is generally barren and has a cold.
Tree	A coconut tree that looks like a stem/ a thin line.	The stem has leaves.	The stem has roots.	The stem is not planted in the ground; therefore it is floating in the air.	Some leaves on the top of the stem are diamond-shaped and the others are like lines.	A single stem/line used to depict a coconut tree.		Fragility and lack of resources. Floating quality may indicate being uprooted or displaced.
Person	A person with no neck and head tilted to the right.	The person's right hand is thinner than the left hand.	The left hand fingers look like a Lobster's claws.	The person has two thin legs that could hardly carry the weight of her body.	The two eyes are by the sides of the head far from each other.	The mouth is where the chin should be; two nipples, belly button, and genitals represented.		This person is traumatized and psychologically unstable. The person may be feeling aggression and anger.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Table 15

*Interpretation of Drawings Case 11/24*

<b>Drawing</b>	<b>FP1</b>	<b>FP2</b>	<b>FP3</b>	<b>FP4</b>	<b>Symbol1</b>	<b>Symbol2</b>	<b>Overall Impression</b>	
House	The two houses have paths leading to them.	The bigger house has windows and a door.	The bigger house has potted flowers and plants in its surroundings.	Another small house (bathroom) with a person inside taking a shower is drawn.	Five birds flying in the sky on top of the big house.	A Flag representing community and national solidarity.	<b>Adaptation</b> Both internal and external care for relationship, love, and well-being is desired. There is a sense of happiness and contentment.	<b>Maladaptive</b>
Tree	One big tree with a hole in the trunk	The tree has no root or soil.	Another thin, floating tree with no roots.	A fruit is on top of the big tree	A boy is at the bottom of the paper playing soccer. He may be half naked as three dots represent his nipples and belly button.	The boy has a very big nose that took so much space that the mouth is drawn on the chin.	Traumatized trees. Inadequate resources or none at all. Lack of root may indicate lack of foundation and nurturance.	
Person	Two people: A man and a boy.	The first person (boy) is naked with nipples and belly button shown. The boy has phallic structured nose.	The second person is smaller though he looks like the man.	The right hand of the second person is shorter than the left hand.	The first person has no neck and his head is very big. The second person has a very long neck.	The second person's legs and feet are very different from one another.	Nakedness, inadequacies, and need for help. Child sexual trauma is implicated.	

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Table 16

*Interpretation of Drawings Case 12/09*

<b>Drawing</b>	<b>FP1</b>	<b>FP2</b>	<b>FP3</b>	<b>FP4</b>	<b>FP5</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Overall Impression</b>	
House	House with a door and two windows, but no path leads to the house.	Door is semi-circle in shape or open mouth.	The inside of the house is not revealed.	House has nice design with solid triangular design.	House has no foundation.		<b>Adaptation</b> It is an idealized house.	<b>Maladaptation</b> House feel closed off with no pathway.
Tree	A tree with exposed roots.	Tree has many bare branches.	Only one branch of the tree has four leaves.	Outside of large trunk results in two thin trunks with branches.	The tree's roots have no soil.	The tree is drawn to the left most part of the paper.		A withering tree that has no means of nourishment.
Person	A girl with a very long and thin neck.	Her hands are attached to the neck.	The left hand is longer than the left.	The girl is wearing earrings.	The right eye is bigger than the left eye.		This is an idealized person with wishes for her needs to be met.	Person seemed to be unhealthy



HAITIAN CHILDREN’S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

Table 17

*Interpretation of Drawings Case 13/01*

Drawing	FP1	FP2	FP3	FP4	FP5	Symbol	Overall Impression
House	A small house.	The house has no windows but has a suspended door.	A person is walking away from the house.	The inside of the house is not revealed.	The house has no foundation.	An antenna or a flag is protruding from the roof of the house.	<b>Adaptation</b>  <b>Maladaptive</b> Inadequate relationship and warmth in the house.
Tree	A floating stem with three branches.	A tall plant stem that has no root.	The plant stem has no soil.	A floating flower with no root.	A shoe/boot shaped object that is big. It may be a plant.	Dots around flower stem. Dots around plant stem’s branches. The dots may indicate decay and loss.	Fruitlessness, inadequacies, and idealization. Lack of roots and thin trunk may indicate depleted ego strength and lack of nurturance.
Person	A person with a wide mouth at the center of the paper.	The person has hands wide open as if in action and motion.	The person’s two hands are different from each other.	A rectangular bodiless head or a mask at the bottom left of the page.	The person’s left eye is near the mouth.	The person in motion is showing some agency and self efficacy.	

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

## Appendix B: Process Notes on Crisis Counseling in Haiti

**Monday, May 14th, 2012**

I started today feeling I am part of a great thing that is about to unfold as the week advances. My involvement with the training of PID staff was gratifying. I felt I could use my multicultural competency skills to deliver the presentation in a way that will be accessible to the participants. I feel that Jane and I as co-facilitators complemented each other as we present the Self Care Didactic Training. I began to have the sense of the living condition among the people of Haiti, and the fact that some of the things we take for granted as basic relaxation techniques for relaxation are not accessible to them because they struggle for more basic survival and daily issues. I quickly realized that our Western ideals will not work under this circumstance. Jane also hinted on this reality.

I saw two individual patients today both of whom touched me differently. Each of them informed me that they have memory problems. At the end of the day I started reflecting on the two patients. Their willingness and receptiveness to therapy amazed me. I realized I was able to empower them to advocate for themselves. Where it was going to be difficult, I suggested to the client the possibility of a person who could advocate on her behalf. She agreed to bring her cousin to meet with me so that we will all have an understanding of what to advocate for. In retrospect this was one of the best decisions I made during this trip.

**Tuesday, May 15th, 2012**

My participation in the training of the translators was very enriching for me. I could see the benefit of training translators for both therapy and research purposes in order to be sure that the correct translations are made. It provides the occasion to resolve different views and opinions about translations.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

My understanding of a hierarchical society where children and young ones cannot approach elders directly seem to be helpful to my understanding of the predicament of my clients and it informed me about strategies in which my patient could still advocate for herself. I suggested that my client could ask someone whom her father respects to speak on her behalf to her father. This was agreeable to her.

I saw eight clients today. My clients from yesterday came with her cousin who would advocate on her behalf at the school, so that her teacher would stop beating and humiliating her in front of her classmate. What amazed me was that this cousin was also convinced that my patients have difficulties in learning and can never be successful with academics. I used analogies that this person could relate with to explain the anxiety and the flight fight response my client was experiencing because of the hostile school environment. I felt my explanation resonated with my client's cousin, and she agreed to advocate for at her school.

There is a mystery that I reflected on but could not find an answer to in 8 out of 10 clients I have seen so far, have memory problems but with different etiology. I wanted to understand why the majority of my clients have memory problems. Does this have to do with the earthquake as in PTSD – Amnesia? Or is it their nutrition? I became curious while at the same time cautioning myself not to diagnose and put any label on my client. People here are very sincere and receptive of counseling. It is very surprising. The relaxation / body and mind connection exercise is well received here. I would like to make this a part of my practice with my clients in the USA. I hope it will also be well received there.

### **Wednesday, May 16th, 2012**

All my clients today were from the Diabetes and Hypertension clinic. I saw five clients today. I was fascinated with the resiliency of both children and adult whom I have counseled

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

here in Haiti. In addition, when my patient will not follow up on the suggestion I make, they let me know. I like this level of sincerity. I found this candidness in the eight-year-old I counseled yesterday too. I have asked her to do the Spaghetti style relaxation technique that Mary had spoken about in one of our debriefings. She had said, as a matter of fact, that she would not do it. This made me think differently about the collective culture in which the lack of Western type of assertiveness is absent, but I see their refusal to follow some of my suggestions as a healthy form of assertiveness. There are also some ways in which they were compliant.

I saw a 62-year-old woman today with the presenting problem of having trouble with her fourth born son, age 30 years, a lawyer, who is in intimate relationship with a woman who brought two children into the relationship. I felt I understood the basis of her anger toward her son. I showed empathy and suggested that as a grown man he had made his choice and we both brainstorm ways she could still be connected to her son, though she did not like the woman. She was not all that receptive to some of the ideas. I was respectful of her wishes. I saw from this case an example of meeting patients where they are at and let them change at their pace. What was hard is the realization that I could only have one session with her. However, the purpose is not to help her reach her goal in one session.

### **Thursday, May 17th, 2012**

All my clients today were from the prenatal clinic. I saw them carrying their pregnancy with pride and joyfulness. I feel quite happy for them. Nutrition issue and the theme of being overwhelmed were prevalent among my clients. I suggested some inexpensive ways of eating nutritious meals and of self-care. I realized that it was tasking for me to come up with alternatives to food groups. Understanding the culture of my clients, including the type of food

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

they eat is very important. I felt I could use more of that knowledge in counseling the pregnant women.

There was a case of a pregnant woman who was accompanied by her mother and the Director of Social work at PID had asked to sit in my session with her. I clarified this with my supervisor, and I came up with the compromise of still been able to speak with the client alone. A little while into the session, I realize that the 30-year-old pregnant woman had developmental delay and severe mental illness. I felt it will be to her advantage if her mother stays with her throughout the session. This case is one of the peaks of my experience in Haiti. Some of the symptoms of her mental illness resemble that of Tourette Syndrome. She speaks profanity and curses at times, and she also cut herself and bites her mother. She was at the prenatal clinic for her third pregnancy all of which she did not know who impregnated her. I advocated for her with the President of PID, and a wrap around meeting was scheduled for the next morning with the entire family present. I felt some gratification in noting that my advocacy could alleviate some of the pains of my patient and possibly provide a better living condition for her.

### **Friday, May 18th, 2012**

The wrap around meeting, for my client with developmental and mental disability and her family, was very productive. An emergency child sponsorship program was approved for the two children within the family as a first step to future supports. Having worked for eight years as an advocate for victims of domestic and sexual violence, I have wondered since I started the PsyD program, whether there is a place for my experience in clinical psychology. It became evident to me today that advocacy can definitely help improve patients' standard of living and well being.

Another passion of mine is learning to be a researcher; it was professionally gratifying how an idea which started like a child's play became an international research project that I am

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

part of. I am very happy to learn under the scholarship of Dr. Roysircar and benefit from many years of her prolific research experiences. I am definitely planning to pull my weight in the research analysis, and any other activities connected with the research.

### **Saturday, May 19th, 2012**

The research with children participants continued again today. I am inspired by the resiliency I saw on the drawings of the children already without having analyzed anything. Children who were living in tents and substandard housing drew pictures of beautiful houses with flowers, Television, dining table and beds. This is hopeful and uplifting. I have reflected several times on most of the response of the second question: Why did you draw it this way? I have wondered endlessly about the response – “Because you [the investigator] asked me to draw it.” What is the root of this response? Is it cultural? Could we have asked about what inspired them to draw what they drew? Would that have changed the response? I may never know. I feel fortunate to be participating in this research. The children taught me resiliency all over again. They reminded me of what my late mother use to tell me when I was younger “You don’t wear your misery on your face.”

### **Monday, May 21th, 2012**

Today is the grandest of all the days I spent in Haiti. I am happy that I chose to go for the two meetings at Port Au Prince. Sitting back and observing negotiation of collaborations was one of the strongest mentorship I enjoyed with Dr. Roysircar throughout this week. I felt connected to a greater force larger than me. I can see a very productive and knowledge filled years for me with Dr. Roysircar. These two meetings provided answers to many of the questions I have throughout the week. The first eight patients I saw during the week complained about memory loss and forgetfulness. The answer that Ms. Coble provided made sense to me. She said after the

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

earthquake that Haitian experienced PTSD by sudden feeling of being frozen in their body as they walk on the streets. She also said that several of them experienced memory loss and forgetfulness as a result of stress and that the locally adapted relaxation techniques have been effective in reducing these symptoms. It is an act of providence that Ms. Colbe is involved in a HTP research with 250 children participants. Going to Haiti for me is like discovering another planet.

I have also benefited from other professionals who were at PID this week. They taught me dedication, tenacity, resourcefulness, and respect for the people of Haiti and the genuineness of these professionals as to what will work for Haitians. I have benefited in several dimensions of multicultural issues during the opportunities I have to discuss with Dr. Roysircar. It's a pleasure to be on the Haiti trip.

## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

## Appendix C: Permission to Use Examples of Drawings from Case 2 and Case 4

## MEMO

March 1, 2015

This memo is written to grant permission for *Bola Afolayan* to use examples of my copyrighted Haitian Children's House-Tree-Person drawings from Case 2 and Case 4 in her published dissertation.

Sincerely,

<electronic signature>

Gargi Roysircar, EdD

**Case 2: Person (Pregnant woman)**





## HAITIAN CHILDREN'S HOUSE-TREE-PERSON

**Case 4: House (Tipping Over)**

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