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The Information Domains of International Faculty in South Korea: A Framework Synthesis of Their Information Needs and Behaviors*

한국대학의 외국인 교수들의 정보 도메인: 정보 요구와 행동에 대한 프레임워크 합성

Jonathan M. Hollister (홀리스터 조나단)**
Jisue Lee (이지수)***

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ABSTRACT : South Korean higher education institutions (HEIs) have implemented internationalization strategies to boost their domestic rankings and global reputation by, in part, recruiting foreign professors to publish in international journals, leverage their professional networks, teach in English, and attract and support international students. However, the population of foreign professors has steadily declined in recent years amid reports of challenges due to language barriers and cultural differences. This study applies a framework synthesis guided by the information domains framework to identify the information needs and behaviors of foreign professors in existing research on the experiences of foreign university professors in Korea. The findings suggest language and information barriers, cultural differences, lack of institutional support, and interrelated feelings of isolation, frustration, and helplessness impact the social, individual, and signification domains of international faculty. Recommendations for academic libraries, HIEs, and international faculty to improve inclusion and information access are discussed.

KEYWORDS : International Faculty, South Korean Higher Education Institutions, Information Domains, Theory of Information Worlds, Framework Synthesis

요 약 : 한국의 고등교육기관(HEIs)들은 외국인 교수를 채용하여 국제 학술지에 논문을 게재하고, 전문 네트워크를 활용하며, 영어로 수업을 진행하고, 유학생을 유치하고 지원함으로써 국내 순위와 글로벌 평판을 높이기 위한 국제화 전략을 시행하고 있다. 그러나 최근 몇 년 동안 외국인 교수의 수는 언어 장벽과 문화적 차이 같은 어려움으로 꾸준히 감소하고 있다. 본 연구는 국내 대학에 근무하는 외국인 교수의 경험에 관한 기존 연구들을 대상으로 정보 도메인 프레임워크를 기반으로 한 프레임워크 합성법을 적용하여 외국인 교수의 정보 요구와 행동을 파악하였다. 본 연구에서는 언어 및 정보 장벽, 문화적 차이, 제도적 지원 부족, 그리고 고립감, 좌절감, 무력감 등 상호 연관된 감정이 외국인 교수의 사회적, 개인적, 의미적 영역에 영향을 미친다는 분석결과를 보고하고, 학술 도서관, 고등교육기관 및 외국인 교수진에 대한 포용성과 정보 접근성을 개선하기 위한 권고사항을 논의하였다.

주제어 : 외국인 교수진, 대한민국 고등교육기관, 정보 도메인, 정보세계이론, 프레임워크 합성

** Associate Professor, Department of Library, Archives, & Information Studies, Pusan National University (hollisterjm@pusan.ac.kr / ISNI 0000 0004 8513 885X) (First author)
*** Associate Professor, Department of Library & Information Science, Chonnam National University (jislee@jnu.ac.kr / ISNI 0000 0004 7472 0115) (Corresponding author)

Ⅰ. Introduction

Higher education institutions (HEIs) in South Korea have implemented internationalization policies to increase their domestic rankings and global reputation, and to attract international students and staff (Cho & Palmer, 2013; Ghazarian et al., 2024; Gress & Shin, 2020; Kim, 2016; Palmer & Cho, 2012). According to the Korean Education Statistics Service (KESS, 2022; 2025), the number of full-time international or foreign faculty at all categories of HEIs, including public or private universities, universities of education, junior colleges, technical colleges, etc., has increased from 1,373 persons (2.4% of all full-time faculty) in 2000 to 4,348 persons (about 4.39% of the total full-time faculty) in 2025. However, the number of full-time foreign faculty peaked at 6,130 (7.1%) in 2013, suggesting a decline in more recent years (KESS, 2013). As HEIs in South Korea attempt to hire and retain international faculty members, these institutions and their academic libraries should consider proactive measures to support a more diverse workforce. Diversity creates opportunities to access unique information and new perspectives, inspire innovation, and promote deeper thinking and higher-quality teamwork (Phillips, 2014).

Foreign faculty in Korea face a variety of challenges. Sim (2014) found that foreign faculty members experience exclusion from decision-making, a lack of administrative support, feelings of isolation, and various forms of discrimination. Jung (2025) reported that some foreign faculty at Seoul National University feel excluded from collaboration and grant opportunities due to language barriers and lack of alumni connections, and expressed difficulties navigating the administrative bureaucracy and securing long-term housing due to insufficient institutional support. Mosheim (2026) reported some foreign faculty feel like outsiders and uninformed about institutional policies that impact their careers due to language and cultural barriers and insider networks. Ndumu (2019) found that immigrants may experience information overload and acculturative stress while adapting to life in a new country. These experiences, among other cultural, work- and mobility-related factors, may contribute to declining recruitment or retention of foreign faculty (Froese, 2012; Kim, 2016; Kim et al., 2022; Shin et al., 2024).

Given these challenges, identifying the information needs and behaviors of international faculty members could help HEIs and academic libraries in South Korea to better provide support for international faculty. Previous studies found that faculty value and use formal and informal information sources and libraries, but their preferences for and use of digital formats and online sources are increasing (Ansari & Kumar, 2010; Hart, 1997; Majid & Kassim, 2000; Miller et al., 2023a; 2023b; Rupp-Serrano & Robbins, 2013; Wang, 2010). This presents opportunities for academic libraries

to strengthen support and connections with faculty. Libraries in South Korea are responding to the increasing number of diverse students, families, and workers by developing the cultural competencies of librarians offering multicultural services (Lee & Chang, 2014), and improving academic library services for international students (Lee & Lee, 2020).

While the information needs and information behaviors of academics across scientific fields have been studied, few have explored the specific context of faculty working outside of their home countries. Despite a gap in LIS research focused on the information needs and behaviors of international faculty in Korea, research in other disciplines, primarily in education-related fields, has explored the needs and experiences of this population. This study employs a framework analysis to identify potential information needs and behaviors of foreign faculty in Korea using existing research on their experiences as the sample (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009). Framework analysis is a form of meta-synthesis that systematically reviews and interprets the findings of qualitative research using an a priori theory (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009). Meta-synthesis uses qualitative data analysis to identify trends, explore topics across contexts, develop new concepts, discover literature gaps, and provide insights for policymakers and practitioners (Urquhart, 2010; 2011; Xie et al., 2020). Burnett's (2015) information domains will provide the framework due to its holistic perspective on the social, individual, and technological aspects of information behaviors. The purpose of this study is to explore the information needs and behaviors of international or foreign faculty in South Korea. The guiding research question is:

RQ1: What characterizes the information domains of international university faculty in Korea?

The goals of this study are to provide insights and recommendations that academic libraries and HEIs in South Korea can use to improve support and conditions for foreign professors.

Ⅱ. Brief Literature Review

1. The Information Needs and Behaviors of University Faculty

This section highlights previous work on the information needs and behaviors of university faculty to provide a brief historical background using studies conducted with university faculty in different disciplines and countries and is not intended to be comprehensive.

Hart (1997) found 91% of professors at the State University of New York Fredonia use their

college library, averaging 8.5 visits per semester. Hart (1997) found that discipline impacts the types of formal sources used: just over half (53%) of hard science faculty favored journals and about a third (33%) favored books and journals equally; a slight majority (54%) of social sciences faculty favored both journals and books equally, with a third (33%) preferring journals; and just over half (53.3%) of humanities faculty favored both books and journals equally, with 15.3% preferring books. Hart (1997) notes informal sources, such as conversations with colleagues or attending conferences, are still valued. Majid and Kassim (2000) surveyed law professors at the International Islamic University Malaysia, finding they most frequently consult books, law reports, and statutes to support their work. Law professors often used their own personal libraries before using their university library, despite favorable ratings, and preferred print over electronic sources.

The preference for digital, online access seems to have increased going into the 2010s. Ansari and Kumar (2010) surveyed engineering and technology faculty in India, finding they use a variety of formal print sources, such as textbooks, journals, research reports, and digital sources, such as e-journals, and informal social sources, such as discussions with colleagues or attending conferences. They also found that while 100% of their sample (390) use departmental or institutional libraries, some professors had trouble accessing information due to time constraints, lack of library coverage, and around ten percent expressed insufficient knowledge on how to use the library. Marouf and Anwar (2010) found social science professors at Kuwait University preferred formal sources, primarily books and journals, to support their teaching and research. However, their research was supported by a wider variety of sources, such as conference papers or technical reports, with additional variations by discipline. Print sources were preferred due to the medium of instruction being Arabic and the greater availability of Arabic print resources. They also found that social sciences faculty members considered their library services and staffing to be inadequate and ranked consultations with libraries as having very low importance.

Wang (2010) surveyed and interviewed social science professors at National Chengchi University in Taiwan and identified a preference for digital resources and reliance on online search engines and Google Scholar,[1] often to supplement access limitations of their university library. Despite this, they did take advantage of their library's catalog, as it was their main source of e-journals. Taiwanese social science faculty preferred journals, conference papers, attending conferences, and technical reports as information resources, and used more journals in English than in Chinese. Wang (2010) also noted social science faculty had only average search skills.

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1) https://scholar.google.com/

Rupp-Serrano and Robbins (2013) surveyed education faculty across 20 universities in the US, finding that journals, either print or digital, are the most important information resource and primary publication venue and that they valued libraries and library databases, particularly for finding older materials. Like Wang's (2010) results, they found that educational faculty highly value digital access to resources and regularly search for and consult internet sources. The two largest barriers to accessing information were not being able to access specific resources via their libraries and a lack of time. Rupp-Serrano and Robbins (2013) also found that many education faculty found informal sources, such as discussions, both in-person and via email, with colleagues and students, and attending conferences to be important or very important.

More recently, in a study spanning two articles, Miller et al. (2023a; 2023b) explored the information seeking and creation behaviors of faculty at Missouri State University (US). Miller et al. (2023a) found their behaviors follows three phases: individual or collaborative formulation of a research question; seeking relevant information using scholarly, typically discipline-specific, literature and search engines; and creating information by conducting research individually or collaboratively with librarians or disciplinary peers. Faculty used various tools to supplement library resources, such as Google, Google Scholar, and academic social networks, such as ResearchGate[2] and Academia.edu[3], joining scholarly societies or other organizations, or requesting materials from colleagues at other institutions (Miller et al., 2023a; 2023b). They found that while digital journals and articles were the most used sources and preferred format, faculty still use books with a preference towards print over e-books (Miller et al., 2023a). Miller et al. (2023b) noted some faculty struggle with organizing and storing the citations, full-texts, and other documents needed for their research.

Overall, university professors seek and use a variety of formal and informal information sources to support their scholarly activities. While print sources still hold value, the preference for and use of digital and online access to information sources are increasing.

2. Information Domains Framework

Burnett's (2015) information domains framework provides a holistic perspective for understanding information behaviors across contexts. The information domains framework extends Burnett and Jaeger's (2008; Jaeger & Burnett, 2010) theory of information worlds by using the original theory

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2) https://www.researchgate.net/
3) https://www.academia.edu/

as the social domain and creating two additional domains: individual and signification (Burnett, 2015). The theory of information worlds, or the social domain, consists of five core concepts: social norms, an information world's set of rules related to acceptable behaviors; social types, the defined roles of a world; information value, or the relative importance or ranking system of different types or sources of information; normative information behavior, all potential information behaviors typical for a world; and boundaries, areas where information can be exchanged with other worlds (Burnett & Jaeger, 2008; Jaeger & Burnett, 2010). The domain of the individual focuses on cognitive and affective factors that may impact an individual's information behaviors, and the domain of signification considers the processes and means through which information is created, stored, sought, shared, and used, such as symbols, language, and technology (Burnett, 2015). The added domains address critiques from Yu (2012), who argued the theory of information worlds does not properly account for individual characteristics or agency.

Both the information worlds and information domains theories are relatively new within LIS. A systematic review and content analysis on the theory of information worlds found it has been applied in various research contexts with different populations and with qualitative and quantitative methods, though more often with qualitative approaches (Hollister et al., 2025; Park et al., 2022). The information domains framework, like its component theory of information worlds, is meant to work with any research methods and alongside other concepts, models, or theories (Burnett, 2015; Jaeger & Burnett, 2010; Hollister et al., 2023; 2025; Park et al., 2022). The theory of information worlds has been applied in similar research contexts, such as scientists at the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory[4] in the Southern US, who produce, manage, and collaborate with shared data (Worrall et al., 2012). The theory of information worlds was also applied as a framework in a meta-synthesis on how mothers share parenting information within online communities (Xie et al., 2021). However, Hollister et al. (2025) identified just two papers using the information domains framework in their systematic review.

Ⅲ. Method

This study employs a specific form of systematic literature review meta-synthesis described as a framework synthesis by Barnett-Page and Thomas (2009). Meta-syntheses are similar to meta-analyses but focus on the systematic review and qualitative interpretation of findings from multiple qualitative
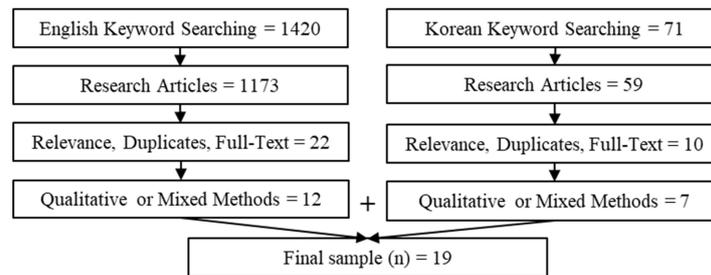
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4) https://nationalmaglab.org

studies rather than the statistical or quantitative analysis of the data or results from multiple quantitative studies (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009; Xie et al., 2020). Meta-synthesis approaches are relatively new in LIS and originate in education with Noblit and Hare's (1988) meta-ethnography (Xie et al., 2020). Since then, a variety of meta-synthesis approaches have been developed and applied in numerous disciplines, including healthcare, business management, and various social sciences (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009; Xie et al., 2020). Meta-syntheses are useful for information behavior research because of the depth and variation of information behaviors inherent in groups of users (Urquhart, 2011).

The sample of this framework synthesis consists of a systematic and purposive sampling of qualitative studies on the experiences, perspectives, or challenges of foreign faculty members working at universities in South Korea. The sample was identified using a systematic approach similar to previous by the authors (Hollister et al., 2025; Park et al., 2022). The search was facilitated using the integrated search tools available at the first author's institutional library, which provides access to Korean academic databases, such as eArticle, KISS, KCI Open Access, DBPia, and Scholar, and international academic databases, including EBSCOHost, Emerald Specialist Collection, Library, Information Science and Technology Abstracts (LISTA), ProQuest Central, ScienceDirect, SCOPUS, among others.[5] Full-texts inaccessible through library resources were located using Google Scholar and ResearchGate. Keyword searching for articles in Korean started with "외국인교수" (which translates to foreign professor in Hangeul) and "foreign faculty in Korea" in English, while testing variations and additional terms, such as international, professor, experiences, and perspectives. Search filters related to publication type, language, and subject were also used to improve the relevance of the results and narrow the retrievals.

The inclusion criteria included peer-reviewed research articles published in English or Korean, with full-text accessibility and relevance to the keywords discussed above. Luetkemeyer and Mardis (2016) also used peer-reviewed status and document type as inclusion or exclusion criteria for a meta-synthesis on secondary education STEM digital resources. Conference materials, books, book chapters, theses, and dissertations were excluded. Relevance was determined by reviewing article titles and abstracts and leveraging search filters to determine whether the articles directly addressed the experiences of international faculty. Articles that mentioned foreign faculty but focused on the perspectives of only students were excluded. Checks for full-text accessibility and removing duplicates occurred alongside relevance assessment. As a meta-synthesis, only qualitative studies and the qualitative components of mixed methods studies were included in the sample. Quantitative

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5) Pusan National University Library's Academic Database Hub: https://lib.pusan.ac.kr/resource/databases/

studies were excluded from the sample. As noted in Figure 1, a total of nineteen studies (n=19) were identified through the search screening process; seven were published in Korean and twelve were published in English.

English Keyword Searching = 1420	Korean Keyword Searching = 71
Research Articles = 1173	Research Articles = 59
Relevance, Duplicates, Full-Text = 22	Relevance, Duplicates, Full-Text = 10
Qualitative or Mixed Methods = 12 +	Qualitative or Mixed Methods = 7
	Final sample (n) = 19

〈Figure 1〉 Systematic Literature Search and Screening

A framework synthesis functions like a directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), leveraging an existing theoretical framework to provide structure and guide the analysis and interpretation of qualitative data (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009). This study uses Burnett's (2015) information domains framework to provide interpretive guidance. The findings and conclusion sections of the sampled articles were analyzed using an existing theory of information worlds general codebook (Burnett et al., 2014) and open coding. As the general codebook (Burnett et al., 2014) includes codes for the social information domain, codes for the individual and signification domains were developed during the analysis and contributed to a preliminary expanded codebook including all three domains. To improve the trustworthiness and reliability of the analysis, consensus-building was used between two coders, using an approach similar to Luetkemeyer and Mardis's (2016) meta-synthesis. Both coders independently analyzed the sampled articles, iteratively reviewed their coding results, and discussed coding differences until reaching consensus. The resulting codes are represented in the themes presented in the findings. The two coders, the authors of this study, are familiar with qualitative data analysis and the theory used.

Like qualitative studies in general, the findings of this study are not generalizable. However, the findings may be transferable to similar contexts, such as the experiences of international faculty working in other countries. As a framework synthesis of existing literature, this study is a secondary analysis of data collected and analyzed for different purposes and research questions. However, given the ubiquity of information in an individual's professional, personal, and social lives, identifying information needs and behaviors from disparate contexts and experiences is possible.

Ⅳ. Findings

1. Sampled Article Characteristics

Nineteen (n=19) articles meeting the selection criteria were identified. Table 1 includes the article information, original language of publication, methods, and foreign professor sample sizes.

〈Table 1〉 Sampled Articles, Publication Languages, Methods, Foreign Faculty Sample Sizes

Author(s), Publication Year, Article Title	Methods & Foreign Faculty Sample Sizes
Cho, Y. H., & Palmer, J. D. (2013). Stakeholders' views of South Korea's higher education internationalization policy. [English]	Mixed: Surveys & Interviews (n=8)
Froese, F. J. (2012). Motivation and adjustment of self-initiated expatriates: The case of expatriate academics in South Korea. [English]	Qualitative: Interviews (n=30)
Ghazarian, P. G., Tait, A., Robinson, J., & Kobyakova, U. (2024). Perceptions of faculty work abroad: Lived experiences in Korean higher education. [English]	Qualitative (Multiple): Interviews & Focus Groups (n=24)
Gress, D. R., & Shin, J. (2020). Perceptual differences between expatriate faculty and senior managers regarding acculturation at a Korean university. [English]	Qualitative: Interviews (n=14)
Hong, S., & Kim, H.-J. (2024). Difficulties and social marginalization of native English-speaking professors in university English programs. [English]	Mixed: Surveys & Interviews (n=5)
Jang, E.-Y. (2013). Perceptions of foreign professors' engineering courses: Perspectives from professors and students. [Korean]	Mixed: Case Study with Surveys, Observation, & Interviews (n=7)
Jang, E.-Y. (2017). Sustainable internationalization in South Korean higher education: Languages and cultures in a foreign professor's course. [English]	Mixed: Case Study with Surveys, Observation, & Interviews (n=1)
Kim, D., Yoo, S.-S., Sohn, H., & Sonneveldt, E. L. (2022). The segmented mobility of globally mobile academics: A case study of foreign professors at a Korean university. [English]	Qualitative: Interviews (n=15)
Kim, S. (2021). Foreign professors' perceptions of online classes during the COVID-19 Pandemic. [Korean]	Mixed: Surveys & Interviews (n=7)
Kim, S., & Chesnut, M. (2016). Hidden lessons for developing journals: A case of North American academics publishing in South Korea. [English]	Qualitative: Interviews (n=2)
Kim, S. K. (2016). Western faculty 'flight risk' at a Korean university and the complexities of internationalisation in Asian higher education. [English]	Qualitative (Multiple): Ethnographic Case Study & Interviews (n=15)
Palmer, J. D., & Cho, Y. H. (2012). South Korean higher education internationalization policies: Perceptions and experiences. [English]	Qualitative: Interviews (n=9)
Park, E. (2025). Analysis of the motivation and needs of foreign faculties to participate in teaching support programs. [Korean]	Mixed: Surveys & Interviews (n=3)
Park, H. W. (2018). Living as foreign scientists: Stories of nineteen expatriate professors in South Korea. [English]	Qualitative: Interviews (n=19)
Sim, M. (2014). A study of foreign professors' perceptions toward their lived experiences in Korean university. [Korean]	Qualitative (Multiple): Interviews & Focus Groups (n=3)
Son, H. (2025). A narrative study on the professional identity of foreign professors at Korean higher education institutions: Focusing on those in charge of Korean language courses. [Korean]	Qualitative: Interviews (n=3)
Song, I., & Kim, Y. (2024). Working as a "token": Different perspectives on the role of international faculty in Korean universities. [English]	Qualitative: Interviews (n=10)
Youn, O.-K. (2015). A study on Korean language-and-culture education for improving foreign professors' job performance. [Korean]	Qualitative: Interviews (n=15)
Youn, O.-K. (2016). Case study of a job-related Korean language-and-culture education lectures for foreign professors: Based on Vygotsky's theory. [Korean]	Qualitative (Multiple): Case Study with Training & Interviews (n=10)

Thirteen (68.42%) of the studies used qualitative designs with singular or multiple methods, and six (31.58%) used mixed methods designs. Of the nine studies that used a singular qualitative method, all were interviews. Of the four studies that used multiple qualitative methods, two studies combined interviews and focus groups, one study used an ethnographic case study approach with interviews, and one was a case study involving a training program and interviews. Of the six mixed methods studies, four studies combined surveys and interviews, and two were case studies combining surveys, observation, and interviews. The number of foreign faculty participants in the sampled articles ranged from one to thirty, with an average sample size of around 10.53 participants (median=9, SD=7.83).

The disciplines of the studies were identified using the journals of publication. Overall, twelve articles (63.16%) were published in education-related journals, including Korean language education (3 or 15.79%), comparative or international education (2 or 10.53%), education (2), Higher Education (2), curriculum and instruction (1, 5.25%), English education (1), and multicultural education (1). Five articles (26.32%) focused on language education or linguistics. Two articles (10.53%) were published in humanities and social sciences journals, one (5.26%) in scholarly communication, and one in science and technology studies.

2. Domain of the Social

The social domain consists of the original five core concepts of Jaeger and Burnett's (2010) theory of information worlds and the findings in this section are organized accordingly.

2.1 Social Types

Foreign professors. Foreign professors or international faculty are the central social type of the information world or domain framed for this study. Like university professors in general, foreign professors are typically responsible for research, teaching, and service, though these responsibilities may vary based on the specific type of their position (i.e., tenure-track vs. non-tenure-track, research vs. teaching) or university type (comprehensive, industrial, junior college, etc.). Teaching-focused university professors may not have tenure-track or tenured positions and may not have opportunities or grant support for research (Palmer & Cho, 2012). Non-tenure-track language teaching professors may lack decision-making authority in their departments (Hong & Kim, 2024). Tenure-track foreign professors are expected to meet research publication, teaching load, and service requirements (Palmer & Cho, 2012).

The perceived roles of foreign professors vary but are often influenced by the internationalization efforts of Korean HEIs. Foreign faculty are expected to improve recognition, rankings, metrics and credibility of their university and its programs, and to attract or recruit foreign students (Palmer & Cho, 2012; Song & Kim, 2024). Son (2025) found that foreign professors teaching Korean perceive managing and advising students as their most important roles and may feel conflicted when assigned other responsibilities. Song and Kim (2024) note that some foreign faculty see their roles as providing outside perspectives. As one foreign professor explains their perspective is "Not better, not worse-[just] different. And then, with this different perspective, it is up to the people who are interested in me-it's up to them to make use of it. It's just one piece of information, one extra data point" (Song & Kim, 2024, 933).

Korean professors. Korean professors are the predominant group of academics working in Korea. Korean professors may work alongside foreign professors in their departments or at their HEIs, and must also meet research publication, teaching, and service requirements. However, their expectations may be higher due to university policies, language abilities, and cultural expectations. Korean professors often need to publish in Korean and English and may also be required or strongly encouraged to teach in both languages; which, in turn, may contribute to resentment towards foreign professors who are typically only required to teach and publish in one language, usually English (Palmer & Cho, 2012). Korean faculty may assist foreign professors, especially if support from the larger college or university is inadequate or missing. However, some Korean faculty expressed frustration and lowered expectations because their institutions were not providing adequate support for foreign faculty and due to the extra work (Song & Kim, 2024).

"Foreign" Korean professors. Foreign Korean professors are a subset of foreign professors who have Korean heritage but are from another country or hold a non-Korean passport and may not be able to speak Korean. Domestic Korean professors and administrators may expect higher adherence to Korean language and cultural norms from foreign Korean professors, despite them potentially having different cultural or linguistic backgrounds (Kim et al., 2022).

Students. Both Korean and international students participate in courses, research collaborations, and mentoring with foreign professors. Some foreign professors hire Korean students to assist with translations, completing administrative work, or applying for research grants (Song & Kim, 2024). Park (2018) found that foreign professors contributed the success of winning research grants to their Korean students as most portions of NRF grant proposals must written in Korean.

Administrative staff. Administrative staff include university workers who manage, support, or

interact with foreign professors. This includes professors serving in leadership roles, such as deans or department directors. Korean staff members may provide information, language, and other support for foreign professors that are not officially or adequately provided by their larger institutions (Gress & Shin, 2020; Song & Kim, 2024). The level of administrative support for foreign professors may vary due to the language abilities of staff and frequent required staff changes, usually two-year terms (Hong & Kim, 2024). Some Korean staff feel reluctant to adapt to the needs of foreign faculty due to language issues, lowered expectations, or negative perceptions of foreign faculty (Gress & Shin, 2020; Song & Kim, 2024).

Foreign faculty's Korean spouses. Some foreign professors are married, partnered, or have families with Korean citizens. Park (2018) found that some foreign professors moved to Korea because their spouses wanted to, or to support their children's education. Froese (2012) found that foreign faculty with both family connections and regional interest were better culturally adapted to life, work, and interactions with others in Korea due to spousal and family support.

2.2 Social Norms

English as lingua franca. While not universal, foreign professors often lack Korean language skills for various reasons. Korean universities often omit Korean language proficiency as a requirement for foreign professors because it may severely limit the number of potential applicants and some institutions provide limited Korean language training (Gress & Shin, 2020; Palmer & Cho, 2012; Park, 2018). However, some foreign professors regard English as "the *lingua franca* of science" (Park, 2018, 64), arguing that academics should communicate with each other in English. The sentiment of English being the "world language and lingua franca" was seen in Kim et al. (2022, 1269), and in Jang (2013, 235), where one professor argued that English is required "at the top levels of research" and another citing its importance "in a world where English is becoming the major language of commerce, science, politics, travel, etc."

Some foreign faculty did not expect the language barrier to be as difficult to overcome, thinking that Koreans, in general, could or would speak better English, underestimated the difficulty of learning Korean, or did not value learning a geographically limited language (Kim et al., 2022). However, for the foreign professors who learned Korean, it helped improve their work and personal lives, as noted by one in Kim et al. (2022, 1269): "Without basic Korean, I couldn't even communicate basically. Just learning Korean makes my life better." However, foreign faculty adverse to service or administrative work may benefit from not knowing Korean (Kim et al.,

2022). Ghazarian et al. (2024) explain that some foreign professors would eschew or neglect administrative or service work they were unable or unsure how to do. However, this may risk further diminishing their roles or perceptions about them (Song & Kim, 2024).

Socialization. Some foreign professors reported different experiences and challenges with socialization norms in Korea that differ from their home countries' cultures. Consensus building in Korean HEIs often takes place at dinners and other informal events (Gress & Shin, 2020; Shin, 2012). A European foreign professor explains that scholars in their home country often host dinners at home to socialize, but Koreans rarely host dinners at home (Park, 2018). Hoesik (회식) is a common Korean workplace practice consisting of an after-work dinner often featuring heavy drinking with co-workers and required or strongly recommended attendance (Kim et al., 2022; Park, 2018). While some foreign professors expressed disdain for hoesik, others tried to participate or socialize with Koreans at other functions due to their social and cultural importance (Gress & Shin, 2020; Kim et al., 2022; Park, 2018). A foreign professor explains, "I think it's really important for me to be introduced, meet, (and) socialize with Korean researchers because this is how most of the things are done here" (Gress & Shin, 2020, 9).

2.3 Normative Information Behaviors

Information Behavior & Access. Individual foreign professors' information behaviors are not specifically addressed in the sampled literature. However, access to information is impacted by language and cultural barriers and a general lack of institutional support. Institutional and department information and official memos (공문) are often disseminated via university systems, such as KORUS,[6] and email or otherwise made available only in Korean (Gress & Shin, 2020; Hong & Kim, 2024; Park, 2018; Park, 2025; Sim, 2014). Due to barriers and lack of support, the burden of information seeking relies on an individual foreign professor's language skills and initiative. As one foreign professor noted (Hong & Kim, 2024, 199), "people don't tell you, or you hear it at the very last minute..., Sometimes the flow of communication is not perfect."

Access to institutional or departmental information in English may also be subject to the language abilities of current administrative staff and frequent staff changes (Hong & Kim, 2024). Foreign English professors identified difficulties in accessing information related to teaching and human resource management, such as submission deadlines or exam schedules. Another foreign English professor (Hong & Kim, 2024, 200) explained, "We can translate ourselves through Google so that's

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6) KORUS is the university system used by national universities in Korea: https://portal.korus.kr/

what I've been doing. But it seems like sometimes we're not getting some fairly important information in English." Foreign professors explained that without such information, they were not able to form or express their opinions, request changes, or ask for help. Gress and Shin (2020) found that some important information, such as department-specific promotion and tenure rules, is sometimes unwritten, unknown, inaccessible, or otherwise inadequately communicated to foreign professors until it is/was too late. Ghazarian et al. (2024) found some foreign professors felt that some information was being purposely withheld from them.

International Collaboration & Publication. Foreign faculty often publish in English in international journals due to their language skills and are expected to leverage and expand their international professional networks, which may be more global than those of Korean faculty (Gress & Shin, 2020; Song & Kim, 2024). Relatedly, foreign professors may collaborate more with other foreign professors or international scholars in their global networks than with Korean faculty due to language barriers and a lack of socialization with Korean scholars. This is reinforced by foreign professors seeking to maintain relevance in their disciplines and retain their global mobility in case they decide to seek academic posts outside of Korea (Kim, 2016; Kim et al., 2022).

2.4 Information Values

In general, foreign professors need information relevant to their research, teaching, and service as well as their personal lives in Korea. There are strong preferences and needs for English-based information due to the language abilities of foreign faculty. In regards to official notices (공문), one professor argued, "information and materials that international faculty mandatorily check must have English translation" (Park, 2025, 413, translated). Some complained about the lack of professional development opportunities, expressing needs for information and training related to new educational technologies and learning management systems (LMSs) (Hong & Kim, 2024).

Many of the foreign professors were surprised and grateful to have great flexibility and agency over their teaching techniques and course content (Froese, 2012; Ghazarian et al., 2024; Hong & Kim, 2024). Others felt overwhelmed by their academic freedom, wanting more direction, feedback, and instructional support (Ghazarian et al., 2024). However, some foreign professors were unfamiliar with the larger curriculum, suggesting a need for information about educational standards and institutional goals (Hong & Kim, 2024). Park (2025) found that foreign professors are motivated to participate in teaching support programs primarily to learn more about teaching approaches and expressed a need for more personalized training or smaller groups, as well as

training on how to use university systems and adapting to Korean culture. Relatedly, Froese (2012) found that foreign faculty often needed help with everyday tasks outside of the workplace, such as opening bank accounts, setting up phone plans, and understanding the Korean housing market and securing living arrangements. Foreign professors with Korean partners or families had more support in these areas (Froese, 2012).

2.5 Boundaries

Language Barriers. Some of the studies noted that foreign professors were not often asked to serve on graduate student committees or were excluded from or not required to participate in faculty meetings and other services because they were facilitated in Korean only (Cho & Palmer, 2013; Froese, 2012; Palmer & Cho, 2012). Outside of a few internationalized departments, Song & Kim (2024) found that foreign faculty are perceived by Korean staff and faculty to contribute less service due to poor Korean skills.

Park (2018) notes that knowing Korean can help foreign professors access and understand important information, such as tenure and promotion polices and university emails and university emails and official memos, which are often only available in Korean. However, foreign professors did not have time or financial support from their universities to take Korean classes. Foreign faculty who can understand Korean may serve as intermediaries to share information between domestic and foreign faculty members (Hong & Kim, 2024). However, some Korean faculty are uncomfortable expressing themselves in English and some refuse to speak English with foreign professors, despite having doctoral degrees from English-speaking countries (Park, 2018).

Cultural Differences. Cultural differences impact the lives and work of foreign professors. As noted, afterwork dinners outside the home and other functions are important for social, cultural, and decision-making (Gress & Shin, 2020; Kim et al., 2022; Park, 2018). However, some foreign professors may be unable, uncomfortable, or unwilling to drink alcohol with their co-workers (Park, 2018). Kim et al. (2022) found that foreign faculty women and those with children felt excluded from social gatherings or treated as lesser if they attended.

Another aspect of Korean culture that created challenges for foreign faculty is its age/power hierarchy (나이 서열), where senior or more highly ranked persons hold more power, and respect or deference are given if not required. Park (2018) describes a foreign professor's experience of being cut off by a senior faculty member during a faculty meeting. The foreign professor was asked for their input on hiring a new person because the foreign professor was an expert in

the recruiting area. When it was the foreign professor's turn to talk, they were cutoff and silenced by a senior Korean professor, who was then allowed to speak at length and without question despite their non-expert status in the recruiting area.

Discrimination. Foreign professors experienced discrimination in the form of racism, sexism, and xenophobia in different, sometimes complex ways (Kim et al., 2022; Park, 2018; Sim, 2014). Discrimination and divisions between social types may create barriers to information and other resources. Park (2018) provided several examples of discrimination experienced by foreign professors. During a department faculty meeting with multiple foreign faculty members present, an older Korean professor stood and began shouting, ""We don't want foreigners in this department." We were taking their space, and there were better Koreans who could take this space. We were just a kind of token, we are not real professors," and at another time, told another foreign professor, "You are not a real professor. You are just here to teach in English" (Park, 2018, 70).

The age/power hierarchy also bothered foreign professors because it negatively impacted younger Korean faculty, especially women (Park, 2018). Kim et al. (2022) found that foreign faculty women with children felt excluded from social events, while white Western faculty women and male foreign professors with lighter skin seemed to receive preferential treatment. Foreign faculty with Korean heritage may experience more pressure to participate in department work and service than other foreign faculty members (Kim et al., 2022). However, Park (2018) also noted several foreign professors with more positive experiences working in Korea, with good support from their university and positive relationships with Korean faculty and Korea in general. Sim (2014) notes some foreign professors acknowledge and pursue their own roles in trying to address discrimination and other systemic issues in Korean HEIs.

Internationalization or Globalization Policies & Insufficient Institutional Support. South Korean universities have aimed to increase their international reputations and rankings by recruiting foreign faculty, foreign students, offering more courses taught in English, and incentivizing or requiring more English research publications (Cho & Palmer, 2013). However, these policies may have created some potential boundaries between social types. These policies often emphasize quantitative measures, such as the number of foreign faculty, students, or classes offered in English, rather than evaluating teaching quality or impact (Palmer & Cho, 2012; Cho & Palmer, 2013). Palmer and Cho (2012) noted that international students want to take more English classes, but that this may negatively impact Korean students wanting to take classes in Korean. In Cho and Palmer (2013), a foreign professor expressed concerns the focus on international students

may underserve Korean students and locals and suggested a balanced approach to globalization. However, universities often do not provide foreign professors with adequate institutional or organizational support, leaving that work for Korean faculty, department staff, students, or for the foreign faculty themselves (Ghazarian et al., 2024; Gress & Shin, 2020; Song & Kim, 2024).

Technology & Language. The Korean government promotes the use of domestic software, which can provide challenges to foreign professors. Some Korean journals only accepted submissions in a file format (.hwp) used by the Hancom Hangul Word Processor,[7] which was only available in Korean (Kim & Chesnut, 2016). While some basic information on university administrative portals may be available in English, much of the more specialized information and documentation is not (Song & Kim, 2024). Park (2025) found that foreign professors as well as students needed more help with learning how to use the Korean LMSs. Despite issues with domestic software, foreign professors seem relatively technologically adept. While Kim (2021) found that foreign professors demonstrated high technology pedagogical content knowledge and were able to effectively teach online with minimal stress during the COVID-19 Pandemic, Park (2025) found that some professors need more support for online teaching.

3. Domain of the Individual

Foreigner Identity, Perceived Roles, & Motivations. The individual experiences and perspectives of foreign professors varied based on their racial or ethnic backgrounds, nationality, gender, Korean language ability, and their motivations for moving to or staying in Korea. Due to individual characteristics and limited roles of foreign faculty, some foreign faculty focus more on their research or teaching than on service or engaging with Korean society (Kim et al., 2022). Froese (2012) found that fewer opportunities for service, while freeing up more time for research and teaching, contributed to foreign professors' feelings of exclusion as well as being uninformed.

Ghazarian et al. (2024) found that foreign professors who were able to build rapport with students expressed joy and satisfaction, while others, particularly tenure-track faculty, complained of high teaching loads. Froese (2012) found that foreign professors who were motivated to move to Korea due to family connections or personal interest in the area were more well-adjusted culturally. However, for foreign professors trying to maintain global mobility and recognition in their fields internationally, some pursue "dual professional identities" by trying to satisfy Korean

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7) https://www.hancom.com/en

and international publication expectations (Kim, 2016).

Intertwined Feelings of Isolation, Frustration, & Helplessness. As in several of the sampled studies, foreign professors often felt isolated or excluded from their Korean peers and communities (Ghazarian et al., 2024; Gress & Shin, 2020; Hong & Kim, 2024, Kim, 2016; Kim et al., 2022; Sim, 2014; Palmer & Cho, 2013; Park 2018). Although Palmer and Cho (2013) attributed foreign professors' feelings of isolation to the lack of Korean language skills, Hong and Kim (2024) note that foreign faculty proficient or fluent in Korean may have limited interactions with Korean faculty, lacking opportunities to work together or to leverage their experience and expertise.

Foreign faculty reported frustration due to language, culture, and other challenges faced while working in Korea (Kim et al., 2022; Kim & Chesnut, 2016). A foreign professor in Kim et al. (2022, 1267) explained that they felt that their university "does not care, does not provide the environment where international faculty can adjust." Gress and Shin (2020) and Song and Kim (2024) also noted that foreign faculty feel like their institutions and some of its staff are reluctant to adapt to new or different needs, preferring to maintain the status quo.

Findings from a few studies suggest foreign faculty also often felt helpless or powerless to make changes or get help (Hong & Kim, 2024; Kim, 2016; Gress & Shin, 2020). As a foreign professor describes: "You don't have a voice, no one cares about you. We really don't know anything, what is going on, who should talk to whom. Basically, we survive with the help of the staff in the department or a student" (Gress & Shin, 2020, 7). Gress and Shin (2020) seem to suggest that being uninformed further contributed to feelings of isolation and exclusion. In turn, the isolation, exclusion from decision-making, lack of access to or transparency of information, especially information related to promotion to tenure, contribute to distrust between foreign professors and Korean professors and HEIs (Gress & Shin, 2020).

4. Domain of Signification

Korean Scholarly Communication. Kim and Chesnut (2016) explored the challenges faced by foreign professors publishing in Korean academic journals, focusing on how information is created and shared within the South Korean context. Tenure-track faculty in Korea are expected to publish their work in journals listed in international citation indexes as well as the Korean Citation Index (KCI), where articles can be published in English or Korean (Kim & Chestnut, 2016; Palmer & Cho, 2013). Foreign faculty can also benefit from publishing in KCI journals, but the process

is sometimes more complicated for them. Kim and Chesnut (2016, 274) noted difficulties in the findability and accessibility of KCI-indexed journal articles, explaining that finding one of the foreign professor's articles was "nearly impossible to access online for those unfamiliar with Korean academic publishing." Another foreign professor explained that they put work on Academia.edu to improve its accessibility.

The participants also received reviews for their English submissions in Korean, making the review process more difficult for both the authors and the reviewers. There also appeared to be inconsistencies in review decisions and journal scope. One foreign professor explained a frustrating experience after submitting a manuscript designated as a theoretical piece rather than an empirical study and received negative reviews and a rejection due to apparently poor descriptions of method and data, which are not usually included in theory or concept papers (Kim & Chesnut, 2016).

Kim and Chesnut (2016) also note that Korean journals often require payment for submissions to be reviewed, and sometimes additional payments if the manuscript is accepted and published, which may be seen by foreign professors as a predatory publishing tactic and may discourage submission to Korean journals. However, many Korean journals are published by academic societies, universities, or research institutes, not major publishing companies; the funds are often used to pay reviewers and for print publication costs. Kim (2016) notes that Korean tenure and promotion requirements require or strongly incentivize publishing journal articles rather than other formats, such as monographs. For foreign faculty, this may seem against the norm because books or conference papers may have more value in their respective international academic communities. This may lead some foreign faculty to put in extra work to maintain "dual professional identities" by publishing both articles and books to secure their jobs in Korea and to retain international relevance and global job mobility (Kim, 2016; Kim et al., 2022).

Language and Cultural Reciprocity in Teaching and Higher Education

The sharing of language and culture between foreign professors and Korean students seems to aid information exchange and knowledge transfer. Park (2018) found that advising graduate students in English enabled Korean students to explain their mental health concerns more honestly and directly than they could in Korean, which helped improve relationships with their students. Jang (2017) found a foreign professor's use of some Korean language and cultural references in their English-based classes improved student learning and made classes more enjoyable. Jang (2013) also found that foreign STEM professors leveraged their expertise and experience well, but did not consider their English use when teaching. Foreign professors who adapted their teaching

to the Korean cultural context felt more fulfilled and successful (Ghazarian et al., 2024).

Youn (2015; 2016) found that Korean language and culture training can improve foreign professors' teaching and their interactions with Korean students, and help them navigate their university's systems and complete everyday tasks. Foreign professors in Youn (2016)'s study initially expressed difficulty understanding Korean workplace culture (직무문화), such as using Korean honorifics (존댓말) when referring to co-workers, such as addressing other professors as gyosunim (교수님) and referring to oneself as gyosu (교수), and understanding the ppalli-ppalli (빨리빨리) or fast-paced and competitive culture of Korean society. After the training, one professor remarked, "Now I could understand Y's university system from President to my boss and the given class could help me to communicate and understand with Korean colleagues in my office" (Youn, 2016, 289).

Ⅴ. Discussion

1. Information Domains of International Faculty Summary

Language and cultural boundaries permeate the information domains of international faculty at Korean universities. Due to internationalization pushes by Korean universities, many foreign professors are hired without Korean language proficiency. With limited institutional support for foreign professors, those without Korean language skills often rely on support from Korean professors, staff, students, and, in some cases, their spouses or the use of translation apps, to translate and access information. Lack of Korean language skills and different socialization norms may contribute to exclusion from service opportunities, administrative work, and social functions, which in turn may contribute to negative perceptions or animosity from Korean professors and staff, and further isolate or diminish foreign professors. However, even foreign professors with Korean language proficiency expressed a lack of socialization with their Korean colleagues, and discrimination related to race, gender, or family status may further contribute to the isolation, frustration, and helplessness experienced by some foreign professors. Holding English as lingua franca or disinterest in service may discourage some foreign professors from learning Korean.

While none of the sampled articles specifically addressed the information behaviors or library use of foreign professors in Korea, some characteristics about their information needs and behaviors were identified. There is a clear preference for information in English and translating or interpreting

Korean information into English is a crucial step in the information seeking behaviors of foreign professors. However, as many foreign professors lack proficiency in Korean, much of the translation-based information seeking is imposed on Korean colleagues, staff, students, or family members. Individual preferences, motivations, and initiative of foreign professors to learn Korean or use translation apps themselves may improve their abilities to access formal and informal information sources needed to support their research, teaching, and service. Information in English related to teaching and university life, such as curriculum, university systems, and professional training, are needed. Foreign professors need information about grant opportunities and how to navigate the review and publication processes of Korean academic journals. Foreign professors also expressed everyday life information needs, such as housing and banking.

The exclusion and isolation experienced by foreign professors may negatively impact their intent to stay in Korea. Informal sources of information, primarily interactions and correspondence with other professors, are seen as valuable sources of information (Hart, 1997; Rupp-Serrano & Robbins, 2013; Wang, 2010). With limited opportunities to socialize or communicate with Korean professors and students, foreign professors may refocus their efforts on international collaborations. Yin and Rhee (2023) found that job resources, such as access to graduate students, cultural adjustment, and other motivators, impact the research productivity of foreign professors. These issues may be detrimental to internationalization efforts by limiting opportunities for foreign professors to collaborate with Korean professors and students and publish internationally, and may further weaken foreign professors' ties to Korean universities and contribute to declining retention.

In brief, the social domain of foreign professors is characterized by language barriers and cultural differences. While the individual domain of foreign professors is impacted by the unique backgrounds, preferences, and motivations, especially those related to learning Korean, of each professor, feelings of isolation, frustration, and helplessness were common. The domain of signification was also impacted by language barriers and cultural differences embedded in Korean scholarly publishing and within classroom teaching and student advising interactions.

2. Recommendations for Korean HEIs, Academic Libraries, and Foreign Faculty

The primary challenge for most foreign professors in Korea is the language barrier. However, the competing expectations of foreign professors, Korean professors, staff, students, and HEI internationalization policies complicate the matter. The push to attract more potential applicants

by waiving Korean language proficiency combined with limited, if any, training or support for foreign professors after they are hired exacerbates the problem. Foreign professors may lack proper incentives, time, funding, training, or other support needed to learn Korean. Gress and Shin (2020) argue that Korean HEIs should establish clearer language expectations, such as reaching a certain level within a specified time frame, and, especially if they waive such requirements, provide adequate post-hire institutional language support.

For Korean HEIs hoping to continue to recruit *and* retain foreign faculty, institutional policies, documents, and systems need to be accessible and usable in English, and more English-speaking staff are needed (Froese, 2012). Park (2025) suggests English manuals (both in PDF and video format) for university portals and LMSs should be provided to international faculty so they can easily adopt technologies for teaching and administrative work. Kim (2016) argues that internationalization policies and support for international faculty need to be meaningfully improved to address isolation and power imbalances. Lack of transparency and leadership contribute to feelings of distrust between foreign professors and Korean HEIs (Gress & Shin, 2010; Sim, 2014).

Korean HEIs are encouraged to provide support for foreign faculty in multiple ways. Foreign faculty want more opportunities to develop their professional identity and need more support and information to improve their teaching and understanding of university curricula, university systems, and workplace culture (Ghazarian et al., 2024; Hong & Kim, 2024; Park, 2025; Son, 2025; Youn, 2015; 2016). Korean HEIs could also support research and socialization between Korean and foreign professors by increasing the value of collaboration in all academic activities, and provide funding and institutional support for co-teaching and research collaborations (Palmer & Cho, 2012). Hong and Kim (2024) argue that such collaborations can help foreign faculty learn more about university culture in Korea and more readily find information they need for work. Improving access to graduate students to work with foreign professors may boost productivity, grant application success, and language translation support (Froese, 2012; Park, 2018; Yin and Rhee, 2023).

Korean HEIs should also develop and provide training workshops on cultural competency, intercultural communication, and diversity available to foreign professors and Korean professors, students, and staff (Froese, 2012; Ghazarian et al., 2024; Jang, 2017; Kim et al., 2022). Such training can help foreign professors to build awareness of their own biases and privileges and better prepare them for living and working in a new society (Kim et al., 2022). Froese (2012) notes that helping with housing, banking, and other everyday tasks could help foreign faculty acclimate and adapt to Korean life and culture (Froese, 2012). Song and Kim (2024) suggest

that organizational changes are also needed to address negative perceptions of foreign professors. Establishing a diversity council open to foreign and Korean professors and students to help build awareness of, address, and provide leadership on issues related to diversity, language, and cultural challenges (Gress & Shin, 2020). Park (2018) argues that learning about the experiences of foreign faculty helps to raise awareness of the challenges they face as well as identify issues in Korean cultural practices, such as hierarchical structures. Korean HEIs should take a proactive, systemic approach to assessing the needs of foreign professors by engaging their perspectives and including them in decision-making processes, especially when these decisions impact them, and leverage their expertise in internationalization efforts (Saffari & Fedorenko, 2025; Sim, 2014).

Academic libraries at South Korean HEIs can also play an active role in supporting foreign professors. Diversity and intercultural training programs can be hosted in the neutral space of the library and supplemented with library resources and services. Libraries should provide awareness and training programs tailored for faculty (Ansari & Kumar, 2010) and liaison librarians should work closely with faculty to better understand and reflect their needs in library collections and services (Miller et al., 2023a). Academic libraries should try to achieve multilingual accuracy and parity of the library website, and consider hiring multilingual staff members dedicated to supporting foreign users (Lee & Lee, 2020). Libraries can offer workshops in English on publishing in Korean academic journals, research grants applications, and university information systems, or host networking events to foster research collaborations between foreign faculty and Korean professors and students. Miller et al. (2023b) suggest that academic libraries should host physical spaces for research collaborations. Academic librarians could also aid KCI-indexed journals and their websites improve visibility and usability to potentially boost access and increase citations.

Lastly, foreign professors with low proficiency or knowledge of the Korean language and culture should consider learning more. This suggestion does not preclude the aforementioned recommendations. Learning more about the Korean language and culture provides multiple benefits for foreign professors, such as improving rapport with Korean colleagues and students, navigating Korean publication processes, and using university systems (Youn, 2015; 2016). Relatedly, Huang and Chen (2024) found that Chinese and Korean professors working at Japanese universities had higher positions, research accomplishments, and Japanese language skills, which improved their status and participation on campus. Jang (2017, 682) advocates for "linguistic and cultural reciprocity" as an integral part of sustainable internationalization. Gress and Shin (2020) call for mutually beneficial, bi-directional changes from both foreign faculty and Korean HEIs.

Ⅵ. Conclusion

The findings indicate that language barriers, cultural differences, individual characteristics, and feelings of isolation and exclusion have major impacts on the information domains and lived experiences of foreign professors at Korean universities. While this study contributes scholarship on an understudied population, more direct research is needed. Future work could explore the importance of translation and the use of translation apps or AI tools to support the information seeking of foreign faculty. As this study's findings primarily report on English-speaking foreign faculty from Anglophone countries, future work could explore or compare the experiences of international faculty from non-English speaking countries and other backgrounds. Next steps could also include quantitative approaches such as surveys or meta-analysis.

This study provides insight into how academic libraries and HEIs in South Korea can provide support for foreign professors by addressing barriers to information access and promoting inclusion. The authors echo calls for more institutional support and reciprocal change from all stakeholders to make internationalization efforts at South Korean HEIs more meaningful and successful.

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