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Online Sojourner Communities: What Can Sojourners Learn from Them and Do They Aid Cultural Adapation?

Bruce E. Screws Jr.

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

ONLINE SOJOURNER COMMUNITIES:
WHAT CAN SOJOURNERS LEARN FROM THEM
AND DO THEY AID CULTURAL ADAPATION?

By

BRUCE E. SCREWS, JR.

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Bruce E. Screws, Jr. defended this dissertation on November 10, 2022.

The members of the supervisory committee were:

Vanessa P. Dennen
Professor Directing Dissertation

Paul Marty
University Representative

James Klein
Committee Member

Eunhui Yoon
Committee Member

The Graduate School has verified and approved the above-named committee members, and certifies that the dissertation has been approved in accordance with university requirements.

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my grandfather, Gerald E. Phillips. In one of our final conversations, he jokingly asked me to mention his area of study, “musical ethos,” in my dissertation. And while I did not get his musical talent, I did inherit his love of education.

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ABSTRACT

Sojourners, people who live outside their home countries, experience inevitable hardships when they separate from their home countries and live in new cultures. These hardships are collectively known as acculturative stress (Spradley & Phillips, 1972). To deal with acculturative stress, some sojourners seek information and social support from other sojourners in online sojourner communities (Oh & Butler, 2019; Ong & Ward, 2005). Sojourners have different knowledge needs throughout their sojourns, but it is unclear much they learn from participating in online sojourner communities and how useful this information is (Yoon & Chung, 2017).

Though some researchers have focused on how sojourners benefit from online sojourner community participation, other researchers have had concerns. Researchers have found that long-term, extensive contact with other sojourners from the same country, termed co-nationals, is associated with poor cultural adaptation to the host country (Kim, 2001; Lim & Pham, 2016). In a meta-analysis of 76 studies about international students, Bender et al. (2019) found that “only support from mixed sources (i.e., not distinguishing between internationals, host, or co-nationals) is associated with a stronger effect of social support than support from co-nationals or fellow international students (compared with support from host sources)” (p. 827). Lim & Pham (2016) argued that sojourners could become so invested in online sojourner communities and their families in their home country that they have no free time to explore the host country and its culture. However, another study suggested that long-term contact with co-nationals could benefit sojourners' cultural adaptation (Cao & Zhang, 2012). This study explored the relationship between online sojourner community usage and cross-cultural adaptation by examining the information that sojourners need to adapt to life in their host countries during each stage of their sojourns and what they learn through participating in online sojourner communities. Additionally, it investigated the benefits and drawbacks of participating in online sojourner communities.

A convergent mixed methods research design using surveys and interviews guided this study. The surveys had qualitative questions, two quantitative psychological scales to assess cross-cultural adaptation, and one quantitative scale to assess Facebook usage. In keeping with Creswell & Creswell's (2018) research methods, the qualitative interviews provided depth and explanations for quantitative findings from the survey. 160 sojourners currently living in South

Korea completed the survey. Eight participants participated in the qualitative interviews through Zoom to investigate what sojourners gain from participating in an online sojourner community.

This study found 25 topics that sojourners must learn to adapt successfully to life in their host countries. As Yoon & Chung (2017) found, these needs varied by their sojourning phases. During the settling stage, Korean language learning/translation and banking/finance/insurance are followed closely by Korean rules/regulations/law, healthcare, and employment/work-related issues. During the established stage, overall reported needs increased by 19%. Most needs remained steady or had modest increases between phases, with few exceptions. Needs like automotive service/repair, childcare, and housing, had large increases between phases. Only one need had a sizable decrease between phases; Korean language learning/translation declined by 10% between phases.

Participants reported the topics they learned about through participating in online sojourner communities. The most common topics they learned during their established phases were visa-related issues, Korean rules/regulations/law, employment/work-related issues, and groceries/dining. Participants also ranked the usefulness of the topics they learned about. The most valuable things they learned were employment/work-related issues, visa-related issues, childcare, groceries/dining, and Korean rules/regulations/law. Though childcare was a less common need, those with children found the information especially useful. Despite the information that sojourners exchange, there was no significant relationship between either of Demes & Geeraert's (2014) cross-cultural adaptation scales and Facebook Sojourner Community Intensity Scale, an adaptation of Ellison et al.'s (2007) Facebook Intensity Scale.

There were considerable drawbacks to participating in online sojourner communities. Negativity was a constant problem in many communities, discouraging some sojourners from participating. Inactive communities were more prone to inaccurate and outdated information. Tempers can flare, and arguments often occurred in some communities. Repetitive low-effort questions were a source of annoyance for long-established sojourners.

However, this study uncovered additional positives about participating in online sojourner communities. The communities provided socio-emotional support through fostering friendship, commiseration, and familial relationship support. Sojourners used online sojourner communities to organize offline events and establish connections to the host country. Sojourners generally regard the information in online sojourner communities as more timely, accurate, and

accessible than official sources. The communities also helped sojourners with professional development and special lifestyle needs.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study explored how people who live outside their home countries, termed sojourners, can use online communities to help them better culturally adapt to their host countries and receive social support. Sojourners experience inevitable hardships when they separate from their home countries and live in new cultures (Spradley & Phillips, 1972). Online communities can be especially beneficial for sojourners because they provide a safe space for information exchanges (Han et al., 2019). Although online communities for sojourners may help them adapt culturally, these spaces can also have the opposite effect by isolating them from participating in the host community (Hofhuis et al., 2019; Jeong, 2004; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 2000). This study explored this issue in depth by studying how sojourners in South Korea use online sojourner communities to learn about their host countries and adapt to their lives outside their home countries.

Background

Online sojourner communities are online groups where sojourners gather online to share information and gain social support. These communities can exist on social media platforms such as Facebook and Reddit. Sojourners can easily find these groups with a simple search for information about a host country. Sojourners collect in these groups and exchange information about their local communities in their host countries (Oh & Butler, 2019, 2015, 2018). These communities can help new arrivals gain valuable survival information and social support while helping experienced sojourners find recreational activities (Oh & Butler, 2019, 2015, 2018). For example, when I moved from my home country, the United States, and began living in South Korea, I joined a sojourner community on Facebook. I frequently posted questions in this local sojourner community. I asked about the local availability of various foods and the best way to get to the airport. The online sojourner community also linked me with social activities where I could meet other sojourners and take Korean language lessons. The online sojourner community helped ease my transition to my new life in South Korea.

Despite these benefits, some researchers have found that long-term, extensive contact with other sojourners from the same country, termed co-nationals, is associated with poor cultural adaptation to the host country (Kim, 2001; Lim & Pham, 2016). In a meta-analysis of 76 studies about international students, Bender et al. (2019) found that “only support from mixed sources (i.e., not distinguishing between internationals, host, or co-nationals) is associated with a stronger effect of social support than support from co-nationals or fellow international students (compared with support from host sources)” (p. 827). Lim & Pham (2016) argued that sojourners could become so invested in online sojourner communities and their families in their home country that they have no free time to explore the host country and its culture. However, another study suggested that long-term contact with co-nationals could benefit sojourners' cultural adaptation (Cao & Zhang, 2012).

As these studies suggest, there is little consensus on whether online sojourner communities are helpful (Bender et al., 2019; Cao & Zhang, 2012; Oh & Butler, 2019, 2015, 2018) or harmful (Kim, 2001; Lim & Pham, 2016) for cross-cultural adaptation. Therefore, more research is needed to provide evidence about the effectiveness or lack of effectiveness of the usage of online sojourner communities.

Despite the problems that sojourners face, sojourning is becoming more common. Finaccord (2018) estimated that over 60 million people are sojourning outside their home countries. They also estimated the annual rate of increase to be around 7.2%. Nearly 1% of the world's population is sojourning outside their home countries. Thus, as the sojourners' population swells, more people will have information needs. Online sojourner communities could be the answer to their questions, but is it the correct answer?

Problem Statement

When sojourners go abroad, they experience problems living in new countries with different cultures. Problems often stem from changes in living conditions, differences in language, food availability, dining habits, internet availability, religion, recreation, social activities, dating practices, and the general pace of life (Geeraert et al., 2021; Oberg, 1960; Spradley & Phillips, 1972; Yu et al., 2021). These problems are collectively called "culture shock" or "acculturative stress." Because of the stresses, sojourners undergo while sojourning, they have a high risk for failure when they cannot culturally adapt to their new environments

(Harzing, 1995, 2002). As many as 20-40% of sojourners return home before completing their studies or work assignments at a high cost to their employers or themselves (Harzing, 1995, 2002).

To deal with these acculturation problems, sojourners seek social support from friends and family in their home countries, but also from other sojourners in online communities (Ng et al., 2017; Oh & Butler, 2019; Ong & Ward, 2005). Sojourners who join sojourner communities on social media were found to have lower levels of acculturative stress and better cultural adaptation than sojourners who do not use social media (Coughlan et al., 2019). Sojourners who use social media for social support benefit from the information and support they receive in the short term. In the short term, sojourner communities can help sojourners adapt to their lives in their host countries (Roskell, 2013; Yoon & Chung, 2017). They can provide easily consumable information from people with familiar experiences (Natalie et al., 2018; Roskell, 2013; Yoon & Chung, 2017).

An overreliance on online sojourner communities may also hurt sojourners' adaptation in the long run (Coughlan et al., 2019; Kim, 2001). Sojourners risk being insulated from their host countries and not adapting past the beginning of their sojourns (Kim, 2001; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 2000). For social support, the downside for sojourners who use social media extensively is that much of their social interactions are limited to digital spaces. At least one study suggests that online social support is inferior to traditional social support but better than no social support (Kaczmarek & Drazkowski, 2014). They may serve as digital enclaves that limit contact sojourners have with locals from the host country (Jeong, 2004; Roskell, 2013). Frequent contact with locals positively correlates with better cultural adaptation (Demes & Geeraert, 2015; Hofhuis et al., 2019; Roskell, 2013; Yoon & Chung, 2017). Demes & Geeraert (2015) found that sojourners adapt better when they orient themselves toward the host culture rather than only trying to maintain their home country's culture. Using online sojourner communities could have the unintended side effect of sojourners' connecting only with those from their home cultures. Online sojourner communities are a mixed bag for helping sojourners culturally adapt to their host countries.

Purpose and Research Questions

This study will examine sojourners' usage of online sojourner communities on Facebook, an internationally popular social media platform. Though online sojourner communities primarily comprise sojourners, locals from the host country can also participate in many online sojourner groups on Facebook. This study will address what knowledge sojourners need to adapt to their host countries and what knowledge they gain from participating in online sojourner communities. It will also address the relationship between the knowledge learned from the communities and sojourners' cross-cultural adaptation. Additionally, the study will examine additional benefits and drawbacks of participating in online sojourner communities on international social media platforms. The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

1. What knowledge do sojourners need to adapt to their host countries cross-culturally?
2. How does participating in online sojourner communities impact how sojourners' knowledge needs are met at different stages in their sojourns?
3. How does online sojourner community usage relate to cross-cultural adaptation?
4. What are the potential advantages and drawbacks of using online sojourner communities?

Significance

Sojourners gather in online sojourner communities, but the benefits of their usages are not yet well understood. Online sojourner communities are groups of sojourning peers who voluntarily associate with one another. Though primarily composed of sojourners, they may also include locals from the host country. Unlike official organizations, such as universities, employers, and governments, sojourners share information laterally rather than receiving information vertically from the top down. When sojourners find official information sources inadequate, they often turn to social media for information (Farh et al., 2010; Sin et al., 2011). Past research has indicated the information needs that sojourners have throughout their sojourns, but research has not focused on whether sojourners have learned this information from online sojourner communities (Bukhari et al., 2020; Natalie et al., 2018; Sharma & Govindan, 2016; Shoham & Strauss, 2008; Showail et al., 2013; Sin et al., 2011; Sin & Kim, 2013; Yoon & Chung, 2017). The research also does not address the relationship between what sojourners learn from online sojourner communities and cross-cultural adaptation.

Research into online sojourner communities' potential pitfalls remains limited. Past research has shown that sojourners who stick to online sojourner communities on social media from their home countries tend to adapt more poorly to the host country than those who engage with people in their host countries (Cao & Zhang, 2012; Lim & Pham, 2016; Saw et al., 2013). Jeong (2004) found that sojourners who only interact with other sojourners tend to adapt poorly to their host countries, and it is logical to assume that applies to digital spaces. Social media from their home countries is not likely to include many locals from the host country. These studies do not address online sojourner communities on internationally popular social media platforms, such as Facebook, that are popular in both the host country and the sojourners' home countries. Additionally, social media, such as Facebook, has the potential to become echo chambers and can intensify users' malcontent (Cinelli et al., 2021). However, this problem has not been explored in online sojourner communities.

This study addressed what sojourners need to adapt to their host countries in greater detail than past studies and addressed what sojourners can learn from online sojourner communities. Additionally, this study examined the relationship between what sojourners learn with both types of cross-cultural adaptation: psychological adaptation and sociocultural adaptation. This examination provided insights into how sojourners use online sojourner communities for cross-cultural adaptation. This study also examined the benefits and drawbacks of using internationally popular online sojourner communities for cross-cultural adaptation.

This study will add to the literature addressing sojourners' information needs and how those needs are addressed through online sojourner communities. It will also address the positives and negatives of online sojourner community participation.

Operational Definitions

Acculturative stress: the feelings of stress that sojourners undergo when adapting to life outside their home countries. Some sources use the term "culture shock," but psychologists now generally prefer "acculturative stress" because of the negative associations with the term "shock" (Sam & Berry, 2006).

Cross-cultural adaptation: I will use the term "cross-cultural adaptation" to refer to how sojourners have adapted to their lives in their host countries. The literature uses similar words, such as "cross-cultural adaptation," "cross-cultural adjustment," "cultural adjustment,"

"international adjustment," and "acculturation." These terms are used somewhat interchangeably without a consistent delineation of meaning (Harrison et al., 2004; Searle & Ward, 1990). Some scholars distinguish the terms, but not consistently (Harrison et al., 2004).

Online sojourner community: An online sojourner community primarily comprises sojourners that address topics specifically for sojourners, though some online sojourner communities also include non-sojourners. These can include online forums, Facebook groups, subreddits on Reddit, and other similar types of communities. Usually, these communities are centered on specific geographic areas.

Sojourners: Sojourners are adults who voluntarily live outside their home countries by choice and eventually plan to return to their home countries (Jackson, 2017). Sojourners include students studying abroad, expatriates working abroad, missionaries, and trailing family members (Jackson, 2017). This study only includes sojourners who intend to stay at least six months within a host country. Though some researchers include tourists in their definitions, I do not include them because they do not stay long enough in the host country to try to adapt (Yu et al., 2021). They are also not likely to participate in online sojourner communities when only visiting as tourists. I also exclude "immigrants" because they do not intend to return to their home countries, so they have different needs than those who plan to return home (Ataca & Berry, 2002). Additionally, volition is a critical consideration; I did not include refugees or children as they lack the choice to go abroad and may not freely return to their home countries. Other terms for sojourners in the academic literature include expat, expatriate, exchange student, foreign resident, foreign student, foreign worker, self-initiated expat, international student, migrant, migrant student, and migrant worker. In common speech, "expat" is the most common term that sojourners call themselves. The data collection instruments will use the term "expat" to avoid ambiguity for the participants.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review will explain the prior research on sojourning, acculturative stress for sojourners, social support, cultural adaptation, online sojourner communities, and sojourners' information seeking.

Sojourners

Sojourning is not uncommon. According to the United States Department of State, nine million American citizens lived abroad in 2019 (Bureau of Consular Affairs, 2020). Though some authors, such as Jackson (2017), explicitly include short-term tourists in their definitions of sojourners, other authors, such as Yu et al. (2019) and Seo et al. (2012) exclude tourists from their research because they are not in their host countries long enough to begin the adaptation process. Because this research focuses on sojourners who use online sojourner communities, the term "sojourner" will exclude short-term visitors because they are not likely to join online sojourner communities or be in the host country long enough for cross-cultural adaptation to occur meaningfully.

Sojourners may choose to live abroad for many reasons. Some reasons for sojourning include personal and professional development, adventure, religion, and entrepreneurship (Kumpikaitė-Valiūnienė et al., 2021; Oberg, 1960; Reardon et al., 2015). Despite their reasons for sojourning, most sojourners experience significant challenges after moving abroad. These stresses are collectively called acculturative stress.

Acculturative Stress

Though there were earlier studies of adaptation in sojourners, many researchers date the study of acculturative stress back to Canadian anthropologist Kalervo Oberg (1960). Oberg first coined the term "culture shock" to describe the problems sojourners suffered from when adapting to life abroad (Ward et al., 2001). Oberg (1960) found that sojourners are initially excited when they arrive and romanticize living abroad in a new culture (honeymoon stage). However, the later reality sets in, and frustrations mount (culture shock). After a while, sojourners begin

adjusting to their lives abroad (adjustment) and gradually accept the cultural differences by findings ways to adapt (mastery).

There are a few problems with the early conceptions of culture shock. Oberg (1960) even noted that the phases of culture shock do not apply to all sojourners; he focused on the sojourners who successfully adjusted to life abroad since many that he observed did not and returned to their home countries without accepting the sojourning lifestyle. Furthermore, his ideas were based only on his informal observations and not on empirical data.

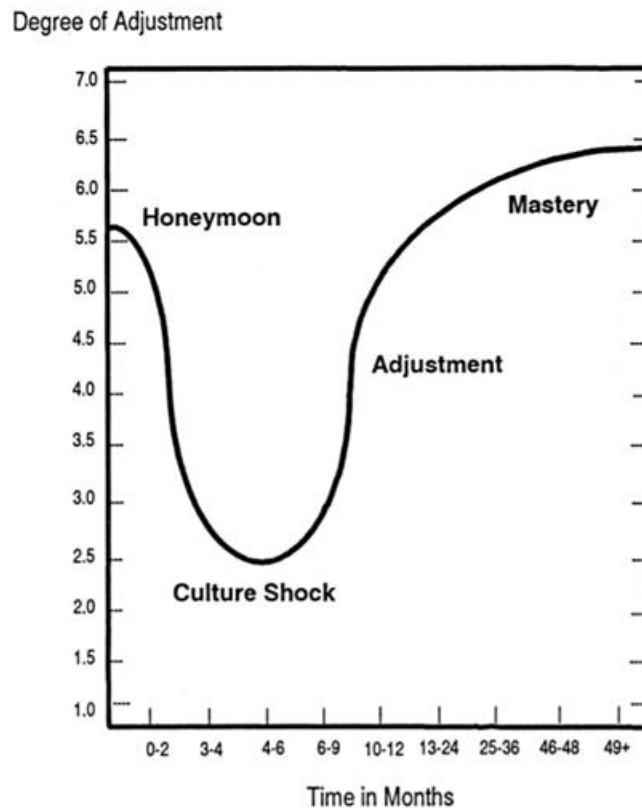


Figure 1

The U-Curve of Cross-Cultural Adjustment

Note. A graph demonstrating the U-curve of culture shock (Black & Mendenhall, 1991, p. 227)

Other researchers have noted that the original culture shock model implies a U-curve and does not hold up well under scrutiny (Ward et al., 2001). See Figure 1 above. Though some researchers found a minority of sojourners who fit Oberg's (1960) culture shock model, others found that sojourners experience the *most* stress when they first arrive (Black & Mendenhall, 1991; Brown & Holloway, 2008; Kealey, 1989; Ward et al., 1998; Westermeyer et al., 1989).

For most sojourners, there is no clear "honeymoon phase," as proposed by Oberg (1960). Many sojourners experience the most difficulties when arriving in the host country (Brown & Holloway, 2008; Ward et al., 1998). The initial conception of culture shock does not hold up to empirical scrutiny, even though the term "culture shock" endures in common speech and academic literature (Ward et al., 2001).

As a response to the perceived shortcomings of "culture shock," Berry (1970) coined the term "acculturative stress" to better describe the challenges that people face when interacting in a new culture. Whereas "culture shock" has a negative connotation, "acculturative stress" is a neutral term. In psychological terms, "stress" breaks down into both positive "eustress" and negative "distress" (Berry, 2006). Both types of stress can serve as impetuses for improving one's life. Additionally, the term "acculturative stress" is more inclusive because the "culture" in "culture shock" sounds like only one culture is involved, but "acculturation" accentuates the interplay between people from different cultures (Berry, 2006). Acculturative stress is an inevitable part of sojourning, not just a "shock" to endure.

In contrast to Oberg's U-curve conception of culture shock, Kim (2001) proposed a constant acculturative stress and cross-cultural adaptation cycle. Instead of distinct phases that do not hold up to empirical scrutiny, Kim's (2001) model constantly cycles between acculturative stress and cross-cultural adaptation. The acculturative stress provides the impetus for cross-cultural adaptation, which later reduces future acculturative stress. For more about Kim's (2001) model, see Cross-Cultural Adaptation below.

Impacts of Acculturative Stress

Sojourners experience acculturative stress for many reasons. In addition to the stresses of relocating to a new area and beginning a new job, sojourners begin living in a new culture (Black et al., 1991). Acculturative stress can lead to "stress behaviors that include anxiety, depression, feelings of marginality and alienation, heightened psychosomatic symptoms, and identity confusion" (Williams & Berry, 1991, p. 634). High acculturative stress is associated with failing to complete overseas assignments and even physical health consequences (Harzing, 1995, 2002; Hwang & Ting, 2008). Therefore, organizations that bring in sojourners would benefit by helping sojourners mitigate acculturative stress.

Cross-Cultural Adaptation

Early scholarship, such as during Oberg's time in the 1960s, focused on immigrants' assimilation into new countries (Kim, 2001). This focus assumed that immigrants should try to fit into the dominant culture in their new countries (Kim, 2019). However, as cultural attitudes have changed, assimilation is no longer the goal, and scholars gradually shifted their perspectives toward multiculturalism (Kim, 2019). Instead of focusing on how sojourners assimilate into the host countries' cultures, cross-cultural adaptation focuses on the "overall 'fit' between an individual cultural stranger's internal conditions and the conditions of the host environment for maximization of his or her life chances" (Kim, 2019, p. 3). Cross-cultural adaptation focuses on how sojourners adapt to their circumstances to reduce acculturative stress and maximize their opportunities in the new host culture.

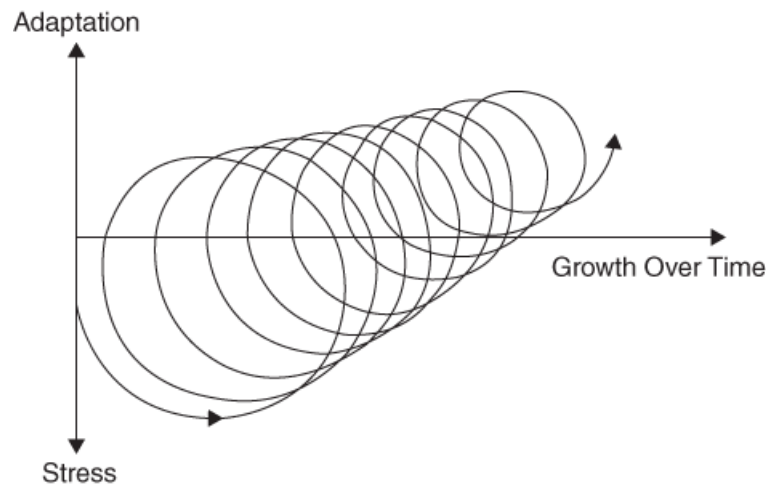


Figure 2

The Stress-Adaptation-Growth Dynamic: A Process Model

Note. A graph showing the process of acculturative stress and adaptation (Kim, 2001, p. 59)

Acculturative stress and cross-cultural adaptation are interrelated. As sojourners gradually adapt to their lives in their host countries, their acculturative stresses decrease, but the relationship is complex (Kim, 2019). Generally, acculturative stress motivates sojourners to find ways to overcome the difficulties of living abroad (Kim, 2019). As sojourners regularly experience new sources of acculturative stress, their internal toolkits for coping expand and lessen the impact of future acculturative stressors of a cyclical nature. Figure 2, above, illustrates

the cyclical relationship between adaptation and stress and how stress decreases over time. To further illustrate this concept, imagine a sojourner couple with a toddler arriving in a new host country for a two-year assignment for a multinational company. Initially, finding how to get groceries and other survival items would take priority, and they would experience acculturative stress as they find out how to get the necessities. Their perceived acculturative stress decreases as they learn how to thrive in their new host country. Later, they enroll their toddler in a local daycare. Norms and expectations for childcare vary widely between countries, so the sojourning parents can expect many acculturative stresses. Over time, as the couple adapts to being daycare parents in a new country, the shock of new stresses lessens as the parents can better cope with changes. Conversely, if the acculturative stress gets too overwhelming and the couple fails to adapt cross-culturally, they could fail to complete the international assignment and return home early.

Cross-cultural adaptation breaks down into two primary components: psychological and sociocultural adaptations (Searle & Ward, 1990). Psychological adaptation “refers to how comfortable and happy a person feels with respect to being in the new culture, or anxious and out of place” (Demes & Geeraert, 2014, p. 92). For example, a sojourner can adapt to the stares of locals when shopping over time. In contrast, “Sociocultural adaptation refers to the more practical and behavioral aspects of adapting to a new culture; those aspects that allow a person to navigate the culture effectively on a day-to-day basis” (Demes & Geeraert, 2014, p. 92). For example, a sojourner learns enough of the local language and customs to make a special order at a restaurant. Past research has shown that both components of cross-cultural adaptation are separate and need to be assessed separately (Ward et al., 1998). Though the two types of adaptation are interrelated, some sojourners adapt socioculturally but struggle psychologically (Ward et al., 1998). For instance, a sojourner may feel entirely out of place in the host country but can navigate its culture without significant problems in their daily life. Thus, in addition to acculturative stress, psychological and sociocultural adaptation are factors that influence a sojourner's experience both negatively and positively.

Social Support

Adapting to a new culture is difficult, but thankfully, sojourners do not adapt in isolation. Numerous studies show that social support helps mitigate the negative aspects of acculturative

stress (Adelman, 1988; Fontaine, 1986; Ong & Ward, 2005; Searle & Ward, 1990; Walton, 1990). According to Ong & Ward (2005), social support is a broad term that includes:

“... emotional support, assertions or displays of love, care, concern, and sympathy; social companionship, belongingness to a social group that provides company for a variety of activities; tangible assistance, concrete aid in the form of financial help, required services, or material resources; and informational support, the communication of opinion or facts relevant to a person’s current difficulties (e.g., advice, personal feedback).” (p.638-639).

Once abroad, sojourners typically get social support from people they can easily communicate with (Jeong, 2004; MacIntyre et al., 2001). Social support can be more challenging in countries with a language barrier with the sojourner's native language. Thus, sojourners typically contact friends or family in their home countries or other local sojourners for social support (Hofhuis et al., 2019; Ong & Ward, 2005; Podsiadlowski et al., 2013). Hofhuis et al. (2019) found that sojourners who frequently communicated with friends and family in their home countries had good social support but tended to feel more alienated in their host countries than those who did not frequently contact people in their home countries. Additionally, Ng et al. (2017) discovered that social support from other sojourners could negatively impact sojourners’ psychological adaptation by supplanting the sojourners’ interactions with locals.

In contrast, some sojourners get social support from locals in the host country, which is beneficial for sojourners' adaptation (Ng et al., 2017; Ong & Ward, 2005; Podsiadlowski et al., 2013). Ng et al., (2017) found that having social support from individuals from the host country positively influenced psychological adaptation. However, getting social support from locals in their host country can be challenging due to language and cultural barriers. Sojourners often turn to online social media to find and connect with other sojourners (Hofhuis et al., 2019; Oh & Butler, 2019, 2015, 2018).

Social support helps mitigate the negative impacts of acculturative stress (Hofhuis et al., 2019; Jyoti & Kour, 2017). Online support communities encourage participants to help each other without monetary reward (Chiu et al., 2015). However, online social support has potential pitfalls (Kaczmarek & Drazkowski, 2014). Online social support is not as effective for people seeking an escape from their real-world problems as traditional offline social support (Kaczmarek & Drazkowski, 2014). Park et al. (2014) and Hofhuis et al. (2019) found that

sojourners who extensively used social media to maintain contact with people in their home countries experienced more significant stress adapting to their host countries.

Types of Social Support

Sojourners, like most people, benefit from social support (Ong & Ward, 2005). However, sojourners have additional needs for social support that those who remain in their home countries do not often need. Ong & Ward (2005) divide sojourner social support into socioemotional and instrumental support. *Socioemotional support* is the emotional support and companionship sojourners receive, while *instrumental support* is how well the sojourners can get relevant information for daily life. Socioemotional support tends to help alleviate uncontrollable stressors, whereas instrumental support helps with controllable stressors (Podsiadlowski et al., 2013). Instrumental social support overlaps with research on sojourners' information-seeking behaviors.

Sojourners' Information Seeking Behaviors

Sojourners seek information to relieve the stress of uncertainty (Sin et al., 2011). Their information-seeking begins before arrival in the host country and continues after they arrive (Yoon & Chung, 2017). They also have informational needs that those in the host country do not have.

Settlement Phases

Yoon & Chung (2017) break sojourners' information-seeking behaviors into three periods. *Pre-arrival* is before sojourners depart for their sojourn in the host country. *Settlement* is the period immediately after they arrive in the host country, and *current* is the period after sojourners finish settling in and begin the regular day-to-day activities of their sojourn. Day-to-day activities often include working or studying at a university.

Before arriving in their host countries, sojourners often seek information to reduce the uncertainties about the major life changes they will face when relocating abroad (Yoon & Chung, 2017). Initially, sojourners look for information about housing, transportation (driver's license, vehicle, public transportation options), documents required for visas, potential employers, and potential schools (Bukhari et al., 2020; Yoon & Chung, 2017). Sojourners can get information from official sources, such as universities, employers, or government websites,

but often find the resources in their native languages lacking and poorly organized (Yoon & Chung, 2017). When official sources fail to provide satisfactory answers to their queries, sojourners search for information online using portal sites such as Google (Sin et al., 2011; Sin & Kim, 2013). Given their shortcomings, sojourners do not often rate the information from either channel as useful as from online sojourner groups (Sin et al., 2011; Sin & Kim, 2013).

During the post-arrival phase, sojourners begin to understand better the uncertainties they face, so they develop better skills to address their knowledge gaps (Yoon & Chung, 2017). During settlement, many sojourners turn to social networking sources, such as Facebook, for information (Bukhari et al., 2018). However, sojourners are much more likely to use the popular social networking services in their home countries rather than the dominant social networking services in their host country (Oh & Butler, 2019; Saw et al., 2013). Additionally, sojourners often follow pages relevant to the information they need and join online sojourner communities (Bukhari et al., 2018). During settlement, sojourners prioritize finding survival information, such as places to eat, accommodations, and transportation (Oh & Butler, 2015, 2018). Sojourners rate this information from social networking as more useful than search engine results and information from official sources (Sin et al., 2011; Sin & Kim, 2013). They could rate this information more highly because sojourners value information from those with similar life experiences (Farh et al., 2010).

Next, sojourners transition to the current phase. During the current phase, sojourners develop daily routines and seek more specific information than in prior stages (Yoon & Chung, 2017). They seek everyday life information. Everyday life information is information that regular people use in their daily lives (Savolainen, 1995). Many sojourners rely on online sojourner communities for this information, and they find it especially useful to them (Sin et al., 2011; Sin & Kim, 2013).

Information Needs of Sojourners

Like Sharma & Govindan's (2016) 12 categories of posts in an online sojourner community, Sin & Kim (2013, pp. 111) identified twelve information needs that sojourners have and ranked them by sojourners' perceptions of their importance (see Table 1).

Table 1

Sojourners' Information Needs in Descending Order of Importance

Important Rank	Sojourners' Information Needs
1	Finance
2	Health
3	News: Home country
4	Housing
5	Entertainment
6	Food and drink
7	Transportation
8	Interpersonal relationship
9	Host country culture
10	Legal
11	News: Host country
12	Self/group identities

Note. Adapted from Sin & Kim, 2013, p. 111.

In addition to confirming many of Sin & Kim's (2013) sojourner information needs, other researchers have noted additional needs. Shoham & Strauss (2008) also included driving and language in their list of needs. Hamid & Bukhari (2015) noted the importance of information for supporting religious practices. Bukhari et al. (2020) noted the importance of academic information for international students, and Showail et al. (2013) noted the importance of social media for working sojourners.

Online Sojourner Communities

Composition

As noted before, during the current phase, many sojourners start relying on online sojourner communities for daily life information (Yoon & Chung, 2017). They start looking into information specific to their sojourns. Official resources are rarely enough to address sojourners' uncertainty, especially when language barriers exist. For example, academic sojourners seek

information about course requirements (Bukhari et al., 2018), and workers seek information relevant to their jobs (Showail et al., 2013). Hamid & Bukhari (2015) also note that some sojourners seek information for religious practices.

The online sojourner communities vary in composition based on the nationalities of sojourners in an area. When a sufficient population of sojourners from one country amasses, those communities primarily consist of co-nationals or sojourners from the same country (Cao & Zhang, 2012; Saw et al., 2013). For example, an American university with a sizable population of Chinese international students will likely have groups on WeChat, a popular Chinese social networking site (Cao & Zhang, 2012; Pang & Wang, 2020; Saw et al., 2013). These sites can serve as digital enclaves that provide comfort and familiarity to sojourners but may limit their cross-cultural adaptation (Pang & Wang, 2020; Samnani et al., 2013). When sojourners only communicate with co-nationals, they tend to adapt poorly and are more likely to fail in their sojourns (Jeong, 2004; Roskell, 2013).

Online sojourner communities can also be diverse and accessible to people from different backgrounds. These communities may not be explicitly for sojourners, but most members are sojourners due to the platform and language of moderation. For example, a city-based online community in South Korea on Facebook moderated in English could consist primarily of sojourners but also include English-speaking Koreans. Because English often serves as an international lingua franca, sojourners from different countries can exchange information in one place. These communities could serve as bridges for sojourners to communicate with locals from the host country. Communication with locals from the host country correlates with cross-cultural adaptation (Billedo et al., 2020; Farh et al., 2010; Hofhuis et al., 2019; Roskell, 2013; Xiao et al., 2019).

Additionally, sojourners are not limited to a single online sojourner community. Often sojourners will start in a public online sojourner community but then fracture into smaller subgroups based on mutual interests (Hendrickson & Rosen, 2017; Oh & Butler, 2018). For example, a sojourner might be a Facebook group based on a city but also be in splinter groups based on hobbies and needs.

Information Exchanged in Online Sojourner Communities

Though sojourners' individual needs vary, common information needs for sojourners arise in the literature. In a content analysis of posts in three open city-based online sojourner communities on Facebook, Sharma & Govindan (2016, pp. 41–43) identified 12 categories for posts. These posts address many previously noted facets of sojourners everyday life information needs (see Table 2).

Table 2

Information Exchanged in Online Sojourner Communities

Information Types	Explanations
Childcare	Posts about services and products, as well as events centered around children
Community	Posts that communicate information related to the expat community. They are mainly of local relevance, including seeking help within the expat community for issues or opportunities for expats to contribute to and get involved in local affairs.
Employment	Posts related to sharing employment opportunities or second-order employment seeking for friends or staff of expats about to leave
Finance/Insurance/Legal	Posts related to financial, insurance-related or legal advice.
Healthcare	Posts related to healthcare, medicine, local doctors and allied health providers such as chiropractors, nutritionists, etc.
Household Domestic	Household/Domestic: Posts seeking recommendations for local services and products or sharing reviews on local services and products.
Local News/Local Interest	Posts related to news, events, happenings related to the city/country

Note. Adapted from Sharma & Govinda, 2016, pp. 41-43.

Summary

Sojourning has its highs and lows. Sojourners have novel experiences and meet new people but face acculturative stress as they interact with new cultures (Spradley & Phillips, 1972). Our understanding of their stresses has come a long way since Oberg (1960) first conceived of "culture shock," or issues sojourners experience when adjusting to life abroad. Acculturative stress can be positive and negative (Kim, 2001). It can overwhelm some sojourners and cause them to return home early, but it can also serve as an impetus for cross-cultural adaptation (Kim, 2019). Acculturative stress and cross-culturally adaptation are interconnected; as acculturative stress decreases, cross-cultural adaptation increases (Kim, 2019).

To combat acculturative stress and to cross-culturally adapt to their lives abroad, sojourners often utilize social support (Adelman, 1988; Fontaine, 1986; Jyoti & Kour, 2017; Ong & Ward, 2005; Searle & Ward, 1990; Walton, 1990). Ong & Ward (2005) wrote that social support uncles to broad emotional aid, encouragement, and companionship, which fosters a sense of belonging. Sojourners seek social support from friends and families in their home countries, other sojourners, and host country nationals. However, sojourners who frequently sought social support from friends and family in their home countries often felt more alienated in their host countries (Hofhuis et al., 2019).

Sojourners also have different information needs and methods for finding information as they adjust to their host countries (Yoon & Chung, 2017). They begin by checking official sources and searching online, but later start using social networking services to find everyday life information (Sharma & Govindan, 2016). Everyday life information relates to sojourners' daily routines and reduces uncertainty-related stresses (Hertzum & Hyldegård, 2019; Savolainen, 1995).

Sojourners often commune with other sojourners. They may meet other sojourners in person and gather in online sojourner communities (Oh & Butler, 2015; Sharma & Govindan, 2016). Some online sojourner communities are only made up of co-nationals, whereas others are more diverse and may include locals from the host country (Saw et al., 2013). These online sojourner communities may benefit sojourners by providing social support (Bender et al., 2019; Cao & Zhang, 2012; Oh & Butler, 2019, 2015, 2018). However, these online communities may also separate the sojourner from their host country's culture, hindering their ability to adapt culturally in the long run (Kim, 2001; Lim & Pham, 2016). Additionally, Ng et al. (2017)

discovered that social support from other sojourners could negatively impact sojourners' cross-cultural adaptation.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This study examined how sojourners adapt to living in their host countries and the role that online sojourner communities play in that process. I used both surveys and interviews to uncover what sojourners learn from online sojourner communities and how what they learn relates to their cross-cultural adaptation to their host countries. Additionally, this study examined the potential advantages and drawbacks of participating in online sojourner communities.

The research questions are as follows:

1. What knowledge do sojourners need to adapt to their host countries cross-culturally?
2. How does participating in online sojourner communities impact how sojourners' knowledge needs are met at different stages in their sojourns?
3. How does online sojourner community usage relate to cross-cultural adaptation?
4. What are the potential advantages and drawbacks of using online sojourner communities?

Research Design

This study used a convergent mixed methods research design. According to Creswell & Creswell (2018), concurrent mixed methods research designs collect qualitative and quantitative information roughly simultaneously. I administered surveys online with qualitative questions, two quantitative psychological scales to assess cross-cultural adaptation, and one quantitative scale to assess online sojourner community usage. I conducted qualitative interviews through Zoom to investigate what sojourners gain from participating in online sojourner communities. In keeping with Creswell & Creswell (2018), qualitative data helped explain quantitative data.

The online surveys addressed what sojourners need to know to adapt to their host countries and what sojourners learn from participating in online sojourner communities. They also collected data about how well the sojourners have cross-culturally adapted to their lives in the host country using two separate scales from Demes & Geeraert (2014), the Brief Psychological Adaptation Scale and the Brief Sociocultural Adaptation Scale. As discussed in the literature review, cross-cultural adaptation divides into psychological and sociocultural

adaptation, so two complementary scales were chosen. The scales were developed for their simplicity and have been validated across more than 50 international contexts for both native and non-native speakers of English (Demes & Geeraert, 2014, 2015; Geeraert et al., 2021; Hofhuis et al., 2019). Additionally, the survey includes the Facebook Sojourner Community Intensity Scale, my adaptation of Ellison et al.'s (2007) Facebook Intensity Scale, to assess the participants' online sojourner community usage. Though the Facebook Intensity Scale is 15 years old, it remains a valid measure for self-reporting Facebook usage (Vanden Abeele et al., 2018).

The interviews, conducted through Zoom, provided additional depth about what sojourners learn from online learning communities. The interviews further explored how sojourners use what they learn in online sojourner communities to adapt to their lives in the host country. The interviews provided an additional data source to triangulate the survey data for a robust analysis. Additionally, the interviews provided data for determining the potential problems sojourners face from using online sojourner communities for cross-cultural adaptation.

Setting

Though the communities examined are all online, the participants were currently sojourning in South Korea. According to Korea Statistics (2020), approximately 50 million Koreans live in South Korea, with 1.73 million foreign residents. Approximately 3.3% of the population of South Korea are foreign residents. Unlike in other countries, such as China, foreign residents tend to live alongside Koreans and not in foreign enclaves (Chang & Kim, 2016). The South Korean government actively seeks to attract foreign workers. They developed free economic zones to attract multinational corporations and workers (Incheon Free Economic Zone Authority, 2018).

Participants

The participants were sojourners living in South Korea and were members of at least one online sojourner community on Facebook. After receiving the moderators' approvals, I posted recruitment posts in 11 Facebook groups for sojourners in South Korea. The groups included city-based groups, parenting groups, general sojourner groups, and a group for sharing events in South Korea. The Facebook groups were all moderated in English. Though some who participated in the groups were not actively sojourning in South Korea, only sojourners who

were currently living in South Korea were selected. Branching questions excluded locals from the host country, those who have not yet moved to South Korea, and those who moved from South Korea were excluded from the survey. 227 people began the survey, but 160 participants completed the survey. Of the participants who completed the survey, 71 volunteered for the interview. I selected eight interviewees based on diversity in gender, time spent in the host country, reason for sojourning, and intent to remain in the host country.

The decision to only include active sojourners was made because information needs vary during the different settlement phases (Yoon & Chung, 2017). Additionally, those who have not arrived have not had enough experience in the country to fully experience acculturative stress and cross-cultural adaptation. Those who have already left no longer feel the same stresses.

Data Collection Methods and Instruments

This study used surveys and interviews to investigate what knowledge sojourners in South Korea need to adapt to their host countries, what they learn from online sojourner communities, the relationship between online sojourner community usage and cross-cultural adaptation, and the benefits and drawbacks of participating in online sojourner communities.

Survey

The survey consisted of four sections: demographics, information needs, cross-cultural adaptation, and online sojourner community usage.

The survey began with demographic questions. This section includes questions about citizenship, length of sojourn thus far, type of sojourn, and intended length of sojourn. The demographics questions used branching to screen for adults who are currently actively sojourning in Korea. Those with only Korean citizenship, under 18 years old, or who did not currently live in South Korea were branched out of the survey. Additionally, the demographic questions informed the interview selection process for survey participants who opted into the interviews. I recruited eight interviewees from the survey interview pool (see Appendix A).

After demographics, there was a section to address the information needs of sojourners and what they learn from online sojourner groups. There were only three questions in this section. The first question asks what knowledge needs the participants had during each stage of their sojourns. Participants could select all relevant responses from a list of 25 options. The

response choices revolve around sojourners' daily life information needs established in the literature (Bukhari et al., 2020; Natalie et al., 2018; Sharma & Govindan, 2016; Shoham & Strauss, 2008; Showail et al., 2013; Sin et al., 2011; Sin & Kim, 2013; Yoon & Chung, 2017). Additionally, I added several questions based on my subjective experiences as a sojourner. The second question asked participants to indicate which topics they learned from the online sojourner communities during each stage of their sojourns from a list of choices they made in the first question. The third question asked participants to choose the top five most valuable things they learned from a list of the items they selected in the second question (see Appendix B).

The following sections used two validated scales developed by Demes & Geeraert (2014), the Brief Psychological Adaptation Scale (10 items) and the Brief Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (12 items). Though initially published in the same article, these scales are distinct, not sub-scales. I selected these scales for their simplicity, brevity, and because researchers have validated them in more than 50 international contexts (Demes & Geeraert, 2014, 2015; Geeraert et al., 2021; Hofhuis et al., 2019). Additionally, the questions were straightforward and validated for second-language English speakers (Demes & Geeraert, 2014). The scales also have good internal consistency. The sociocultural scale has a Cronbach's alpha score of .85, and the psychological adaptation scale has a .82 across all survey translations (see Appendices C and D).

The final section addressed how and how often sojourners used online sojourner communities. It began with an adaption of Ellison et al.'s (2007) Facebook Intensity Scale (8 items) that, I term, Facebook Sojourner Community Intensity Scale. Ellison et al.'s (2007) original had a Cronbach's alpha score of .83. My adaptation has a slightly lower Cronbach's alpha score of .77. I adapted it by replacing all references to "Facebook" with "Facebook groups for expats" as this is the term that sojourners call online sojourner communities on Facebook. The scale uses interval data for participants to self-report their online sojourner community usage and how important online sojourner communities are to them. After the scale, there are questions about long they have used online communities and what activities they participate in within the community. For the length of time in the groups, intervals were used. For activities sojourners engage in, participants could select all relevant responses from a list of choices. The final question is a voluntary free-response question for participants to indicate how they use online communities to adapt to life in the host country (see Appendices E and F).

Interview

The interviews employed a semi-structured interview protocol with 19 questions through Zoom. Each interview lasted between 20-60 minutes. The interviews were recorded through Zoom and then transcribed using Otter.ai, an automated transcription service with additional manual error correction. As the interview was semi-structured, probing and follow-up questions were asked. The interviews focused on how the participants use online sojourner communities to seek/share information and the benefits and drawbacks that sojourners perceive from participating in online sojourner communities (see Appendix I).

Participant Recruitment Procedures

After IRB approval, participants were recruited via Facebook posts in online sojourner communities for sojourners in South Korea. With the moderators' approvals, I posted the recruitment posts to 11 different Facebook groups for sojourners in Korea. The posts included a link to the survey. The informed consent statement indicated that their participation was entirely voluntary.

To find communities, I searched for groups using permutations of the key terms "expat," "foreigner," and "Korea" using Facebook's search function. I shared the recruitment post in all the groups that allowed for survey recruitment posts. I also shared the link in several online sojourner communities where I was already a member. Additionally, I arranged for a female sojourner in Korea to post the recruitment post in several women-only online sojourner communities on Facebook that allowed for survey recruitment posts. Of the initial 227 responses, 160 (70.4%) completed all survey sections. Partial completions did not appear in the final analysis.

At the end of the survey, there was a solicitation to recruit interview participants (see Appendix G). The 71 survey participants who volunteered for the interview entered the interview pool. I selected eight interviewees based on diversity of gender, employment status, university enrollment status, and time spent living in the host country.

Data Analysis Procedures

Before beginning the data analysis, I prepared the survey and interview data separately.

Survey Analysis Preparation

I first analyzed the survey data with IBM SPSS Statistics 27. First, I cleaned up the data to remove the incomplete responses. Next, I ran basic descriptive statistics for the demographic data. Future researchers can determine the study's validity and applicability for their contexts (Stake, 1995, 2010).

After cleaning up the data, I calculated the scales for cross-cultural adaptation. As noted in the literature review, cross-cultural adaptation divides into two separate categories with separate scales for sociocultural adaptation and psychological adaptation (Demes & Geeraert, 2014). I calculated the Brief Sociocultural Adaptation Scale and the Brief Psychological Adaptation Scale for each response to address cross-cultural adaptation. Both scales use a 7-point Likert scale. To find each participant's score, I calculated the mean of the responses after adjusting for the reverse-scored items. The higher the score, the more the participants have adapted to their lives in the host country. Psychological adaptation “refers to how comfortable and happy a person feels with respect to being in the new culture, or anxious and out of place” (Demes & Geeraert, 2014, p. 92), whereas “Sociocultural adaptation refers to the more practical and behavioral aspects of adapting to a new culture; those aspects that allow a person to navigate the culture effectively on a day-to-day basis” (Demes & Geeraert, 2014, p. 92) The scales indicate how well the participants have adapted socioculturally and psychologically to their lives in the host country. These scales indicate the extent to which sojourners have cross-culturally adapted to life in the host country.

Finally, I calculated the scores for the Facebook Intensity Scale. I scored the arithmetic mean of the sojourners' responses to compute the scores using Microsoft Excel. A high score indicates that sojourners routinely use online sojourner communities and feel like they are genuine members of the communities. Conversely, a low score would indicate that they do not often participate in online communities and feel less connection to the communities.

Interview Analysis Preparation

Interviews were recorded on Zoom, then transcribed using Otter.ai with manual error correction. Before beginning coding, I redacted all personally identifiable information from the transcripts and provided pseudonyms for each participant. I used provisional (*a priori*) codes based on the literature and developed additional codes after conducting the interviews. To

develop the additional codes, I read the transcripts multiple times and developed a coding scheme based on process coding. Process coding involves assigning short verb gerund phrases to describe the text from the interview transcripts (Saldaña, 2016). For example, if a participant indicates that they received inaccurate information from an online sojourner community, I could code it as "RECEIVING INACCURATE INFORMATION." Process coding is handy "for those that search for the routines and rituals of human life..." (Saldaña, 2016, p. 111). I read the transcripts and supplemented the provisional codebook based on the participants' responses related to information gaps and things learned. After completing the codebook, I coded the interviews using comments in Microsoft Word (see Appendix J). After coding, an online sojourner community member with a doctorate in education checked and confirmed the coding in keeping with Lincoln & Guba's (1985) member checking methods.

Data Analysis by Research Question

RQ1 Analysis

Research question 1 addressed the knowledge that sojourners must cross-culturally adapt to life in their host countries. I examined the responses to the question about the knowledge needed to adapt to life in the host country. I calculated the frequency of responses to show which things sojourners need to know to adapt to life in the host country. I also compared the frequency of the responses from the survey with the interview analysis results to provide triangulation. I pulled illustrative quotes from the interviews to provide more context for the results.

RQ2 Analysis

Research question 2 addresses which knowledge needs are met through participating in online sojourner communities. I compared the knowledge needed responses to the knowledge learned from online sojourner communities for the established phase. The comparison indicated what sojourners learned from the online sojourner communities and showed any gaps between needs and what they learned. I also compared the frequency of responses from the survey with the frequency of the codes from the interview analysis results to provide triangulation. I then pulled illustrative quotes from the interviews to further explain the results.

RQ3 Analysis

Research question 3 addressed the relationship between online sojourner community usage and the two forms of cross-cultural adaptation, psychological adaptation, and sociocultural adaptation. To measure online sojourner community usage intensity, the survey included the Facebook Sojourner Community Intensity Scale, an adaptation of Ellison et al.'s (2007) Facebook Intensity Scale. To address the two forms of cultural adaptation, the survey used Demes & Geeraert's (2014) Brief Sociocultural Adaptation Scale and Demes & Geeraert's (2014) Brief Psychological Adaptation Scale. I looked for correlation between the Facebook Intensity Scale's results and both cross-cultural adaptation scales' results.

RQ4 Analysis

Research question 4 addressed the other potential advantages and disadvantages of participating in online sojourner communities. I examined the frequency of the interview codes about the advantages and disadvantages of participating in online sojourner communities and pulled illustrative quotes from the interview transcripts (see Appendix J).

Trustworthiness

In keeping with Lincoln & Guba (1985), I used member checking throughout the analysis to ensure trustworthiness. I had a person with a doctorate in education also was also a member of online sojourner communities review my findings and interpretations. The member helped me assess the participants' intentions, catch errors, and provide additional information and context for findings, in keeping with Lincoln & Guba's (1985) research methods. I also defined the research methods and conclusions clearly. These explanations allow for "petite generalizations" (Stake, 1995, 2010). Future researchers will be able to determine how well this research applies to their contexts because the methods, data, and interpretations were explained in detail. By clearly defining the methods, researchers can determine the applicability to their areas of interest.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Research Questions

The research questions that guided the analysis are as follows:

1. What knowledge do sojourners need to adapt to their host countries cross-culturally?
2. How does participating in online sojourner communities impact how sojourners' knowledge needs are met at different stages in their sojourns?
3. How does online sojourner community usage relate to cross-cultural adaptation?
4. What are the potential advantages and drawbacks of using online sojourner communities?

Survey Sample Demographics

The survey received a total of 160 completed responses. To confirm that they meet the participation requirements, all respondents indicated that they currently live in South Korea and are a member of at least one online sojourner community on Facebook. Men and women responded in nearly equal proportions, with 49.4% (79) and 46.3% (74), respectively. Non-binary/third gender and those who preferred not to answer totaled 7 (4.4%). 158 (98.8%) of respondents indicated that they only have foreign citizenship, while only 2 (1.2%) indicated that they had dual citizenship with both South Korea and a foreign country. Though some local South Koreans participate in online sojourner communities, their responses were deliberately excluded from the sample. Although most sojourners in South Korea are from China and other non-English-speaking Asian countries (Statistics Korea, 2022), this sample only includes English-speaking foreign residents living in South Korea.

Most of the sample (85%; 136) is currently employed. Only 13.1% (21) indicated that they are not currently working (see Table 3). These employment results were similarly reflected in the sojourners' reported reasons for sojourning on their current visas, with 68.1% (109) indicating that they came to South Korea to work. However, their reasons for sojourning often varied, with 16.3% (26) of respondents indicating other reasons for sojourning. Among those

who indicated “other,” the most common response was that they originally came to Korea to work, then married locals and remained in Korea afterward on marriage visas (see Table 4).

Table 3
Current Employment Status

Employment status	Full sample	
	n	%
Full-time employment	115	71.9
Part-time employment	21	13.1
Not currently working	21	13.1
Other	3	1.9

Note. N=160

Table 4
Reasons for Sojourning on Current Visa

Reason	Full sample	
	n	%
To work	109	68.1
To study	16	10
To accompany family	30	18.8
To visit family	4	2.5
To travel	12	7.5
Other	26	16.3

Note. Participants could select multiple reasons for sojourning.

The length of time sojourning in South Korea skewed towards long-term sojourners. Only 11 (6.9%) respondents have lived in South Korea for less than three years, whereas 127 (79.4%) have lived in South Korea for longer than five years. Over half of the sample (93; 58.1%) indicated that they have sojourned in South Korea for longer than ten years (see Table 5).

Table 5
Length of Sojourn in South Korea

Length of Sojourn	Full sample	
	n	%
3 to 6 months	1	0.6
6 months to 1 year	1	0.6
1 year to 3 years	9	5.6
3 years to 5 years	22	13.8
5 years to 10 years	34	21.3
Longer than 10 years	93	58.1

Note. N=160

Most respondents (103; 64.4%) have had no experience formally studying at a Korean university or in a Korean university language program. However, a quarter (40; 25%) indicated that they did have some experience at a Korean university. 14 (8.6%) respondents indicated that they currently studied at a university or in a university language program (see Table 6).

Table 6
South Korean University Enrollment Status

Enrollment status	Full sample	
	<i>n</i>	%
Currently studying at a Korean university	13	8.1
Currently studying at a Korean university language program	1	0.6
Previously studied at a Korean university or in a language program	40	25
Never studied at a Korean university or in a language program	103	64.4
Other	3	1.9

Note. N=160

The respondents varied in their plans to continue living in South Korea. Only a few respondents (7; 4.4%), planned to leave Korea within the following year. Most respondents (98; 61.3%), intended to leave South Korea within the next one to five years. 30 (18.8%) respondents intend to leave within the next five to eight years. Only 5 (3.1%) of respondents planned to live in South Korea indefinitely, and 142 (88.9%) planned to leave South Korea eventually (see Table 7).

Table 7
Intent to Continue Sojourning in South Korea

Intended length of remaining sojourn	Full sample	
	n	%
Less than 1 month	1	0.6
1 month to 6 months	3	1.9
6 months to 1 year	3	1.9
1 year to 3 years	24	15
3 years to 5 years	74	46.3
5 years to 8 years	30	18.8
Longer than 8 years	11	6.9
Indefinitely	5	3.1
Unsure	9	5.6

Note. N=160

Respondents had three choices to indicate the current stage of their sojourns; they could choose settling, established, or leaving. Settling indicated that they had recently arrived, were still getting used to their lives in South Korea, and had not fully established daily routines yet. In the established stage, they lived in South Korea long enough to establish routines for their daily lives. In the leaving stage, they were approaching the end of their sojourns in South Korea and were preparing to leave. Nearly all, (149; 93.1%), indicated that they are in the established phase. Only 3 (1.9%) respondents indicated that they were settling, and 8 (5%) indicated they were leaving. The 8 (5%) who indicated that they are leaving meshes with the 7 (3.8%) who indicated that they would leave within a year (see Tables 7 and 8).

Table 8
Current Stage of Sojourn in South Korea

Stage	Full sample	
	n	%
Settling	3	1.9
Established	149	93.1
Leaving	8	5

Note. N=160

The respondents spent a sizable length of time in online sojourner communities on Facebook. Most respondents (97; 60.6%) have been in at least one online sojourner community

for over five years. However, when compared to the length of time spent in the host country, it becomes evident that many participants' sojourns predated their participation in online communities. 93 (58.1%) had sojourned in South Korea for longer than ten years (see Table 9), but only 62 (38.8%) have been in online sojourner communities for that length of time. The long-term sojourners' settling periods predated their times in the Facebook communities. In interviews, several long-term sojourners indicated that they used other online sojourner communities that predated Facebook (see Table 5).

Table 9
Length of Time Participating in Online Sojourner Communities on Facebook

Time in at least one online sojourner community	Full Sample	
	n	%
1 month to 6 months	4	2.5
6 months to 1 year	1	0.6
1 year to 3 years	20	12.5
3 years to 5 years	38	23.8
5 years to 8 years	35	21.9
Longer than 8 years	62	38.8

Note. N=160

Interview Participant Demographics

I selected the interviewees from the interview pool based on diversity of nationality, gender, and time spent in the host country. The interview pool comprised volunteers who opted to participate in the interview during the survey. The interviewees were all either students or instructors. Six participants began working in Korea as language teachers, whereas the remaining two came to South Korea to study at Korean universities (see Table 10).

Table 10
Interview Demographics

Pseudonym	Nationality	Gender	Age	Time in Korea	Household	Profession
Alice	American	Female	Mid 30s	9 years	American husband, 2 children	Writing professor at an American university in Korea
Ana	Spanish	Female	Early 30s	5 years	single	Spanish professor at an American university in Korea
Anh	American	Non-binary	Mid 20s	1 year	single	Student at a Korean university language program
Arif	Indonesian	Male	Late 20s	4.5 years	Indonesian wife, 2 children	Doctoral student at a Korean university
Brandon	American	Male	Late 30s	14 years	Korean wife, 2 children	English teacher
Chuck	American	Male	Mid 50s	23 years	Korean wife	Public administration professor at a Korean university
Jessica	American	Female	Mid 30s	13 years	Korean husband, 2 children	Professor and doctoral student at Korean universities
Kevin	American	Male	Early 40s	12 years	Korean wife	Home study school owner and English teacher

Knowledge Needs by Phase

The respondents' information needs varied according to the stages of their sojourns. Sojourners' needs changed over time as they settled into their lives in their host countries.

Knowledge Needs During the Settling Phase

During their settling phases, Korean language learning/translation (109; 68.1%) and banking/finance/insurance (107; 66.9%) were the biggest knowledge needs, with over two-thirds of respondents indicating that they needed to learn about them. Settling sojourners need to

establish bank accounts, and English-friendly banks can be challenging to find. Kevin explained, "If you go to [a Korean bank branch] in my area here, nobody can speak English."

Six other knowledge needs also topped 60%. These six needs included Korean rules/regulation/law (106; 66.3%), healthcare (103; 64.4%), employment/work-related issues (100; 62.5%), transportation (97; 60.6%), groceries/dining (96; 60.0%), and Korean culture/customs/etiquette (96; 60.0%). All these are common issues one would expect sojourners to need to know. They needed to know about local rules, where to go if they got sick, their new jobs, how to get around, how to get food to eat, and the local culture. Most interview participants indicated that they first came to South Korea with little knowledge of Korean customs, culture, or how to get around in South Korea. Alice explained, "Sometimes communication was hard, culture. Not always knowing the proper etiquette was challenging." She ate at a convenience store for her first few meals after arriving because she did not know where to get food or how to order food in restaurants.

Automobile service/repair (26; 16.3%) and childcare (25; 15.6%) were the two least common needs. The least common needs also meshed with the interviews. When they first arrived, the interviewees all relied on public transportation, and few brought children with them (see Table 11).

Table 11***Sojourners' Knowledge Needs During the Settling Phase***

Knowledge needs	Full sample	
	n	%
Korean language learning/translation	109	68.1
Banking/finance/insurance	107	66.9
Korean rules/regulations/law	106	66.3
Healthcare	103	64.4
Employment/work-related issues	100	62.5
Transportation	97	60.6
Groceries/dining	96	60.0
Korean culture/customs/etiquette	96	60.0
Visa related issues	95	59.4
Entertainment	94	58.8
Shipping/receiving packages/mail	89	55.6
Travel	84	52.5
Local Korean news/local happenings	80	50.0
Exercise/sports	79	49.4
Interpersonal relationships	79	49.4
Housing	71	44.4
Education (public/private)	63	39.4
Home country news	61	38.1
Second-hand goods (buying/selling)	58	36.3
Driving/parking	46	28.8
Religious services/observances	37	23.1
Pet care	34	21.3
Charity	30	18.8
Automotive service/repair	26	16.3
Childcare	25	15.6

Note. N=160

Knowledge Needs During the Established Phase

The participants reported that knowledge needs increased after becoming established in the host country compared to the settling stage. The participants reported 19.0% more knowledge-need responses in their established phases (2219) than in their settling phases (1865). The two most common topics, housing (114; 72.6%) and visa-related issues (111; 70.6%) were shared by over 70% of respondents. Eight topics were shared by over 60% of respondents. Over half of the respondents reported needing to know about 21 topics. Even the least common topic, religious services/observances (33; 21.0%), still appeared in over 20% of the survey responses.

The interviews provided more depth for these findings. When settling, many sojourners relied on employer-provided housing and employers to help with visas. After completing their work contracts, many sojourners changed employers, so they needed to find housing and manage their visa processes themselves.

Most knowledge needs remained relatively constant or had modest increases between phases. For example, 100 (62.5%) respondents reported employment/work-related issues during their settling phases and 101 (64.3%) reported the need during their established phases. There were also a few knowledge needs with large increases between the phases. Automotive service/repair had the largest increase. It went from one of the least reported knowledge needs during the settling phase (26; 16.3%) to over half of the respondents (89; 56.7%) during the established phase. Alice, a mother of two, explained her changing needs for a vehicle by saying, “We didn’t need a car until after I had [my second child] in Korea. We always just got by with public transportation ‘til then.” Childcare had similarly large increases, indicating the changing needs between phases.

Though the general trend was for knowledge needs to remain constant or steadily increase between phases, one had a marked decrease. Korean language learning/translation went from being the most popular need during the settling period (109; 68.1%) to the fifteenth most common need (89; 56.7%). The decreasing language need echoed the sentiments of the interview participants. The longer they sojourned, the more English-friendly services became available, the more people they had to help them with their language needs, and the more Korean they learned. Kevin, despite not having learned more than basic Korean, explained his declining Korean language needs by saying, “As far as getting around Korea, though, at the time, I did need help. I suppose [now] I could go to the hospital and ask for help, but you know, I have my wife. We just want to get it done.” In contrast, Chuck took the opposite approach. Over the course of his 23-year sojourn, learned enough Korean to have few language-related issues in his daily life (see Table 12).

Table 12***Sojourners' Knowledge Needs During the Established Phase***

Knowledge needs	Settled and established participants	
	n	%
Housing	114	72.6
Visa-related issues	111	70.7
Korean rules/regulations/law	109	69.4
Local Korean news/local happenings	107	68.2
Healthcare	105	66.9
Travel	104	66.2
Employment/work-related issues	101	64.3
Second-hand goods (buying/selling)	101	64.3
Groceries/dining	93	59.2
Korean culture/customs/etiquette	93	59.2
Entertainment	91	58.0
Banking/finance/insurance	91	58.0
Education (public/private)	91	58.0
Childcare	89	56.7
Korean language learning/translation	89	56.7
Automotive service/repair	89	56.7
Shipping/receiving packages/mail	85	54.1
Exercise/sports	84	53.5
Interpersonal relationships	83	52.9
Transportation	81	51.6
Home country news	79	50.3
Driving/parking	78	49.7
Charity	62	39.5
Pet care	56	35.7
Religious services/observances	33	21.0

Note. N=157. Only respondents in settling and established phases were included.

Topics Learned About in Online Sojourner Communities

Research question 2 addressed which knowledge needs are met through participating in online sojourner communities. 58.1% (93) of respondents have sojourned in South Korea for longer than 10 years, and many of their settling periods predated the online sojourner communities in Korea. This analysis focused on knowledge needs and learning during the established period. 93.1% (146) of respondents were currently in this stage, and many long-term sojourners' settling phases predated the establishment of online sojourner communities on

Facebook. This analysis included all respondents in their leaving and established phases but excluded the three respondents still in their settling phases.

Among those with the knowledge needs, greater than 80% of the participants reported learning about four topics. These included groceries/dining, visa-related issues, employment/work-related issues, and Korean rules/regulations/law. These knowledge needs were common, with nearly 60% of respondents indicating they had these knowledge needs that came up during the interviews. Sojourners often have different dietary needs and preferences than the standard Korean diet, so online sojourner communities helped them find appropriate foods. The interview participants often found official government sources for laws and visa-related issues lacking and found online sojourner communities more accurate and up-to-date information in English. Most respondents originally came to Korea for work, so many also used online communities to find new jobs, find information about their jobs, and commune with other sojourners.

For all but three topics that sojourners needed to learn about, greater than half the respondents learned about them through online sojourner communities. Fewer than 40% of participants learned about religious services/observances and automotive service/repair in online sojourner communities. Automotive service/repair was a common need, with 56.7% (89) of respondents needing to know about it, but 37.1% (33) of those needing it learned about it in online sojourner communities. Overall, respondents found online sojourner communities to be repositories for information. One interviewee explained, "I look at the [online sojourner communities] every day, so I definitely put them at a high value."

Table 13***Sojourners' Knowledge Needs Compared to Topics Learned About in Online Sojourner Communities During the Established Stage***

Topic	Participants with knowledge need		Participants with need who learned about need from online sojourner communities	
	n	%	n	%
Groceries/dining	93	59.2	78	83.9
Visa related issues	111	70.7	93	83.8
Employment/work-related issues	101	64.3	84	83.2
Korean rules/regulations/law	109	69.4	89	81.7
Entertainment	91	58.0	69	75.8
Banking/finance/insurance	91	58.0	68	74.7
Healthcare	105	66.9	78	74.3
Second-hand goods (buying/selling)	101	64.3	73	72.3
Exercise/sports	84	53.5	57	67.9
Childcare	89	56.7	60	67.4
Shipping/receiving packages/mail	85	54.1	57	67.1
Local Korean news/local happenings	107	68.2	71	66.4
Interpersonal relationships	83	52.9	55	66.3
Travel	104	66.2	68	65.4
Home country news	79	50.3	47	59.5
Housing	114	72.6	67	58.8
Korean culture/customs/etiquette	93	59.2	54	58.1
Education (public/private)	91	58	51	56
Pet care	56	35.7	31	55.4
Transportation	81	51.6	43	53.1
Korean language learning/translation	89	56.7	47	52.8
Driving/parking	78	49.7	41	52.6
Charity	62	39.5	27	43.5
Religious services/observances	33	21	13	39.4
Automotive service/repair	89	56.7	33	37.1

Note. N = 157 Only participants in their established and leaving phases were included.

The participants' perceptions of the usefulness of what they also learned varied. The survey asked respondents to rank the top five things they learned from participating in online sojourner communities. Of the 84 (83.2%) respondents who learned about work-related issues/employment, 88.1% (74) learned about the topic in online sojourner communities and ranked it in their top 5 most useful things learned. Visa-related issues had similar but slightly lower numbers. The interviewees further explained that official sources were often lacking, so they trusted the first-hand experiences of other sojourners more. Most respondents are in South

Korea for work, so information about work situations and employment opportunities tops this list. For example, one interviewee, Kevin, runs a small school out of his home. He regularly communicates with other foreign school owners in a private group on Facebook. Visa-related issues were nearly as popular. All respondents are foreign nationals who must maintain visas to remain in South Korea lawfully. Anh resolved a visa-related issue using information from an online sojourner community.

The fourth most useful topic was groceries/dining. Though not as common as the prior needs, it was helpful for those special dietary needs or preferences. Of the 78 (48.8%) who learned about groceries/dining, 47 (60.3%) ranked the information in their top 5 most useful things learned. Ahn was vegetarian and found communities supporting their dietary preferences were crucial for living comfortably in Korea. Anh explained "I'm in a vegan [online sojourner community], because I'm vegetarian. And there's, there's actually not a lot of vegetarian Facebook groups for Korea. It's mostly only vegan, which is understandable because it's harder being vegan here than vegetarian." Another interviewee, Chuck, could not tolerate fermented foods. Given that much of the South Korean diet is fermented, he found online communities helpful for finding options for food he could eat.

Table 14***Frequency of Top 5 Rating of Topic Learned About During Established Phase***

Topic	Participants with knowledge need		Participants with need who learned about need from online sojourner communities		Participants who learned about the need and ranked it in their top 5 most useful	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Employment/work-related issues	101	64.3	84	83.2	74	88.1
Visa related issues	111	70.7	93	83.8	72	77.4
Childcare	89	56.7	60	67.4	42	70.0
Groceries/dining	93	59.2	78	83.9	47	60.3
Korean rules/regulations/law	109	69.4	89	81.7	49	55.1
Banking/finance/insurance	91	58	68	74.7	37	54.4
Korean culture/customs/etiquette	93	59.2	54	58.1	28	51.9
Healthcare	105	66.9	78	74.3	36	46.2
Local Korean news/local happenings	107	68.2	71	66.4	31	43.7
Education (public/private)	91	58	51	56	22	43.1
Housing	114	72.6	67	58.8	28	41.8
Second-hand goods (buying/selling)	101	64.3	73	72.3	30	41.1
Travel	104	66.2	68	65.4	21	30.9
Exercise/sports	84	53.5	57	67.9	17	29.8
Pet care	56	35.7	31	55.4	9	29.0
Entertainment	91	58	69	75.8	18	26.1
Korean language learning/translation	89	56.7	47	52.8	12	25.5
Driving/parking	78	49.7	41	52.6	10	24.4
Interpersonal relationships	83	52.9	55	66.3	13	23.6
Shipping/receiving packages/mail	85	54.1	57	67.1	11	19.3
Transportation	81	51.6	43	53.1	8	18.6
Charity	62	39.5	27	43.5	4	14.8
Home country news	79	50.3	47	59.5	6	12.8
Automotive service/repair	89	56.7	33	37.1	3	9.1
Religious services/observances	33	21	13	39.4	1	7.7

Note. N = 157 Only participants in their established and leaving stages were included.

Relationship Between Community Intensity and Cross-Cultural Adaptation

Research question 3 addresses the relationship between online sojourner community usage and the two forms of cross-cultural adaptation: psychological and sociocultural adaptation. To measure online sojourner community usage, the survey includes an adaptation of Ellison et al.'s (2007) Facebook Intensity Scale, termed the Facebook Sojourner Community Intensity Scale. To address the two forms of cultural adaptation, the survey uses Demes & Geeraert's

(2014) Brief Sociocultural Adaptation Scale and Demes & Geeraert's (2014) Brief Psychological Adaptation Scale. All scales are scored by computing the mean for each item.

There was no significant correlation between Facebook Sojourner Community Intensity Scale and Demes & Geeraert's (2014) Brief Sociocultural Adaptation Scale or Demes & Geeraert's (2014) Brief Psychological Adaptation Scale. In other words, the intensity at which participants used online sojourner communities on Facebook did not significantly relate to their cross-cultural adaptations.

Pearson Correlation Table

Table 15

Correlation for Facebook Sojourner Intensity and Cross-Cultural Adaptation Scales

Variables	1.	2.	3.
1. Sociocultural Adaptation	-	.41**	-.09
2. Psychological Adaptation	.41**	-	.12
3. Facebook Intensity	-.09	-.12	-

Note. N=151.

*p < .05 **p < .01.

Additional Benefits of Online Sojourner Communities

Research question 4 addresses the potential advantages and drawbacks of participating in online sojourner communities. The most common theme was sharing and receiving helpful information for their daily lives in the host country. This section focuses on specific benefits beyond information sharing. This study identified several common themes in the interview data.

Socioemotional Social Support

Sharing helpful information for their daily lives could be termed "instrumental social support," but there is another type of social support, socioemotional social support (Ong & Ward, 2005). Socioemotional social support refers to people's emotional support and companionship (Ong & Ward, 2005).

Friendship. The participants used online sojourner communities on Facebook for companionship. Some participants, such as Kevin and Brandon, married locals and live in areas far from other sojourners, so they use sojourner communities to keep in touch with other

sojourners. Kevin explained, "As far as my area, I don't have any friends. I'm the only foreigner in my area. I believe there's a Canadian, but he's like 72. And he's...we're not on the same page." Some find companionship through the communities and maintain online friendships. Alice, for example, said, "I've met quite a few people who live around Korea who are also expats, who we've met on the Facebook groups, and we've just kept in touch and messaged each other that we just noticed we were commenting on each other's posts and then just took it to DMs."

Ana and Alice met their best friends in South Korea through online sojourner communities. Ana found her two closest friends in a "...volunteering Facebook group. One of them from Puerto Rico, one of them from Romania. Yeah, so it's like people you would never meet otherwise, at least not easily. So, we ended up like, talking like, are you going to this event that you're going to the other event, and we ended up becoming really good friends." Alice also met her closest friends through an online sojourner community. "I met [my two best friends] through Facebook groups for [sojourners]. Both of them are Korean, local Koreans, who posted in the [online sojourner community] looking for language exchange."

Other participants used the communities to keep in touch with people they had met. Since they did not see other sojourners regularly, keeping in touch with them passively helped them maintain their social networks. To illustrate this, Chuck said, "I would say that the biggest friendship-oriented thing with Facebook is the sort of reconnecting and keeping track of people that I already know."

Commiseration. Sojourners feel the inevitable stress of sojourning, and some found venting about what stresses them helpful. Chuck felt that participating in online sojourner communities "makes you feel like you're part of a community and that there other regular human beings going through [the same] things." Even though sojourning can feel isolating, many participants felt solace in knowing they were not alone. Brandon agreed that venting was one of the most valuable reasons to use online sojourner communities. He explained, "...you can just kind of vent, and it's kind of cathartic in that way." However, Brandon also had reservations about venting in online sojourner communities. He explained that "They can also be a bit negative sometimes. You know, complaining and stuff like that." Though venting can help some sojourners, it can also be a drawback for others.

Familial Relationship Support. In addition to general communities about sojourning in South Korea, many participants found support from online sojourner communities for family members. Half the sojourners participated in groups for parents of children in Korea. These groups cover broad parenting topics, such as sleep training for toddlers and situations applicable only to sojourners in Korea. Jessica, a mother of two, summed it up best: "I'm also in the parenting groups just because, like, I don't have a community here. I mean, like, other than online, I don't have my parents or relatives. If I were to go back to [my hometown], they're all within a 30-mile radius. They would all be able to help or give advice, but the only way I can get their advice now is through Facebook and then from other moms as well. I'm friends with Korean moms, but sometimes their childrearing ideology is very different." She also explained that when she was a new mom, "...I didn't know anything, so I would ask a lot of questions, and people were so kind and helpful." The sojourning fathers echoed similar sentiments about the sojourning fathers' communities. All the participants who had children participated in online sojourner parenting communities.

In addition to parenting groups, Jessica also regularly participated in other family-based communities. For example, she participates in a community exclusively for Western women married to Korean men "because there are a lot of cultural issues that are very hard to understand. And just to having women that I can relate to or know that I'm not the only one going through certain things." She also actively participates in a group for Montessori moms in South Korea. Her participation helps her navigate the cultural differences in childcare and childrearing as she sojourns in South Korea.

Timely information

The interview participants noted that the information shared in online sojourner communities was timely. Interviewees noted that they could reliably get accurate up-to-date information. Sometimes participants posted questions in the group, but often they searched the group or passively read posts as they came in. Ana explained, "most of the time-- when I have a question, someone has had it before." Alice also explained that she gets answers quickly from the sojourner communities. "The groups are amazing because you're able to post with a question and get feedback most of the time pretty quick. That's really, really helpful, especially when you need a fast answer."

Others noted that the information is more accurate and better than official channels. A common complaint was about dealing with government issues. Sojourners reported getting conflicting information, even when calling the official hotlines or checking the official websites. They often found that the English translations were inaccurate, outdated, or incomplete, but they could get more accurate information from online sojourner communities. Anh had an issue with immigration but resolved it with the help of other sojourners in the online sojourner communities, even though they got conflicting information from official sources. Multiple participants mentioned one community administrator of several Facebook groups by name because he consistently provided accurate information across various topics.

About half the interviewees brought up using online sojourner communities to learn about the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions in South Korea. For example, Anh joined the communities before arriving in South Korea. "I was also very nervous about coming here because of COVID. So, I joined [a large sojourner community] on Facebook. I [also] joined all of the ones related to COVID because I needed to know what the most up-to-date procedures for arriving in Korea with the COVID regulations were." Additionally, Kevin operates an afterschool English academy from his home and used online sojourner communities to navigate the constantly changing restrictions on his business from the COVID-19 pandemic. They appreciated the timely explanations of the official government announcements in online sojourner communities.

Fostering Offline Events

Participants also found that online sojourner communities effectively found and coordinated in-person activities. The most mentioned activity was domestic travel within South Korea. Alice, Ana, Jessica, and Kevin mentioned how helpful the communities were for exploring South Korea and getting to know the local culture. Alice explained that "You can go and experience Korea that you probably would not be able to [on your own] because of the language barrier [and] because the reservations are all in Korean." They experienced aspects of Korean culture that they could not have accessed otherwise and felt a deeper connection to the host country.

Offline events were not limited to domestic travel. Others found clubs and meetups for friends. For example, Kevin participated in a sojourner baseball league that met on weekends and

made friends with whom he has kept in touch for years. Brandon and Anh attended networking events organized through their local online sojourner communities. Ana regularly does volunteer work arranged in online sojourner communities. Chuck joined a Dungeons and Dragons group, and Alice organized local playdates for her children to meet other sojourning children their ages. She gave an example, "I posted about a splash pad that is in my local city that a lot of people expressed interest in, so I posted a map and the times we could all meet."

Professional Development

Given that all but two interview participants originally came to South Korea on work visas, it is no surprise that they used online sojourner communities for professional development. Chuck created his Facebook account in 2010 to participate in a local professional organization and later found other sojourner communities. Kevin often participates in a sojourner group for private academy owners. The educators I interviewed all participated in communities for teachers in South Korea. They used the communities to find work, share best practices, navigate rules, and connect with other like-minded people.

Special Lifestyle Needs

Sojourners often have additional special needs that online sojourner communities can serve. For example, Ana said, "I'm super tall. I'm in one group for plus-size women. And it's not 100% for women, but mostly for women. So, they give ideas where you can find, like, plus size clothes." Dietary concerns were also common. Arif used online sojourner communities to share information about sourcing Indonesian ingredients and halal foods. Anh is a vegetarian and uses online sojourner communities to find vegetarian dining options. Chuck wishes online sojourners communities existed when he first moved to Korea two decades ago. He explained that "There were lots of food issues. I don't really tolerate anything fermented very well. And I really dislike most seafood. So, you can imagine. I didn't, you know, make up well with most food, and then I always cooked for myself."

Drawbacks of Online Sojourner Communities

Negativity

The biggest drawback of participating in online sojourner communities was negativity. Though many felt that venting was helpful and seeing others share the same struggles was comforting, being subjected to negative opinions also had its toll. Some participants were annoyed by others' complaining over minor issues. Others found some specific online sojourner communities toxic and avoided participating in those groups. Half the participants brought up one infamous group. This group allowed "Korea bashing" content, meaning content that was often overly negative, toxic, and even racist. Chuck described the Korea-bashing sojourners in these groups as "...people who get kind of stuck in a rut. And they only see things from the perspective of their rut. And then they do a projection onto Korea of their rut. So, Korea is all like this, Korea's all like this. And you know, it gets real negative." Chuck also felt that these negative groups impacted him offline too. "It also impacts the sense of a lot of Koreans I do interact with that it's very hard for me to complain about, you know, very specific things without them getting the person perception that I'm a Korea-bashing foreigner." The participants felt tension between commiserating over commonly shared issues and bashing the host country.

Negativity was especially troubling for some participants. Jessica even stopped using Facebook for a couple of years after encountering a particularly toxic group. Jessica explained that in one particularly toxic group, "People were just so degrading toward a lot of experiences or people in Korea...I also stopped using Facebook for a while." Negativity was not limited to English-language groups. Ana observed the most toxic behaviors in communities for Spanish teachers in Korea. She related one troubling interaction she saw: "So, people were asking, like, how can I get a job in Korea or something like that, and the response was not something useful. He was like, just don't waste your time, leave this place. We are here to work, and we don't want any more competition." Despite previously finding helpful information in the community, she departed that group after reading that exchange.

Inaccurate and Dated Information

Though the participants all found helpful information in online sojourner communities, it was not always easy to find that information. With years of past posts in active groups, searching

through past posts for relevant information is difficult. Ana often found "...that there is too much information. So, sorting out all that information takes a little bit of time." Although participants could find information in active online sojourner communities, not all communities are active. Ana had experience with an inactive community for the district where she lived. Especially after many closures due to COVID-19 restrictions, she found most of the existing information outdated and no longer relevant to her needs, leading her to seek information outside of online sojourner communities.

Even recent information was not always beneficial for the participants. Alice found recent posts about dentists in her local community. Contrary to the recommendations, Alice had prior negative experiences with several of the recommended dentists. She stressed the importance of considering recommendations with a grain of salt. "At least for me, knowing that the comments are going to be people's opinions and not taking them as absolute truths is really important."

Arguments

Several participants reported being troubled by arguments they had gotten into online sojourner communities with other sojourners. For example, Kevin explained his occasional issues with other sojourners in online sojourner communities. "I try to just read the snarky comments and such now, I try not to reply to them. Because if I reply to them, I know that I'm, for the next hour, because I'm not one just to... I gotta have the last word. And I should know not to engage because then we're gonna be here all night. So, and then I'm gonna go to bed, probably with, you know, what's on my mind, and then I'm not gonna be able to sleep. So, yeah, I try not to engage with those people." Other participants were put off by seeing others argue but could not recall any arguments they had.

In contrast to Kevin's arguing with other sojourners in online sojourner communities, Brandon and Chuck both had experiences arguing with local Koreans. Brandon recalled an experience with a Korean national where the argument got "kind of a nationalist, or you know, us versus them kind of mentality of I think you're wrong because you're a foreigner or something like that." Similarly, Chuck recalled multiple instances where "some people get a little bit nationalistic. And, you know, some people have different academic orientations and ideological orientations. And so, things can get, you know, somewhat heated."

Repetitive and Low-effort Questions

The long-term sojourners interviewed mentioned an annoyance with low-effort or easily searchable questions. Chuck observed that one large community of over 70,000 members "has lots of really dumb questions in it. But, like in reading the responses to those, sometimes you get some very interesting information." Kevin did not want to ask low-effort questions, so he was mindful about searching before he posted. He explained: "I don't just like ask a question without, you know, searching or doing because then if you just want to ask a question, then you're probably gonna have the trolls coming out at you." The other long-term participants also observed that seeing the same questions regularly can be annoying, so they preferred communities frequented by other long-term sojourners instead of those with many new arrivals.

Chapter Summary

The analysis provides insight into how sojourners use online sojourner communities. This study uncovered 25 different knowledge needs that sojourners might have. On average, reported knowledge needs increased by 19.0% between the setting and established phases. For most knowledge needs, sojourners learned about them through online sojourner communities. Online sojourner communities were beneficial for learning about employment/work-related issues, visa-related issues, childcare, and groceries/dining. In contrast, they were not effective ways to learn about automotive services/repair.

Though sojourners found the information in online sojourner communities helpful, there was no significant correlation between the Facebook Sojourner Community Intensity Scale, an adaptation of Ellison et al.'s (2007) Facebook Intensity Scale and either measure of Demes & Geeraert's (2014) two cross-cultural adaptation scales. However, this study uncovered other positives about participating in online sojourner communities. The positives included social support, timely information, fostering offline events, professional development, and addressing special lifestyle needs. However, there were drawbacks too. These included negativity, inaccurate/dated information, arguing, and repetitive low-effort questions.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This study explored the knowledge that sojourners need to adapt to their host countries. To gain this knowledge, some sojourners participate in online sojourner communities while they cope with acculturative stress (Adikari & Adu, 2015), the inevitable stress that sojourners experience while living abroad (Oh & Butler, 2019, 2015, 2018). As sojourners experience different phases of their sojourns, their knowledge needs vary (Yoon & Chung, 2017). Sojourners benefit from what they learn in online sojourner communities. These communities also facilitate social support. Past research has shown that sojourner social support mitigates acculturative stress and aids in cross-cultural adaptation (Ong & Ward, 2005). Though online sojourner community participation has clear benefits, this study also explored the downsides of participating in online sojourner communities.

Sojourners' Knowledge Needs

Sojourners need to learn about various topics as they adjust to life in their host countries. This study identified 25 broad categories of knowledge needs, expanding on past research about sojourners' knowledge needs (Bukhari et al., 2020; Natalie et al., 2018; Sharma & Govindan, 2016; Shoham & Strauss, 2008; Showail et al., 2013; Sin et al., 2011; Sin & Kim, 2013; Yoon & Chung, 2017). Many sojourners share some needs consistently throughout their sojourns, whereas some sojourners' needs change over time.

Common Knowledge Needs

Though each sojourner has different knowledge needs throughout their sojourns, some noteworthy needs emerged in the study. For example, as Yu et al. (2021) found, food is a constant concern for sojourners. Some sojourners may crave a taste from home, but others have dietary needs that are uncommon in the host country. Some may not care for the local cuisine, but others have restricted diets. For example, one interviewee could not tolerate fermented foods, a primary component of Korean cuisine. Another interviewee maintained a strict vegetarian diet,

which is an uncommon diet in South Korea (Yoo & Yoon, 2015). Over half of the participants shared this concern during their settling and established phases.

The study also confirmed Showail et al.'s (2013) findings about working sojourners' needs for work-related information. Most respondents reported needing knowledge about employment/work-related issues in both the settling and established phases. Working in a foreign culture with different implicit expectations can be a significant source of acculturative stress for sojourners (Showail et al., 2013). Even after adjusting to a foreign work environment, sojourners remain limited by the kinds of work that they can do in the host country. Visa restrictions limit work opportunities, as do practical limitations, like language skills and certifications. They need information about their current workplaces as well as finding new opportunities. Every interviewee mentioned difficulties they had at work.

Participants also consistently needed to know about rules/regulations/law. Approximately two-thirds of participants indicated they needed to know about the topic during both the settling and established phases. The South Korean legal system is different from the sojourners' host countries, so they are not yet familiar with it. Additionally, throughout the interviews, sojourners brought up the uncertainty of the South Korean government's constantly changing COVID restrictions. Farh et al., 2010 and Sin et al., 2011 noted that sojourners often find official sources of information difficult to access with poor or nonexistent foreign language translations.

Knowledge Needs Changes Over Time

RQ1 addressed the knowledge that sojourners must cross-culturally adapt to their host countries. These knowledge needs change throughout their sojourners. As Kim (2001, 2019) noted, cross-cultural adaptation is gradual, with many ups and downs. As sojourners overcome the inevitable challenges of living abroad, other challenges arise. Also, as Oberg (1960) and Yoon & Chung (2017) noted, cross-cultural adaptation happens in different stages, with sojourners' knowledge needs changing over time. This study confirmed these past findings. Participants' information needs changed as they adapted to live in their host countries and their life circumstances changed. The participants' childcare information needs provided a telling example. Most participants arrived childless, so relatively few needed information about childcare. After getting established in the host country, many participants had children and suddenly needed to know about childcare.

When Oberg (1960) first proposed the different stages of "culture shock," he supposed that sojourners would need less information as they adapted. This study found the opposite to be accurate, reaffirming Kim's (2001, 2019) idea that sojourners face constant stressors as they adapt to their lives in the host country. Participants experienced more knowledge needs during their established phases than their settling phases.

Most knowledge needs remained relatively constant between phases, with most having modest increases in prevalence. Some, however, had steep increases between phases. The largest increase was in automotive services/repair. Even though Yoon & Chung (2017) found that sojourners need information about automobiles most during their settling phases, few participants reported needing to know about automotive services/repair during their settling phases in this study. In contrast, over three times as many participants reported the need during their established phases. Driving/parking had similar but less pronounced increases. Yoon & Chung's (2017) study took place in the United States, where exclusively using public transportation is less common than in South Korea. South Korea has robust public transportation, which may account for the difference in phases. Because of the accessible public transportation, most sojourners in South Korea did not need vehicles during their settling phases but purchased them after establishing themselves.

Like automotive services/repair, childcare significantly increased between phases. It was one of the least common needs during the settling phase, with few reporting it, but one of the most common needs during the established phase with three times as many participants reporting the need. Most participants arrived in South Korea without children but had children after arriving. Just as Kim (2001, 2019) and Yoon & Chung (2017) noted, acculturative stresses and knowledge needs vary over time. This study's findings also confirmed Sharma & Govindan's (2016) findings that childcare is a common topic in online sojourner communities. However, this study found that established sojourners are more likely to have this need than settling sojourners.

Housing also showed a sizable increase between phases. During the settling phase, less than half of respondents reported needing to know about housing, but over two-thirds needed to know about it once they became established. The increase may seem puzzling initially because all sojourners need a place to live, but most participants surveyed came to South Korea on working visas. Often, their employers provided housing for them during their settling periods. After completing their work contracts, many changed jobs and had to secure housing for

themselves. Coupled with language and cultural barriers, housing information needs increased over time.

The one notable exception to the increases between phases was Korean language learning/translation. The local language-related need was the only category to have a sizable decrease between the settling and established phases. During the settling phase, over two-thirds of survey participants had the knowledge need, whereas, during the established phase, only around half of survey participants had this need. Though language remained a common need, those who overcame the need used a combination of several strategies. They either learned the language, found other people (such as Korean spouses) to handle situations for them, or found English-friendly services. These findings provide more insight into Gearing's (2015, 2019) and Gearing & Roger's (2018) research into sojourners' Korean language knowledge needs and decreasing motivation to continue studying the Korean language.

Meeting Sojourners' Knowledge Needs

Sojourners participate in online sojourner communities differently at each stage. However, there was insufficient data in this study to make accurate conclusions about the differences between sojourners' participation at different stages. Many sojourners' settling periods predated the existence of online sojourner communities, so many knowledge needs would have appeared unfulfilled by online sojourner communities. Additionally, most respondents were in the established phase, with very few in the settling or leaving phases. Since few participants indicated the leaving phase, there was insufficient data for comparison. Due to these limitations, this discussion focused on what sojourners learned during their established phases.

Common and Useful Information Learned

Participants found some information especially needed and useful. For example, employment/work-related issues was one of the most common knowledge needs. Most of those participants learned about the topic by participating in online sojourner communities. Of those who learned about the topic, most ranked that information in their top five most useful things they learned. Those who learned about employment/work-related topics in online sojourner communities found the information helpful for adapting to life in the host country. Considering

that working abroad is the most prominent reason for people to sojourn, it follows that information about working abroad was helpful. These findings confirm the research about the necessity and usefulness of work-related information in online sojourner communities that Showail et al. (2013) and Sharma & Govindan (2016) found. Working outside one's home country comes with many challenges, so sharing information with like-minded people benefits sojourners. Sojourners can also find jobs through postings in online sojourner communities.

Though information about childcare was one of the least common issues during the settling stage, it became one of the most common needs during the established stage, with over half of respondents expressing that knowledge need. About two-thirds of those respondents reported that they learned childcare in online sojourner communities. Over two-thirds found the information useful and counted it in their top five most valuable things they learned in online sojourner communities. These findings confirm Sharma & Govindan's (2016) findings that sojourners often discuss childcare in online sojourner communities and demonstrate that sojourners find this information especially useful. Once established, many sojourners continue working and need childcare. With language and cultural barriers, sojourners use online sojourner communities to share information about childcare effectively.

Two other common topics had similar results. Korean rules/regulations/law and visa-related issues were knowledge needs shared by over two-thirds of the participants. A large portion of those participants learned about these topics in online sojourner communities. However, there was a disparity in how the participants ranked their usefulness. Of those who learned about the topics in online sojourner communities, approximately two-thirds listed visa-related information in their top 5 most useful, but only half listed Korean regulations/law in their top five lists. Few interview participants found the official sources of visa information adequate. These findings confirm what Farh et al. (2010) and Sin et al. (2011) found; sojourners turned to social media to find more accurate information than official sources. However, Sin et al. (2011) found legal issues one of the least important information needs; participants in this study ranked information about legal concerns as some of the most useful.

The findings also provided evidence explaining how sojourners satisfy their information needs about dining/groceries. Sin et al. (2011) found that food/drink was a crucial information need for sojourners, and this study's findings corroborate their findings. Most participants needed to know about groceries/dining, while most with the need learned about the topic from online

sojourner communities. Many who learned about dining/groceries ranked what they learned as most useful. These findings further corroborate past findings about the importance of sharing information about dining and groceries for sojourners' cross-cultural adaptation (Seo et al., 2012; Sharma & Govindan, 2016; Sin et al., 2011).

Many participants also effectively learned about healthcare through online sojourner community participation. Over two-thirds of respondents reported needing knowledge about accessing the Korean healthcare system. Of those two-thirds, most learned about healthcare in online sojourner communities, with almost half ranking that information in their top 5 most useful. Needing information about healthcare commonly came up during the interviews. For example, Arif's wife was pregnant with twins when they arrived in South Korea. He relayed his experience with using online sojourner communities to find a doctor. "When we came here, my wife was pregnant, and we need to give birth here. And that really scared us. Because yeah, but finally we found hospital that the doctor speaks English." These findings confirm the necessity of healthcare information for sojourners found in past research (Sharma & Govindan, 2016; Sin & Kim, 2013). For those with pressing medical needs, this information was handy.

Common But Unsatisfied Needs

Some needs were common but were poorly satisfied by participating in online sojourner communities. Korean language/translation provides a good example. Over half of the participants reported needing to know about the language, but only about half of the participants with this need learned about the Korean language from participating in online sojourner communities. Only a quarter ranked the knowledge about the Korean language they learned in their top five most useful things. Learning a foreign language can take years of dedicated study, and automated translation tools, such as Google Translate and Naver Papago, have come a long way. Some participants likely found alternatives, such as translation apps or South Korean spouses, to satisfy their language/translation needs. Some participants also indicated that they participate in online language learning communities, similar to what Isbell (2018) described. These online communities support informal language learning. Though many sojourners participate in them, they are not limited to sojourners.

The largest gap between knowledge needs and learning was automotive services/repair. Like Korean language/translation, around half of respondents reported needing to know about

the topic. Of those who reported the need, only a about a third learned about it through online sojourner communities. Very few ranked the information in their top five most useful things learned. Though Yoon & Chung (2017) asserted that automobile information was necessary for sojourners' cross-cultural adaptation, online sojourner communities did not adequately address this need for the participants.

Online Sojourner Community Usage and Cross-Cultural Adaptation

To assess online sojourner community usage, this study employed Ellison et al.'s (2007) Facebook Intensity Scale. Cross-cultural adaptation divides into psychological adaptation and sociocultural adaptation (Searle & Ward, 1990). Psychological adaptation “refers to how comfortable and happy a person feels with respect to being in the new culture, or anxious and out of place” (Demes & Geeraert, 2014, p. 92), whereas "Sociocultural adaptation refers to the more practical and behavioral aspects of adapting to a new culture; those aspects that allow a person to navigate the culture effectively on a day-to-day basis” (Demes & Geeraert, 2014, p. 92).

There was no significant correlation between Demes & Geeraert's (2014) Brief Psychological Adaptation Scale and Ellison et al.'s (2007) Facebook Intensity Scale. Past research, such as Jeong (2004), Pang (2018), and Samnani et al. (2013), had concerns about how sojourner communities might serve as enclaves that separate sojourners from participating in the host culture and limit their psychological adaptation. However, these concerns did not seem to have a noticeable impact on sojourners' cross-cultural adaptation from using online sojourner communities on Facebook. Some sojourners used online sojourner communities to make friends with locals, and many participated in domestic travel activities organized through the communities to engage with the local culture. The opportunities to engage with locals and the local culture seemed to offset the potentially insulating effects of community participation as predicted by Bender et al. (2019). Their meta-analysis did not find much impact on co-national social network usage and cross-cultural adaptation.

Advantages and Drawbacks of Participation

Online sojourner community participation has both pros and cons. The sojourners who participated in the study found that the benefits outweighed the downsides, but this is not the case for those who chose not to participate in online sojourner communities. In addition to the

information sharing discussed in RQ2, online sojourner communities provided social support and fostered connections to the host country. The drawbacks included negativity, inaccurate/outdated information, and repetitive questions.

Social Support

Past research has shown how social support helps benefit sojourners' well-being (Hofhuis et al., 2019). Though past studies, such as Hofhuis et al. (2019), focused on the social support sojourners get from locals and people back home, this study found that sojourners also can receive social support from other sojourners in online sojourner communities. Social support for sojourners divides into instrumental and socioemotional supports (Ong & Ward, 2005). Instrumental support is how well the sojourners can get relevant information for their daily lives. The prior discussions already addressed what daily life needs that sojourners learn about from online sojourner communities. This discussion focused on socioemotional support. However, socio-emotional support is the emotional support and companionship that sojourners receive. Participants received socioemotional support online within the communities by helping them make friends and maintain existing networks.

Online sojourner communities provided places for sojourners to connect in the online space. The communities provided a sense of kinship and opportunities to commiserate about their difficulties abroad. One interview participant explained that online sojourner communities "...make you feel like you're part of a community that there are other regular human beings going through going through [the same] things." Those interviewed who lived far from other sojourners found the communities helpful when felt isolated from other sojourners. Two of the interview participants lived far from other sojourners, so they appreciated the connections with other sojourners that they would not otherwise had in their daily lives. Communities for sojourning parents and international relationships were beneficial as cultural norms for childrearing and marital relationships greatly differ. One interviewee summed up the social support she receives by saying, "Being a foreigner here can be challenging, and finding someone who has your interests, who's also a mom, who's also working, who's interested in beauty, can be really, really helpful makes you feel less lonely." These findings confirm that online social support helps ward off loneliness and homesickness found in prior studies (Billed et al., 2020; Hofhuis et al., 2019).

Online sojourner communities also facilitated friendships that extended offline. Several interview participants made their closest in-country friends through online sojourner communities. One interviewee explained how she met her two best friends in Korea. “We met through the volunteering Facebook group, one of them from Puerto Rico, one of them from Romania. Yeah, so it's like people you would never meet otherwise, at least not easily.” Another interviewee had a similar story about meeting her two best friends. “Both of them are Korean, local Koreans, who posted in [a local online sojourner community] looking for language exchange.” Though they initially met their closest friends through the communities, most of their contact moved offline, further warding off the loneliness that plagues many sojourners.

In addition to facilitating making friends, online sojourner communities also helped sojourners maintain existing social networks. Participants were often Facebook friends with other community members. Sojourners also maintained contact with acquaintances and friends through sojourner communities. Seeing each other's posts and replies helped them passively maintain social contact, even without directly engaging with each other. Especially during COVID restrictions of 2020 and 2021, sojourner communities allowed sojourners to continue feeling the sense of community when meetups in person were not possible.

Fostering connections to the host country

In addition to social support, online sojourner communities fostered connections to the host country's culture. Past studies have repeatedly found that connections to the host country correlate with cross-cultural adaptation (Billedo et al., 2020; Farh et al., 2010; Hofhuis et al., 2019; Roskell, 2013; Xiao et al., 2019). Some participants reported making close South Korean friends through the group. Though communications in the communities were primarily in English, some interviewees reported positive interactions with English-speaking South Koreans from the host country with some making close Korean friends. Facebook's popularity internationally seems to limit the enclave effect of home country social media, such as the Chinese WeChat, that Pang & Wang (2020) and Samnani et al., (2013) observed.

Domestic travel trips were another popular way to connect with the culture. Many reported joining weekend travel excursions organized through sojourner communities. On these trips, sojourners traveled with local tour guides and had cultural experiences they would not have

had otherwise. They felt more connected to the host country after experiencing more than the cities where they lived, just as Hart (2021) found.

Negativity

Though most sojourners' experiences with online communities were positive, the most pervasive issue was negativity in online sojourner communities. Though commiserating over shared problems can foster social support, this can also bring others down and create a hostile environment. Among interviewees, negativity was the primary reason they chose to leave online sojourner communities. Sojourners experience acculturative stress, and that stress can manifest in unfortunate ways (Demes & Geeraert, 2015; Hwang & Ting, 2008). Logically, it follows that sojourners may take out their frustrations in impersonal online spaces, and others get turned off by it.

Some participants mentioned a phenomenon that they called "Korea bashing" in online sojourner communities. "Korea bashing" was content that was overly negative and borderline racist about South Korea, the host country. Interview participants mentioned one infamous online sojourner community on Facebook that allowed for Korea bashing. Whereas bashers in that community likely consider it commiseration or in good humor, the interviewees were turned off by groups that allowed this kind of content. Social media tends to serve as an echo chamber for strengthening prevailing beliefs (Cinelli et al., 2021). Interview participants felt that communities like the infamous one strengthened the negative opinions of their members.

The interviewees mentioned the importance of rules and moderation in online sojourner communities. They felt that as communities grow, they need moderation to limit the harmful elements to remain helpful for sojourners. Kevin said that communities need "...to be monitored better." However, he acknowledged how difficult it must be to successfully moderate online sojourner communities by saying, "It's hard to monitor a group of 30 people. I used to teach 35 first-graders with no Korean knowledge and no co-teacher. That was hard enough. I can imagine trying to, you know, monitor a Facebook group with 30 people. But I think all and all they're helpful but, you just got to weed out the snarky comments and the trolls."

Inaccurate/Outdated Information

Though participants found reliable, timely information in online sojourner communities, there was also inaccurate and outdated information. In communities that were not very active, information about local resources quickly become dated. Because of the language and cultural barriers, sojourners in the groups may have an incomplete understanding of local processes, so rumors propagated. According to the interviewees, small communities with few active members tended to have less accurate, timely information than their active counterparts.

Repetitive/Low-effort Questions

Online sojourner communities include sojourners at different stages of their sojourns. They include sojourners preparing for their sojourns, settling into the host country, already established lives in the host country, and preparing to conclude their sojourns. This study confirmed Yoon & Chung's (2017) past findings that sojourners needed information at different stages. Coupled with Facebook's limited search function, questions often got repeated to the annoyance of experienced sojourners. These questions could instigate negative interactions and made it more difficult to find useful information. Repetitive low-effort questions could receive troll responses from frustrated established sojourners, spreading negativity in the groups.

Limitations

There are several limitations to the survey. Studying sojourners exclusively from Facebook groups may have limited how generalizable the study is to other contexts, even though clearly defining the methods still allows for "petite generalizations" (Stake, 1995, 2010). Facebook required using one's actual name to create an account, so the experience of using an online community is likely different than online sojourner communities on anonymous platforms (Morio & Buchholz, 2009). Additionally, Facebook tends to skew older than some other platforms (Beers et al., 2022) so there were more established sojourners than settling sojourners. Most respondents had lived in South Korea for longer than five years.

The sojourner communities that allowed my recruitment posts were limited. I attempted to post in various communities, but moderators often refused my requests to post in their groups. In the same way that strict moderation can limit negative interactions, it can also limit survey recruitment. I tended to get approval from groups frequented by long-term sojourners where I

had already established myself. Consequently, the sample inadvertently skewed towards established, with few in the settling or leaving phases. Also, I could not access any communities specifically for international students in Korea, so only few respondents were students.

Soliciting participants for an online survey had the same limitations as other voluntary surveys. People who care most deeply about the subject are the most likely to complete the survey and may not be representative of the whole group (Andrade, 2020). Additionally, frequent online community users are more likely to have seen the recruitment post and may be overrepresented in the survey sample.

Though Vanden Abeele et al. (2018) recently confirmed the validity of the Facebook Intensity Scale for psychological research, Ellison et al.'s (2007) scale relies on participants to self-report their online sojourner community usage. I adapted her scale into the Facebook Sojourner Community Intensity Scale. Young people and heavy social media users tend to under-report their social media usage on self-reported surveys (Ernala et al., 2020). Ernala et al. (2020) found system logs much more accurate but analyzing system logs would be far outside the scope of this research.

The study may not represent all sojourners. It only sampled only sojourners currently sojourning in South Korea. Most of the population of South Korea, live in condensed urban areas. The sample also included only those proficient enough in English to interact in online sojourner communities. Most were likely native English speakers, but some non-native speakers also participated in the study. Most sojourners in South Korea come from non-English-speaking Asian countries, such as China (Statistics Korea, 2022). Given that English is the primary second language used in South Korea, sojourners who are not proficient in English would likely have different needs when adapting to life in the host country. This study may not fully generalize to non-English speaking sojourners in South Korea.

Additionally, most participants in the study are connected to education as either instructors or students. The most common job for English-speaking sojourners in South Korea, as in this study, is foreign language instructor due to the relative ease of getting a working visa. Other visas have more stringent requirements or less desirable working conditions. This study may not generalize to sojourners with no connections to education.

Implications

The study results have implications for various stakeholders, including sojourners, online community moderators, employers of sojourners, universities, and governments.

Sojourners

Sojourners can benefit from participating in online sojourner communities. This study found that sojourners learned about many facets of life to help them adapt to sojourning outside their home countries. Additionally, online sojourner communities provided both instrumental and socioemotional support. At their best, online sojourner communities provided sojourners with a sense of belonging that they may not feel offline.

However, participation in online sojourner communities has potential drawbacks too. This study found that using online sojourner communities alone was not enough to adapt to life abroad. The most common pitfall in the communities was toxic comments in some communities. If sojourners want to adapt to their lives cross-culturally in their host countries, they should be cautious about which groups they frequent. They should choose well-moderated groups that limit toxic behavior and misinformation.

Online Sojourner Community Moderators

Though this study found that online sojourner communities have numerous advantages for helping sojourners adapt to their host countries, they also can have serious drawbacks. The biggest drawbacks stem from negativity and arguments. Whereas one sojourner may find it cathartic to vent about their problems, others can be brought down by the negativity. Since social media can already be an echo chamber for negativity (Cinelli et al., 2021), setting clear rules for conduct within the communities can limit negativity and maximize the benefits. Having clear guidelines for the types of posts allowed within the communities can also help. For example, a community about vegan dining would not likely benefit from off-topic arguments about politics.

Employers

Employers who wish to employ sojourners should take steps to help sojourners adapt to life in the host country. Providing well-presented information to their employees in their native languages could help prevent poor cross-cultural adaptation. Poor adaptation can result in

sojourners failing to complete their contracts and costing the employer money (Harzing, 1995, 2002). During the interview process, employers could refer prospective employees to online sojourner communities to help them prepare to move to the host country and support them after arriving.

Governments

Farh et al. (2010) and Sin et al. (2011) also observed that sojourners often found official government sources of information lacking. The interview participants often found official online sources, especially those translated into foreign languages, inadequate and outdated. If a government wants to attract sojourners to work or study in a country, it should provide clear information to sojourners about sojourning-related activities. Sojourners often use online sojourner communities as a stopgap measure for sharing information when official sources are lacking.

Universities

Universities seeking to attract and keep international student sojourners must also consider how sojourners adapt to life in their host countries. Educational systems and expectations vary greatly between countries, and international students can struggle as a result. Often international students find official resources lacking, and classes often have less English than their official listings may suggest, as noted by the two graduate students I interviewed. Online sojourner communities can be places for international students to get social support and share information.

Future Research

This study opens further lines of inquiry. The study only included adults sojourning in South Korea who were proficient in English and used online sojourner communities on Facebook. Most participants came to South Korea on work visas and continued working full-time with comparatively few international students. Future studies could focus on specific subsets of sojourners' online sojourner community usage, such as international students, trailing spouses, and non-English speaking communities. The study only included those who were currently sojourning in South Korea, so those who were preparing to sojourn and those who had

already departed from South Korea were excluded. Future studies could investigate how prospective sojourners use online sojourner communities to gather information. They could investigate the information that those planning to exit their host countries need for a successful transition by including those who have recently repatriated.

Facebook is not the only place where sojourners convene in communities. In addition to offline communities, interviewees mentioned other active online sojourner communities on Reddit and Discord. Future studies could investigate online sojourner communities on other platforms and how they help their members adapt to their lives in their host countries. Perhaps a future study could compare how sojourners in online sojourner communities cross-culturally adapt to those who do not participate in online sojourner communities.

Additionally, social support became an emergent factor. Ong & Ward (2005) created the Index of Sojourner Social Support to assess the social support that sojourners receive. Future studies could explicitly compare Facebook Sojourner Community Intensity Scale, an adaptation of Ellison et al.'s (2007) Facebook Intensity Scale, to Ong & Ward's (2005) Index of Sojourner Social Support.

Conclusions

Sojourners, people who live outside their home countries, face challenges when they live in new cultures outside of their home countries (Spradley & Phillips, 1972). To deal with these challenges, sojourners seek support other sojourners in online communities (Ng et al., 2017; Oh & Butler, 2019; Ong & Ward, 2005). Online communities can be especially beneficial for sojourners because they provide a safe space for information exchanges (Han et al., 2019). This study found that the information sojourners need varies according to whether they were settling, established, or leaving which aligns with the findings of Yoon & Chung (2017).

Although, sojourners information needs varied, their knowledge needs generally increased over time, averaging a 19% increase between phases. Though most sojourners' knowledge needs remained constant or steadily increased between phases, some needs became much more prevalent. For example, automotive service/repair went from one of the least commonly reported knowledge needs during the settling phase to over half of the respondents during the established phase. In contrast, Korean language learning needs became less prevalent after sojourners progressed to the established phase.

While this study identified 25 categories of knowledge needs that sojourners share, it discovered that online sojourner communities were best for communicating information about employment/work-related issues. More than 60% of participants reported employment/work-related issues information needs throughout their sojourns. Just as Showail et al. (2013) observed, sojourners who go abroad to work need information about their jobs, and employers are often incomplete sources of information. Other effectively learned topics included Korean rules/regulation/law, healthcare, transportation, groceries/dining, and Korean culture/customs/etiquette. Though online sojourner communities were good for learning some kinds of information, they were ineffective for others. Automotive services/repair and Korean language/translation were popular needs, but few participants reported learning about them in online sojourner communities and even fewer reported that the information they learned was particularly useful for adapting to life in South Korea.

Participating in online sojourner communities came with some drawbacks. The most common drawback for the participants was negativity. Whereas some saw commiserating about hardships as social support, others felt brought down by that negativity. Others reported arguments and trolling as common experiences. Sometimes the negativity even devolved into "Korea bashing." However, interviewees all felt that moderation was key for limiting negativity and negativity was not a common feature of many communities.

Despite these drawbacks, there was no significant correlation between cross-cultural adaptation and online sojourner community usage. This study confirmed Bender et al.'s (2019) findings that there was no significant correlation between co-national social network usage and cultural adaptation. The lack of significant correlation suggests that the benefits of online sojourner community usage may offset the downsides of participation.

While this study did not find a significant relationship between online sojourner community usage and cross-cultural adaptation, this study did uncover advantages to participating in online sojourner communities. In addition to providing instrumental social support through information sharing, some sojourners reported receiving socioemotional social support from online sojourner communities. Some met their closest friends through online sojourner communities or through meetups arranged in online sojourner communities. Others used online sojourner communities to connect them to host country's culture through meeting

locals and domestic travel. Overall, sojourners who participate in online sojourner communities find them a net benefit, despite their drawbacks.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. What is your gender?

- A. Male
- B. Female
- C. Non-binary / third gender
- D. Prefer not to say

2. What is your citizenship status?

- A. I have South Korean citizenship. (*Branch to the end of the survey*)
- B. I have dual citizenship with South Korea and another country.
- C. I am a foreign national with no South Korean citizenship.
- D. Other _____

3. Where do you live?

- A. I currently live in South Korea.
- D. I used to live in South Korea, but I live elsewhere now. (*Branch to the end of the survey*)
- E. I do not currently live in South Korea and I never have. (*Branch to the end of the survey*)
- F. Other (Branch to the end of the survey)

4. How long have you lived in South Korea?

- A. Less than 1 month
- B. 1 month to 6 months
- C. 6 months to 1 year
- D. 1 year to 3 years
- E. 3 years to 5 years
- F. 5 years to 10 years
- G. Longer than 10 years
- H. I have never lived in South Korea. (*Branch to the end of the survey*)

5. What is your current employment status?

- A. I work full time.
- B. I work part time.
- C. I am not currently employed.
- D. Other: _____

6. Are you studying at a school located in South Korea?

- A. Yes, I am currently enrolled at a university in Korea.
- B. Yes, I am studying in an official university language program in Korea.
- C. No, I have no experience formally studying in Korea.
- D. No, but I previously formally studied at a university or a university language program in Korea.
- E. Other: _____

7. Why did you come to South Korea on your current visa? (Select all that apply.)

- A. To work
- B. To study
- C. To accompany family
- D. For travel/leisure
- E. Other: _____

8. How much longer do you plan to live in South Korea?

- A. less than 6 months
- B. between 6 months to 1 year
- C. between 1 year and 2 years
- D. between 2 years and 5 years
- E. indefinitely
- F. unsure

APPENDIX B

SOJOURNERS' INFORMATION NEEDS SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Select each topic you learned about via your participation in Facebook groups for expats in South Korea during each stage of your time in South Korea.

You can choose multiple stages for each topic. If you did not need to learn about a topic, leave it blank.

- automotive service/repair
- banking/finance/insurance
- charity
- childcare
- driving/parking
- education (public/private)
- employment/work related issues
- entertainment
- exercise/sports
- groceries/dining
- healthcare
- home country news
- housing
- interpersonal relationships
- Korean culture/customs/etiquette
- Korean language learning/translation
- Korean rules/regulations/law
- local Korean news/local happenings
- pet care
- religious services/observances
- second-hand goods (buying/selling)
- shipping/receiving packages/mail
- transportation
- travel
- visa related issues

2. Select each topic you learned about via your participation in Facebook groups for expats in South Korea during each stage of your time in South Korea.

You can choose multiple stages for each topic. If you did not need to learn about a topic, leave it blank.

(The survey used display logic to only display the topics that participants selected in Question 1.)

3. What are your top 5 most useful things you learned about from Facebook groups for expats? Begin with #1 as the most useful.

Drag the topics from the left to the box on the right. (If you learned about fewer than 5 topics, rank all the topics you selected.)

(The survey used display logic to only display the topics that participants selected in Question 2.)

APPENDIX C

SOCIOCULTURAL ADAPTATION SURVEY QUESTIONS

The following 12 questions are from Demes & Geeraert's (2014) Brief Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (BSAS). The scale was published with an Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 Unported Creative Commons license. The license allows for free usage for non-commercial purposes.

Think about living in South Korea. How easy or difficult is it for you to adapt to _____ and then rate the following 12 items on a 7-point scale from 1 = very difficult to 7 = very easy.

1. Climate (temperature, rainfall, humidity)
2. Natural environment (plants and animals, pollution, scenery)
3. Social environment (size of the community, pace of life, noise)
4. Living (hygiene, sleeping practices, how safe you feel)
5. Practicalities (getting around, using public transport, shopping)
6. Food and eating (what food is eaten, how food is eaten, time of meals)
7. Family life (how close family members are, how much time family spend together)
8. Social norms (how to behave in public, style of clothes, what people think is funny)
9. Values and beliefs (what people think about religion and politics, what people think is right or wrong)
10. People (how friendly people are, how stressed or relaxed people are, attitudes toward foreigners)
11. Friends (making friends, amount of social interaction, what people do to have fun and relax)
12. Language (learning the language, understanding people, making yourself understood)

APPENDIX D

PSYCHOLOGICAL ADAPTATION SURVEY QUESTIONS

The following ten questions were adapted from Demes & Geeraert's (2014) Brief Psychological Adaptation Scale (BPAS). The scale was published with an Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 Unported Creative Commons license. The license allows for free usage for non-commercial purposes.

The adapted items use a 7-point scale of 1 = never to 7 = always.

Think about living in South Korea. In the last 2 weeks, how often have you felt . . .

1. I am excited about being in South Korea.
2. I feel out of place, like I do not belong in Korean culture. (*reverse scored*)
3. I am sad to be away from my home country. (*reverse scored*)
4. I feel nervous about how to behave in certain situations in South Korea. (*reverse scored*)
5. I feel lonely without my friends and family from my home country around me. (*reverse scored*)
6. I feel homesick when I think about my home country. (*reverse scored*)
7. I feel frustrated by difficulties adapting to Korea. (*reverse scored*)
8. I am happy with my day-to-day life in Korea.

APPENDIX E

FACEBOOK SOJOURNER COMMUNITY INTENSITY SCALE

The following eight questions were adapted from Ellison et al.'s (2007) Facebook Intensity Scale. Ellison allows researchers to freely use and adapt the scale with proper attribution (Ellison, 2020). Instead of being about Facebook in general, I adapted it to be about online sojourner communities on Facebook. I replaced the term “Facebook” with “Facebook groups for expats” because that is the term that sojourners use to describe themselves.

1. About how many total Facebook friends do you have who are also members of Facebook groups for expats?

- A. 0 = 10 or less
- B. 1 = 11–50
- C. 2 = 51–100
- D. 3 = 101–150,
- E. 4 = 151–200
- F. 5 = 201–250
- G. 6 = 251–300
- H. 7 = 301–400
- I. 8 = more than 400

2. In the past week, on average, approximately how many minutes per day have you spent checking or participating in Facebook groups for expats?

- A. 0 = less than 10
- B. 1 = 10–30
- C. 2 = 31–60
- D. 3 = 1–2 hours
- E. 4 = 2–3 hours
- F. 5 = more than 3 hours

Please indicate the extent that you agree with the following statements. 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

3. Expat groups on Facebook are part of my everyday activities.
4. I am proud to tell people I'm in expat groups on Facebook.
5. Expat groups on Facebook have become part of my daily routine
6. I feel out of touch when I haven't checked expat groups on Facebook for a while
7. I feel I am part of the expat groups on Facebook.
8. I would be sorry if the expat groups on Facebook shut down.

APPENDIX F

ONLINE SOJOURNER COMMUNITY USAGE SURVEY QUESTIONS

I developed the following questions:

1. How long have you been a member of at least one Facebook group for expats?

A. Less than 1 month

B. 1 month to 6 months

C. 6 months to 1 year

D. 1 year to 3 years

E. 3 years to 5 years

F. 5 years to 8 years

G. Longer than 8 years

H. I am not a member of any expat groups on Facebook. (*branch to end of survey*)

2. Which of the following activities have you ever done in expat groups on Facebook? (Select all that apply.)

A. posted a question

B. answered another member's question

C. communicated with members through direct messages

D. met members offline (in person)

E. became friends on Facebook with someone from a Facebook group for expats

F. visited a business based on a recommendation in a Facebook group for expats

G. attended an offline event promoted in a Facebook group for expats

H. attended on online event promoted in a Facebook group for expats

I. had a post rejected by moderators for a Facebook group for expats

J. interacted with a local Korean person

3. How have Facebook groups for expats been most helpful for you in adapting to life in South Korea? (Free response)

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW INVITATION

At the end of the survey, participants will see the following invitation to participate in the interview:

Thank you for your participation! As a fellow expat in Korea, I truly appreciate your help. As part of this study, I will be conducting 30-45 minute follow-up interviews with select individuals. Would you be willing to participate in an interview on Zoom? If yes, please provide your information below.

Name: _____

E-mail address: _____

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

For my doctoral dissertation, I am collecting data about how expats in Korea use online groups on Facebook to adapt to living in South Korea. For this interview, “expats” are foreign national adults who are currently living in South Korea and plan to stay for longer than three months. Expats can include those who are working, studying, or accompanying a family member in Korea.

By signing this form, you, the participant, consent to a recorded interview on Zoom. Your interview will be transcribed, and all personally identifiable data will be removed. Your data will be used for analysis in my doctoral dissertation and any other future publications. At any time during the interview process, you may refuse to participate without any ramifications. When consent is withdrawn, any information you have provided will be destroyed. If you have any other questions or concerns, contact Bruce Screws at bscrews@fsu.edu.

I understand by signing below, I consent to participating in the survey with my expressed electronic permission.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher’s Name: Bruce E. Screws, Jr.

Researcher’s Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Consent

After choosing the participants for the interview, I will send them consent forms in advance using DocuSign. In the consent form, I will inform them that their anonymity will be maintained, but that the interviews will be recorded for transcription. The Interview Consent Form is in Appendix G.

Interview Structure

I will use a semi-structured interview. I will use the prepared questions, but I will also take notes and ask follow-up questions to probe deeper into the participants' answers.

Sample Introduction Script

Hi, my name is Bruce. Feel free to call me “Bruce.” Thank you for participating in this interview. Your help is invaluable for my research. How would you like for me to address you?

This interview will take about 30-45 minutes. I will ask you questions about your experiences adapting to life in Korea and how you have used Facebook groups mostly made up of expats.

It is important for my research that you answer each question honestly. Our conversation will be strictly confidential. After the interview, I remove all personally identifiable details when I transcribe this interview. Also, please speak slowly and clearly to make it easier for the software to transcribe your interview.

Is it okay if I begin recording now?

Interview Questions

Question 1: How long have you lived in Korea?

Question 2: Have you lived in any other countries outside your home country? If so, how long and where?

Question 3: When and why did you first move to Korea?

Question 4: How much longer do you plan to live in Korea?

Question 5: In what area do you live? Work? Study?

Question 6: (If working in Korea) What kind of work do you do in Korea? What trouble have you had adapting to work here?

(If studying in Korea) Tell me about your studies in Korea. What sorts of troubles have had adapting to studying here?

(If accompanying family member) What sort of troubles have you had adapting to living in Korea?

Question 7: What kinds of Facebook groups for expats are you in? Please give some examples. Which provide you with the most useful information for adapting to life in Korea?

Question 8: How long have you been a member of at least one Facebook group for expats in Korea? Approximately how many are you in now?

Question 9: What kinds of Facebook groups for sojourners do you participate in? For example, other sojourners have mentioned location-based groups, hobby-based groups, parenting groups, etc.

Question 10: Have you ever left a Facebook group for expats? Why did you choose to leave?

Question 11: How often would you say that you interact with Koreans in the online expat groups? What kinds of interactions have you had?

Question 12: How do you usually participate in the Facebook groups for expats in Korea? For example, posting questions, sharing links, answering others' questions, reading others' responses etc.

Question 13: (If applicable) What is an example of something you might post in a Facebook group for expats in Korea?

Question 14: (If applicable) What are some examples of comments you might post?

Question 15: Tell me about a time you had a problem and you turned to an expat group on Facebook for help? Feel free to include both positive and negative results. Do you have any other examples?

Question 16: In your opinion, what are the most useful things about Facebook groups for expats? What are some of the downsides?

Question 17: What negative experiences have you had with Facebook groups for expats?

Question 18: Have you ever made any friends, real life or virtual, from a Facebook group for expats in Korea? Tell me about that.

Question 19: Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your experience using Facebook groups to adapt to life in Korea?

Thank you for your participation. If anything else comes to mind about your experience with Facebook groups for expats, feel free to send me an email.

NOTE. "Expatriate" and "foreigner" are the most common terms used among sojourners in Korea to describe themselves.

APPENDIX J

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS CODES

Learning/needing knowledge about _____

- automotive service/repair
- banking/finance/insurance
- charity
- childcare
- driving/parking
- education (public/private)
- employment/work related issues
- entertainment
- exercise/sports
- groceries/dining
- healthcare
- home country news
- housing
- interpersonal relationships
- Korean culture/customs/etiquette
- Korean language learning/translation
- Korean rules/regulations/law
- local Korean news/local happenings
- pet care
- religious services/observances
- second-hand goods (buying/selling)
- shipping/receiving packages/mail
- transportation
- travel
- visa related issues

Receiving/needing social support about _____

- friendship
- parenting
- relationships
- venting/commiserating

Negatives about online sojourner communities

- arguing
- boundary breaking
- complaining
- receiving outdated/inaccurate information
- seeing stupid questions
- receiving inaccurate information

Benefits of online sojourner community participation

- Receiving good information
- Receiving timely information
- First-hand experiences

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

EDUCATION

Doctor of Education, Instructional Systems & Learning Technologies

Florida State University

Tallahassee, Florida

Research Areas: EFL/ESL pedagogy, cultural adaptation, technology usage in higher education

2019-present

Dissertation: "Online sojourner communities: Do they help or hinder cross-cultural adaptation and social support?"

GPA: 4.00 / 4.00

Expected Graduation: Fall 2022

Master of Education

Florida State University

Tallahassee, Florida

Major: Instructional Systems & Learning Technologies

2015- 2017

Research Areas: EFL/ESL in Higher Education, Online Instruction

GPA: 4.00 / 4.00

Bachelor of Science

Florida State University

Tallahassee, Florida

Majors: Entrepreneurship and Marketing **Minor:** Classics

2003-2007

GPA: 3.96 / 4.00

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Visiting Professor, Department of General Education

Incheon National University

2014- present

Responsibilities: Help students improve their English proficiency in both writing and speaking. Design the English Conversation and extracurricular courses' academic curriculum, including syllabi and online learning environments. Administer courses online and in-person. Design course materials used by the entire department.

Courses:

Business Culture

(Levels: 1, 2, 3 and 4)

English Conversation 1

(Levels: Intro, 1, 2, 3)

English Conversation 2

(Levels: 1, 2, 3)

English Excellence Article Discussion

Intensive English

Online Video and Culture

Social Media & Games

Study Abroad Preparation

Teaching Assistant, Department of Educational Psychology & Learning Systems

Florida State University (online)

2021-2022

Responsibilities: Graded and provided formative feedback to students through the university's learning management system; Assisted the professors in designing and editing the course content. Instructed new and second-language English students with English writing standards and practices.

English Teacher and Curriculum Developer

Feinschule Academy

2013-2015

Responsibilities: Used task-based learning to teach English writing, reading, and geography to K-6 students; Developed instructional materials used throughout South Korea and China.

PUBLICATIONS

Conference proceedings: Dennen, V. P., Yalcin, Y., Screws, B., & Hur, J. (presented 2022, April). *Student webcam behaviors and beliefs: Emergent norms, student performance, and cultural differences*. Paper presented at American Educational Research Association, American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA. (National)

Book chapter: Choi, H., Arslan, O., Adolfson, D. & Screws, B. (2021) "Bruce's Story: A domestic student living abroad." In P. Nixon, P., V. P. Dennen, & R. Rawal, (Eds.). *Reshaping international teaching and learning: Universities in the information age*. Routledge.

JOURNAL PEER REVIEWS

The Internet and Higher Education

2020-2021

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

KOTESOL National Conference – Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

Seoul, South Korea

2020

"How is English Conversation useful? Korean university students' perspectives."

HONORS, AWARDS, AND PRIZES

Gagne-Briggs Outstanding EdD Distance Learning Student Award

Florida State University

2021

Gagne-Briggs Outstanding Master's Distance Learning Student Award

Florida State University

2018

CERTIFICATIONS/TRAINING

Korean Immigration and Integration Program

Korea Immigration Service, Ministry of Justice

2018

Completed Levels 3, 4, and 5. (250 hours of in-class coursework)

TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) Certification

TEFL Online

2014

150 hours of coursework with additional certifications for teaching business English and teaching young learners.