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SIMPLE LIFE IN RURAL AMERICA: AN INVESTIGATION OF INTERNATIONAL
FACULTY MEMBERS CLASSROOM INTERACTION AND MIGRATION
MOTIVES AT A TEACHING-FOCUSED UNIVERSITY

By

CHENYU LIU

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Arkansas Tech University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN APPLIED SOCIOLOGY
August & 2019 of Graduation

Thesis Approval

This thesis, "Simple Life in Rural America: An Investigation of International Faculty Members Classroom Interaction and Migration Motives at a Teaching-Focused University," by Chenyu Liu, is approved by:

Thesis Advisor:

Dr. James Stobaugh
Associate Professor of Sociology

Thesis Committee:

Dr. Sean Huss
Professor of Sociology

Dr. Justin Moss
Assistant Professor of Psychology &
Graduate Director

Program Director:

Dr. Justin Moss
Assistant Professor of Psychology &
Graduate Director

Graduate College Dean:

Dr. Jeff W. Robertson
Interim Dean, Graduate College & Dean,
College of Natural and Health Sciences

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ABSTRACT

By interviewing 15 international faculty members who are currently employed at a teaching-focused university in the rural South of the U.S., this study investigated: 1) what brought them to the university in rural America; 2) whether students' complaints about their English proficiency affected the levels of their classroom interaction with students; and 3) whether the levels of their job satisfaction affected their migration motives. The present study found job opportunity is the only reason that drew the 15 participants to rural America. The findings indicated that domestic student complaints about their English proficiency and the levels of their job satisfaction do not play a role in this group of international faculty members' classroom interaction with students and intentions to stay or leave. The socio-cultural factor (inconvenient transport system, family conflicts, and cultural issues) was identified as the main reason, which affected the international faculty members' migration motives. Besides that, university type and geographic region of a university are also matter about international faculty members' levels of classroom interaction with students and their intentions to stay or leave at teaching-focused rural institutions.

Keywords: Teaching-focused university; Rural America; International faculty; Migration motives; Job satisfaction; Classroom interaction; Intentions to stay or leave

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I. Introduction

In recent years, U.S. higher education institutions have been making great efforts to attract foreign-born scholars with high levels of education from all over the world to the country in order to enhance innovation and scientific leadership (NAFSA: The Association of International Educators 2006; Kim, Wolf-Wendel and Twombly 2011). Between 1969 to 2007, the number of full-time international faculty members who were recruited and remained at American universities and colleges increased rapidly from 28,200 international faculty members in 1969, reaching to 126,123 international faculty members in 2007 (Open Doors 2008; Schuster and Finkelstein 2006). Looking at the geographical distribution among full-time international faculty who were employed at American higher education institutions, quite a few of them have been found at research universities, which are mostly in metro areas of the U.S. (Open Doors 2008; Kim et al. 2011). In terms of their country of origin, until 2008, international faculty from China (22%), were the highest percentage among the population of foreign-born faculty in the U.S.; followed by their peers who were from India (9.4%), South Korea (9.3%), Japan (5.4%), Germany (5%), and Canada (4.5%) (Open Doors 2008). Of these international faculty members, approximately 75% of them specialized in the STEM field (Open Doors 2008).

Higher education researchers also have investigated and examined international faculty's job satisfaction, work productivity, teaching experiences, and migration motives while working at research universities in the U.S. However, many international faculty members employed at American research universities are relatively less productive in the area of teaching but highly engaged in research (Wells 2007; Mamiseishvili and Vicki

2009; Kim et al. 2011; Manrique 1999; Thomas and Johnson 2004). Studies found that complaints about their accents affected their teaching productivity and further decreased the levels of their classroom interaction with students, which finally turned many of them to the area of research (Manrique 1999; Marvasti 2005; Skachkova 2007). In terms of job satisfaction and migration motives, previous studies found that Asian international faculty members in the STEM field were more likely to leave their current positions because they were less satisfied with their work environments, time for research, and resources on the campus (Austin and Rice 1998; Youn and Price 2009; Lee and Kim 2010). In addition, a number of international faculty members were still not sure whether they should remain at the same university even though they have obtained their tenure (Lawrence et al. 2014).

The findings of previous studies on international faculty classroom interaction with students, English proficiency, job satisfaction, and migration motives were mostly interrelated. They both provided evidence that international faculty classroom interaction at American research universities is relatively lower than their native-born counterparts due to domestic students' complaints about their English proficiency (accents), and the levels of their job satisfaction related to their intentions to stay or leave. However, there is very limited scholarly attention given to international faculty who work at teaching-focused institutions and live in rural America. In fact, only a few scholars have specifically examined or investigated the levels of international faculty members' classroom interaction with students while working and living in rural America, and little is known about whether their migration motives are also affected by the levels of their job satisfaction.

Because of the limited scholarly attention, one purpose of this study is to investigate whether the group of international faculty members who are employed at a primarily teaching-focused university in the rural South of the U.S. also intended to leave due to their relatively lower levels of job satisfaction. Most of the previous studies only focused on the international faculty members who were employed at American research universities in metro areas of the U.S., so it is quite important to pay more scholarly attention to international faculty members who work and live in rural America (Open Doors 2008; Kim et al. 2011). Socio-cultural factors, political factors, demographic factors, economic factors, and some miscellaneous factors would also affect people's migration motives (Krishnakumar and Indumathi 2014). Based on the migration factors proposed by Krishnakumar and Indumathi (2014), this study also investigates whether any of these factors have affected the group of international faculty members' intentions to stay or leave teaching-focused rural institutions.

Another purpose of this study is to investigate whether the international faculty members who teach at a primarily teaching-focused rural institution are actively interacting with students in the classroom or not. This is still an existing gap in the literature; the previous studies only focused on international faculty members who were employed at American research universities in metro areas, who changed their work preference from teaching to research because of domestic students' complaints about their accents (e.g., Wells 2007; Mamiseishvili and Vicki 2009; Kim and Susan 2011). Additionally, some international faculty members were hired by certain research universities due to their outstanding publication records, so it becomes easy for them to

change their work preference in order to maintain their “good” publication records and have more chances to get tenured (Marvasti 2005).

Foreign-born scholars with high levels of education have been bringing with them high-quality working skills and professions to the U.S. higher education institutions. There are numbers of domestic students also who have achieved diverse worldviews and learnt the processes of globalization through interacting with international scholars. Therefore, it is essential to understand what affects this group of individuals’ work productivity and migration motives in order to retain the best scholars into the larger system of the U.S. higher education (Kim et al. 2011). As a result, a phenomenological study was conducted using in-depth interviews of international faculty members who work at a primarily teaching-focused university and live in rural South of the U.S. The present study aims to investigate whether the complaint about their English proficiency and the levels of their job satisfaction have affected their classroom interaction with students and their intentions to stay or leave while working and living in rural America. My research questions are:

1. What brought the group of international faculty members to a primarily teaching-focused institution in the rural South of the U.S.?
2. Do domestic students’ complaints about the group of international faculty members’ English proficiency affect the levels of their interaction with students in the classroom?
3. Does job satisfaction affect the group of international faculty members’ intentions to stay or leave? If not, what are the alternative factors affecting their intentions to stay or leave?

In the next chapter, I will discuss in detail about the gap between the previous studies and the present study, what previous research has studied about individuals' migration motives, as well as international faculty's levels of classroom interaction with students and their intentions to stay or leave.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, based on the findings of previous studies, I will discuss international scholars' stay and return after graduation and how push and pull theory of migration explains their migration motives. In addition to that, I will also discuss the findings of previous studies about international faculty classroom interaction with students and their migration motives while working at the U.S. Carnegie Research I or II universities, as well as how English proficiency and job satisfaction have affected their interaction with students in the classroom and their intentions to stay or leave.

International Scholars in the U.S.

The number of international scholars who obtained their terminal degree (Ph.D.) in the U.S. and found employment at the U.S. education institutions as highly-skilled workers (university faculty members at academic rank) has increased rapidly. The theory of human capital explains the implications of international scholars' stay decisions after graduation. Many related studies use this theory as a lens for examining foreign-born doctoral recipients' stay rates (Kim, Bankart and Isdell 2011). Human capital consists of the skills, knowledge and social experiences that increasingly improve a person's productivity throughout his or her lifetime and cumulatively increase his or her earnings (Psacharopoulos 2006). Associating human capital theory with previous studies, stay rates of international faculty members have appeared to significantly increase over the past two decades in the U.S., especially for those who major in natural sciences and computer sciences (Finn 2007; Roh 2014; Lawrence et al. 2014; Lin, Pearce and Wang 2008). Studies found that nearly half returned home after they finished their terminal

degrees in the period of 1980s; but in 2000s, only about one-third returned home while most (two-thirds) tended to stay in the U.S. after graduation (Kim et al. 2011).

Findings of a previous study suggested that the process of globalization has led an increasing number of available jobs for international scholars (Cantwell and Taylor 2013). Due to the increasing demand for scientists and engineers in the U.S., foreign-born scholars who are in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) have a higher stay rate compared to their counterparts who are in other majors, such as humanities, business, education and social sciences (Roh 2014; Lawrence et al. 2014). By 2018, there were about 230,000 jobs in STEM projected by the U.S. government that foreign STEM doctorates were expected to take instead of U.S. native-born workers (Carnevale, Smith and Strohl 2010). As a result, the likelihood of staying in the U.S. for the group of international scholars in STEM after graduation has increased.

Demographically, international faculty who came from China, India and South Korea have the highest stay rates while their peers from Thailand, Mexico and Brazil have the highest return rates (Finn and Pennington 2013). Studies found that international scholars who were originally from China have the highest stay rate in the U.S. after graduation because the U.S. higher education in the field of science and engineering have an increasing dependence on Chinese doctorates (Roh 2014).

Individual educational background indicated the likelihood of whether international scholars can stay in the U.S. after graduation (Kim et al. 2011; Roh 2014). Kim et al. (2011) and Roh (2014) found that international scholars who came to the U.S. for undergraduate education were much more likely to stay compared to other internationals who just came to the U.S. for pursuing master or doctoral degree. In terms

of gender, Kim et al. (2011) indicated that female international scholars were more likely to stay than male international scholars were after graduation because there were more degree-relevant employment opportunities for them in the U.S. However, Lee and Kim (2009) found that female international scholars were actually more likely to return home because they were more likely to be influenced by their family members' advice on whether they should return upon graduation.

Push and Pull Theory of Migration

International scholars with high levels of education are the prestige of global education institutions and their migration motives can be explained by the push and pull theory of migration (Garcia-Rodriguez, Mihi-Ramirez and Navarro-Pabsdorf 2015). Studies found that the numbers of opportunities, living conditions, cultural backgrounds, financial considerations, education environment and economic conditions between two locations determined the volume of migration from one place to another (Mazzarol and Soutar 2002; Aslanbeigui and Montecinos 1998). Scholars classified the forces of migration (push and pull factors) in political, social, economic, cultural and educational aspects (Mejia, Pizurki and Royston 1979). Specifically speaking, an individual moves to another destination when his or her home country “pushed” him or her away due to its poor economic activities, low quality of education, discriminating cultures and lack of job opportunities; and a destination country “pulls” him or her to the location because of the better economic activities and opportunities, the promise of better life, high quality of education and more employment can be accessed, etc. (Krishnakumar and Indumathi 2014). According to Krishnakumar and Indumathi (2014), “Push factors are those that force the individual to move voluntarily, and in many cases, they are forced because the

individual risks something if they stay. Pull factors are those factors in the destination country that attract the individual or group to leave their home” (2014:9).

The concept of push and pull theory of migration can be utilized in investigating, examining and explaining the issues of brain gain and brain drain among the flow of individuals who moved in and moved out of their home countries (Lee and Kim 2010; Zweig 1997; Dreher and Poutvaara 2006). Brain drain is the loss of skilled individuals leaving a country, and brain gain is the gain of skilled individuals entering a country (Ozden and Schiff 2005; Stark, Helmenstein and Prskawetz 1997). Findings of a previous study suggested that the concept of brain gain and brain drain could be related to push and pull theory in order to explain the factors that have drawn international scholars to foreign countries in pursuing their terminal degrees (Karaca 2018). Rao (1978) indicated that salary, logistical support, political stability and opportunities for mobility were the four basic factors pushing scholars with high levels of education away and pulling them from developing countries to advanced countries like the U.S.

Additionally, the theory also can be examined in psychological aspects and by means of hedonic models (Chen and Jim 2010; Waltert and Schalapfer 2010; Grzeskowiak, Sirgy and Widgery 2003; Hidalgo and Hernandez 2001). In terms of politics and economy, Doerschler (2016) argued that political and economic push and pull factors have a lasting impact on immigrants and profoundly influence the integration process, and second, political and economic push and pull factors can “shape one’s outlook for settling permanently in the homeland” (2016:1102).

Job Satisfaction and Intentions to Stay or Leave

Previous studies have identified several factors that correlated with university faculty members' job satisfaction, such as gender, ethnicity, and job characteristics (Hesli and Lee 2013). In terms of ethnicity, overall, minority faculty members are typically less satisfied with their work duties than non-minority faculty members (Antonio, Cress, and Astin 1997; Bender and Heywood 2009). For example, Ponjuan (2005) found that Latino faculty members were relatively less satisfied with their work duties than their Caucasian counterparts were. However, other researchers found that African-American faculty members are actually having equal or higher levels of job satisfaction toward their work than their Caucasian peers (Sabharwal and Corley 2009). The variation of job characteristics also affects faculty members' levels of job satisfaction. To be specific, studies have found that faculty members who are employed at Carnegie Research I or II universities are likely to have higher levels of satisfaction toward their position than other faculty members who are employed at other types of universities like teaching-focused institutions (Hesli and Lee 2013; Sabharwal and Corley 2009; Ethington, Smart, and Zeltman 1989).

Among these factors correlated with levels of job satisfaction, gender is a controversial one. Some researchers have reported that compared to male faculty members employed at the U.S. education institutions, female faculty members have lower levels of job satisfaction (Tack and Patitu 1992; Olsen, Maple, and Stage 1995; Bender and Heywood 2009; Callister 2006; Huit, Callister, and Sullivan 2005). However, other researchers found that while working in the higher education industry, male and female faculty members have equal levels of job satisfaction, and in some cases (in different

countries across the world), female faculty members even have higher levels of satisfaction than male faculty members (Oshagbemi 1997; Okpara, Squillace, and Erundu 2005; Sabharwal and Corley 2009; Ward and Sloane 2000).

International faculty's job satisfaction differs by their specialization and where they come from, and their levels of satisfaction finally determined their intentions to stay or leave while working at the U.S. education institutions (Locke 1984; Blackburn et al. 1995). Specifically speaking, the findings of the previous studies indicated that for STEM international faculty who work at American research universities and were from Asia, they are more likely to leave their current positions and move to another one because they were less committed to their campuses and were less satisfied with their work environments, time for research and resources (Austin and Rice 1998; Youn and Price 2009). A large number of Asian faculty members also were still not sure whether they should stay at the same university (research type) even they already obtained their tenure (Lawrence et al. 2014). International faculty's intentions to stay or leave were also determined by geographical differences. Wells (2007) indicated that international faculty were more likely to leave their current job and accept another one at another education institution based on the geographic location of an employment.

However, Biddle (2002), Hawkins and Cummings (2000) and Knight (2004) viewed this phenomenon in a different perspective. The reasons why international faculty are more willing to leave their current job and move to another position either in the U.S. or outside the U.S. is that most have accepted internationalized education and adapted to cultural diversity, which provided them with several advantages finding jobs in a globalized employment market.

English Proficiency and Classroom Interaction

International faculty who are employed at research universities in metro areas of the U.S. have demonstrated their productivity and engagement in the area of research (Webber 2012; Wells 2007). The findings of previous studies indicated that international faculty at particular American research universities are more productive in research but significantly less engaged in teaching (Wells 2007; Mamiseishvili and Vicki 2010; Kim et al. 2011). English proficiency explained why international faculty at research universities are less productive in teaching, that is, low English proficiency decreases their engagement in teaching activities in the classroom and it changes their work preference between teaching and research in academia (Manrique 1999; Marvasti 2005; Skachkova 2007; Thomas and Johnson 2004).

The teaching evaluation of domestic students toward international faculty's English proficiency plays an important role in their classroom interaction. Previous studies found that the reason why international faculty at American research universities are less productive in teaching is that domestic students are often questioning their teaching credibility based on how fluent they are in English (Manrique and 1999; Skachkova 2007; Marvasti 2005). Dedoussis's (2007) study found that some third-country faculty members' courses are often under-registered because most domestic students prefer to attend native-born faculty's section. Students often complain that their "strong" accent has hindered their learning process in the classroom, but they almost make no complaints toward the local faculty's accent. In recent years, even though universities have been trying to assign almost similar numbers of college students to international faculty and domestic faculty in order to make it balance, most students

prefer to enroll in classes that are taught by domestic faculty (Mamiseishvili and Vicki 2010; Dedoussis 2007). As a result, the complaints toward international faculty's accents have resulted in the consequence that they were less effective in teaching.

There are also alternative reasons that affected international faculty classroom interaction. For instance, numbers of international faculty who dedicated plenty of their time in research instead of teaching because some American research universities would like to hire the international faculty who have higher publication records. This situation can be described as an academic circulation for certain group of international scholars (Marvasti 2005). According to Marvasti (2005), international scholars in all fields have spent a high percentage of time on engaging in research and building a better publication records for their academic career because the research universities hired them due to their outstanding publication records. In other words, for many of those international faculty members who have been dedicating most of their time in research, they have to maintain this sort of "good" record in order to help them keep their jobs or have more chances to become a tenured-track faculty at the same university, which decreased the levels of their classroom interaction.

Gender differences also matter to international faculty classroom interaction. The findings of previous studies indicated that male and female faculty members' classroom interaction is actually displayed differently, and their work activities are gendered (Bellas and Toutkoushian 1999; Sallee and Hart 2015). Compared to male faculty members, female faculty members often have differential career progress and types of engagement difficulties in the area of teaching (Ward and Wolf-Wendel 2004; Wolf-Wendel and Ward 2006; Park 1996; Toutkoushian and Conley 2005). Relating the gendered division

of labor in academia to international faculty's passion in teaching, Skachkova (2007) indicated that female international faculty's teaching skills and styles are often judged by their students based on their accent and the judgement affects their performance in teaching.

In this chapter, I discussed international scholars' stay and return after graduation and the findings of previous studies about push and pull theory of migration. I also discussed how English proficiency and job satisfaction affected international faculty who work at American research universities' classroom interaction with students and intentions to stay or leave. Previous research has paid little scholarly attention to the international faculty members who work at the U.S. teaching-focused universities and live in rural America. There were also very limited literature talking about international faculty who work and live in rural America's classroom interaction with students and their intentions to stay or leave. In other words, I still do not know whether international faculty's classroom interaction and intentions to stay or leave differ by the university type (research or teaching-focused), or not. In order to conduct research to investigate whether this particular group of international faculty members' classroom interaction and intentions to stay or leave are also affected by the levels of their English proficiency and job satisfaction. In the next chapter, I will discuss the research method I will utilize, as well as the process of my data collection and data analysis.

III. METHODOLOGY

In the previous two chapters, I have explained the purpose of my research and my three research questions. After concluding the findings of previous studies, I also indicated why my research questions are important sociologically. In this chapter, I will discuss the qualitative research method I will use in my research project. More specifically, I will talk about: 1) context of my study population; 2) the process of recruitment, sampling, and selection; 3) the in-depth interview method; 4) specific issues while collecting my research data; and 5) the process of data collection, interviewing, and coding.

Context

Demographic and research data were collected at a teaching-focused university in the rural southern United States. Rural regions are defined as all population and housing not included within urban areas (Hrsa.gov 2018). For purposes of this study, I used the Dillman and Trembly definition of rural areas as areas where all individuals residing outside urban areas (large cities or town cities with a population of 50,000 or more), or by following the traditional U.S. census definition of rural, that is, individuals who live in open country or towns with 2,500 or less (1977). The university is located in what is considered a rural area because until 2017, there were about 29,318 people living in the area, which is less than the standard population (50,000 or more) of urban areas (World Population Review 2019).

Through fall 2018, 160 male faculty members and 148 female faculty members were employed at the academic departments of the university. Among these faculty members at academic rank, approximately 39 international faculty were employed at the

institution and two-thirds (28 out of 39) were from Asia. Among the 28 Asian faculty members, eight were from China, four were from India, four were from Iran, three were from South Korea, three were from Japan, one was from Nepal, two were from Bangladesh, two were from Pakistan and one was from Thailand. The rest of the international faculty members were from 11 countries across the world, such as Colombia, Italy and Egypt. Of those 39 international faculty members, 27 teach courses related to the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) field and the rest teach courses related to Education and Liberal Arts.

Recruitment, Sampling, and Selection

The study population consisted of the international faculty who initially came to the U.S. to pursue higher education, earned his or her terminal degree in the U.S., and are currently teaching at the institution. International faculty are individuals who are not native-born U.S. citizens, currently holding permanent (immigrant) or temporary (non-immigrant) visa status and are employed in the United States (U.S. Citizenship and Naturalization Services 2007). In addition, since the study focuses on motives for international faculty migration while working and living in rural South, the study population was also limited to the international faculty members who are currently residing in the rural region where I conducted my research.

Initially, the study population were identified by visiting department webpages and seeking participants who may have met my research criteria. However, during the recruitment process I realized that the faculty member's name and previous educational background could only give me very limited clues to identify whether they are foreign-born faculty. As a way to help me find more related study population on the campus, I

utilized snowball-sampling technique. In qualitative and quantitative research, snowball-sampling technique is often used for helping people study individuals' characteristics or find potential participants who are hard to reach in the entire targeted population (Biernacki and Waldorf 1981; Hancock and Gile 2011). In my case, the international faculty who are currently employed at the university are the hard-to-reach population because the faculty webpages did not specifically indicate who is an international faculty member. It is also unreliable and inaccurate to identify my study population's country of origin by only depending on the information provided on the department webpages.

To introduce my research project and convince faculty to participate, I first contacted the 39 international faculty members via email or came by their offices and asked them verbally in person. By utilizing snowball-sampling technique, during each conversation with the 39 international faculty members, I also asked them to refer me to other international faculty members on the campus who they think would be willing to participate in order to find more related samples who may met my research criteria. After recruitment, 15 international faculty members were interested in participating and I selected them all as my sampling population.

Table 1 demonstrates the demographic information of the participants including their pseudonyms, academic field, gender, age, immigration status, country of origin and the terminal degree they have achieved in the U.S. Since I have a very small size of sampling population and since the university does not have many international faculty members employed, I only used the continent's name instead of the country's name to indicate where the participants were originally from in order to protect their privacy.

Participants who were from the single country or do not want to share how old they are, the continent's name or their age were not listed in the table due to confidentiality.

In-Depth Interviews

Interviews are the common method in qualitative research simply because they directly solicit the perspectives of the samples who we wish to study in our studies (Saldana 2011). In this study, as a way to scientifically investigate international faculty's migration motives and the levels of their classroom interaction while working at the U.S. public university in the rural South, I conducted phenomenological research through the method of in-depth interviews (Marshall and Rossman 1999). In particular, in-depth interviews are a common qualitative research method in sociology, and it is particularly appropriate and effective for acquiring deep understandings of phenomenon, perspectives, experiences, or events (Healey-Etten and Sharp 2010; Sallee and Hart 2015).

Healey-Etten and Sharp (2010) noted that, "Sociologists often use this method to explore in detail people's subjective experiences, meaning-making, accounting processes, and unspoken assumptions about life and the social world in general" (2010:157). The method of in-depth interviews is appropriate for my research because my study aims to investigate whether or not the complaints about the international faculty's English proficiency would affect their classroom interaction as well as whether the levels of job satisfaction affects their migration motives while working at the teaching-focused university in rural America.

Data Collection

I conducted one-time interviews with each participant during the beginning in November 2018 through the spring 2019 semester. Each face-to-face interview lasted approximately half an hour. As the only investigator, I scheduled interviews, all of which took place in the participant's office on the campus and most of the interviews were conducted during their office hours.

At the beginning of each interview, interviewees were assured that they would remain confidential and I would use my iPhone to record the whole interview. I would preserve participant confidentiality and no one else except myself could access his or her answers and personal information. The interviews are conversational and allowing me to ask follow-up questions as appropriate because I would like to let the participants to talk more about their opinions and share their experiences with me. I subsequently transcribed recorded interviews. I used the transcription as the data to complete the findings section. Additionally, the gathered data has identifiable information, so I titled participants with a pseudonym based on their gender, Lily, Mike, Jennifer, etc. I stored the printed interview questions and signed informed consent forms in the locked cabinet in my office. All digital versions of the interviews are password protected.

Specific Issues

English was given as the only option for communication during the interview process in order to keep consistency. Communicating in English also makes it easier for me to later on transcribing the interviews into text after the data collection process. No international faculty in my research should have any difficulties of reading the consent form and understanding the interview questions because they all obtained their terminal

degree in the U.S. and have been teaching in English for at least 1-2 years. However, I still explained the consent form and the interview protocol to each of them before starting to interview in case he or she could not understand certain questions, terms, or sections due to cultural barriers.

Since some of the interview questions are sensitive and related to the participants' personal life, they can skip the questions they do not wish to answer and may also end the interview at any point during the process if certain questions make them feel uncomfortable. Following the IRB approved procedures, I also notified the participants that a copy of the consent form would be available for them to retrieve upon their specific requests. Some of the interviewees required a copy of the signed informed consent form after the interview in order to keep a record for them.

Interview Process

Before starting each interview, I first introduced myself and then explained the purposes of my project in order to help them understand the direction of my research and why they are matter to my study. I explained the informed consent form in detail to assure they know I would preserve participant confidentiality and no one else besides me has the access to their information and answers.

The interview protocol included 63 close-ended and open-ended questions, and some of the open-ended questions contained follow-up questions. After they agreed to participate and signed their names on the last page of the consent form, I started to ask few demographic questions to collect his or her age, country of origin, education level, and marital status. After finishing collecting demographic information, a series of open-

ended questions pertaining to each participants' decisions of coming to the U.S., intentions of staying in the U.S., experience of working and living in the U.S., experience of being an international faculty and teaching in the U.S., motives for moving to rural South. In addition, questions concerning classroom interaction at the particular university, job satisfaction and migration motives, and living condition in rural South were asked.

Coding Process

I conducted all coding by using the grounded theory approach. When I began coding, from the previous studies I only knew that international faculty who work at American research universities are less productive in classroom teaching due to students' complaints about their accent. I also knew that many Asian faculty members in the STEM field are more likely to leave their current position simply because they are less satisfied with their work environment on the campus. However, I did not know whether international faculty who work at teaching-focused universities in rural America were in the similar situation as those who work at the U.S. research universities in metropolitan areas. More specifically, I still did not know whether my participants' classroom interaction and migration motives were also affected by the complaints about their accent and job satisfaction. As a way to scientifically analyze the interview data, I coded using NVivo. I coded the interview transcripts and identified everything that was being talked or discussed during each interview. After coding, it became very clear to me about what exactly affects my participants' classroom interaction and migration motives while working at the public university in the rural South of the U.S.

Based on the concept of grounded theory approach, in NVivo I created an “open-coding” node, an “axial-coding” node and a “selective-coding” node to categorize, classify and analyze my interview transcription (Strauss and Glaser 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990). Open-coding phase is a preliminary stage focusing on labeling and categorizing phenomena found in my interview transcripts. In this phase, I sorted all the answers from each interview transcript, labeled and categorized them into different nodes (categories). For instance, the answers from the question, “Are you satisfied with your currently working condition in rural America” were sorted and categorized into a node called “Satisfaction.” The codes in this node include the information of my participants’ job satisfaction while working at the teaching-focused university in rural America. All the answers from the question, “In classroom, do you teach students by just giving the lectures or give them more open-ended questions?” and “Were you very engaged in interacting with your students in the classroom?” were categorized into another node called “Interaction.” I used the codes in this node to analyze my participants’ classroom interaction because the levels of an international faculty’s undergraduate classroom interaction were constructed by how frequently he or she interacts with his or her students in the classroom (Mamiseishvili and Rosser 2009).

All the other answers were sorted and categorized as the same way as I constructed the nodes “Satisfaction” and “Classroom Interaction.” The other nodes were labeled as “Complaints,” “Teaching Experience,” “Migration Motives,” “Stay or Not,” “Concerns,” “Family,” “Challenges,” “Awareness” and “What They Like.” Table 2 demonstrates the codes in order to show how I labelled each category and described each of them in NVivo, as well as the answer from the participant.

Axial-coding is a second coding phase focused on relating nodes to each other by utilizing both inductive and deductive thinking (Strauss and Glaser 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990). At this stage, I read over all the answers I coded and stored all the interrelated codes into a same category. Specifically speaking, I realized that the participants' motives for migrating to rural America ("Migration Motives"), awareness of rural America ("Awareness"), the challenges they have met while working and living in rural America ("Challenges"), the concerns they had before moving to rural America ("Concerns"), and what they like the most part about working in rural America ("What They Like") are interrelated and can be used in finding out if there are any alternative factors that affected the participants' intentions to stay or leave. I classified them into a new category called "Intentions." Since the study aims to investigate international faculty's intentions to stay or leave, I also classified "Intentions" into "Stay or Not" (whether the participants have considered staying) because I can use the information from "Intentions" to help me find out that the alternative factors that affected international faculty's considerations about staying.

"Complaints" (whether the participants have received complaints about their accent), "Classroom Interaction" (the participants' classroom interaction with students), and "Teaching Experience" (the participants' teaching experience in rural America) both were classified into a same category called "Productivity." This category provides the information about participants' teaching experience while working in rural America and explains whether the complaints about the participants' accent would affect their classroom interaction. "Satisfaction" was remained in the same category as I originally

created because I want to use the information from it to study whether the participants' job satisfaction could be related to their intentions to stay or leave.

When I was done with axial-coding, selective-coding was conducted as the final phase of coding process. I chose "Stay or Not" as the core category to relate "Satisfaction" to that category because the primary purpose of this study is to investigate the reasons affecting international faculty's intentions to stay or leave while working and living in rural America. In order to examine whether job satisfaction affects the participants' migration motives, I asked each of them the question "Are you planning on staying here?" After that question, I asked the question "Are you satisfied with your current working condition at the university?" The reason of doing this is to determine whether job satisfaction affects the participants' considerations about staying or leaving. For instance, Rod of Liberal Arts indicated that he is satisfied with his current working condition at the university even though he has received several complaints from his students about his accent. As Rod explained how he has been actively interacting with his students in the classroom,

I actually emphasize discussion a lot because you know, [Liberal Arts] trains you think critically. I think reading documents, discussing and interacting with my students in classroom is a crucial part. In this morning, we actually had a discussion about the private documents about our topic.

However, when I asked him about his intentions to stay or leave, he indicated that he still considers leaving. From Rod's answers, I could conclude that his intentions to leave were not motivated by job satisfaction. Since job satisfaction did not affect his migration motives, I began seeking out the alternative factors. From "Intentions" and "Challenges" and "Concerns," I found that transportation, family and culture might affect

his migration motives instead of job satisfaction. I applied this method to other participants in order to investigate whether the migration motives of the other 14 participants were also being affected by the three proposed factors. In the next chapter, I will discuss what I find from the answers of the 15 international faculty members.

IV. FINDINGS

The findings of the present study include 15 international faculty members' subjective experiences and meaning-making about lives and the social world in rural America. This group of faculty members are all currently employed at a teaching-focused university in the rural South of the U.S. By utilizing the grounded theory approach through coding process, the study categorized the interrelated codes into three categories: "Stay or Not," "Productivity" and "Satisfaction." "Stay or Not" was selected as the core category and "Satisfaction" was related to that category in order to investigate whether job satisfaction affects the participants' intentions to stay or leave while working and living in rural America. The correlation between international faculty job satisfaction and intentions to stay or leave was the finding presented in previous research, which studied the group of international faculty members who are employed at American research universities in metro areas of the U.S. (Sallee and Hart 2015; Kim et al. 2011; Lawrence et al. 2014; Lin et al. 2009; Wells 2007; Biddle 2012; Hawkins and Cummings 2000; Knight 2004).

According to the codes in the category "Intentions," the study finds that job opportunity is the main reason that attracted most of the international faculty to work at the university in the rural South. Of the 15 international faculty members, 13 of them had never considered moving to the rural South of the U.S. until receiving or accepting their job offer.

From the category "Interaction," the study finds that the complaint about the international faculty members' accent did not decrease their effectiveness of teaching at all. In fact, the faculty members who have received complaints are very confident about

their English proficiency and they are still actively interacting with their students in the classroom while teaching.

This study also finds that the majority of faculty members are very satisfied with their employment and current work environment on the campus. However, after relating “Satisfaction” to the core category “Stay or Not,” the study finds although most of the faculty members are satisfied with their employment as well as rural America’s natural environment and affordable housing price, many of them are still considering or have considered leaving their current position and moving to another university which is located at a bigger city in the U.S. The findings indicate that the group of international faculty members’ intentions to stay or leave were not affected by the levels of their job satisfaction, which is different from what the findings of previous studies. Austin and Rice (1998) and Youn and Price (2009) indicated that many international faculty members who work at American research universities are more likely to leave their current positions because they were less satisfied with their working conditions for many reasons.

Since the majority of international faculty members in this study are very satisfied with their current work environment at the university, but many of them still intend to leave in the future, it is important sociologically to find out whether rural America’s living environment and the social world affected their migration motives or not. By understanding the codes from “Concerns,” “Family,” “Challenges,” “Migration Motives” and “What They Like,” the present study finally finds that the socio-cultural factor is related to the group of faculty members’ intentions to stay or leave. To be more specific, rural America’s inconvenient transportation system, family conflicts and cultural issues

are the three primary reasons that promoted certain international faculty members' migration motives.

Classroom Interaction

Previous studies have used the levels of classroom interaction as a way to measure international faculty classroom interaction; they found that complaints from students about international faculty's accent affected the levels of their classroom interaction and furtherly decreased their classroom interaction (Manrique and Manrique 1999; Marvasti 2005; Skachkova 2007; Thomas and Johnson 2004). In the present study, the majority of participants have received complaints from domestic students about their accent; however, it seems the accent does not affect the levels of their classroom interaction with students.

Rod is an Asian faculty member of Liberal Arts who has been working and living in the U.S. for 12 years. He was an English teacher in his home country before earning his master's degree in Liberal Arts. After finishing the graduate program at a top-rating university, he decided to pursue a Ph.D. degree outside his home country simply because he wanted to gain some experience abroad. The United States attracted him the most because he is very conscious of the political environment, and he believes that the U.S. is an open society, which would provide him the right of freedom of speech. After graduation, he became a professor of Liberal Arts at different higher education institutions in the U.S. He came to this university just a few years ago and currently he is teaching four classes. While talking about students' complaints about his accent, Rod (Interview by author, November 14, 2018) indicated,

You know, we are all foreigners and we have accent. Some students especially in [here] don't have this experience or opportunity to engage to get to talk to foreigners with accent. I think most of them they have to try tolerating and try to be accommodating. However, some students, especially if they do not like my class and they will complain that is your accent. Therefore, there are people who are not as tolerant as others are, but more generally speaking, it is fine. And also, I think I'm pretty confident about my English because I was an English teacher in [my home country] and I think my accent is okay. I have never worried about my accent and I am very confident in teaching.

However, the complaint about Rod's accent did not decrease his classroom interaction. As he explained about his interaction with his students both in the classroom and out of the classroom,

I like talking to [my students] face to face. If they would be here, we can talk about many things. You know, email is just the problem solving. If they are in [my] office, we can talk about many things beyond the classroom. We can talk about his career, his life without a general interest. As a professor of [Liberal Arts], we like sharing and talking things with each other. In the classroom, I emphasize open-discussion a lot because you know, [Liberal Arts] trains you think critically. I think reading documents, discussing and interacting with each other in the classroom is a crucial part. In this morning, we actually had a great discussion about some private documents about our topic. It's very interesting and my students like it.

Some faculty members who have accents also have found their own way to help students understand them. Greg is an African faculty member who specializes in the STEM field. He has been studying and working in the U.S. for about 16 years. The reason why he came to the U.S. to pursue higher education is that the university he used to teach in his home country required him to get a Ph.D. degree so he could continue to work there. As a scholar in STEM, he chose the U.S. to pursue his Ph.D. degree because the country has the most developed technology, which makes mechanical work and advanced research a lot easier. He came to the university to teach right after he finished

his post-doctoral training at a midwestern American research university. During the interview, Greg (Interview by author, December 3, 2018) shared how he has been engaging in interacting with his students in the classroom,

We have accent and that could be a case that may hinder students' learning, but we do certain things to take care of that. For example, I provide a lot of resources on Blackboard and lecture notes to the students. My students are very engaged with my questions because my method of teaching is Socratic Method. I ask a lot of questions so there's nothing they can do other than engage with me. For my case, I interact with all the students who come to me no matter they are international or domestic students.

John is an Asian tenured faculty of Business. He has been studying and working in the U.S. for nearly 18 years. The high quality of higher education is the only reason that attracted John to come to the U.S. After completing his Ph.D. degree, he also taught at some other universities for a couple years. He chose this university to teach because the Business program is Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accredited, and he believes that the university has a good quality of students and faculty members. Currently he is teaching three classes. His classroom interaction also was not affected by domestic students' complaints about his accent. As John (Interview by author, January 22, 2019) said,

I see the students' comments about my accent. I mean definitely international faculty member have accents, but I have not seen any comments saying that students cannot understand [me]. As a professor, I know if you speak slowly, even you have accent, students should understand you; plus, professor can use a different method. I mean you can write on the white board and explain to them by using the PowerPoint. I like interacting with my students. You know, I engage them like giving some activities or group works so they will become very interactive. So, there are a lot of ways.

Another faculty member in the STEM field, Macy also has been living in the U.S. for about 14 years. After earning her master's degree, she became a professor at a public university in her home country for a couple years. Her purpose of pursuing a Ph.D. degree in the U.S. is to have the opportunity to conduct advanced research and learn more in her own academic field. Macy indicated that the complaint did not lower the levels of her classroom interaction with her students. In fact, since English is not her first language, and she did not speak English in her home country at all, she has never stopped improving her English skills from the first day she started to teach in the U.S. Currently she is teaching two classes. As Macy (Interview by author, November 20, 2018) explained,

Yeah, in my first-year teaching that was the complaint, you know, because my accent is so strong no matter what. So, this can be like hard. I mean at the beginning; the student has to get used to my accent. Even I try all the time to improve it, but its kind like my accent is so strong, and English is so soft. So now I don't have any problem because I get lots of experience in teaching. I talked with them since the beginning, and I made them to feel comfortable in order to ask any questions if they don't understand, the language or any words I say, or I write on the board. I mean now it's not a big deal, but the first year it was because they have to get use to my accent.

As an African faculty member of Social Science, Gary talked about his experience with being an international faculty and teaching in the U.S. He has been living in the U.S. for about 30 years. Before moving to the U.S., he used to be a site engineer in the construction industry in his home country. After finishing his bachelor's degree, his senior brother gave him the opportunity to come and study in the U.S. In terms of Gary's English proficiency, he was born in a country, which is under the British rule, so he has been speaking English since he was born. However, his teaching experience as an

international faculty was not very positive when he first started to teach at this university a few years ago. As Gary (Interview by author, January 17, 2019) indicated,

The student would disrespect you simply because you are not an American. And also, some of them would be complaining that they don't understand my accent and even though they might not actually say that in front of you. Behind your back they maybe complaining about your English.

However, domestic students' complaint about Gary's accent did not decrease his classroom interaction. When asked about his teaching styles and classroom interaction with students, he says,

I structure my classes differently in order to increase my students' engagement with me and also with their classmates. For me, we have a discussion time after lectures. For example, if I have to teach a class for three days, like one of these classes I teach on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and the two days, Monday and Wednesday, it might be a lecture and discussion, but on Friday, we spend time for discussion because I asked the student to submit questions from what I've read that they don't understand. Then on Friday we discuss, the same thing happens with the even with the classes on Tuesdays because that one a longer class. We always have a discussion time on Thursday.

Dan is another faculty member of Liberal Arts who teaches students foreign language. He indicated that he has never received any complaints about his English proficiency because he is not supposed to teach in English. In terms of classroom interaction, Dan asks many open-ended questions to his students so they can interact with him during the class time. As Dan (Interview by author, November 20, 2018) explained,

I mixed both [lectures and open-ended questions]. I used both approaches because we have been having this professional development workshops in which they have been suggesting us to use more audio-visual materials. For example, I ask my students to discuss many questions and rules with me so they can feel that they are being more active in the learning acquisition process. For part of the session they just listen to me when I

lecture. During the rest of the class time, sometimes they work in groups and sometimes they work individually. Overall, they are very interactive.

Certain international faculty members also have found their own unique values that most domestic faculty members do not have in the area of teaching, and the value increased the levels of their classroom interaction. Lily is another faculty member of Liberal Arts who teaches foreign language, as well. She has been working and living in the U.S. for about 26 years. She was an English teacher in her home country, and all her education background was in British English. She initially came to the States as a cultural ambassador, who serves a role to exchange foreign cultures. She decided to stay in the U.S. to pursue higher education because she found the opportunity that she could become a teacher and teach her native language in the U.S. Lily has been working at the university for nine years, and she usually teaches four or five classes in each semester. In her perspective, the complaint about her accent is not a big deal because she believes that her advantage of being an international scholar has motivated her students to interact with her in the classroom. As Lily (Interview by author, November 8, 2018) explained,

I think it has to do with personality. I think it is the personality more than the fact that you are international. When you're international, you will have an exotic value to it. You know, students want to know your experience and they talk to me a lot because of my international background. And we bring other things that American faculty do not bring to the table. That is the knowledge from other cultures, languages and things. The students enjoyed. They might not express that much, but I know that they enjoy it.

The experience of being an international scholar also has increased certain international faculty members' confidence of teaching in the U.S. Jennifer is another tenured faculty member of Liberal Arts at the university. She has been studying and working in the U.S. since 1990. Her motive for migrating to the U.S. is to pursue higher

education, with a focus on American literature and American studies. After she obtained her Ph.D. degree at an American research university in the West Coast, she first went back to her home country and taught at there for about three years, and she finally decided to come back to the U.S. to teach Liberal Arts. She was employed at the university since the beginning of the 2000s and currently she is teaching four classes in each semester. Jennifer indicated that she has received complaints from domestic students about her accent if they did not receive a final grade of “A” or “B” for the class they were taking. However, she has never worried about those complaints because, as an international scholar who has received plenty of teaching experiences both from her home country and from the U.S., she has been very confident about teaching courses in Liberal Arts. As Jennifer (Interview by author, January 30, 2019) explained,

I teach one class called “Worldviews of the United States.” I am pretty confident about teaching this class because my past experiences from abroad help me teach that class. That’s an advantage not to be from [here]. I also have never found my students do not want to talk with me. I always feel that students were very interested in me because you know the novelty but if someone that did not like you or they received poor grade in my class, then they were going to say that they couldn’t understand you because of your accent. [In the classroom] I make the point of making [students] interact with me. Sometimes we even joke about our respective accent. Yeah, I mean I have not observed that students would interact less with me than domestic faculty members.

Another Asian tenured faculty member of Social Science, Lisa, shared her own teaching experience in the U.S., which is slightly different from others. Lisa is a permanent resident who has been working and living in the U.S. for nearly 20 years. Before moving to the U.S., Lisa was a manager at a travel institution in her home country. She decided to move to the U.S. because of her daughter’s education. Although she has been learning English since she was in elementary school in her home country

and received both her undergraduate and graduate academic trainings in English, she still receives complaints about her accent from the teaching evaluation in each semester. She has tried many ways to help students understand her lectures and make them interact with her during the class time; however, she noticed that culturally, domestic students still prefer to interact with domestic faculty members. Talking about her English proficiency and her interaction with students in the classroom, Lisa (Interview by author, November 26, 2018) said,

I could, I think I tried but I couldn't change my accent. One thing is that I learned to speak slower, or I tend to put more words in my PowerPoints slides, like the training said you should put only a few words into PowerPoints like keywords. However, I found that that technique works well with the native speaker but not with me. In my PowerPoints, I put more words because I told students if you do not understand my pronunciation. You could say the word on the slides, so I did not want to use it against me or jeopardize their learning. Other than that, I also try to use a more variety of teaching techniques, like I give them opportunities to interview other people, write papers and I tend to give them examples of everything that I assigned. However, I also observed that, culturally, [American] students tend to interact with other professors and students who also came from the same country with them. I feel like American students tend to be more relaxed and interactive while communicating with domestic professors in the classroom than to us. But I think it's up to us. If we often talk with them, they may try to be open-minded to us. And also, I am sorry to say that this is the only university I saw in the teaching evaluation that ask student to rate the professors English. I even brought this up to the former vice president and the former director of teaching academy, but it has never been changed. I think that is unfair.

Overall, most of the participants indicated that they have no language barrier issues in terms of teaching in English at the U.S. higher education institutions. Even though it is nearly impossible for many of the international faculty members to totally change their accent, no issues have been found in communicating and interacting with students both in the classroom and outside the classroom; many of them are still quite

engaged in interacting with their students during the class time. In addition, having an international background also provides certain faculty members' confidence while teaching courses in foreign language and globalization. However, certain faculty members noticed that many domestic students still prefer to interact with native-born faculty members at the university, which might have affected the levels of their classroom interaction with students.

In terms of gender differences, after interviewing the eight male and seven female international faculty members who are currently employed at this particular university in the rural South of the U.S., this study does not find that the participants' classroom interaction with students was gendered. To be specific, even though the male and female faculty members both have received complaints about their accents, there are no differences shown that the female faculty members are relatively less productive in teaching and less engaged in interacting with their students in the classroom. As a fact, both the male and female international faculty members have been trying to utilize different teaching methods in order to help their students understand them and make them become more engaged in interacting with them during the class time.

The Role of the Socio-Cultural Factor

The study finds that the group of international faculty members' intentions to stay or leave were not correlated to their job satisfaction while working at the teaching-focused university in the rural South of the U.S. Although nearly all the participants have expressed their great satisfaction of working at the university, many of them still are considering or have considered leaving their current position and moving to another one in the future. The inconvenient transport system, family conflicts, and cultural issues

have been found as the three primary reasons that pushed the participants away from rural America. According to push and pull theory of migration, Krishnakumar and Indumathi (2014) indicated that, “social and cultural factors also an important role in migration” (2014:10). Their study found that socio-cultural factors including family conflicts, cultural adaption, good network communication, transportation, the cinema, and the education system in urban areas promote people’s migration motives (Krishnakumar and Indumathi 2014).

Inconvenient Transport System “Travel” and “Airport” are the two terms that have been mentioned 14 times during interviews. It seems transportation plays a significant role in the group of international faculty members’ lives in rural America. Through the process of interviewing the 15 international faculty members, of the participants who are dissatisfied with the inconvenient transport system in the rural South, many also indicated that they are considering or have considered leaving. Some of the faculty members shared their unhappy experiences of how the transport system in rural America has caused many inconveniences to their daily lives. Even though Lily, a Liberal Arts Professor is very satisfied with her working condition at the university, she does not plan to stay in the place in the future. Lily (Interview by author, November 8, 2018) indicated,

I just planned to move to a bigger city in the future because I travel a lot. I definitely want a bigger city, a city that has a good airport that takes me abroad very easily. [I] and my husband talked about finding another job in the U.S. My husband speaks Cantonese so we always think about the fact that if he gets a job in Hong Kong, we will go there for a couple of years.

Liberal Arts Professor, Rod is also satisfied with his current working condition at the university. Talking about his intentions to stay or leave in the future, he indicated that

he might move to a bigger city in the future because the inconvenient transport system in the rural South of the U.S. is definitely a problem for him when he needs to travel within or out of the States. As Rod (Interview by author, November 14, 2018) explained,

Transportation is one of the things, I think. For example, if you want to fly to somewhere else, [it] is just a small airport. In addition, basically, you have to use connections through like Chicago, Atlanta, or Washington DC. So, the price of the ticket is a headache for me, because if you have direct flights, it's cheaper and faster. And here you have to have to pay sometimes five hundred six hundred dollars for a domestic flight, which is actually like the price of flying to Europe. And also, you have to drive like one and half hours to [the airport] to take your flight and there is no public transportation can take you to there. The rate of taking taxis is also high compared to big cities, so it's not worth to do that. So yeah, that's is a major thing.

James is another faculty member of Business who has been working and living in the U.S. for many years. After he finished his Ph.D. degree, he looked for jobs both in his home country and in the U.S., and he found a job at a research university in the West Coast. After two years practice in teaching at that university, he moved to this state and then started teaching at the university. Even though he has not experienced any negative things yet while working and living in the rural South of the U.S., he is still not very satisfied with the current transport system of the city. Due to the inconvenient transport system, James thought about moving to a bigger city in the past. As James (Interview by author, January 15, 2019) indicated,

Personally, I haven't experienced any negative things in [town] yet. I will say everything is fine now. However, I wish there were more sidewalks because you have to drive everywhere. I like to go to work by riding my bike. I will be happier if there were more sidewalks on my way go to work and back home. I thought about moving a bigger city in the U.S. which has a more convenient transport system, but I haven't engaged in job search yet.

Gary has met the similar problem in transportation, as well. Before moving to this State, he used to work and live in an urban area in Texas. He indicated that there are many challenges for him while living in this place, but the transportation issue is definitely the most significant one. As Gary (Interview by author, January 17, 2019) explained,

I am satisfied with my working condition at [the university] but there are a lot of challenges. In fact, the airport is so far even though in those big cities like Houston, the airport is also far away, but in Dallas is okay. But here it's just too far away, and there's nothing like buses or cabs. It seems to be very limited. So that's some of the problems, the public transportation in general is the issue here, and for me it's very inconvenient.

The other Asian faculty member of Business, John indicated that he is also very satisfied with his current working condition at the university; however, he is uncertain about whether to stay or not in the future. Discussing about the issue of transportation, John (Interview by author, January 22, 2019) indicated,

I would say transportation is one of the major issues. Especially if you want to travel, you have to go to [the capital] to take the airplane. It's relatively inconvenient but it's not too difficult. I think that's one of the major things for me.

Another Asian tenured Social Science faculty member, Lisa, also does not intend to stay in the future. She indicated that she often has to depend on her friends or even her students to give her a ride to the airport, which sometimes makes her anxious when she needs to travel somewhere else by airplane. As Lisa (Interview by author, November 26, 2018) explained,

I think the transportation back and forth to the airport is the major challenge for me while living in a rural area. We don't have a reliable [transportation], also now they have Uber in many areas, but I am afraid to

use it because if they forgot to pick me up then I will miss the plane. So, I had to either depend on friends or some students who help me to drop me off. If those don't work out, then I have to drive myself to the airport, which is inconvenient.

Family Conflicts Besides the forces related to the inconvenient transport system of the rural South of the U.S., family conflicts affected certain international faculty members' intentions to stay or leave, as well. Some of the participants have considered leaving in the future because their family members do not like living here or their spouse could not find a job here. In Lily's case, she has planned to move to a bigger city in the future. As Lily (Interview by author, November 8, 2018) explained,

I will move to a bigger city in the future because I don't think my family likes living in [here] at all. My daughter, she doesn't want to leave, but it's because she's still a teenager, and she has friends here, but yeah.

Lisa also indicated that she has considered leaving because her family members do not like living in rural America, and her husband could not even find a job at here. As Lisa (Interview by author, November 26, 2018) explained,

No, they [my family members] don't like here at all. And also, because my daughter she already has a Ph.D. degree in the U.S. When she was a student, she had a lot of things to do, so she did not have time to come visit me. It was me who went to visit her. After she graduated, she didn't want to come to stay with me at here because she doesn't like it here, and she wants to be in a bigger place. And also, my husband lived at another place in the U.S., both of us agree that it was too small to retire here.

Cindy is another Asian faculty member of Social Science who also intends to leave in the future. She has a similar issue as Lisa. Cindy came straight to teach at the university a couple years ago after finishing her Ph.D. degree at a research university in another state. Her mother used to be a visiting scholar, and she stayed with her for about ten months in the U.S. Her decision to move to the U.S. was based on her experience of

pursuing secondary education at a U.S. high school. Talking about the importance of having a family for international faculty, Cindy (Interview by author, November 16, 2018) indicated,

[It] is a small town. If you have a family here, like some of my friends, they have many family members at here. So, I feel like they have more things to do together, and they will not feel lonely.

When asked about her intentions to stay or leave, Cindy indicated that she would leave in the future because her husband found a job at a research university in another State, she says,

To be honest with you, since my husband works in [a city in northern America], so actually I was thinking probably I will move to [the city at Northern America] and be with him. So actually, before he found a job over there, we were hoping he can find a job at [the current university] so we can stay together. Now since he took the job in [the city at Northern America], maybe I will just move to there and just sacrifice a little bit and I stay with him.

Another Asian tenured faculty member in the STEM field, Coco, was also not sure whether she will stay or not in the future because her husband could not find a job at the same university with her. She has to drive back and forth about two hours to see him and her kid every day. She has been working at the university for nearly two years. Before coming to the university to teach, Coco finished both her master's degree and her Ph.D. degree at a research university in this state. Coco (Interview by author, November 28, 2018) explained about her intentions to stay or leave,

Well, so one thing I do not like about living here is that there are not a lot of job opportunities for my husband. My husband also has a physics Ph.D. Therefore, you know living in [the city, the State], you know there are not that many jobs that a physics Ph.D. can have. Therefore, in terms of my spouse employment opportunities, I do not think we have enough opportunities here. We want to find a job that does not have to be at the

same university but definitely in the city, so I will see my husband and my kid every day without long distance drive.

Cultural Issues Culture plays a central role in people understands of migration (Epstein and Gang 2010). In this study, another important aspect of pulling the group of international faculty members away from the rural South of the U.S. is related to the low cultural diversity of the local community. Unlike big cities, which have a multicultural background, many rural regions in the States do not have high cultural diversity, which at some point affected international faculty intentions to stay.

Dan is very satisfied with his working condition at the current university. He shared his negative experience when he first moved to the town in the early 2000s. Before moving to rural America, he used to live in California for many years. He indicated that at the beginning he thought about leaving here because he had encountered cultural diversity issues at several times. As Dan (Interview by author, November 20, 2018) explained,

At the beginning, I would say that when I ate lunch at Subway, for example, I was the only Hispanic there. In addition, back in early 2000s, they were not as many Hispanics as nowadays. They always looked at me as something different or somebody who is not from there. I felt like I was being observed. That is something that I had not been experienced in [a city in California] because it is a multicultural city.

Steve is an African tenured faculty of Education who also has been working at the university for many years. He is satisfied with the work environment on the campus. Steve used to teach at a public university in another State. Before moving to this State, he also worked in his home country and countries in Europe for a couple years. During his interview, he indicated that he used to have a few students who were afraid of interacting

with him simply because he is a foreign professor. As Steve (Interview by author, December 4, 2018) said,

Honestly, I noticed that some students are reluctant to communicate with international professors, unless it is the first time for them to come to [the university] or to see an intervention or professor, they are reluctant to communicate with them. Moreover, sometimes, it is funny because this happens many times. I have other peers and other professors here. They have been approached by other students into them and told them that they are afraid to talk to international professors. In addition, I said why, I mean we are all human beings and we all can talk. Moreover, the students said yes, but I'm still afraid. I said you are afraid of what? I think this is a problem, and this is actually [happening] sometimes when the people from closed society. They are not open for everybody. They only know their family members. They only they know their clan, they know their only community, but they are not open for everybody else. They feel the others regardless these others are you as others; I am other even the different skin color is other. Therefore, they are afraid from the other. This sometimes block the communication with each other. Again, one of the things that we try to do here and [the university] is successful in this, which is bringing international scholars and professors to break this kind of close cycle off ignorance of others. If we are preparing our students to be international and global learner, they have to understand there are more than [the State], more than the villages around [the State]. We have a big globe, people are smart like you, people can communicate, and people can contribute. In fact, not only that, but already contributed for thousands of years for the civilization of the world. Before this is part of the process, how to make sure the kids understand and break up this taboo with them.

As another faculty member who is also satisfied with her current working condition in rural America, Coco indicated that she is considering moving to a bigger place in the future because she wants to provide her child a living environment with a diverse cultural background. As Coco (Interview by author, November 28, 2018) explained,

Honestly, I feel like this place is not very diverse. I mean I am more focused on diversity now because I have a child that is biracial. In addition, I feel like people that look should surround him like his father and his mother. And you know, so I think that's something that I did not

consider very seriously before I moved here. So that something I wouldn't say it's a disadvantage, but that's something standing out there more and more as I am living in a society where there's not much diversity for my children. And this is also might be the major reason that makes me think about moving to a bigger city where diverse cultural background has in the future.

The limited intellectual life in rural America affected international faculty's intentions to stay. As a faculty member of Liberal Arts, Jennifer indicated that initially she tried to move out of rural America because there were not many places she could go in her spare time. As Jennifer (Interview by author, January 30, 2019) indicated,

Initially I tried to move. I think the challenge is to be in this cultural desert because even if you want to go and see a movie, movies here at the theater are not exactly highbrow. I mean you go Hollywood blockbusters, that's it. I would really like to see the restaurants and the movie theater that offers something more diverse and interesting because those are things that I could do without planning a trip to somewhere else. I mean, going to [the capital] for me is a trip. I don't know how you feel about it, but you're gone all day because you don't go back and forth. I mean, I don't go back and forth if I can avoid it. So yes, the difficulty is being in a place that as very limited intellectual life. I wish it can be improved in the future.

Similar with Jennifer, Gary also does not like the limited intellectual life in the rural South of the U.S. As Gary (Interview by author, January 17, 2019) explained,

I used to live in Texas and actually I love countryside. I feel comfortable living here. The only problem is some of the facilities that you have in big cities you don't have them at here like Bank of America, Chase Bank, big movie theaters and restaurants and other facilities. Another thing is when I came here, I was kind of shocked. By five o'clock everything at here were just shut down, even whether it is government or private companies like a car workshop. On weekends is almost dead and they don't open anything but in those big cities even on Sundays, they are very functional.

In conclusion, as one of the important factors which affect people's intentions to stay or leave, there is no doubt that the socio-cultural factors have played a significant role in promoting people's migration motives. Rather than job satisfaction, rural

America's inconvenient transport system, international faculty members' family conflicts, and the issue of low cultural diversity have been identified as the three primary reasons that lowered the participants' life satisfaction and motivated them to move to metro areas in the U.S. In the next chapter, I will discuss the interpretation and the implications of these findings, as well as the limitations of this study and the suggestions toward future research.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Many higher education researchers only have investigated and examined the work productivity, academic life, job satisfaction and retention for the group of international faculty members who work at American research universities in metro areas; however, they did not pay much scholarly attention to other international faculty members who work at teaching-focused universities in rural America. By conducting the present study at an American teaching-focused university in the rural South, I investigated the international faculty's migration motives, living and teaching experience in the U.S., and I examined whether or not their intentions to stay or leave and classroom interaction were affected by their English proficiency and by their job satisfaction. Besides English proficiency and job satisfaction, the study also finds that the international faculty's classroom interaction and migration motives also could be affected by university type (research or teaching-focused) and by geographic difference. Through the process of in-depth interviews with the 15 international faculty members who are currently employed at a comprehensive university in the rural South, I have identified the issues specific to my faculty population's classroom interaction with students and willingness to stay.

Interpretation of the Findings

The findings of the present study show that the majority of international faculty members (14 out of 15) at this particular university have received complaints about their accents from the past, which aligns with the findings of previous studies (Manrique and Manrique 1999; Skachkova 2007; Marvasti 2005). For instance, while talking about the

questions about English proficiency, Steve of Education (Interview by author, December 4, 2018) indicated,

Absolutely I have received complaints about my accent, but you will have some students they have never seen any international professors before. Sometimes this is their first time to see somebody not from their own family, like they live in a small rural village and they have never seen anybody different from them.

However, what does not echo to the previous findings is the correlation between the complaint toward international faculty's English proficiency and the levels of their classroom interaction. Previous studies found that for the international faculty who work at American research universities, domestic students' complaints toward their English proficiency have largely affected the levels of their classroom interaction with students. The classroom interaction and the complaint present a negative correlation; the more complaints they have received, the less they are engaged in interacting with students in the classroom. Different from the findings of previous studies, this study finds that the participants' classroom interaction was not affected by domestic students' complaints about their English proficiency. Although complaints still exist in the teaching evaluation, they did not decrease the participants' levels of classroom interaction with their students at all. The findings indicate that many of the international faculty members have been seeking out many ways in order to engage their students to interact with them in the classroom, such as improving their English-speaking skills, asking more open-ended questions, or holding more discussions during the class time. However, the present study did not find whether the numbers of complaint about the group of international faculty members' accents have made them become more engaged in interacting with students in the classroom.

Other than the complaint about their accents, gender difference also plays a significant role in international faculty's teaching productivity (Bellas 1999; Sallee and Jeni 2015; Lamb 1985). Previous studies found that female international faculty teaching styles are often judged by domestic students based on their English proficiency, and the judgement affects their teaching productivity and the levels of their classroom interaction with students (Skachkova 2007). However, the present study does not find that the participants' classroom interaction was gendered. Both male and female international faculty members who are currently employed at this particular university in the rural South of the U.S. have received judgements or complaints about their English proficiency. In comparison with male faculty members, there are no differences with female faculty members being less productive in teaching and less engaged in interacting with their students in the classroom. More specifically, from the interview I learned that both the male and female international faculty members have been trying to utilize different teaching methods in order to help their students understand them and make them become more engaged in interacting with them during the class time.

The advantage of having an international background also has been found to increase certain international faculty members' confidence of teaching specific courses at the U.S. higher education institutions. The experience of living, working and studying abroad has given many international faculty members an "exotic" value, thus they can pass the knowledge of foreign cultures, languages and traditions to domestic students. The findings indicate that certain international faculty members have stronger persuasion while teaching courses in foreign language and globalization because of their international background. The stronger persuasion at some point increased the levels of

their classroom interaction. For instance, while talking about having an international background and teaching in the U.S., Lily of Liberal Arts (Interview by author, November 8, 2018) indicated that, “I think when you’re international you have an exotic value to it. You know, the students want to know. We bring other things that American [professors] do not bring to the table; that is, the knowledge from other cultures, languages and things. The students very enjoyed. They might not express that much but I know that they enjoy it.”

In terms of migration motives, the study finds that job satisfaction was not a reason that affected the international faculty’s intentions to stay or leave while working at the teaching-focused university in rural America. By investigating the international faculty’s working conditions and their migration motives, the faculty members who are considering or have considered leaving are all satisfied with their current work environment, which is opposed to the findings of previous studies (Wells 2007; Biddle 2012; Hawkins and Cummings 2000; Knight 2004). Additionally, different from the previous findings, this study did not find the international faculty’s job satisfaction differed by specializations and countries of origin (Locke 1984; Blackburn et al. 1995). The majority of participants are very satisfied with their current working and living condition in the rural South of the U.S. no matter where they are originally from or what academic specializations they practice.

The study also demonstrates that the socio-cultural factor affects the international faculty’s intentions to stay or leave and the previous studies found it likewise (Mejia, Pizurki and Royston 1979; Huang 1984; Krishnakumar and Indumathi 2014). In this study, the participants who indicated their intentions to leave all have expressed their

dissatisfactions toward the rural South's inconvenient transport system, their family conflicts, and the issue of cultural diversity in rural America. Asking about the international faculty's challenges and concerns while working and living in rural America, "travel" and "airport" are the words that have been mentioned the most frequently by them during interview. The relatively expensive flight tickets the international faculty must buy in the rural South have decreased their life satisfaction and increased their motives for leaving. Most of the faculty members indicated that living in the rural South means they have to spend more money on their flight tickets when they need to travel within or outside the U.S. because the two airports in the state both are national airports. They are relatively small, so they often have to pay connecting flights in order to get to most of the major cities either in the States or out of the States. Besides the issue of flight tickets, the lack of public transportation to the airport also has bothered few international faculty members a lot and made them to consider leaving. Certain faculty members are dissatisfied with the way they travel because there is no public transportation to the airport, and sometimes they even have to rely on their student's help to give them a ride, which often makes them anxious when they need to travel across the country. The study finds that those faculty members used to live in the U.S. urban areas, where there was a developed public transportation for many years; so, it may take them a while to get used to the way people travel in the rural South.

Family conflicts and cultural issues also related to the international faculty's intentions to stay or leave. In terms of the family conflict, the study finds that: 1) the participants' family members do not like living in rural America; 2) their family members think the city in rural America is too small to retire; and 3) their partner or spouse could

not find a job that is near to him or her. In this study, five participants have encountered family issues. They indicated that they would leave some time in the future due to their family members' dissatisfaction toward rural life and the limited job opportunities in rural America. In terms of cultural issues, lacking cultural diversity and intellectual life are the two main factors. In comparison to transportation and family, however, culture actually has the least effect toward the participants' migration motives because there is only one international faculty who still considers leaving due to cultural issues. Although the other participants who have encountered cultural issues also considered leaving, they finally decided to stay because they married with local people in rural America and had children after that.

Implications

There are a few important implications from the findings of the present study, which are the effect caused by the variety of university type (research or teaching-focused) and geographic region toward international faculty's classroom interaction and their intentions to stay or leave. By comparing with the findings of previous studies, this study finds that the international faculty's classroom interaction and their intentions to stay or leave differed by the variety of university type (research and teaching-focused university) and geographic regions (urban and rural). Previous studies found that for the international faculty who teach at research universities and live in large or medium sized cities in the U.S., their work productivity and intentions to stay or leave were affected by domestic students' complaints toward their English proficiency and by the levels of their job satisfaction (Wells 2007; Mamiseishvili and Vicki 2009; Kim and Susan 2011; Kim et al. 2011; Manrique and Manrique 1999; Marvasti 2005; Skachkova 2007; Thomas and

Johnson 2004; Austin and Rice 1998; Youn and Price 2009; Lawrence et al. 2013; Biddle 2012; Hawkins and Cummings 2000; Knight 2004; Locke 1984; Blackburn et al. 1995); however, the findings of the present study are not aligned with the previous findings.

The study finds that the present research project was conducted at a teaching-focused university in rural America, so it also could be the reason that caused the present findings to be different from the previous findings. Specifically speaking, for the international faculty who work at teaching-focused universities in the U.S., limited research opportunities may lead to their relatively high productivity in teaching compared to other international faculty members who at research universities. As a female STEM international faculty indicated in interview, it is hard for her to start a lab to conduct advanced research because her department does not have sufficient funding to support her to do what she wants. In this case, there could only participate in teaching activities simply because the academic department does not have enough funding to support her to conduct advanced research. International faculty members like her need to try their best to improve their English proficiency, teaching skills, or the quality of classroom interaction with students because high classroom interaction is one of the most important factors which affect their chance to get tenured at a teaching-focused university. As a result, the teaching-focused role could be the main reason that leads certain international faculty to have relatively higher classroom interaction compared to their peers who work at research universities.

Another important implication from the present study's findings is the effect that different geographic regions has brought toward international faculty's intentions to stay or leave. Previous studies found that job satisfaction is the major factor that affected

many of the international faculty's decisions of whether stay in the city where their university located at (Kim et al. 2011; Kim et al. 2011; Louie 2006; Lin et al. 2009; Massey et al. 1993). However, it should not be very surprising if their intentions to stay or leave were only being affected by the levels of their job satisfaction because most of the U.S. urban areas have provided them a well-developed transport system, more open opportunities on the job market, and a high quality of diverse cultural backgrounds. In other words, their migration motives are much less likely to be affected by the socio-cultural factor that the international faculty who work and live in the rural South have encountered but other factors, such as the quality of their academic lives, and the levels of their work and life satisfaction.

Limitations and Future Research

Limitations also exist. In the present study, only 15 out of 39 international faculty members at academic rank agreed to participate in this research. Since it is a relatively small sampling population, the 15 participants' answers could not fully represent other international faculty members' answers about their classroom interaction and intentions to stay or leave while working at a teaching-focused university and living in rural America. As a qualitative research, it is important to have a larger sampling population because the answers from the participants are the only source of data for such study; the limited dataset would affect the accuracy and the reliability of the findings of a qualitative study. In addition, the present study did not create enough follow-up questions to ask the participants about classroom interaction and their intentions to stay or leave. For questions about classroom interaction and migration motives, I only left very few open-ended discussion questions for the interviewees to answer, and I failed to ask more

follow-up questions in order to discover if there are any deeper meanings toward their answers. Future studies should also create questions that are more relevant in order to study this particular group of faculty members in detail.

As I mentioned, previous studies that aim to investigate international faculty who work at American teaching-focused universities and live in rural areas working conditions, work productivity and migration motives are very limited. Future studies should not only pay more scholarly attention to the group of international faculty members who work at primarily teaching-focused institutions and live in the rural South of the U.S., but also should also expand their range of research to the international faculty who work and live in other rural areas all around the States. I believe that international faculty's classroom interaction and their intentions to stay or leave also differed by the geographic difference of rural regions where they are working and living.

In addition, future studies should also find a scientific way to specifically investigate and examine how the problem of inconvenient transport system have been affecting international faculty intentions to stay or leave while working and living in rural America. To be more specific, the group of international faculty members who participated in the present research project have only indicated that the long distance drive back and forth to the airport, lack of public transportation and the relatively more expensive flight tickets largely affected their intentions to stay; however, the findings could be different if certain international faculty were dissatisfied with the rural South's inconvenient transport system because they do not have a car. In other words, for an international faculty member who does not have a car, the levels of his or her life satisfaction and intentions to stay or leave might be different from their counterparts who

have a car. To study in detail the relationship between international faculty intentions to stay or leave and rural America's inconvenient transport system, future studies should conduct their research at a bigger university in rural America and study separately between the international faculty members who have a car as well as their counterparts who do not have a car.

As a conclusion, despite these limitations, by comparing the present findings with the previous findings we could easily find out there are so many differences in work and life between the faculty population who are employed at a research university and living in the U.S. urban areas and who are employed at a teaching-focused university and living in the U.S. rural areas. Thus, it is important to note that besides some alternative reasons like English proficiency, job satisfaction, and socio-cultural factors, international faculty's classroom interaction with students and their intentions to stay or leave were also being affected by the university type (research or teaching-focused) and the geographic location of that university.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX I
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions

1. How old are you?
2. Where are you from?
3. Are you a permanent resident with a green card or citizenship? If not, have you ever considered becoming a permanent resident?
4. Do you have family here? If yes, did you bring your family from your home country or you create your family after settling down in the U.S., or both?
5. Did you have any family members in the U.S. before you came like your parents, husband, wife, or relatives? If yes, did they have green cards or citizenships? **(Skip to question 11 if the answer is NO)**
6. If you had a family before you came to the U.S., do you think they affected your decision of choosing to come to the U.S. to pursue your academic degree? Please explain why if you had a family before you came to the U.S.
7. If you had a family before you came to the U.S., do you think they affected your decision of choosing to stay in the U.S. after you earned your highest degree, like doctoral degree? Please explain how they affected your decision.
8. Tell me about your decision to move to the U.S.
9. How long have you been living in the U.S.?
10. What did you do before coming to the U.S.?
11. What are the major academic differences between studying in the U.S. and in your home country?
12. What did you like the most part about living in the U.S.? Please share with me particularly good, bad, or interesting experiences as an alien, U.S. citizen, or immigrant.
13. Who financially supported you while you completed your doctoral degree?
14. Why did you choose to pursue your master or doctoral degree at U.S. universities rather than at the universities in your home country?
15. After you earned your terminal degree, did you intend to be employed in the U.S.? **(Skip to question 18 if the answer is NO)**
16. What are the factors attracted you the most to work in the U.S. instead of returning home?

17. What were the other factors that kept you working in the U.S.?
18. When it comes to immigration, what are the specific benefits of a doctoral degree from an U.S. university?
19. What were the challenges you encountered when you were studying at an American university as an international student?
20. As an international faculty, are you still confronted with those challenges you had experienced when you were a student?
21. Have you ever attended any post-doctoral trainings after graduation? If yes, do you think attend such trainings would increase international doctoral recipients' chance of staying in the U.S. rather than just directly finding teaching positions?
22. How long have you been working at Tech?
23. How many classes are you teaching this semester?
24. Why did you choose [this university]? Are there any particular things that attracting you to come here?
25. What is your experience with being an international faculty member and teaching at an American university?
26. If you can make a choice, do you prefer teaching or researching? Please explain why.
27. What were the specific challenges for you when you first started teaching domestic students in the U.S.?
28. Following that up, do you think those challenges are still exist for you after you have been teaching for years?
29. Is English your primary or secondary language?
30. Did you learn English in your home country before you came to the U.S.? If yes, how many years of English training?
31. Was it hard to learn a second language? If yes, please explain.
32. Are you very confident, confident, okay, not confident, or very not confident about your English proficiency when you teach in the class?
33. Have you ever received any complaints from your students about your English proficiency? If yes, please share with your experience.
34. Have you ever worried that your accent will hinder your students to learn during your class?

35. From your perspective, do you think English proficiency determines an international faculty's value and his or her teaching credibility at American universities?
36. Do you prefer students coming to your office and interacting with them by face-to-face, or just communicating with them by email? Why so?
37. Do you teach students by only lecturing, or do you give them more open questions that allow them to interact with you more often in the class? Please explain your preference.
38. Were your students very engaging in interacting with you during the class, like frequently asking you questions and having a discussion on those questions with the whole class?
39. Following that up if not, what were the factors do you think that have hindered the student classroom interaction with you?
40. Do you think American students are more willing to interact with domestic faculty or foreign-born faculty? Why do you think so?
41. Thinking about your career, which interactions with students stand out most to you? Would you classify this as positive or negative interactions? Why?
42. How are your interactions with domestic colleagues?
43. Following that up if you were not very active of interacting with domestic colleagues, do you prefer interacting with other international faculty who came from the same country as you came from?
44. Have you ever had any troubles that the enrollment of your classes was under-registered compared to domestic faculty? **(Skip to the question 48 if answer is NO)**
45. Following that up if your answer is YES, from your perspective, what are the factors that drew a majority of students to domestic faculty's sections instead of yours?
46. What were the factors that drew you to [here]?
47. Before coming to [this university], how aware were you of [rural South of the U.S.]?
48. Have you ever considered moving to [this town] before the job opportunity?
49. Were there any concerns about moving to [rural South]?
50. What do you like the most about working and living in a small town in [rural America]?

51. If you have family here, do they like living in small towns like here in [rural America]?
52. Following that up if your family like living here, what do like? If not, have they considered about leaving here?
53. Following that up if your family is unhappy about living here and has considered leaving, what made them consider leaving here?
54. As an international faculty, what are the major challenges for you of living and working in [this place]?
55. What are the major differences between living and working in small towns in the U.S. and in your home country?
56. Are you satisfied with your current living and working condition in [this place]? If not, what would have to change to make you stay, like town life, school, or work?
57. If you do not have a family here, is having a family can make you happier of living and working in [this place]? Why or why not?
58. Are you planning to stay in [this place]? Why?
59. Following that up if you have never considered staying in [here], are you on the job market now?
60. What made you consider leaving here?
61. Following that up have you done more than only consider leaving your current job and finding another position, or have you ever applied another job?
62. How active are you of searching another job and applying for it?
63. If you cannot find another job that you like or related to your field of study in the U.S., will you consider returning home, searching other jobs outside the U.S., or just staying here even though you would not prefer to? Please explain why.

APPENDIX II
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Form

[Name of the University]

Title of Project: Simple Life in Rural America: An Investigation of International Faculty Members Classroom Interaction and Migration Motives at a Teaching-Focused University

Principal Investigator: Chenyu Liu

Section 1. Introductory Information

The purpose of these procedures is to collect data from international faculty members who are currently working for [name of the university] on [name of the city] campus. The project goal is to investigate and understand what the factors that drew international scholars to pursue their doctoral degrees at the U.S. education institutions, what keeps them living and working in rural towns in the U.S. after they obtained their degrees, and what affects the levels of their classroom interaction with students and their intentions to stay or leave. The principle investigator is selecting a sample of 15 international faculty members to ask simple demographic and open-ended questions to that relate to their experiences and perspectives of studying, working, and living in the U.S. If you agree to participate, you would be a member of the project sample. As a participant, the principal investigator highly values your experiences and hopes you agree to this opportunity to share your views. The questions the principal investigator will ask you concern your reasons of pursuing doctoral degrees at the U.S. education institutions, opinions about living and working in U.S. small towns, as well as considerations about staying or leaving. Once the principal investigator processes the information for all interviews, he will provide [name of the academic department] at [name of the university] with summarized findings of the research. Your responses will be anonymous. The research will in no way connect your identity to your responses.

Section 2. Procedures

The principle investigator is encouraging interviews to take place on [name of the university] campus. However, at your request, the interview can take place in another location, such as a residence or public area. The questioning will start with basic demographic inquiries on your name, age, nationality, and education. There will also be brief questions that address family background, socioeconomic, and marital status. Subsequently, questioning will center on a) as an international faculty, what challenges or issues that you have been encountering with, b) what is your and your family members' perspective about studying, living and working in U.S., and c) what factors keep you or push you away of working and living in U.S. small towns.

Section 3. Time Duration of the Procedures and Study

If you agree to take part in this study, your involvement will last approximately 1 hour. The principal investigator will use iPhone to document the interview process in order to playback the interview when later transcribing it.

Section 4. Discomforts and Risks

There is minimal to no risk associated with the interview process. If you become physically uncomfortable during the interview or do not want to answer specific questions, you may withdraw from the interview process. Just tell the interviewer you are ready for the interview to stop.

Section 5. Potential Benefits

The participants will contribute to our knowledge and understanding of this overlaid group. No other benefits are present at this point.

Section 6. Statement of Confidentiality

Your research records that are reviewed, stored, and analyzed at [name of the university] will be kept in a secured area in my own accommodation. All the printed interviews and sign informed consent forms will be stored in a locked cabinet in my accommodation. Your samples collected for research purposes will be labeled with a pseudonym corresponding to the master list and will be stored on my own laptop. I will keep the digital files and printed files for up to one more semester at which I will delete the digital versions of the interviews and shred all the printed papers.

Section 7. Costs for Participation

The time to answer all the interview questions will be 1-hour maximum. I will request an interview time that will not interfere with any scheduled teachings to the interviewees. The interviewees' work time or off-work time will be cost. There is no cost on transportation unless the interviewees want the interview to be conducted off the campus, such as coffee shops, the public library, or restaurants, etc.

Section 8. Compensation for Participation

Participation in the project will not cost you anything except your time. The principal investigator and/or [name of the university] will not compensate you for participation. There are no external organizations or grants tied to this project. You will not lose any legal rights by signing this form.

Section 9. Research Funding

The present research project was not tied to any research funding at this point.

Section 10. Voluntary Participation

As the interviewer, the principal investigator will answer any questions you have concerning this investigation or the procedures at any time. Taking part in this research study is voluntary. You do not have to participate in this research. Participation involves you answering basic demographic questions and a series of open-ended questions on your experiences, opinions, and considerations about studying, living, and working in the U.S. after you obtained your doctoral agrees. If you choose to take part, you have the right to stop at any time. You must sign this form to show that you want to take part. The principal researcher reserves the right to edit your interview for reader consistency

or remove parts or entire interviews from the project if they do not seem appropriate for inclusion in the research. Transcription might lead to the misinterpretation or exclusion of parts of your interview; however, the principal investigator will do his best to transcribe your interview to reflect your statements verbatim. If you decide not to participate or if you decide to stop taking part in the research at a later date, there will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Section 11. Contact Information for Questions or Concerns

You have the right to ask any questions you may have about this research. If you have questions, complaints or concerns or believe you may have developed an injury related to this research, contact Chenyu Liu at [cellphone number].

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant or you have concerns or general questions about the research, contact the research participants protection advocate in the [name of the university] IRB Office at [cellphone number]. You may also call this number if you cannot reach the research team or wish to talk to someone else.

For more information about participation in a research study and about the Institutional Review Board (IRB), a group of people who review the research to protect your rights, please visit [name of the university]'s IRB web site at [link]. Included on this website, under the heading "Participant Info", you can access federal regulations and information about the protection of human research participants. If you do not have access to the internet, copies of these Federal Regulations are available by calling the [name of the university] at [office phone number].

Interviewee Signature and Consent/Permission

Before making the decision regarding enrollment in this research you should have:

- Discussed this study with an investigator,
- Reviewed the information in this form, and
- Had the opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

Your signature below means that you have received this information, have asked the questions you currently have about the research and those questions have been answered. You will receive a copy of the signed and dated form to keep for future reference.

Participant: By signing this consent form, you indicate that you are voluntarily choosing to take part in this research.

Signature of Participant

Date

Time

Printed Name

Participant's Legally Authorized Representative: By signing below, you indicate that you give permission for the participant to take part in this research.

Signature of Participant's Legally Date Time Printed Name

Authorized Representative: Signature of Participant's Legally Authorized Representative is required for people unable to give consent for themselves.

Description of the Legally Authorized Representative's Authority to Act for Participant

Person Explaining the Research: Your signature below means that you have explained the research to the participant/participant representative and have answered any questions he/she has about the research.

Signature of person who explained this Date Time Printed Name
research

Only approved investigators for this research may explain the research and obtain informed consent.

A witness or witness/translator is required when the participant cannot read the consent document, and it was read or translate.

Table 1 List of Participants

Name	Academic Field	Gender	Age	Immigration Status	Country of Origin	Terminal Degree
John	Business	Male	42	Citizenship	Asia	PhD
Lily	Liberal Arts	Female	N/A	Citizenship	N/A	PhD
Jennifer	Liberal Arts	Female	52	Dual Citizenship	N/A	PhD
Mike	STEM	Male	67	Citizenship	Asia	PhD
Steve	Education	Male	58	Citizenship	Africa	PhD
James	Business	Male	39	Permanent Resident	Asia	PhD
Lisa	Social Science	Female	35	Permanent Resident	Asia	PhD
Sabrina	Social Science	Female	58	Permanent Resident	Asia	PhD
Greg	STEM	Male	45	Permanent Resident	Africa	PhD
Coco	STEM	Female	34	Permanent Resident	Asia	PhD
Gary	Social Science	Male	N/A	Citizenship	Africa	PhD
Dan	Liberal Arts	Male	50	Citizenship	N/A	PhD
Macy	STEM	Female	43	Permanent Resident	N/A	PhD
Cindy	Social Science	Female	30	H-1B (Work Visa)	Asia	PhD
Rod	Liberal Arts	Male	42	H-1B (Work Visa)	Asia	PhD

Table 2 The Codes in NVivo

“Satisfaction”	Whether the participant satisfies with his or her current working and living condition while working and living in rural America	“Yeah, yes, yes.”
“Classroom Interaction”	How/whether the participant interacts with his or her students in the classroom	“We have accent and that could be a case that may hinder students’ learning, but we do certain things to take care of that...”
“Complaints”	While teaching at the university, whether the participant has received complaints from domestic students about their English proficiency (accent)	“I see the students’ comments about my accent. I mean definitely international faculty member have accents, but I have not seen any comments saying that students cannot understand [me]...”
“Teaching Experience”	The teaching experience while working at the teaching-focused university where located at the rural South of the U.S.	“Generally it is very positive because I think some departments like our department, they open this position because they wanted to increase the diversity of their course offerings...”
“Migration Motives”	The motives that moved to rural America	“Well, this was just the circumstances on my life at the time. As I said, that was my husband had a job here, so I was in [my home country] and he has a job here...”
“Stay or Not”	Whether the participant has considered staying or leaving	“No. I don't know when, but definitely I want a bigger city...”
“Concerns”	Whether the participant has any concerns before moving to the rural South of the U.S.	“Not really. I like small towns. I like to really deal with undergrad students, you know...”
“Family”	Whether the participant’s family members like living in the rural South of the U.S.	“They like here. They really like here...”
“Challenges”	Whether the participant has encountered with any challenges while working and living in the rural South of the U.S.	“Yes, my challenges are to start a research lab because that it's not part of my contract. So that the reason is a really little harder because it’s not going to be money for that...”
“Awareness”	The awareness of rural America before moving to the area	“No, I didn’t know anything about [here], and before I came here, I didn’t know this place at all.”
“What They Like”	What the participant likes the most part about working and living in rural America	“I have always lived in [here], so having lived in any other states. I really like how pretty [here] is...”