International Branch Campus Faculty Member Experiences of the Academic Library

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor of Education by Alicia Salaz

April 2015
Acknowledgements

Four years ago I was, intellectually, a fundamentally different person. This work, and the personal transformation it represents, would not have been possible without the support of many individuals to whom I express my thanks. I would like to thank the faculty members who participated in this research for their time and effort. I would like to thank my thesis advisors, Dr. Clare Pickles and Dr. Ian Willis, along with members of my advising committee for their encouragement, patience, feedback and commitment. I am grateful to Dr. Nicole Johnston for her peer review and feedback. I would like to thank my peers in the doctoral program for their support, friendship and collegiality during this journey. I would like to thank my colleagues at Carnegie Mellon University, Qatar, for their professional support and guidance. I would like to thank my wonderful academic library friends who have inspired me, helped me blow off steam, challenged me, and encouraged me. I hope to pay it forward.

Finally, I would never have undertaken an ambitious project like doctoral level study, nor been as dogged about it, without the inspiration and encouragement of my family. Thank you Haytham, Petra and Omar for giving me a reason to be better, achieve more and keep learning. I love you all.
Abstract

International Branch Campus Faculty Member Experiences of the Academic Library

Alicia Michelle Salaz

This thesis uses phenomenography to investigate the perceptions and experiences of academic libraries by faculty members across a variety of disciplines working in international branch campuses (IBCs). The main research question addressed by the study asks how faculty members experience the academic library, with the objective of identifying qualitative variations in experience within this group. The findings of this research address established practical problems related to library value and identity, and have implications for practice in both the development and evaluation of library services for faculty members, as well as communication about those services with faculty members. Furthermore, the findings of this research support practical developments in the support of faculty members engaged in transnational higher education provision.

The results of the research find that these participants in this context experienced the academic library in at least six different ways and reported a variety of experiences in terms of using information, in and out of the academic library, to accomplish core faculty member functions of teaching and research. The categories of experience generated through the study are: IBC faculty members experience the academic library as relationships with librarians; as a content provider; as a discovery service; as a facilitator for engaging with the academic community; as a champion of reading books; and as a compliance centre for information ethics. Investigations into the information behaviour, library use and perceptions of faculty members have been conducted in a variety of contexts, but are limited in transnational contexts. This research therefore also represents an original and important contribution to an understanding of academic library practice in transnational or cross-border contexts, as well as contributing to a limited knowledge base about the experiences of faculty members in transnational higher education generally. Phenomenographic investigations into the experiences of library and
information science elements such as libraries and information centres are rare, and therefore this research represents an original contribution to understanding this phenomenon in this way.

The study employed phenomenography as the methodology for understanding the academic library experiences of the participants. Ten faculty member participants representing a variety of IBC institutions located within major educational hubs in the Arab Gulf and Southeast Asia were interviewed about their academic library experiences moving from a home campus to a branch campus, using the story of this move as a critical incident for starting discussion and relaying real experiences to the researcher. These experiences are theoretically situated in the context of information worlds (Jaeger & Burnett, 2010) in order to increase understanding around the formation of these experiences and to critically analyse practical implications. This research design contributes to the phenomenographic method by detailing its procedures and to its theoretical aspects by linking the methodological with a framework, Jaeger and Burnett’s theory of information worlds, which facilitates phenomenography outside its traditional domain of teaching and learning research.
Keywords

Academic Library, Value, Impact, Information Behaviour, International Branch Campus, Faculty Members, Phenomenography, Critical Incident Technique
# List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEI</td>
<td>Higher Education Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB</td>
<td>Information Behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBC</td>
<td>International Branch Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL</td>
<td>Information Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIS</td>
<td>Library and Information Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROI</td>
<td>Return on Investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNHE</td>
<td>Transnational Higher Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Statement of Original Authorship

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for any other award or credit at this or any institution of higher education. To the best of my knowledge, the thesis is wholly original and all material or writing published or written by others and contained herein has been duly referenced and credited.

Signature: AS

Date: 7 February 2015
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .................................................................................................................. ii

Abstract .................................................................................................................................... iii

Keywords .................................................................................................................................... v

List of Abbreviations ................................................................................................................... vi

Statement of Original Authorship ............................................................................................... vii

Table of Contents ......................................................................................................................... viii

Table of Figures .......................................................................................................................... xii

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Research ...................................................................................... 1

1.1 The Context .......................................................................................................................... 1

1.2 The Research Problem and Key Practitioner Research Questions .................................. 3

1.3 Researcher Positioning .......................................................................................................... 5

1.4 The Research Approach ....................................................................................................... 8

1.5 Significance of Research ...................................................................................................... 9

1.5.1 Significance to Theory ................................................................................................... 9

1.5.2 Significance to Practice ................................................................................................. 10

1.5.3 Significance to Research Approach .............................................................................. 12

1.6 Key Concepts ...................................................................................................................... 12

1.6.1 Experience .................................................................................................................... 13

1.6.2 Information Behaviour ................................................................................................. 13

1.6.2.1 Information Behaviour - Distinction from Information Literacy .................................. 13

1.6.3 Information Worlds ....................................................................................................... 14
# International Branch Campus Faculty Member Experiences of the Academic Library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.6.4 International Branch Campus</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6.5 Transnational Higher Education</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Overview of Thesis</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Introduction</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Research about Academic Libraries</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1 History and Contemporary Roles</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2 Approaches to Understanding Impact</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.3 Academic Libraries in Transnational Higher Education</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Research about Faculty Members</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 History and Contemporary Roles</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 Faculty Members in Transnational Higher Education</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Faculty Members and Academic Libraries</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 Perceptions and Experiences</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2 Information Behaviour of Faculty Members</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Theory of Information Worlds</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Conclusion</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Chapter 3: Research Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Selecting the Approach</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Research Paradigm</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Phenomenography</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1 Introduction</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.2 Application in LIS</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.3 Research Outcomes</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.1 Relationship of Findings to Information Worlds Theory ........................................ 84
5.2 Contribution to Academic Library Practice in the IBC setting ................................ 87
  5.2.1 Category 1: Librarians ................................................................................. 87
  5.2.2 Category 2: Content Provider ................................................................. 88
  5.2.3 Category 3: Discovery ............................................................................... 90
  5.2.4 Category 4: Community .......................................................................... 92
  5.2.5 Category 5: Reading Books ..................................................................... 93
  5.2.6 Category 6: Ethics .................................................................................. 93
  5.2.7 General Implications .............................................................................. 94
5.3 Contribution to the Study of Faculty in TNHE ................................................... 96
5.4 Contribution to the Study of Academic Library Roles, Value, Identity .......... 98
5.5 Contribution to the Study of Faculty Information Behaviour ......................... 101
5.6 Limitations of the Study ............................................................................... 103
  5.6.1 Recommendations for Further Research .................................................. 106
5.7 Conclusions ................................................................................................... 108

Word Count ......................................................................................................... 110
References ........................................................................................................... 111
Appendices .......................................................................................................... 126
  Appendix A – Ethical Approval Form, University of Liverpool ......................... 126
  Appendix B – Institutional Review Board Approval, Carnegie Mellon University .... 127
  Appendix C – Information Sheet and Consent Form ........................................ 128
Table of Figures

Figure 1: Structure of Awareness ................................................................................. 40
Figure 2: Summary Table of Categories of Description ..................................................... 61
Figure 3: Category Frequency Table .............................................................................. 80
Figure 4: Hierarchical Representation of Categories of Description ............................. 80
Figure 5: Comparing Information Worlds ..................................................................... 86
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Research

This chapter introduces and outlines the research problem and key questions undertaken for this thesis, including the context, approach and significance of the research. Key concepts related to the research are also defined. The chapter concludes with an overview of the organization of the thesis.

1.1 The Context

This research investigates the varying academic library experiences of faculty members practicing in international branch campuses. The international branch campus (IBC) is a growing form of transnational higher education (TNHE) wherein institutions offer full degree programs in their own name through a purpose-built facility or campus which is wholly situated in an international location foreign to the home campus (Becker, 2010). “Faculty members” for the purpose of this research refers to full-time, regular faculty engaged in either teaching, research or both as primary job functions. The faculty member participants in this research have been drawn from a variety of institutions in two major regions for international branch campus activity in the world: the Arab Gulf and East/Southeast Asia. These regions host the majority of the approximately 250 IBCs currently in existence, most of which are of American, British and/or Australian origin (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012). The nature of the degree programs offered at IBCs is generally intended to replicate the nature of the degree programs at the home campus, with identical or near-identical standards, requirements, and assessments of both faculty and students. The faculty members participating in this research all have experience of teaching or conducting research in their institutions’ home campus as well as the branch, although many faculty members within IBCs are drawn directly from other institutions or countries and lack experience from the institution’s main campus. Faculty members in IBCs therefore represent very diverse cultural and professional backgrounds and are tasked with carrying out their teaching and research goals in a setting where the institutional culture, supports, facilities and resources may be physically or intellectually remote. Though firm statistics are hard to come by, the growth of TNHE models since the late 1990s, including IBCs, can safely be characterized as growing rapidly. In cases such as that of the UK, the number of
students studying for foreign credentials delivered ‘offshore’ in their own or a third-party country now outnumbers international students studying abroad for credentials in the host country (HESA, 2013). Several years ago the number of offshore programs operating worldwide was estimated to be in the range of 3-4,000 and growing (Naidoo, 2009). Faculty members operating in the context of an IBC therefore represent a rapidly growing body of practitioners involved in transnational academic work.

The academic library is one of the institutional supports that faculty members have traditionally relied on for the successful execution of their work, as its collections and services have always centred on what Schuster and Finkelstein call “the major historic functions of the university”, namely, “...the creation, presentation, dissemination and preservation of knowledge” (2006, p. 9). The early academic libraries which supported research and scholarship, such as the library at Alexandria, predate the modern western university by millennia, and academic libraries have played a central role in the function of the modern university since its origins some 800 years ago (Budd, 1998). More recent history has seen new importance given to developing academic library collections and services as faculty within higher education have been professionalized and as pressure to conduct and communicate research has grown. According to Budd, speaking of 20th-century faculty members, “...if these faculty were eager to, and expected to, conduct research, then they had to have all of the necessary tools to succeed...”, including large and well-equipped libraries (1998, p. 25). The academic library in recent generations has functioned more than ever as a facilitator of information flow in the context of what faculty members do and has been conceived of as ‘information work’ (Palmer & Neumann, 2002; Palmer, 1996) : the acquisition, communication and development of new knowledge between and across individuals, disciplines and social contexts.

The academic library experiences of faculty members working in the context of University IBCs has been explored in this research to better understand how faculty members who are directly engaged with this new higher education model conceive of their academic libraries under the assumption that internationalization, cross-border education and faculty, program and institutional mobility represent dominant future characteristics of higher education.
1.2 The Research Problem and Key Practitioner Research Questions

Despite the rapidly expanding number of transnational higher education offerings worldwide, including international branch campuses, to date there is little known about how faculty members experience transnational teaching and research practice or how institutions and their elements, such as academic libraries, facilitate or hinder the work of these faculty members. This research focuses on experiences of the academic library, in particular, as an institutional element which supports the needs and practices of faculty members in IBCs. The IBC setting is assumed to represent a new intersection among personal, professional, institutional, and social/political information contexts, and a study of the different ways that faculty members experience the academic library at this intersection will lend insight into how the library can or should facilitate information flow for teaching and research practice. The problem being addressed concerns how to effectively position and develop academic library departments into the future to meet the needs of this constituency.

In traditional contexts, libraries and faculty members alike have been affected by shifts in the information landscape and in higher education practice. Many of these shifts have been observed by library and information science (LIS) practitioners on the macro- and micro- levels. They include changes in information technology (Lewis, 2007), changes in the nature of information production and dissemination within scholarly disciplines, also known as scholarly communications (Carpenter, Graybill, Offord & Piorun, 2011), changes in legal and regulatory frameworks pertaining to research data, changes in the costs and economics of information (Carpenter, et al., 2011), and changes in higher education such as shifting student demographics (Bolt, 2014; Budd, 2012), to name but a few.

The academic library use and experience of faculty members who take on roles in transnational higher education contexts may be affected by additional rapid changes in their personal information worlds such as operating within new or overlapping policy contexts (Farrugia, 2012; Lane & Kinser, 2011), different barriers or modes of accessing interpersonal, text-based or social information, and different access to institutional supports and mediators (Jais, 2012).
experience of the academic library in these circumstances may begin to vary considerably when
discerned against and related to this rapidly changing background context.

The role of the academic library in the context of increasing internationalization of higher
education is a problem of organizational strategy, of significant interest to the administrators of
academic library departments themselves as well as University administrators more broadly.
Questions of how to fund, manage and steer academic library departments, establish
departmental priorities and goals, and support the emerging information needs of scholars in
the contemporary University setting underpin this research, while the focus on transnational
educational contexts seeks to contribute knowledge from an understudied area. Prerequisite to
answering these questions is a need to understand how faculty members, who make up the
heart of the University (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006), experience academic libraries in the
context of these significant shifts in the various levels of information environments. This
understanding may be especially necessary in light of the fact that studies indicate a lack of
alignment about the roles, value and priorities of academic libraries between faculty members
and library leaders (Housewright, Schonfeld & Wulfson, 2013a). In order for academic library
administrators to make informed, professional, practical decisions about what services to offer,
as well as when and how to offer them, academic libraries must understand where they fit in
the information milieu. In seeking to understand how faculty members discern and relate the
academic library to its informational context, we learn a great deal about the context(s) itself
and are able to map the landscape as it is experienced by faculty members. Such understanding
both establishes a point of departure for attempting to shape or respond to those experiences
into the future, and lends insight into how the modern work of faculty members interacts with
the academic library. The key research questions being investigated here are:

- What are the qualitatively different ways in which faculty members in an international
  branch campus setting experience the academic library?
- How can knowledge of these experiences inform the development and evaluation of
  academic library services?
• How do the experiences of these faculty members compare with the experiences of those in prior studies of similar or varied contexts?

The answers to these questions have the potential to yield valuable insights into current and potential sources of value and impact on faculty members and their practice from the perspective of the academic library. The development and evaluation of library services, as well as communication about library services to faculty, are areas of practice which directly benefit from the results of this research.

1.3 Researcher Positioning

The position of a researcher has the potential to affect research outcomes and is therefore important to consider. Transparency around a researcher’s background is also necessary as part of measures which permit the readers of qualitative research to judge the adequacy of a researcher’s efforts at objectivity, particularly in phenomenographic inquiry (Cope, 2004). Questions of researcher positioning typically focus on where the researcher stands in relation to research participants, with ‘insider-outsider’ being a common, if imperfect, dichotomy used to explore potential issues regarding ethics, bias and so forth (Eppley, 2006). In this case, I was known to some of my research participants prior to our research interactions, and not to others. In all cases, I operated to some degree on the level of ‘peer’ with my participants, as we are all practitioners in higher education. Additionally, participants in this study share with me the characteristic of being researchers themselves, leading to a degree of instant rapport in each data-gathering interview. This relationship conveys benefits, such as participants feeling more comfortable and being more open to discussion, as well as potential hurdles, such as participants using the research interview as a form of ‘confessional’ (Williams, 2009), a phenomenon which I have elaborated on further in the discussion of ethical considerations related to this research (p. 53). My position as an ‘insider’ among participants for this research affects data integrity and interpretation positively in terms of communicating and clarifying with participants what they have told me, and in terms of the parties feeling a sense of mutual trust and understanding with which to base discussions on. Issues of hierarchy, as in
supervisor/subordinate relationships, were not an issue here; nor were any of my participants in an adversarial or competitive position with me personally, departmentally or institutionally. Because this research asked participants about their experiences with the library, it is possible that my role as a librarian affected some of their responses and descriptions. Depending on the views and assumptions of participants about librarians, they may have described their experiences to me in a way that would have been different were I in another role, say as an English faculty member or even just a student. One particular area where I think this may have had some impact is in the area of copyright and license compliance, which I discuss further in the results section of chapter five.

My position also becomes relevant in terms of what experience, assumptions or biases I may bring to the research design, questions, data gathering and analysis. I have been a practitioner in LIS for upwards of fifteen years and have watched the conversation about the role and value of academic libraries develop and shift over time, from concerns about the internet driving libraries into obsolescence to more recent strategic efforts to isolate and measure library ‘impact’ on various student and faculty member outcomes, a form of inquiry which has become enormously popular through advocacy efforts of organizations like the Association of College and Research Libraries in the United States (Oakleaf, 2010). I perceive a number of difficulties with the way that libraries have attempted to shape their identities and defend their value to relevant stakeholders, which is likely what has driven me to this research area in the first place. For instance, one such problem is the activist (Hale, 2001) nature of many library value inquiries. Library practitioners have a vested interest in demonstrating the value of their work and institutions. Though I agree with the perspectives on activist research like that of Hale, who states “...there is no necessary contradiction between active political commitment to resolving a problem, and rigorous scholarly research on that problem...” (2001, p. 13), such contradiction is a risk and some research into the roles and value of academic libraries has failed to adequately demonstrate a resolution to the presence of political bias and/or to resolve tensions between political advocacy and research integrity. Many such studies, in my view, make claims about the value and impact of libraries that reach beyond the support of the evidence cited.
Poll and Payne state that “…various projects worldwide are trying to prove that use of library services can positively influence…behaviour of users” [emphasis added] (2006, p.1). In terms of research validity, this statement concerns me. Many studies are dismissive of the way that library users report their perceptions of and experiences with libraries. For example, Research Libraries UK and the Research Information Network insist that libraries are valuable to researchers “even if the nature and extent of that contribution is not well understood by researchers...” (2011, p.4). It seems that one common response by practitioners to evidence that faculty members or researchers do not find libraries and their services valuable is to simply reject those views as uninformed and unreflective of reality. This view creates certain practical implications; it suggests that the main issues for libraries are a matter of branding or advertising; making “real” reality clear to the constituents who are missing it. My concerns around the professional conversation on this topic leave me genuinely curious about how the academic library might be experienced and perceived by non-LIS professionals, and to consider the practical implications of these experiences if interpreted as valid, true ways of seeing the world, part of what has steered me towards the particular research orientation of this thesis. At the same time, creating space for this interpretation is recognizably challenging. My familiarity with various arguments and propositions about library value, impact and identity from the practitioner perspective poses a risk of subconsciously imposing or assigning similar meanings to the data produced by faculty member research participants. Considering this, and that the objectives of the research are to understand as closely as possible how participants experience the academic library phenomenon, it has been especially important to practice reflexivity and to set aside this prior knowledge as much as possible during data gathering and analysis. Akerlind emphasizes the necessity for phenomenographic researchers to “…as far as possible...maintain an open mind...minimizing any predetermined views or too rapid foreclosure in views about the nature of the [research data]” (2005, p. 323). I am excited by the potential that examining the academic library from outside the librarian-practitioner lens holds for building and enhancing organizational value in the modern information context. It is my objective that the research conducted and presented here offers meaningful insight to practitioners and organizational leaders in LIS regarding the ways that faculty members may
experience the library, enabling reflective and strategic thinking about how to develop organizational identities and appeal to varied user experiences. My goal is not to present a personal agenda or engage in activist research, even very well-substantiated, except perhaps to the extent of encouraging others within LIS to adopt more diverse approaches to the consideration and measurement of academic library value, impact and identity. This research does not aim to prove any theory of library value or impact, but rather to explore potential sources of value for faculty members in the international branch campus context with an eye towards future development.

1.4 The Research Approach
The research questions are approached using phenomenographic methodology within an interpretivist research paradigm (Willis, 2007; Bruce 1999). This approach assumes that our understanding of reality is socially constructed, and influenced by social artefacts like language and culture. It holds that “individuals gradually build their own understanding of the world through experience and maturation...” (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996, p. 19, as cited in Willis, 2007). Ontologically, phenomenography does not assume a reality which is purely subjective nor purely objective, but one which is instead constructed through an internal relationship between people and the phenomena they experience (Marton & Booth, 1997). Coming from this perspective, the experiences and perceptions of the research participants are valuable objects of research in themselves. Understanding these experiences is a way of both getting at the nature of the phenomenon under study as well as its effect on or relation with people. In line with the recognition that reality may be experienced differently to different social groups, phenomenography as a research approach aims to faithfully describe the second-order perspective: the experiences of participants as they see it, rather than as the researcher may see it (Marton, 1981). The approach is fundamentally concerned with revealing variation; that is to say, the different ways in which a phenomenon, in this case the academic library, may be experienced among a collective group of people (Marton & Booth, 1997). An understanding of the how and why of these variations may lead to practical developments and applications, such as practices or methods for cultivating certain experiences or avoiding others.
Phenomenography originates from educational research contexts but has not been widely used
within LIS research. It has been cited as potentially fruitful research approach for many practical LIS problems and questions (Bruce, 1999). The approach to this research, from the nature of the questions to data gathering and analysis techniques, is designed to be internally consistent and to effectively address the questions that have been asked. This approach was selected for its utility in addressing the research questions, its epistemological and ontological position, and its potential to yield useful insights for practice within LIS.

1.5 Significance of Research
This section highlights the contributions of this research to theory and practice within LIS, as well as to the research approach. The research provides data on the varying academic library experiences of faculty members working in the context of the international branch campus. There is little research currently into the functioning and practice of academic libraries in transnational contexts, and research concerning the experiences of internationally mobile faculty generally is in its infancy, though of great interest as larger numbers of higher education institutions pursue transnational programmes and partnerships. The use of phenomenography within LIS applications is also very limited. This research therefore provides new insight and perspectives into the information behaviour of faculty members in transnational higher education settings which may inform academic library practice and development as well as information theory. It is also significant for phenomenography in its selection and detailing of questioning and interview techniques.

1.5.1 Significance to Theory
This research will advance theory in the field of LIS as it contributes to existing models of information behaviour (IB) with data from the IBC context as well as supporting and extending information theory by situating the academic library in the context of micro-, meso-, and macro- information worlds (Burnett & Jaeger, 2011). This research investigates varying faculty member experiences of the academic library in the context of the international branch campus, yielding insight into how the academic library can be situated and experienced differently within varied personal, social, institutional and societal/political levels or worlds of information experience. It contributes to Jaeger and Burnett’s theory of information worlds (2010) as a
framework for understanding or interpreting the situation of the academic library in the context of both larger and smaller information worlds, and the broader information landscape. This is important for bridging what Jaeger and Burnett characterize as the “canyonesque gaps between the way information is viewed in terms of small social units and the ways it is viewed in larger social and political processes” (2010, p. 1). The description of varied experiences of the academic library by participants in this research lends useful insight into how faculty members go about solving their information needs in a particular context, that of the international branch campus, which represents a new and emerging context and thus contributes to current theoretical discussions about how, whether and to what extent context matters in information behaviour (see Burnett & Erdelez, 2010).

1.5.2 Significance to Practice

The outcomes of this research directly inform and relate to the practice of LIS in two areas: the development and evaluation of academic library services, and communication about academic library services to faculty members. Explicit attention to articulating the uses and impact of the research results is given here and throughout the research discussion in an effort to bridge this divide and to encourage the adoption of research approaches and methods which lend themselves to practical application.

The disconnect between research and practice in LIS is widely acknowledged, and according to Julien, Pecoskie and Reed’s longitudinal content analysis of LIS research, this disconnect is growing in significance, with an increasing gap between the publication and communication patterns preferred by researchers versus practitioners in LIS (2011). Only a fraction of published articles in LIS journals represent formal research (Turcios, Agarwal & Watkins, 2014), and what practitioner research is published has been documented as being largely atheoretical (Pettigrew & McKechnie, 2001). At the same time, increasing numbers of research-oriented journals and LIS publications from researchers, versus practitioners, are now being published (Julien, Pecoskie & Reed, 2011), and this growing body of inquiry represents a potentially useful source of knowledge for practice, so long as researchers attend to practical questions and practical implications for their work.
The outcomes of phenomenographic inquiry traditionally enjoy close ties with practice. Bruce suggests that phenomenographic inquiry has the potential for practical and applied impact in a range of LIS applications and settings including in the development and evaluation of LIS services (1999). According to Bruce, “…understanding the different experiences of various components of library systems would potentially influence the design of systems, training and education of end-users and professionals, and evaluation strategies. Designers, educators and evaluators would be positioned to consider and take into account identified variation in experience” (1999, p. 5). The development and evaluation of academic library services in the context of current changes in the information and higher education landscape is a significant problem. Practitioners and administrators responsible for this development and positioning of academic libraries have wrestled with questions of what the library is and should be, what value it brings to its constituents, and how it impacts the core functions of its parent institution, the University (see for example Oakleaf, 2010; Lincoln, 2010; Jubb, 2011; RLUK, 2011). Lewis states that “given the new internet tools and explosive growth of digital content…it is now not entirely clear what an academic library should be” (2007, p. 418). While most agree that the academic library cannot and should not be primarily identified as a storage centre for print materials and books (e.g. Lewis, 2007; Lincoln 2010), there is not wide agreement within the LIS profession about exactly what new roles may take primacy for academic libraries in the coming decades. Various authors have argued for the concept of ‘information commons’ (MacWhinnie, 2003); against the concept of ‘information commons’ (Gayton, 2008); and for greater roles in scholarly communications (Carpenter, et al., 2011), among many other possibilities. An understanding of faculty member experiences of the academic library may reveal as-yet unconsidered possibilities for library role and value, and/or lend support or criticism to emerging roles. This understanding will enhance strategic planning efforts by libraries.

Additionally, phenomenographic forms of inquiry have led to significant practical insights in the field of teaching and learning across a variety of subjects, and this is also true in the library and information sciences where the teaching and learning of information literacy is a primary concern. Yates, Partridge and Bruce (2012) describe how an understanding of variation in experience may lead directly to practical improvements in teaching which results in greater
learning where information searching is concerned, by leading students through various experiences of information searching. This is relevant to the way that academic library services are communicated about to faculty members in higher education. An understanding of varied experiences of the academic library will inform communication about those services and general user education efforts for faculty members.

The findings of this research yield implications for practice in the area of organizational strategy, development and communications for academic libraries by lending insight into how academic libraries are perceived and understood by a core constituency, the academic faculty. Knowledge and understanding of these experiences and their associated behaviours may reveal the kinds of experiences that we want constituents to have, or not to have; and aid in the development and evaluation of services which will create particular kinds of experiences. This knowledge and understanding will also inform communications with and education for faculty members about academic library roles, services and value.

1.5.3 Significance to Research Approach
Akerlind (2005) states that many criticisms of phenomenography may arise from a lack of understanding of the approach and its procedures, which may itself be a result of the limited number of published studies detailing the methodology, decisions and procedures used. This research contributes to phenomenography by offering a full and detailed accounting of the methodological decisions behind the research design. It also uses a particular approach to eliciting experiential descriptions from participants through questioning about lived experiences which is derived from critical incident technique and this approach contributes to discussion within phenomenography about preferred practices for interview technique and question design.

1.6 Key Concepts
The following key concepts represent ideas that may carry different meanings in different contexts or may not be widely understood outside the disciplines of higher education or library and information science. These concepts are therefore briefly explained and defined in the
context of this research as they are referred to on a recurring basis throughout the thesis and are significant to understanding the discussions therein.

1.6.1 Experience

In the context of this research, the phenomenographic meaning of experience is used to denote the process of discerning a phenomenon from its context and relating the phenomenon to its context (Marton & Booth, 1997). The ways of experiencing captured by this research therefore focus on the ways in which faculty members discern the academic library from its physical, intellectual, or social context, and how they relate it to these contexts. An experience can also be thought of as a way of knowing something or a way of seeing something.

1.6.2 Information Behaviour

Information Behaviour (IB) refers to the ways in which individuals interact with information and apply it in various contexts (Case, 2012). This type of activity may be purposeful or passive/accidental; and may involve seeking out information or avoiding it. IB has been studied extensively among occupational groups, including faculty members and researchers of various disciplines, and the concept is essential for thinking about how faculty member participants in this research seek and use information products and services in order to achieve their teaching and research goals. The academic library is one element within the world of information use, products and processes, and talking about its impact on teaching and research activities is, in essence, talking about its impact on the information behaviour of faculty members. We can reasonably expect that the information behaviours adopted and pursued by faculty members in any given circumstance would be influenced by the characteristics of the academic library as well as other external factors previously known to relate to information behaviour, such as social networks and access to information technology, along with internal perceptions, beliefs, and meanings associated with these elements.

1.6.2.1 Information Behaviour - Distinction from Information Literacy

IB is related to information literacy (IL) and the two are frequently discussed in proximity to one another, so it is worth distinguishing them. IL is a topic of great concern within LIS and is often described as a set of outcomes encompassing knowledge, attitudes and behaviours which deal
with the many aspects and dimensions of an individual’s interactions with information (Boon, Johnston & Webber, 2007). IL can then be thought of as encompassing, as well as extending beyond, information behaviour alone. Views on the scope, definition and boundaries of IL are debated among practitioners, as evidenced in the recent discourse around the US-based Association of College & Research Libraries’ move towards adopting a revised IL framework (ACRL, 2015). However, I would argue that IL can be likened to a knowledge discipline, like nursing or economics, while IB can be considered as a social phenomenon, like evidence-based practice or decision-making, and in that regard are distinct. A further distinction between the two concepts has to do with implied value judgments. Typically when we talk about information literacy, we imply that a certain set of knowledge, attitudes and behaviours towards information is desirable, and from an educational perspective, we are always striving to coach information users in that direction. Considerations of information behaviour may be more objective and neutral, descriptive rather than prescriptive, and fashioned on observation and understanding. It may be true that certain information behaviours are more desirable from the perspective of LIS practitioners, but to describe and discuss information behaviours is generally more value-neutral than to describe and discuss information literacy, which linguistically suggests the possibility of information illiteracy. The concept of information behaviour is employed extensively in the discussions of this research to refer to the behavioural processes faculty members go through relating to their experiences of the academic library.

1.6.3 Information Worlds
The concept of ‘information worlds’ is derived from Jaeger and Burnett’s theory of information worlds (2010) and is used to place the academic library experiences of faculty members into the context of a larger environmental ecosystem or landscape comprised of small, intermediate, and large worlds which overlap and work together to influence experiences and behaviour differently for groups and individuals. In this sense, small worlds refer to the immediate context of everyday life, such as interactions with friends, co-workers and other trusted information sources; intermediate worlds include institutions and technologies which mediate information flow such as libraries, and large worlds include that which applies to whole societies such as media and national political contexts. A world is comprised of social norms, social types or
actors, information value, information behaviour and boundaries with other worlds across which information can cross, or not (Burnett & Jaeger, 2011).

1.6.4 International Branch Campus
Faculty member participants for this research were drawn from international branch campus settings; yet there is no broad agreement on what exactly defines an international branch campus (Altbach, 2013, p.101). For the purposes of this study, Becker’s criteria are used to define an international branch campus (IBC) as an institution which provides full degree programs in its own name at an overseas or foreign location, situated in a fully functional and purpose-built campus, ultimately issuing a degree from the home campus (2010, p. 3). This form of transnational higher education is distinct from many other varieties of TNHE, and the definition in use specifically excludes joint/twinning programs, exchange programs, and ‘model’ campuses which seek to replicate a style of foreign education without ties to a specific transnational institution. Within these fairly narrow parameters, the qualities of IBCs can still vary considerably. Verbik and Merkley for instance offer a typology of IBCs in their 2006 report, which focuses on differences in modes of funding. Depending on the definition employed, estimates of the number of branch campuses currently in existence worldwide run somewhere in the low hundreds, with most concentrated in the Arab Gulf and in Southeast Asia (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012) and nearly half of those being of American origin (Altbach, 2013, p. 101). The pace of expansion of IBCs in recent decades has been rapid, as with other forms of TNHE, and while quality assurance in overlapping, transnational policy environments is a complicated question for IBCs, most IBCs and their stakeholders both strive to achieve and use some measure of ‘equivalence’ or ‘equality’ between the home and branch campus as a measure of quality (Farrugia, 2012), making the IBC a unique and opportune environment in which researchers might study a number of variables related to the delivery of higher education.

1.6.5 Transnational Higher Education
Transnational higher education, or TNHE, is referred to throughout this work as an umbrella concept for international branch campuses. Various forms of transnational education exist and are gaining prevalence worldwide, such as joint degree programs, distance study programs,
dual degree programs, twinning programs, and franchises; the primary commonality being that students study for a foreign credential in their home or a third-party country (Naidoo, 2009). The institution offering the credential, therefore, can be said to be operating outside of its national borders or ‘offshore’. Diversity in how TNHE programs are constructed and delivered is very broad. Typically within TNHE, faculty members are tasked with carrying out typical research and teaching duties in a context where either institutional facilities, supports, students, colleagues and/or other University elements are remote through space and/or time. This is true in the case of international branch campuses as well, and in this regard the IBC context is thought to present many of the same issues and factors which would affect faculty member experiences of the academic library in other forms of TNHE. Various reports and estimates also give an indication of how rapidly TNHE models are gaining prevalence around the world, with statistics showing, for example, that the number of students studying for a UK credential outside the UK now exceeds the number of international students studying inside the UK (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012).

1.7 Overview of Thesis
The remaining chapters of this thesis are organized as follows: Chapter 2 provides an in-depth literature review related to academic libraries, faculty members and transnational higher education in order to provide context and background for the research and to highlight the originality and significance of the research. Chapter 3 details the research methodology employed, including an overview of phenomenography and a detailed accounting of the research procedures selected and employed for this study. Chapter 4 explains the findings of the research and lays out the results in the form of rich categorical description of faculty member experiences of the academic library. Finally, Chapter 5 discusses the practical and theoretical implications of these findings, discusses the limitations of the study and makes recommendations for further inquiry.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction
There are four broad areas of knowledge which inform this research and to which its outcomes make a relevant contribution. First, an overview of scholarly discussion on the value and identity of academic libraries is given to demonstrate existing concepts and theories of library identity as well as methods commonly employed for investigating these topics. Second, a review of literature concerning faculty members and their work is given to inform and contextualize the experiences of these participants. Each of these two sections specifically addresses transnational education contexts in order to highlight practice issues for faculty members and libraries which may be unique to transnational settings and set apart or relate the findings of this research with findings from research in domestic higher education settings. Third, a review of literature concerning the experiences and perceptions of faculty members about academic libraries is provided as a basis for later comparison and interpretation of the results of this research. Finally, a review of the theory of information worlds (Jaeger & Burnett, 2010) is provided as the main source of theoretical guidance for interpreting and analysing the results of this research and their implications.

2.2 Research about Academic Libraries
Research about academic libraries is presented here in relation to how libraries have developed in the context of modern Universities and how their current roles and organizational identities have been conceptualized and investigated. Research about academic libraries is reviewed first in general and then in specific to transnational contexts.

2.2.1 History and Contemporary Roles
According to Budd, the nature of the modern academic library can be attributed to 20th-century developments in the role of faculty members; namely the professionalization of academic disciplines and the rising emphasis that modern Western Universities have placed on research activity among faculty (1998). In contrast to the situation in the 19th century which saw academic libraries of modest size and limited opening hours, along with faculty members who lacked doctoral degrees and engaged primarily in teaching, the late 19th and early 20th centuries
saw the development of professional organizations such as the Modern Language Association, which created their own scholarly journals for their own academic audiences, and Universities which began to link research, as well as research libraries and their collections, with prestige and success. This required greater support for research and professional activity by faculty and endowed many academic libraries with greater funding, contributing to rapid expansion during the early 1900s. However, the pace of change for both Universities and their libraries in the late 20th century has accelerated. Lewis states that “the wide application of digital technologies to scholarly communication has disrupted the model of academic library service that has been in place for the last century” (2007, p. 418). And, according to Lincoln:

“Were Rip Van Winkle to awaken today, and hope to find some comfort and updating from his long sleep in the library of a nearby research-extensive library, he would be stunned at the changes he encountered. The 20 short years of his nap, between 1990 and 2009, have totally reconfigured the library, and along with it, the way faculty work, the way they communicate within their “invisible colleges,” and the way they cumulate, seek out, utilize, and regard information and knowledge” (2010, p. 425).

The rapid “reconfiguration” of the academic library referred to here is far from complete and arises in response not only to new technology, but to numerous environmental shifts which have challenged the traditional role of libraries in providing access to research collections such as academic books and journals. The most prominent of these shifts are neatly summarized in Budd (2012):

“Academic libraries have had to grow to serve the increasing numbers of students and faculty. They have had to adopt strategies, first to acquire, then to provide access to, the rapidly growing amount of information being produced. They have had to adjust as well to the constrictions of funds, which has made choices of services and acquisitions more difficult. Moreover, libraries have had to react to and help create technological innovations that have affected information production, storage, and retrieval” (p. 45).

As scholarly journals and monographs pursue open access policies which make greater amounts of scholarly content free to read, the library’s traditional role as a buyer of content is
undermined. As policies and regulations pertaining to data management and preservation of funded research expand, the library’s traditional role of archive may be renewed and re-imagined. As greater quantities of information are available in electronic format, the physical space that libraries once dedicated to housing print collections can be reclaimed and repurposed. And, as commercial digitization and discovery services such as Google Scholar gain in popularity, the library’s traditional role as a gateway to knowledge sources becomes less significant.

Responses to these changes across academic libraries have not been uniform. Research about the future roles, value and identities of academic libraries has resulted in diverse ideas and recommendations for organizational development, and as a result numerous conceptualizations have been put forth and experiments undertaken. These include libraries as a centre for social or community activity, libraries as a support or platform for information production, and libraries as a ‘third space’ to complement home and work/school, all of which were mentioned by practitioners during the American Library Association’s 2014 Summit on the Future of Libraries (Bolt, 2014). Oakleaf (2010) takes a managerial perspective in arguing that academic libraries must strive to align themselves with their parent institution’s mission. The library as ‘research commons’ is another model arising from trends towards the publication and preservation of raw data as research output, resulting from open data laws and regulations (Corrall & Lester, 2013). Carpenter, et al. (2011) similarly focus on the library’s role in supporting scholarly communications into the future and identify a potential role for the library as a publisher. The identification of library roles and sources of value has been pursued through philosophical research methods focused on thought and reflection (e.g. Gayton, 2008; Lewis, 2007), as well as empirical methods like qualitative interviews (Carpenter, et al., 2011) and case studies (King, 2000). This search for identity around what libraries are, can be and should be into the future has contributed to the rise of a movement within LIS towards assessment and impact measurement. Various authors have emphasized the importance of assessing the impact of experimental models and services in academic libraries in order to determine and communicate their value (Oakleaf, 2010; Steiner & Holley, 2009). A brief survey of approaches to impact measurement in academic libraries follows.
2.2.2 Approaches to Understanding Impact

Li and Koltay call impact measurement “a field in its infancy for research libraries” (2010, p.11). A variety of approaches to studying the impact of academic library initiatives and activities on constituent groups have been used and each has strengths and weaknesses.

Many studies suggest or imply impact by using quantitative approaches in a case-study style of research which correlate data about a single library’s collections or services with University outputs such as graduation rates or research dollars. Examples of this type of study include Emmons and Wilkinson (2011) which linked library staffing, collections, usage and services with student retention and graduation rates, or Stone and Ramsden (2013) which linked library resource usage with student attainment. Oakleaf (2010) includes a research agenda for investigating academic library value which suggests a number of data points which could be considered for use in correlational studies. One of the limitations of this type of approach is the extent to which the impact of a particular department or departmental initiative on large and complex outcomes can be realistically isolated and quantified in an educational context. Emmons and Wilkinson accurately point out in their investigation of student success that academic libraries are part of an institutional system whose whole impact on users is likely larger than the sum of its parts (2011). They also discuss the numerous factors external to the University itself which interact with the environment to affect student outcomes. This illustrates the impracticality of attempting to convert this type of correlational data into causal claims. Tenopir (2013) further cites the hundreds of variables within the library department alone which might provide value to different sets of users at different times, making it difficult to establish impact in the sense of causation. Correlational studies may be more valuable as evidence when collated or combined across many contexts and institutions. However, Poll and Payne (2006) point out that a lack of standardization in the way that correlational data is gathered across individual studies makes comparison or benchmarking of data a challenge.

Some studies, such as Dickenson (2006), have used survey instruments to gather broader data sets from constituents about their library use and perceived impact, opting to query users directly rather than gather documentary evidence. This type of approach may yield more
insight into how the library causes certain outcomes from the perspective of users while still allowing some degree of quantification. However, the design and phrasing of survey questions is likely to have a significant impact on the results of the research, and can easily introduce the biases and preconceptions of the researchers if not carefully controlled. The Dickenson survey, for example, asks faculty members which of four types of diminishing library resources have negatively impacted their work; suggesting strongly to respondents that library resources are in fact diminishing, and that this is in fact a negative phenomenon. Without such a leading prompt, respondents may not have perceived the situation of library resources in this manner at all.

More qualitative approaches to understanding impact have focused on identifying and describing the library’s role in core University activities of teaching, learning and research. Rodriguez (2014) uses a critical incident survey to ask students about their academic library use during a high-impact learning experience such as a senior capstone project. Nitecki and Abels (2013) employ qualitative interviews and focus groups to investigate faculty member perceptions of library value. While informative, such methods can be time-consuming to execute and are frequently limited in terms of size and scope.

A commonality across investigations of library impact, regardless of methodological approach, is a tendency to group library users by organizational role. While recognizing that the library may have different value to and impact on different users at different times (Tenopir, 2013; Nitecki & Abels, 2013), research in this area also treats constituent groups such as students, faculty, or administrators as fairly homogenous, and may overlook variations in experience within an occupational group.

Regardless of the approach, any investigation into impact, effect or value for academic libraries is fraught with challenge. Poll and Payne argue that “…it is nearly impossible to separate library impact from other influences…” (2006, p. 4) while Everest and Payne point out that “…we are dealing with a changing environment where people, services, and needs are constantly evolving. Any research will inevitably provide a snapshot of what is happening at a particular point in time” (2001, p. 21).
This research contributes to the study of the value and impact of academic libraries by utilizing a qualitative approach to understanding the complex systems and behaviour under study. It accepts the reality articulated by participants and thus avoids the problems of attempting to definitively prove impact through the use of quantitative data. It also focuses on variation in experience rather than similarity among a core constituency, the faculty. As libraries experiment with new roles and identities, an understanding of the varied experiences of user groups will inform practitioners and administrators about the impact of these changes as well as suggesting future directions.

2.2.3 Academic Libraries in Transnational Higher Education

The developing body of research about academic libraries in transnational educational contexts is mostly recent and descriptive in nature. Green (2013) offers a descriptive study of academic libraries in American branch campuses which suggests great variety in the nature and quality of collections, services and staff experiences across the libraries surveyed. Wang and Tremblay (2009) describe the various projects and services undertaken by the Long Island University library to support its numerous international sites, such as web site enhancements and cross-border partnerships with other libraries. McCarthy and Ortiz compare two academic libraries in the national contexts of Ireland and Mexico to make inferences about the impact of educational globalisation and internationalisation on the practice of librarianship, finding that distinct forms of library practice are giving way to “shared experience” (2013). McSwiney and Parnell examine the role of academic libraries in transnational higher educational expansion from the Australian perspective, and recommend steps to better achieve equity between home and transnational library services (2003). These studies primarily discuss services to students. Several studies about libraries in transnational contexts focus specifically on collection development activities (Yang & Gyeszly, 2009; Gyeszly & Ismail, 2003; Gilreath, 2006). Researchers examining academic libraries in TNHE contexts draw on knowledge from studies of library services for distance/e-learners as well as studies of services to international students, both of which enjoy a longer research tradition and more extensive bodies of work (Green 2013). Lessons from these related research traditions emphasize the cultural and language implications for
information use and academic library services in the case of international students and the technological implications of distance services (Becker, 2006).

My research contributes to the emerging body of knowledge about academic libraries in transnational higher education contexts and focuses specifically on faculty member experiences, representing an important expansion in perspective beyond the consideration of student constituencies.

2.3 Research about Faculty Members

Research about faculty members is presented regarding the nature of faculty work and roles in the modern University, with a focus on the role of faculty members in TNHE.

2.3.1 History and Contemporary Roles

One of the important aims of this research is to identify how academic libraries can effectively support the teaching and research work of University faculty members. However, the nature of faculty work and roles is itself undergoing significant change. Schuster and Finkelstein mark two significant periods of restructuring for academic staff in modern history, first in the late 19th and early 20th century with a rising emphasis on the conduct of research and greater professionalization and organization within the academic disciplines, and second during the period from World War II to the 1970s when higher education saw massive expansion and diversification (2006). More recent developments in the higher education landscape have contributed to a new period of significant change in the structure of faculty work, including massive increases in part-time and adjunct faculty appointments, increasing variation in the types of post-secondary institutions, shifts in academic cultures, changes in educational technology, and changes in how higher education is viewed and funded by society (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006; Marginson, 2000).

2.3.2 Faculty Members in Transnational Higher Education

What is currently known about the experiences of faculty members operating in transnational and offshore contexts is derived through a combination of systematic inquiry and anecdotal evidence, and is still quite limited. Jais states that “studies focusing on the organisational support for [transnational] academics is almost non-existent...there is no complete central
source of data on flying academics, which are the backbone of a multi-billion dollar industry” (2012, p. xiii). Miller-Idriss and Hanauer, in mapping the landscape of transnational programs and offshore campuses in the Middle East, point out that in spite of what they refer to as the “recent explosion of these...programmes and institutions...Very little is known about this phenomenon” (2011, p. 182).

Existing literature on this group tends to focus on teaching aspects and cultural preparation. Van de Bunt-Kokhuis, in the year 2000, predicted that, “in the years to come, more research will be needed on the effects of international faculty mobility. The infrastructure at institutional level is a crucial variable...” (p. 50). Since then, however, Smith explains that a great deal of research into transnational education has been focused on studies of successful and unsuccessful transnational collaborations, while a limited and more recent body of literature exists related to the transnational teaching experiences of “flying academics”, with many of these studies examining cases of Australian academics in East Asia (2013). The existing emphasis on the teaching aspect of faculty work in offshore situations rather than research or service activities typically undertaken by faculty in home campus settings may reflect the fact that research activities and facilities are to date, a less significant or prominent activity for transnational operations. Ziguras and McBurnie cite the potential for research activity and partnerships as one of the goals that transnational education has “failed to live up to” (2011, p. 112). As regards investigations of offshore teaching, some research has focused on faculty in short-term assignments (Lynch, 2013; Jais, 2012; Smith, 2014) while other research has focused on long-term assignments (Smith, 2009). In both cases, much of this literature exists for the purpose of better preparing faculty to undertake teaching assignments in offshore locations, with emphasis on the many cultural and linguistic issues encountered in host classrooms (Gopal, 2011; Lynch, 2013; Smith, 2013; Wallace & Dunn, 2013).

Lynch points out that “the quality of offshore partner facilities varies considerably”, referring to the challenge of access that offshore academics may face in terms of access to libraries and other support infrastructure, and going on to articulate how this can negatively impact teaching (2013, p. 22). Experiences of faculty members in transnational contexts have also been
captured through ad-hoc reports. Ziguras and McBurnie argue that “It is not uncommon for academic staff involved in offshore teaching to be ambivalent about the social and educational merits of their overseas programs” (2011, p. 112), citing a variety of reasons for this including pressures on teaching quality. Smith, in analysis of interviews with faculty on short-term offshore assignments, stated that “narratives hinted that these teachers did not always feel that the flying faculty model of transnational education was in the best interests of the flying faculty teachers, the overseas students, or those students back in the UK” (2014, p. 130).

Despite apparent concerns and challenges related to infrastructure, institutional supports, and quality, faculty members continue to take on transnational assignments for a variety of reasons and the significance of transnational education continues to grow as a higher education phenomenon. This research will enhance understanding of faculty member experiences regarding the varying information worlds encountered in offshore academic work, with attention to the situation of the academic library as a particular institutional support. This research expands consideration of faculty experiences beyond strictly teaching to research and service activities, and adds diversity to the range of faculty member experiences captured by including participants drawn from institutions of American and British national origin operating in both the Middle East and East Asia.

2.4 Faculty Members and Academic Libraries

The relationship between faculty members and academic libraries has been investigated in a number of ways across the literature of information behaviour and library assessment and management, with a number of surveys of user satisfaction and perceptions available to draw on. This section outlines some of the main findings from this body of work.

2.4.1 Perceptions and Experiences

A brief distinction is necessary to delineate between the literature of faculty member satisfaction with library service quality, and the literature of faculty member perceptions of and experiences with the academic library. Many small and large-scale inquiries have drawn conclusions about faculty member satisfaction with library services and initiatives, such as marketing efforts and embedded librarian-type programs (Heider, et al., 2012), sometimes
using very systematic instruments such as the popular LibQual+ survey (ARL, 2014). However, questions about satisfaction with existing services are qualitatively different than those concerning perceptions and experiences of the library’s role or potential role for teaching and research. Nitecki and Abels state that “even though satisfaction, service quality and value each involve perceptions, they are not the same” (2013, p. 24). This research is fundamentally concerned with library identity, roles and value as experienced by faculty members in IBC contexts, and so consideration of perceptions derived from studies of satisfaction are set aside in this literature review.

Research more specifically investigating perceptions and experiences, rather than just satisfaction, suggest that faculty members find value in the library’s ability to boost productivity, support work objectives, indulge intellectual curiosity, support student research, or to promote certain educational or learning values (Nitecki & Abels, 2013).

The fifth Ithaka S+R survey of faculty attitudes conducted in the United States (Housewright, Schonfeld & Wulfson, 2013a) is a longitudinal study focused on the perceptions and attitudes of faculty members regarding teaching, research and communications and trends in these attitudes over time. It indicates a declining sense of value from the perception of faculty members as far as library activities and services go, but also provides valuable insight into the relative importance of different library functions to faculty members as they conduct their work. This survey analyses over 5,000 individual responses. A parallel study from Ithaka conducted for the first time in the UK (Housewright, Schonfeld & Wulfson, 2013b) reached many of the same conclusions from a UK participant sample. Both studies, for instance, found that the library’s role as buyer of content was the most important role identified by faculty members out of six options provided.

The Ithaka survey suggests that increasingly fewer faculty members initiate their research with a library (physical or digital), moving instead towards external online sources and services. Fewer faculty members felt a need or desire for libraries to maintain print journal collections, growing ever more comfortable with electronic formats. However, most respondents still felt it will be necessary for libraries to maintain print collections of scholarly monographs, in spite of
increasing electronic access and usage of these materials. Faculty members report using a variety of strategies, sources and services to identify and access needed materials, while still emphasizing their institutional libraries as a very important source of scholarly content. Overall, the authors of the report conclude that “The campus library is a central element, but it is only one part of a complex environment for accessing needed scholarly resources” (p. 35). When material was unavailable for direct access through their institutional library, a third of respondents used strategies such as asking for the material from a friend at another institution, purchasing it for themselves, or contacting the author for a copy.

Faculty members also reported a strong sense that undergraduate students are significantly lacking in their abilities to find and evaluate sources of scholarly information. However, only a minority felt that the development of these abilities was a primary responsibility of their institutional library. Still, about half of the respondents suggested that the interactions of librarians with students helped students to learn and succeed in the classroom (p. 55).

The survey attempts to carve a space for future planning by asking faculty members how important they rate six different ‘roles’ or identities their institutional library may already have or could assume. The study’s authors conceptualize these roles as gateway (discovery service), buyer (providing content), archive (preservation service), teaching support, research support, and undergraduate support. While acknowledging that these roles may not be exhaustive, they lend insight into the perceptions and experiences of faculty members concerning their institutional libraries. By a substantial margin, respondents rated the library’s role as buyer as the most important, a finding which has been consistent across the study’s cycles.

Research Libraries UK and the Research Information Network in their 2011 report focus on the perceptions of academic library by researchers, including faculty members as well as doctoral students, fellows and other categories of researcher. Using data from interviews and focus groups, the study also suggests that providing content is one of the most important roles of the academic library for researchers.

Others suggest that faculty members “perceive university libraries as geared towards teaching and learning, prioritizing undergraduates” (Corrall & Lester, 2013).
The way that faculty members perceive of and utilize academic libraries is related to their overall information behaviour. The following brief discussion of faculty member information behaviour therefore aids in situating the academic library among other information habits, agents and services.

### 2.4.2 Information Behaviour of Faculty Members

The study of user information behaviour, generally, is aimed at discovering how individuals go about acquiring and applying information to solve their information problems and needs (Case, 2012). There is a great abundance of research into the user information behaviour or information seeking behaviour of various groups and demographics in different contexts, including faculty members, which has been increasing in size exponentially over the last half-century (Case, 2012). A recent search for “faculty” and “information behaviour” or “information seeking” from 1983 to the present in the Library Literature & Information Science Index yields over 1,600 articles. It is therefore impossible to be exhaustive in capturing the content and knowledge of this body of work. However, from the more prominent examples and reviews pulled from this literature base, there are several important observations about faculty information behaviour to be gleaned which inform this study.

First, we understand that faculty discipline has a significant influence on information behaviour. This is reflected in the way that the information behaviour of faculty members is often divided across science, the social sciences and the humanities, with a focus on the types of sources faculty within each of these major discipline areas tend to use. These studies show for instance that scholars in the traditional “hard” sciences rely more heavily on scholarly journals, while those in the humanities rely more on books and archives (Case, 2012). Their information behaviour varies further based on information attributes like the cost of materials and distribution channels, which are distinct across disciplines. These attributes change over time, and in fact through recent history we have seen radical changes in the cost, format and distribution process for scholarly information across disciplines (Lincoln, 2010; Carpenter, et al., 2011). Conclusions about the information behaviour of these groups from the past may not hold into the future as the nature of scholarly information changes.
Second, there is a recognition across the literature that information behaviour always arises in a context, and never in a vacuum, with the context comprised of factors like the purposes, tools, and information channels around the behaviour (Case, 2012). Studies of faculty member information behaviour have therefore been conducted across a wide range of specific contexts and purposes, such as in the use of scholarly materials (Volentine & Tenopir, 2013; Volentine, Whitson & Tenopir, 2012) or while studying stateless nations (Meho & Haas, 2001), and in numerous sub-disciplines such as engineering, psychology, and chemistry (Case, 2012). In the face of this overwhelming wall of apparently disparate data, some researchers have reached for commonalities across these contexts which would allow for more general conclusions about faculty member information behaviour and for even the development of theory which could provide predictive and explanatory power around broader information behaviour contexts. One finding that seems to be common across many contexts and disciplines is that faculty members satisfy many of their information needs through informal information channels, namely contact with their colleagues either within their institution or within their discipline, and at conferences and networking events (Case, 2012). The use and exchange of information through these “invisible colleges” appears to be the preferred mode of information access for faculty members in general, versus the use of formal literature or other channels. This widely consistent finding may reflect the fact that this is often the easiest way for faculty members to access needed information, a hypothesis which has been explored with the principle of least effort (Case, 2012). This principle has been observed in a wide range of human behaviours in various social science contexts and described in the context of information science by Faibisoff and Ely (1974). It suggests that users will fulfil their information needs using the most efficient, easiest channels available and will cease information seeking when minimally acceptable results have been acquired. This principle has been put forth as a potentially unifying or “grand theory” of human information behaviour (Case, 2012), encompassing and extending beyond considerations of faculty members alone. A wide range of other theories and models of information behaviour have been developed to explain and predict information behaviour in different populations across varying contexts (Fisher, Erdelez & McKechnie, 2005), and it is possible to infer from this abundance of theoretical frameworks and models that each is
suitable for particular kinds of applications, but not for any kind of spectrum. Hence, LIS literature continues to reflect a search for the development of theoretical models and aspects of information behaviour and for frameworks which enable analysis across and between contexts. The theory of information worlds (Jaeger & Burnett, 2010), which has been used as a framework for analysis of faculty members’ academic library experiences in the discussion of this study, is one such emerging model which attempts to account for the range of contextual factors which influence human information behaviour. This theory argues that information behaviour is “shaped simultaneously by both immediate influences, such as friends, family, co-workers and trusted information sources of the small worlds in which individuals live, as well as larger social influences, including public sphere institutions, media, technology and politics” (Burnett & Jaeger, 2011, p. 167), and that failure to account for these levels of influence results in an incomplete understanding of observed information behaviours.

This research represents an original contribution to the study of information behaviour, as it puts forth evidence about faculty members’ experiences of the academic library in the context of transnational higher education, contributing new evidence from an under-studied context. It analyses this evidence through the information worlds framework, thus contributing to the development of this model for the study of information behaviour and experiences. This framework also helps to contextualize the situation of the academic library and is explained and summarized in detail in the following section.

2.5 Theory of Information Worlds

Phenomenography as a methodology is concerned with describing variation, while theory can explain why such variation exists or how it is influenced. Phenomenography has been tightly linked with variation theory which has emerged in recent decades to explain “how a learner might come to see, understand, or experience a given phenomenon in a certain way” (Orgill, 2012). However, the power of variation theory for understanding and explaining questions of organizational identity, like those of this research, is limited. In the context of classroom teaching and learning, variation theory defines learning as the process of discerning a phenomenon in new ways, and thus implicates a variety of recommended approaches and
practices for teaching. However, although effectively teaching users about the library is one area with potential for practical development arising from the results of this research, there are broader concerns in the area of organizational development which call for a stronger theoretical basis, enabling a fuller analysis of the research outcomes. Jaeger and Burnett’s *theory of information worlds* (2010) provides a useful framework for understanding and conceptualizing information behaviour as well as the many influences which might affect an individual’s perceptions of and interactions with an information centre such as the academic library. This emerging theoretical framework from the field of information science accounts for both complexity and variation in information experiences. Phenomenography, and the interpretivist paradigm, assert that meaning is constituted in the relationship between people and their world. What is the “world” under study, in any investigation of this kind? How large or small is it? And when the “world” under investigation is an information world, what are its boundaries?

Information worlds theory has been developed in response to what its authors view as a general paucity of theoretical development related to information and its impacts on and relationship to various levels of society (Jaeger & Burnett, 2010). This lack of theoretical work is attributed to both a shortage of people working on such areas as well as the inherent difficulties of theorizing the social dimensions of information. It acknowledges the existence of and examines interactions between micro-, meso- and macro-worlds of information. It draws on aspects of Elfreda Chatman’s *small worlds* theory (1999) which focuses on the role of information within specific social groups and communities, as well as Jürgen Habermas’ ideas of the *lifeworld* and the *public sphere* which conceptualize the information and communications activity of society at the broadest level (1981). It seeks to enable us to analyse the connections and relationships between information, information behaviour, and information contexts, and is thus very well suited for considering the role of the academic library as it functions both in the micro-context of faculty member communities, the meso-context of higher education institutions and branch campuses, and the macro-context of transnationalisation, global communications, information systems and technologies. The theory positions the library as an institution which facilitates the flow of information through and across worlds, such as scholarly
knowledge between individuals and disciplines, and likens its role to that of other information interfaces such as schools and technologically mediated networks (Jaeger & Burnett, 2010, p. 262). However, it is not restricted to a consideration of libraries or library and information science inquiries, as it is put forth as a theory of information which can be employed in other information-intensive disciplines such as media, communications, policy studies, and other areas, and to facilitate interdisciplinary inquiry and communication across social disciplines (Jaeger & Burnett, 2010). It is thus also very appropriate for an inquiry like the one conducted in this thesis, which straddles the disciplines of information science and higher education.

Where the empirical phenomenographic research presented in this study describes varying experiences of the academic library among faculty members in IBC contexts, the information worlds framework helps to conceptualize the influences which contribute to the development of those experiences, and to analyse the potential response of the academic library to those experiences. It supports the goal of seeking to understand libraries from different points of view with the acknowledgment that academic libraries and their staffs inhabit an information world which is likely to vary from that of any given constituent community. Burnett and Jaeger state:

   “Because libraries, as institutions, are often charged with meeting the needs of multiple constituencies, and because they are intrinsically formalized information worlds in their own right, they are ideal candidates for studies drawing upon the theory. In particular, the theory can offer a framework for investigating whether the norms and values embedded in the information worlds of libraries and in the services offered by libraries mesh with those of the communities they serve…” (2011, p.176).

Information worlds theory defines five separate elements which capture the who, what, why and where of information in any given level of society and form a foundation for analysis. They are:

   o **Social norms**, or socially acceptable behaviours
   o **Social types**, or roles played by social actors
International Branch Campus Faculty Member Experiences of the Academic Library

- **Information value**, or socially accepted importance of different kinds of information and the nature of the value attached to it (e.g.; emotional, cultural, economic, or other types of value)

- **Information behaviour**, which is similar to other definitions of IB presented in this thesis and refers to the range of interactions between information and social actors, and:

- **Boundaries**, the points where different information worlds come into contact and can exchange information (Jaeger & Burnett, 2010)

It further posits that individuals are members of numerous small worlds of information such as family or co-workers, and that they will adopt the norms, roles and behaviours of these different worlds when they interact with other members of that group. Information crosses the boundaries of these worlds with individuals who move between worlds or groups of which they are members. Venues for such movement and information exchange include technological mediums like online social networks as well as institutions like schools and libraries, and various tools and influences may aid or hinder the flow of information between worlds across these mediums. Worlds are not conceived of as equal in terms of their intellectual influence and control; powerful actors such as those in control of media or politics may leverage that position to increase or decrease access for individuals and groups to certain kinds of information. This theoretical framework is therefore attentive to issues of power and equity in information access, and it further characterizes three types or “levels” of access to information useful for discussion and analysis: physical, intellectual, and social (Burnett & Jaeger, 2011). Physical access is defined as literal access to the document, person or object containing information, whether it is presented as a hard copy, electronic copy, or verbal speech. Intellectual access is defined as being able to understand and derive meaning from information once it has been physically accessed. Finally, social access is defined as the ability to use information for a purpose within any given social context; such as participation in a democracy or creating a joke which others will find funny. Or, in the context of faculty member practice, leveraging information to communicate new knowledge or arguments, or to teach students.
This study utilizes the theory of information worlds in its discussion of research outcomes to analyse factors from interactions between both smaller and larger worlds which may contribute to different ways of experiencing the academic library for faculty members in the context of international branch campuses. This enables a considered application of the findings to any other practical context, by drawing attention to the numerous contextual factors which must be taken into account.

2.6 Conclusion

This review of the literature shows that academic libraries are undergoing an identity transformation spurred by rapid changes in the nature of information and higher education. The work and roles of faculty members have traditionally had a significant influence on the shape of academic libraries and continue to do so. The nature of faculty work and scholarly communications is changing, partly due to the same shifts in information landscapes that have directly affected libraries, and partly due to rapidly increasingly transnationalisation of academic institutions and programs. This transnationalisation of higher education is rapidly expanding but is as-yet little researched. Across contexts, faculty members typically prefer the information channels available through “invisible colleges” to satisfy their information needs, but may find these networks disrupted when they travel across borders to work in transnational or IBC settings. They may also experience significant differences in their information needs and the institutional supports available in the IBC setting. Jaeger and Burnett’s theory of information worlds provides a useful framework for analysing and synthesising these disparate and complex forces as they combine to affect the way that faculty members in international branch campus contexts experience the academic library.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter details the research approach used and is divided into seven sections. The first sections describes why the phenomenographic approach was selected for this inquiry and why it is suitable for the research questions. The second section introduces the research paradigm in terms of its ontological and epistemological assumptions. The third section details the development and characteristics of phenomenography, and introduces its existing applications
within the field of library and information science. The fourth and fifth sections detail the data gathering and analysis procedures selected and employed for the thesis research, respectively. The sixth section discusses issues of validity and reliability pertaining to the research, and the chapter concludes with a summary of ethical considerations and procedures taken.

3.1 Selecting the Approach
The methodology employed here and described more fully throughout this chapter is phenomenography – and has been selected for a number of reasons. First, this approach to inquiry has not been widely used within LIS and thus is likely to generate new insights and ways of knowing about questions and problems in this field. It has been recommended by Bruce (1999) as having great theoretical and practical potential within LIS. Second, this approach is derived from the original research questions; as explained below, it is a very good way of investigating experiences and perceptions. Third, an interest in personal experiences and perceptions in the first place arises from the acceptance of interpretivist epistemological and ontological beliefs – namely, that meaning is created through the interaction of people with the world around them and that we as practitioners in LIS can improve practice and services by better understanding that relationship between users, systems and services. Thus, the nature of the research questions as well as my own epistemological stance has led to the selection of this research approach.

3.2 Research Paradigm
This research takes an interpretive approach to understanding the issues in question, indicating a belief that “the reality we know is socially constructed” (Willis, 2007) and that external reality, while it exists, is not directly accessible through research. The interpretive paradigm is derived from hermeneutical philosophical antecedents often held in contrast to positivist or constructivist research paradigms and differentiated in that it assumes that actors and their worlds are inseparable. Phenomenography assumes a non-dualist ontology; that reality is neither purely subjective nor purely objective, but that it is derived from the interaction between a person who experiences and an experience itself (Marton, 1981). In some way, this can be described as the belief that an objective reality exists, and we have a limited capacity to
get to know that reality, being constrained by the limits of perception and understanding. The interpretive research paradigm places great importance on how the world is experienced and perceived by individuals, because this directly influences their behaviour within it. According to Willis,

“Humans behave the way they do in part because of their environment...[they are] also influenced by their subjective perception of their environment—their subjective realities...if we are to fully understand the behaviour of an 18-year-old delinquent we must understand her view of the world around her. We must also understand the subjective perceptions of her by others in her social and cultural context. Thus, for interpretivists, what the world means to the person or group being studied is critically important to good research in the social sciences” (2007, p. 6).

It is assumed in this research that the experiences and understandings of the participants concerning academic libraries are influenced by their social contexts, cultures, languages, professional backgrounds, and other social elements; which is not to say that every individual has their own experience which cannot be understood collectively, but to say that those who are closer members of the same socially-defined group(s) are more likely to understand each other and to share similar experiences (Willis, 2007, p. 97). The objectives of research conducted within this paradigm thus are not to generalize widely, but to understand behaviour in context and be able to make limited or weak predictions about how environmental or contextual conditions may contribute to ways of experiencing and associated behaviours. The relationship between this type of inquiry and professional practice is typically integrated; it allows both the researcher and the audience of the research to continue building a tacit knowledge base for practice which supports decision-making in novel contexts, rather than finding utility in strict laws or rules of social behaviour.

3.3 Phenomenography

The methodological approach used in this research is phenomenography. This section provides a brief introduction to its origins, procedures, theoretical and practical benefits, as well as an overview of its main criticisms. Its use and application for the investigation of questions within
LIS is also detailed, as well as its suitability for examining the key practitioner research questions addressed in this thesis.

### 3.3.1 Introduction

Phenomenography is an empirical research approach concerned with identifying the qualitatively different ways in which people experience a given phenomenon (Marton, 1981). Not to be confused with the philosophical approach to inquiry known as phenomenology, phenomenography’s earliest pioneers, Ference Marton, Roger Saljo, and Lennart Svensson, successfully used this approach to investigate student experiences of academic reading (Marton & Saljo, 1976; Svensson, 1977), leading to the subsequent development of a well-known and influential taxonomy concerning deep and surface approaches to learning. Phenomenography emphasizes discovering what Marton (1981) refers to as the second-order perspective on a phenomenon, meaning the ways that people themselves experience and perceive phenomena rather than describing the first-order perspective of the researcher(s).

### 3.3.2 Application in LIS

Since its development in the 1970s, the phenomenographic approach has been used to describe, analyse and understand experiences and behaviours in numerous educational settings, and in particular, learning and teaching in higher education (Entwistle, 1997). In the context of education, a better understanding of student experiences of learning is meant to yield useful insight which would have practical ramifications for teaching (Entwistle, 1997). Likewise in the field of LIS, Dr. Christine Bruce has argued that “in phenomenography, we find a research tool which...provides outcomes which are readily applicable to professional practice” (1999, p. 3), going on to recommend several areas where the use of this approach could be expanded, such as in human computer interface design, user and practitioner education and training, and the design and evaluation of LIS services. Limberg (2000) similarly presents practical and theoretical benefits to the phenomenographic approach in the area of information behaviour and use. However, despite its potential advantages, the use of phenomenographic investigations into the work of the academic library has not, to date, been widespread. Most studies to date have focused on the experiences of different user groups
concerning information literacy, for instance English faculty (Boon, Johnston and Webber, 2007), ESL/EFL students (Johnston, 2014) and web designers (Sayyad Abdi, Partridge, & Bruce, 2013), with other studies focused on the experience of information use and behaviour (Kirk, 2002; Limberg, 1999). The majority of phenomenographic investigations within LIS concern information literacy, information searching and teaching and learning concerns related to these knowledge areas. Because faculty members interact with the academic library in the course of practicing information behaviours, this research inquiry is related to investigations of information behaviour. However, in focusing on experiences of the academic library as an object or element, represents an extension of the phenomenographic methodology into new areas of LIS research.

The use of phenomenography to understand and investigate questions across LIS has, to date, been limited. Most research utilizing this approach within LIS has been related to questions of teaching and learning information literacy, which is the traditional domain of focus for phenomenographic investigations, although users of this approach have advocated for its application across a range of other LIS contexts, for instance in investigating questions around “human computer interface design, enhancement, implementation and training, in the design and evaluation of services, and in education and training for both end-users and information professionals” (Bruce, 1999). Experiences of information literacy are a natural place to start with phenomenographic investigations within the library science field, as this research methodology has traditionally and widely been applied to teaching and learning questions. This thesis, however, represents an application of phenomenographic inquiry into an area of LIS that has not seen similar investigations, namely into experiences of the academic library or information centre itself, which Bruce refers to as an “LIS element” (1999, p. 25). It serves as an example for further inquiry focused on applied questions of organizational development and identity in and out of LIS. It reveals ways that the products of phenomenographic inquiry might be leveraged to improve practice in the management of LIS elements.
3.3.3 Research Outcomes

The products of phenomenographic research are categories of description, which represent the qualitatively different ways of experiencing the phenomenon under examination, as well as the structural relationships between these conceptions, altogether known as the “outcome space” (Marton, 1981; Akerlind, 2005). Categories of description are intended to capture the variations in experience across a collective group of persons rather than particular individuals, and it is possible for a single individual to hold more than one conception of a phenomenon (Boon, et al, 2007). The resultant knowledge of phenomenographic inquiry is thus said to represent “collective consciousness” about a phenomenon (Marton & Booth, 1997). The different ways of experiencing phenomena are assumed in phenomenography to be logically related to one another, an assumption which rises out of the ontological position that ways of experiencing something are neither purely subjective and internal, nor objective and external, but arise out of the relationship between the person who experiences a phenomenon and the phenomenon itself (Akerlind, 2005). Although distinct, the different experiences elucidated must then be logically related in some way through the common phenomenon, and the outcome space is the logical structure which includes and relates these experiences. Often in phenomenography, such relationships across ways of experiencing are found to be hierarchical, but this is not a requisite.

Categories of description, or ways of experiencing a phenomenon, can be described and analysed in terms of a structure of awareness (Marton & Booth, 1997), a framework which has been suggested as contributing rigour to phenomenographic analysis (Cope, 2004). According to Marton and Booth, each category or structure of awareness includes a referential aspect and a structural aspect. The referential aspect captures the overall meaning of the experience or conception. The structural aspect is comprised of both an internal and an external horizon. The internal horizon includes the phenomenon and its parts, features and characteristics, while the external horizon includes the context for the phenomenon. The aspects or characteristics of a phenomenon which are part of the internal horizon, and which can vary, are referred to as dimensions of variation. These dimensions can carry different values which contribute to
different overall experiences of the phenomenon. The following figure adapted from Marton and Booth (1997) diagrams this structure.

![Diagram of structure of awareness]

**Figure 1: Structure of Awareness**

This research has employed the structure of awareness framework in data analysis to identify critical differences in the aspects and characteristics of the academic library that have been focused on by participants and the outcomes are also reported using this framework.

### 3.3.4 Debates and Criticisms

Despite a range of theoretical and practical advantages for the field of LIS, as articulated by Bruce (1999), phenomenography has encountered criticisms, some of which its proponents assert are rooted in fundamental misunderstandings of the methodology and its requirements. According to Akerlind (2005), such misunderstanding easily arises from the fact that published discussions of phenomenographic methods and approaches are, to date, somewhat limited. This study contributes to the development of phenomenography, in part, by thoroughly explaining and detailing its procedures. Nonetheless, phenomenographic investigations are subject to the same criticisms encountered by qualitative research more generally, namely that the results often lack a justifiable level of rigour (Cope, 2004; Richardson, 1999). Dealing with this requires specific efforts towards validity and reliability which are fully documented in the presentation of research including acknowledgment of the researcher’s background, and strategies for sampling, interview question design, analysis and interpretation (Cope, 2004). The best or most preferred approaches to these elements of research design, those which ensure scientific rigour and/or validity, have been debated. For instance, should data be analysed in
the context of its full transcript, or in smaller chunks of separate discrete utterances (Akerlind, 2005)? The former would allow the incorporation of context into meaning, but runs the risk of focusing too closely on individual experience represented by a full transcript rather than the collective, while the latter supports a focus on the collective experience but runs the risk of misidentifying meaning in the absence of context. A criticism specific to phenomenography is that the structure of the outcome space may be too rigid and may impose meaning or structure on data that is not really there (Akerlind, 2005). A possible resolution here is to acknowledge the likelihood of atypical structures and non-critical variations, and to report these alongside more significant or critical outcomes (Akerlind, 2005).

### 3.3.5 Procedures
Phenomenographic researchers commonly gather data by way of semi-structured interview, which is then transcribed. Transcriptions are, at some point, pooled and analysed collectively. Individual researchers have made different choices when it comes to how much of an interview transcript to consider as ‘data’, how much data analysis is conducted individually versus in collaboration with other researchers, how to make sense out of the quantity of data present (essentially, different reading and coding strategies), and to what extent relational structures are driven by the data itself, versus the judgment of the researcher (Akerlind, 2005). The remaining sections of this chapter detail the nature of the data gathering and analysis procedures I have undertaken, which have been informed by phenomenographic traditions as well as broader recommendations for qualitative interviewing and data coding.

### 3.4 Data Gathering
Qualitative data for this research has been gathered from participants through qualitative interviews using a questioning or interviewing technique drawn from critical incident technique. These choices and their implications are detailed in this section.

#### 3.4.1 Participant Recruitment and Selection
The publicly available biographies and curriculum vitae of nearly one hundred and twenty faculty members across ten IBC institutions in four countries were screened to identify those who potentially fit the study’s selection criteria. Of these, eighteen faculty members were
purposively invited on the basis of the data in their faculty biographies to participate in the research study, of which ten were eventually found to meet the study’s selection criteria, agreed to participate and were interviewed. After the first eight interviews, novel comments and utterances became far less frequent, and by completion of the tenth interview, review suggested that the data was becoming redundant and saturated (Baker & Edwards, 2012); that is to say, new elements and variations novel to the overall data set were not apparent from the final interviews. The diminishing informational return on data-gathering effort at this point helped to determine a stopping point for data gathering, along with knowledge of the range of participant counts across phenomenographic studies, which vary widely from as few as 5 (Wakimoto & Bruce, 2014) to as many as 80 (Boon, Johnston & Webber, 2007).

Participants were selected primarily on the basis of work history. Participants were required to be full-time, regular faculty; and to have at least one full semester of teaching and/or research experience at the home campus of the institution they represented, as well as at the branch campus, a minimum intended to ensure that all participants had enough experience to sufficiently describe.

It is perhaps notable that the participation criteria around having home campus work experience in addition to branch campus work experience turned out to be a quality which was surprisingly rare across the IBCs examined and limited the number of faculty invited to participate. Some of the IBCs investigated employed zero faculty with home campus experience; others just a handful, and others as much as half of their faculty rosters. In addition to having an impact on the makeup of the participant group in the study, this observation also underscores some of the tremendous diversity in the character and makeup of transnational educational programs and activities.

Aside from the primary participation criteria around work experience, diversity in participant gender, institutional type, subject discipline and age was sought, in order to generate a wider range of potential views and experiences. The ten participants who eventually contributed to the study included four women and six men, representing institutions of American and British origin with branches in two major educational ‘hubs’ for IBC activity, the Arab Gulf region and
Southeast Asia. Four participants held leadership positions within their academic departments at the time of interview, with more overall years of experience, while the other six were more junior faculty. Participant ages ranged from 30-60. The subject disciplines represented by these participants included four in the social sciences, five in the arts and humanities, and one in science.

3.4.2 Qualitative Interviewing

Interviews were digitally audio-recorded and transcribed. Data pertaining to the length of time practicing in each setting as well as division of practice across teaching, research and administrative duties was gathered during the interview in order to provide context to the participants’ reports and perceptions. A semi-structured approach was adopted in order to provide the participants more control over the direction of the conversation, which is effective for eliciting the understandings and perceptions of participants in the phenomenographic tradition, as well as allowing the research participants and the researcher to construct the meaning of their experiences together (Cassell, 2009). Importantly, the semi-structured interview approach allows the interviewer to elicit a ‘story’ or narrative about what the faculty member experienced in moving from place to place, without placing expectations about those experiences. A sense of how the academic library experience is perceived and defined by these participants can be gleaned not only from what participants choose to address in their responses, but also what they choose not to address; a possibility which would be precluded by a more structured interview format.

In other phenomenographic inquiries, different approaches to the construction of interview questions and interview protocol have been used. A very direct questioning approach was used by Boon, Johnston and Webber while exploring faculty member conceptions of information literacy, who asked participants, “What is your conception of information literacy?” (2007, p.213). Larsson and Holmstrom, in contrast, asked participants about their conceptions of anaesthesiology with more indirect questions such as, “When do you feel you have been successful in your work?” and “What is difficult or what hinders you in your work?” (2007, p. 57). For this inquiry, questions similar in construction to those of Larsson and Holmstrom’s
were used as prompts to elicit concrete descriptions of practice-based activity from participants. With this approach, I sought to avoid what Boon, et al. describe as “expressions of how things should be, or ought to be” from participants (p. 57) and to understand more clearly how participants really experience their academic library based on how they utilize and talk about it in relation to real, experienced events. To that end, participants were posed three general questions or conversation starters, structured as follows:

Q1) Can you tell me about any ways that you have used your academic library for your professional work?

Q2) Tell me about any changes in your use of the academic library resulting from your move between a home and a branch campus?

Q3) Can you describe any barriers or advantages that you have encountered with your use of the academic library in a branch campus setting?

3.4.3 Interview Question Design

The design of the interview questions for this research receives special attention and explanation, in order to contribute to on-going conversation around useful ways of structuring and designing the phenomenographic interview. As mentioned above, very different approaches to question design have been employed in phenomenographic studies. While the first and third interview questions for this study are directly modelled on examples from other phenomenographic interviews, the second interview question in this study asks participants to reflect on the effects of the critical incident of moving between a home and a branch campus and is derived from aspects of the research approach known as Critical Incident Technique, or CIT (Flanagan, 1954). This section explains the potential benefits of this type of questioning as well as important differences between this research and CIT as an overall research approach which merit distinguishing.

CIT as originally conceived is a qualitative methodology which asks participants to relay a story about a critical incident which is sufficient in detail to allow for making inferences and predictions about the person(s) described. Flanagan describes its original research objectives as
“solving practical problems” and “developing broad psychological principles” (1954). It asks, essentially, what behaviours are effective or ineffective in certain situations. This technique has often been used to develop critical competencies and job requirements and admissions standards. It has also been used in a wide variety of market research, human factors, organizational development and information-seeking behaviour inquiries. A typical implementation would require qualified observers, such as training supervisors, to make simple judgments about specific incidents, such as why a pilot-in-training passed or failed, and would then compile and analyse these reports to develop broader conclusions about what practices, competencies or qualities are required to pass flight school. The result in this context is a set of practical recommendations for improving training or assessment. As described by Flanagan, this approach reflects a positivist epistemology, in that it seeks to establish objective facts about causation. This aim carries through to sample size, as this approach traditionally analyses incidents into the count of hundreds or thousands of individual incidents, reflecting its search for a generalizable, objective truth about behaviour. The methodology also relies, traditionally, on an inductive and relatively subjective approach to data analysis.

The question used in this thesis does centre on a specific incident of a move from home to branch campus. It also requires simple types of judgments, such as what advantages or barriers to conducting work may have arisen in moving from home to branch campus. These judgments are requested from qualified observers, namely those being impacted, the faculty member participants. Additionally, the purpose of questioning shares practical aims, such as identifying what kinds of organizational behaviours or services are effective or ineffective in terms of how they impact faculty member practice. This type of question is expected to be valuable by calling into the minds of faculty member participants some recent, real experiences and interactions with the academic library at their branch campus. It is also intended to help them explain or describe what something is by comparing it with what it is not. The ability to compare academic library experiences in the IBC setting with prior experiences within the same organization is intended to help illuminate what participants think is important about the academic library, and what its main characteristics are. The use of a specific incident or example as a point of
departure for participants to explain their experiences in phenomenographic inquiry may be generally very useful.

Nonetheless, there are important differences between the use of this type of question and CIT. Paradigmatically, my inquiry is less concerned with establishing an objective reality than it is establishing the qualitatively different ways in which academic library services and activities might be perceived and utilized by different faculty members. It of course uses a much smaller participant sample group. So while this research utilizes a similar approach to question design in order to generate important qualitative data for analysis, the other aspects of the methodology including research orientation and data analysis are quite distinct. A formalization of this questioning technique which makes a clear distinction from CIT itself may be an avenue for further methodological development within phenomenography.

3.5 Data Analysis
The procedures around analysis of the study data are explained in full detail in this section for two purposes. First, to permit “informed scrutiny” (Cope, 2004); giving readers the ability to judge how these procedures may or may not have affected research outcomes. Second, to contribute to phenomenographic methodology by being explicit and transparent in the techniques used and how they represent consistencies with or departures from common practice.

3.5.1 Analytic Procedures
The interviews recorded for this study were transcribed, coded and analysed for categories with the assistance of NVivo software. All participant interview transcripts were pooled and analysed as a collective, per typical phenomenographic procedures (Akerlind, 2005). This procedural decision arises from the knowledge goals of the inquiry, which are to identify variations in ways of experiencing a phenomenon within a collective group of people, rather than to identify or describe the qualities of individuals or to compare individuals. I did choose to exclude certain portions of the transcripts from analysis. These included a few sentences and utterances towards the end of the transcripts from the first participants which may have been unduly influenced by my questioning. On an early review of the transcripts, I found instances where I
had suggested specific ideas about library services in probing participants to extend discussion. These avenues of questioning yielded very little data or response in any case, however I still felt these utterances should be counted as non-existent since they weren’t brought up by the participants themselves. This review and reflection caused me to be more careful in my questioning and follow-up technique in subsequent interviews, so as not to “plant” ideas in the heads of participants, and to pursue the objective of understanding the library phenomenon from the perspective of the participants rather than my own perspective. Other exclusions from analysis included portions of the transcripts which we consider an “aside”, or conversation unrelated to the research questions such as that involved in building rapport or veering into other topics of interest to the participants.

The initial round of data coding followed procedures common to qualitative research in general. I followed an inductive, data-driven approach to categorization (Boyatzis, 1998), as opposed to deductive analysis which would attempt to code based on a pre-existing theory or taxonomy. However, my knowledge of existing literature and theory, as well as my own position, assumptions and biases, may affect my reading of the data so must be reflected on. Green (2013), for example, provides a descriptive study into various differences in the libraries of branch and home campuses, both positive and negative, which suggests possible avenues of analysis but may also plant categorical descriptions in mind. More broadly, it is difficult for me as an experienced LIS practitioner to ignore significant areas of professional discussion and theorizing around the roles and identities of libraries, which have been articulated more fully in the literature review and include concepts such as library as place. I therefore have taken care throughout analysis to reflectively “bracket off” the potential influence of prior literature, as well as personal beliefs and assumptions, in order to give the fullest possible import and consideration to the expressed conceptions of participants; a fundamental phenomenographic procedure (Ashworth & Lucas, 2000; Richardson, 1999). Achieving this involved procedures such as first identifying some of my own assumptions about academic libraries and then reading the data through alternative lenses. For example, I identified a personal assumption that academic libraries are critically valuable to academic work, and then set out to read my data set as if academic libraries were utterly useless to academic work, and then as though I
were an extra-terrestrial examining a totally unfamiliar phenomenon. Where the meaning of
data through these lenses appeared to coincide, I felt more confident that I was reaching a
point of view most consistent to what the participants expressed. A second important
procedure involved coding every piece of textual meaning on the initial rounds of thematic
analysis, even when the meaning did not at first appear important or illuminating to the
research questions. This reflects an acknowledgment that my personal sense of what is
important may colour my selection and prioritization of data, as well as a concerted effort to
counteract this tendency. The use of pre-existing taxonomies or theory for guiding data analysis
is a different choice which might be perfectly suitable for other types of qualitative questions
(Ryan & Bernard, 2003), but would be inappropriate in phenomenographic inquiry and
therefore the analytic procedure for this research is primarily focused on generating categories
of description directly from the data gathered.

There are at least two other important decisions about qualitative data analysis in general that
should be addressed in research design: the definition and size of a “theme”, or expression of
meaning, and whether data interpretation will be conducted in a semantic or a latent way
(Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this case, a ‘theme’ or a unit of meaning is the size of sentences or
paragraphs, as opposed to individual keywords or full discussions, without a specific rule on
how frequent the meaning needs to be across the data set in order to be viewed as significant
to the development of categories. An expression of meaning which appears only once may be
significant if it is directly related to the research questions and reveals a qualitatively unique
way of experiencing the academic library. Finally, data for this inquiry has been analysed in an
interpretive way, which may incorporate conversational subtext. This approach would is more
informative than a strictly semantic analysis in a context which utilizes semi-structured
interview where vocabulary and expression is loosely controlled, likely to be widely variable,
and inclusive of insider/contextual references. Interpretive approaches to data analysis
certainly introduce a greater risk of misinterpretation or bias on the part of the researcher,
which is why conclusions and interpretations in this inquiry have been presented with block
quotes from participant transcripts which exemplify the interpretation and are accompanied
with explanations of the structure of awareness behind them which mitigate a literal
interpretation of the words spoken by participants. The validity of these interpretations is ensured through transparency and communicative checks, a concept which is elaborated on subsequently in this chapter.

During the first round of coding and analysis, I searched for any expressions of general meaning and tagged them with short words or phrases as descriptions. This resulted in dozens of initial tags. During the second round of coding, I attempted to group these tags and descriptors into categories using what I call the sesame street approach – or, “which of these things is not like the other?” This resulted in a fewer number of broader classifications of meaning, with many of the participant’s descriptions and expressions falling into more than one group or category, however, there were still too many categories whose boundaries were poorly defined. This is the point at which the analytic procedure became more specifically phenomenographic in nature, as I employed the structure of awareness framework (Marton & Booth, 1997) to identify both critical aspects and features of the academic library as described by faculty members (the internal horizon) as well as background awareness contexts and objects described by faculty members (the external horizon), and potential values held by the different academic library variables which were expressed by participants. With the data set organized into a more manageable list of potential themes or categories of experience, I was able to undertake a new sort of coding. This involved additional tagging of data points within each existing category as being part of an internal horizon and/or dimension of variation, or being part of an external horizon. This required significant interpretive effort, and I guided my thinking with questions about the awareness structure underlying participant statements using questions such as those suggested by Cope (2004, p. 14); “How must the phenomenon be delimited from its context if this quote is to make sense?” and, “What dimension(s) of variation must be discerned if the quote is to make sense?”

Once this round of analysis was complete, I could compare the results for meaningful, qualitative variations in how academic library characteristics were viewed by the faculty members, or in the number of critical characteristics focused upon, or in the nature of the external horizon. This resulted in recombining some categories together and breaking some
apart in light of their critical similarities and differences across the structure of awareness. This process revealed five discrete categories of description, denoted as librarians and the knowledge they provide, content, discovery, space and place, and ethics.

After these iterative rounds of data-based coding were completed, relationships between these categories were analysed and a comparison to theory-generated categories was undertaken. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) use a similar multi-step approach, employing several of the same stages of qualitative analysis but in the reverse order, starting with a template analysis of data based on preconceived or theory-generated codes. My analysis of the relationships between the categories was again based on the structure of awareness and found that, for instance, the discovery experience can be considered a sub-category of the content experience, and that they are related hierarchically, which is discussed in more detail as part of the findings and discussion in chapters four and five. My comparison of the results to theory-generated categories or experiences did result in some final revisions of the categories intended to more clearly convey their meaning. For instance, the space and place category calls to mind the library as place movement, around which the literature places a great emphasis on elements such as architecture, building design, and furnishings within a library. Participants in this study were not focused on these aspects in their awareness however, but were very focused on the human interactions and intellectual exchange that takes place within the library space. Therefore, I refined this category to be denoted as library as community. Finally, a comparison of the ethics category with literature around the library’s role in information ethics showed that I had probably conflated two meanings of the word moral in my analysis – one which has to do with abiding the law, and one which has to do with holding or manifesting principles. Therefore, the library as ethics category was split to form a new category denoted the library as reading books – an experience focused very heavily on moral beliefs around the value of reading and print books, but quite separate from legal and compliance issues like copyright. The final set of categories of description generated by this analysis were the library experienced as librarians, content provider, discovery, community, reading books, and ethics. After gathering feedback from peers, these categorical titles were revised to express greater meaning and are officially denoted in the results chapter of this thesis as:
1. IBC faculty members experience the academic library as relationships with librarians
2. IBC faculty members experience the academic library as a content provider
3. IBC faculty members experience the academic library as a discovery service
4. IBC faculty members experience the academic library as a facilitator for engaging with the academic community
5. IBC faculty members experience the academic library as a champion of reading books
6. IBC faculty members experience the academic library as a compliance centre for information ethics

3.5.2 NVivo Use and Impact

The use of software for data analysis in qualitative inquiry cannot and does not replace the interpretations of the researcher, but can make the organization of large amounts of data easier to manage and conceptualize for the researcher-analyst. Particularly in the early stages of data analysis, software such as NVivo is useful for allowing numerous tags and sub-tags to be attached to snippets of text; allowing the quick retrieval of groups of text and key quotations based on those tags, and the quick re-sorting, re-naming and re-grouping of texts which represent different forms of meaning. This also provides an efficient means of assigning more than one meaning to the same block of text, where alternate methods such as the manual printing and manipulation of paper cut-outs in physical space would start to become cumbersome, as the number of copies of the same text necessary for sorting might be unclear from the beginning. In the end, the effect of the use of this type of software on the results of the inquiry is likely to be minimal; it is not a data analysis tool so much as a data management tool, likely to increase the speed and efficiency of data analysis more than to alter its’ eventual conclusions and structures.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

The meaning of validity and reliability in qualitative research as well as the extent to which it can and should be pursued is debated. Qualitative researchers frequently use alternate terminology such as “credibility”, “trustworthiness”, or “dependability” to refer to the quality of research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The validity of qualitative research, defined here as the extent
to which it measures what it set out to measure, can be ensured through a number of quality control mechanisms and checks pertaining to the various research steps and stages where research outcomes might be affected by the decisions or processes employed. One of these is to adopt rigorous analytic methods. Cope (2004) argues for the use of the phenomenographic structure of awareness as a framework for data analysis to this end, and I have elected to do so in this research. The key validity question for this study is whether I have accurately and thoroughly captured faculty member experiences of the academic library. Two styles of validity check which can be applied to this question and which are commonly used in phenomenographic inquiry are termed communicative and pragmatic validity (Akerlind, 2005). Methods specific to these styles and their application in this study are discussed in this section.

A primary threat to the validity, or perceived validity, of qualitative research in general is misinterpretation of data by the researcher, and this can be addressed with communicative checks. The challenge is that many legitimate, alternate interpretations of data and phenomenon may exist in qualitative research – and therefore the correctness of an interpretation lies in its ability to be persuasively defended to the relevant audiences. Communicative validity checks present such defences and arguments to relevant audiences and gather feedback via peer review, conference presentations, and other formal review mechanisms, as well as feedback from members of the population that the research sample represents and the audience for the research findings. The technique of member-checking, well-known in qualitative analysis, is another form of communicative validity check where the research participants themselves are asked for feedback on the researcher’s interpretations. However, this technique has criticisms both from the realm of phenomenography and in qualitative research more broadly. Oliver (2003) gives voice to several such criticisms, including the argument that participants who are untrained in social science methods would be ill-equipped to ‘check’ the data or analysis of a researcher in any meaningful way. These checks, according to this argument, may not aid in verifying the accuracy of the conclusions as much as the satisfaction of the participant with their own self-presentation or desired conclusions. Akerlind (2005) argues that this type of validity check is particularly inappropriate for phenomenographic interpretations, since analysis is conducted on a collective level, rather than
an individual level, and the meaning and significance of an individual interview transcript cannot be understood without the context of all the others in a data set. I have elected to forego formal member-checking of this sort and to pursue other communicative validity checks. In the context of the production of a doctoral thesis, I believe that a large degree of communicative validity can be sought and demonstrated through the persuasive defence of my methods and interpretations to research supervisors and advisors charged with reviewing the work, as well as in conference-style feedback from my peers in both research and practice, both of which ensure that my interpretations are defensible to any other reasonable observer.

Pragmatic validity (Akerlind, 2005) focuses on ensuring that the outcomes of research are useful and practical. The development of practical insights as a core aim of phenomenographic research is emphasized by Entwistle (1997) and Bruce (1999), and this emphasis is likewise of great importance in the arena of the professional doctorate. In addition to asking, “has this research measured what it set out to measure?” we can ask, “has this research produced the kinds of practical insights it was meant to produce?” In the case of my inquiry, the practical intention has been to find meaningful directions for the development and evaluation of academic library services to faculty members, and to a large degree then its validity relies on the meaningfulness and utility of the practical recommendations outlined in the results and discussion. The critical judgment of LIS practitioners and faculty member users of academic library services provides evidence in this regard. Lincoln & Guba (1985) approach this from the idea of “transferability”, referring to how the readers of research can identify and extract useful elements of findings and apply them to their own contexts. According to Lincoln & Guba, a procedure which enables this is the use of what they term “thick description”, as opposed to superficial description, which should capture a phenomenon in sufficient detail that those details can be identified and compared to other contexts by readers. While this research certainly employs a rich and detailed structure for descriptions of experience, it also seeks to describe much of the context for the research in the higher education, disciplinary and international branch campus setting. To aid the readers of this research in drawing their attention to relevant details which are likely to affect faculty member experiences with the academic library, the theoretical framework of information worlds (Jaeger & Burnett, 2010) is
Reliability in qualitative research generally depends on ensuring that the same data would be interpreted in the same or similar way by another reasonable, qualified observer. Would another qualified phenomenographic researcher, given the same data set, reach similar conclusions in terms of categories of description and understandings of meaning? Some researchers rely on dialogue with colleagues and/or multiple data coders to arrive at some consensus and confidence in the reliability of the results (Akerlind, 2005); however, others argue that this is both ineffective and unnecessary because it is rooted in a search for some kind of objective reality; a proposition which has already been rejected from the outset of phenomenographic inquiry (Sandberg, 1997). For the purposes of this research, I would argue that a diligent approach to critical reflexivity, bracketing off my own presuppositions, and offering clarity and transparency in these steps to readers as they are manifested in specific data gathering and analysis activities, will adequately ensure to my own and others’ satisfaction that the results are as reliable, in the sense of dependable, as can be expected in this type of research, while acknowledging the position that a researcher can never be removed entirely from influencing the outcomes of qualitative inquiry. Sandberg terms this approach “interpretive awareness”, arguing that we must account for the impact of subjectivity in research rather than trying to get around it (1997). In the case of this research, for example, I have shared my position as an academic library practitioner with knowledge of library roles and identity from the practitioner/administrator perspective. Coming from this position, I have identified several of my own, taken-for-granted assumptions about the academic library; for instance, that it is a valuable academic support, and that it serves meaningful roles as a support for faculty teaching and research. My awareness of these “knowns” allows me to adopt an opposite assumption while reading and analysing data, for instance, actively looking for evidence of areas where the academic library is not used or not valuable. Readers must take into account both my position as a practitioner-researcher and my described good faith efforts to move towards an honest representation of participant experiences, rather than my own, when considering the meaning of the findings presented here.
Some special considerations around validity and reliability exist for phenomenographic approaches to research. Marton and Booth (1997) posit that the quality of an outcome space can be judged primarily on how well the categories of description capture distinctive variations in experience, to what extent the categories are logically related, and to what extent the categories efficiently capture critical variations with the minimum number of categories necessary. The data analysis procedures described in detail above, as well as the explanations of categories of experience presented in the results and discussion section, therefore demonstrate these qualities, in part by describing how the structure of awareness framework was employed in analysis.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations and issues explained in this section summarize those which were explained and discussed in applications to two different institutional ethics review boards prior to commencing the research, whose approval of the research plan are included here as appendices A and B. These have to do with the researcher-participant relationship and its implications, issues and procedures concerning participant privacy and confidentiality, and ensuring the acquisition of fully informed consent from participants.

I enjoy a collegial relationship with the participants in this study, a situation which may convey benefits, such as participants feeling more comfortable and being more open to discussion, as well as challenges, such as participants using the research interview as a form of “confessional” (Williams, 2009). This risk was realized, in part, as participants in this research revealed different kinds of compromising information to me, from complaints about specific individuals within our shared higher education network, to reports of unethical or possibly illegal information behaviours. Having been aware of this as a possibility prior to commencing the research, I took care to adhere to procedures for protecting the privacy and confidentiality of the participants and the data generated. Participants in this research are drawn from a relatively small community of IBC institutions, and for that reason I have been intentionally vague about demographic and institutional details which might allow the identification of participating individuals through any process of elimination. One such measure of vagueness is
my selection and use of the common pronouns she/her to refer to individual participants and their quotations when necessary, even though the study does include both male and female participants. Another which readers will observe is the practice of generalizing specific nouns and place names in participant quotations. For example, a participant who talks about the rare book room at Hogwarts University near Dufftown, will be quoted as talking about the rare book room at [university] near [city]. The research design reflects a concern for participant privacy and confidentiality as well. For instance, it would have been convenient and beneficial, possibly resulting in a greater number of research interviews, to use participant referrals or “snowball technique” as a means of identifying potential participants. This approach was rejected, however, as its use could generate a cloud of knowledge within the IBC environment about who may have participated in the research and who may have been the source of any individual quotations.

A unique challenge with the ethical considerations around this research was meeting the requirements of institutional review boards in two, or potentially three, different jurisdictions. This research was subject to review boards based both in the UK, by the University supervising this research, as well as one based in the USA, by the University providing the material support to carry out the research, but influenced by the requirements of MOUs with foreign hosts. These jurisdictions have many similar and overlapping requirements, but with some distinctions where the protection and preservation of research data are required. For instance, one regulatory environment preferred for hard copies of signed information and consent forms be digitized and preserved electronically for a minimum time period, with all hard copies destroyed as soon as possible; the other jurisdiction required any hard copy materials generated to be preserved in hard copy for a minimum time period. Competing concerns and mandates from both review boards had to be addressed and satisfied with this research design.

I also anticipated that some faculty member participants, being experienced and knowledgeable researchers themselves, might give a less than full consideration of the study’s consent form and information sheet before assuming that it was fairly standard and agreeing to participate. In the interest of ensuring that participants were informed about the details, risk
and benefits specific to this study, I took time to reiterate the main points of these forms verbally before initiating each interview. This action did not result in any withdrawals from the study, nor did it generate additional questions or concerns from participants.

In recognition of the ethical duty I have to the respondents, potential research audience, and to my community of peers to be as faithful and dutiful to a careful consideration and interpretation of evidence as possible, I have laid out in as much detail as possible in the relevant sections the steps I have taken in terms of research design, data gathering and analysis procedures, actions related to reflexivity and minimization of unrecognized biases, and procedures for ensuring validity and reliability.

### 3.7.1 Political Considerations

A discussion of ethical considerations related to this research is not complete without a special mention about political considerations, which are difficult to escape in the context of social and practice-based research (Babbie, 2013), and which I have touched on briefly in the discussion of researcher positioning in chapter one. There is no doubt that the LIS profession has a vested interest in demonstrating and proving its own worth and value in the context of higher education. Research in this area which is political in nature, in the sense of power-preserving, can be difficult to distinguish from research which is activist in nature (Hale, 2001); with activist research having a lengthy and often commendable track record for stimulating social change, for instance Paulo Freire’s work which has underpinned different types of educational reform. It can be difficult to distinguish yet again from research which is really open to the possibility that the academic library, in its traditional form, is of little to no value to the modern faculty member teacher-researcher in the context of higher education. It is also true that, in the same way that a research audience would be reasonably sceptical of medical research which demonstrates the safety of a drug whose maker funded the research, the audience for research into the value, impact and identity of academic libraries must be sceptical of favourable conclusions from researchers whose salaries are paid by academic libraries. It is my hope that effective and transparent data gathering and analysis procedures have resulted in an accurate and faithful portrayal of the academic library experience as understood by the research
participants, and not as understood by me, the researcher; and that the conclusions have not been swayed by such political concerns.

Chapter 4: Research Findings

This chapter details the findings of this research. These findings are communicated in four sections. First, an introduction briefly reviews the theoretical and methodological elements being used to communicate the research findings. The second section presents the descriptive categories revealed by the data with supporting quotations. The third section organizes these findings into a phenomenographic outcome space, illustrated with figures. The chapter closes with a final summary of the research results to set the stage for discussion in chapter five.

4.1 Introduction

The primary question under study for this research was, “What are the qualitatively different ways that faculty members in an international branch campus setting experience the academic library?” Analysis of the participant responses yielded six varying conceptions or experiences of the participants’ institutional academic libraries. These ways of experiencing are denoted as categories of description and denoted as IBC faculty experience the academic library as relationships with librarians, as a content provider, as a discovery service, as a facilitator for engaging with the academic community, as a champion of reading books, and as a compliance centre for information ethics. Across these categories, participants explained their experiences by identifying and talking about various aspects or characteristics of the library. These included the library’s information assets, services, personnel, physical space, and proximity to their primary workplace, which make up the dimensions of variation. They also explained purposes and contexts for their interactions with the library. These characteristics, contexts and purposes, in total, help define each way of experiencing, and they are expressed in this section using the language and organization of the structure of awareness framework (Marton & Pong, 2005), a concept which I will briefly review.

In phenomenographic description, structures of awareness (Marton, 2000; Marton & Booth, 1997) provide a framework for understanding how participants view and experience the
phenomenon in question, and are comprised of a referential and a structural aspect. The referential aspect expresses the overall meaning of the category, for example, \textit{discovery}, while the structural aspect breaks awareness of the phenomenon down into component parts. It includes an internal and external horizon. The internal horizon captures how participants perceive the phenomenon, its component parts and their internal relations; while the external horizon captures how participants perceive the phenomenon in contrast to its background or surroundings. The external horizon includes what is termed the \textit{margin} which captures co-existing experiences and perceptions which are linked and experienced in tandem with the phenomenon in question but are discrete and separate entities (Marton & Booth, 1997). The experiences of the participants are also described in terms of the previously mentioned dimensions of variation across the categories. This is because, in order to discern the component parts, internal relationships and external contrasts of phenomenon, we must discern the aspects which define them. According to Marton and Booth, “...[t]o experience a particular situation...we have to experience the general aspects. These aspects correspond to \textit{dimensions of variation}. That which we observe in a specific situation we tacitly experience as \textit{values} in those dimensions” (1997, p. 108). These dimensions of variation reflect elements of focus within each category and help to elucidate and define the experiences of participants as a collective. For example, \textit{personnel} is an aspect of direct focus for participants across the six categories of experience, but personnel is experienced differently in each category.

\textbf{4.2 Categories of Description}

The six revealed categories of description, corresponding to different conceptions of the academic library by faculty member participants, are described and explained in this section. They are denoted as:

1. IBC faculty members experience the academic library as relationships with \textit{librarians}
2. IBC faculty members experience the academic library as a \textit{content provider}
3. IBC faculty members experience the academic library as a \textit{discovery} service
4. IBC faculty members experience the academic library as a facilitator for engaging with the academic \textit{community}
5. IBC faculty members experience the academic library as a champion of *reading books*

6. IBC faculty members experience the academic library as a compliance centre for information *ethics*

The italicized portion of these categories have been adopted as shorthand to refer to the categories in various sections of this thesis for the sake of brevity.

Each categorical description is described in terms of the structure of awareness framework (Marton & Booth, 1997). Each begins with a brief, summary explication and a representative quotation, which captures the referential aspect or general meaning, and is then described in finer details in terms of its structural aspects. Figure 2 provides an overview of the main characteristics of these categories in a summary table of the findings.
### 4.2.1 The Academic Library as Relationships with Librarians

With this conception, participants experience the academic library as the librarians who administer it. When discussing this conception, participants sometimes referred to librarians by name, and emphasized the value of those individuals to achieving their purposes, whether teaching, researching, or engaging in other forms of library and information use. They also described dissatisfaction with individual librarians and an inability to get knowledge or support
from them. Participants talked about librarians outside the context of the library itself; as in participating in faculty retreats, and becoming “embedded” in courses and departments. They described the sorts of knowledge and guidance that librarians could provide in terms of information seeking. The following quotation illustrates the referential aspect, or general meaning of this category:

“...[the librarian’s] interest, her curiosity, her willingness to help, and on the one hand, you could think of it as spoon feeding, and maybe that’s not helpful, although I wouldn’t really call it that – it’s just more kind of, she always let us know that she was available. Whereas later on, it felt very much like it was very difficult to get that. And so, when I talk about, it feels like there’s hidden knowledge in terms of, how to you find the right keywords to do a proper search. That still eludes me?” (Participant 5)

4.2.1.1 Structural Aspect
With this experience, the participants were focused on the presence and knowledge of librarians at the foreground of their awareness of the academic library. In this category, the information assets of the library are accessed via librarians, and that access is mitigated by the attitudes, knowledge, and abilities of the specific librarians in mind. Librarians are perceived as having special information skills and knowledge which must be accessed through social interactions and relationships. The meaning of this category is discerned against the external horizon or background awareness of feelings about librarians, purposes for utilizing librarians, barriers to accessing librarians, and available alternatives to librarians. In the margins of their awareness are teaching and supporting students, and researching in new disciplinary areas. Participants also expressed meanings for librarian derived from prior experiences or social constructions, and the existence of these affects how the academic library is perceived and understood. For example, this participant assigns meaning to particular library functions based on their assumed attitudes of librarians:
“I guess librarians don’t like people touching stuff, so they set up a service where if you give them the call numbers they’ll just send a student worker to get it for you and keep it waiting at the entryway...”

4.2.1.1 Internal Horizon (Dimensions of Variation)
When experiencing the academic library as librarians, participants focused on certain information assets characteristic of the academic library. These included electronic resources, print resources, scholarly resources, and special collections or archives which librarians would enable access to, help to identify or acquire.

In this experience, the library services discerned by participants included those accessed via librarians, such as instruction to students and access to needed materials. The following quotation exemplifies how the services of the library are experienced via librarians:

“...the longer association with [the librarian]...was also very helpful in terms of knowing the room was there, knowing that she was available and interested in talking to students about it, knowing that it wasn’t closed off. So that was I think the most important relationship.” (Participant 4)

Library personnel are viewed as knowledgeable and skilled in this conception, and serve as gatekeepers to knowledge which is difficult to access without their assistance, as exemplified in the following quotation:

“...[the librarian’s] interest, her curiosity, her willingness to help, and on the one hand, you could think of it as spoon feeding, and maybe that’s not helpful, although I wouldn’t really call it that – it’s just more kind of, she always let us know that she was available. Whereas later on, it felt very much like it was very difficult to get that. And so, when I talk about, it feels like there’s hidden knowledge in terms of, how to you find the right keywords to do a proper search. That still eludes me?” (Participant 4)

In this experience, the library building or physical space is not in focus, in contrast to other experiences of the library. However, the proximity of physical space was an important part of
this experience, as participants only experienced the library as librarians when physically near the library space. One participant, discussing a move from home to branch campus and resulting closer physical proximity to the library space, indicated:

“I actually talked to a librarian, which I haven’t talked to in 10 years, you know. Part of that’s the fun part...” (*Participant 6*)

Another participant expressed a change in experience away from the librarian experience after moving to a branch campus which was physically remote from the librarians through whom she had previously accessed the library.

A third participant talked about how working in closer physical proximity to the library after a move to the institution’s branch campus enabled new use of the library through librarians:

“I mean it’s a beautiful [home] campus, but it’s spread out, and especially where we are... is quite a ways from the actual main campus where the library and stuff is, so I certainly went there and we used some of the services, but it was so inconvenient for us to hike all the way over there... But it changed a lot here [at the branch campus], because I felt like when I started teaching, especially, I could kind of work together with the library to help get students access, not only access to resources but access to just training, and partnering with the library in ways that I never did on the main campus. And I don’t know if that’s just because it was ‘out of sight, out of mind’...” (*Participant 5*)

Participants expressed strong statements about the importance of the relationship with librarians to their use of the academic library:

“...the longer association with [the librarian]...was also very helpful in terms of knowing the room was there, knowing that she was available and interested in talking to students about it, knowing that it wasn’t closed off. So that was I think the most important relationship.” (*Participant 4*)

Participants also reported developing positive feelings in response to personal contact from librarians. For instance:
“...the librarian actually just emails me when they get a new issue. They save them, so I get sort of first dibs on these two resources. I told them it wasn’t going to be as sweet when they automated it, because it was the fact that a real person was contacting me, I feel really honoured.’ (Participant 6)

Participants in this experience describe unresolved questions and missed opportunities when librarians could not be accessed or leveraged. For example, the participant who described:

“...she always let us know that she was available. Whereas later on, it felt very much like it was very difficult to get that. And so, when I talk about, it feels like there’s hidden knowledge in terms of, how to you find the right keywords to do a proper search. That still eludes me?” (Participant 5)

Participants in this experience describe using the library to accomplish teaching and research objectives. Participants were focused on how librarians assisted with the location of resources in support of research, as with this participant:

“From the point of view of faculty research, I would say that it has really helped in, personally for me, to tell my...liaison saying, I wasn’t able to find this resource on the web, can you kind of scour out there to see if you can find something... So in terms of, even for the faculty support, there’s a lot more.” (Participant 10)

Participants also explained how librarians were available to students, offered lectures and class sessions to students, and helped to build and support curriculum. The following quote illustrates this meaning:

“we work very closely with our liaisons in the library, and so they really are with us all the way through from our larger departmental initiatives, so we invite them for our retreats, so they really kind of understand what the priorities of the programs are, so there’s a lot of back and forth between our library liaisons and allowing the collection to grow...even within the class curriculum and syllabi, we really try and integrate, have a session with the library, with our liaisons. So we send them the assignments to say ok here’s an assignment that’s coming up, you’ll probably have students who we’ve
assigned to meet with you 1:1 or as a group, so these are some of the areas that they might come and ask you…” (Participant 10)

4.2.2 The Academic Library as a Content Provider

With this experience, participants expressed an expectation that the library would provide content in a variety of formats. In this experience of the library, users know the items and materials they want and look to the academic library to provide access to those items. Participants expressed appreciation and gratitude when the content they wanted was provided by the library, and frustration and disappointment when it was not, or when it was less efficient than alternate channels – placing a clear responsibility for content provision on the institutional academic library. The types and variety of content that participants expressed an expectation for included e-resources, scholarly journals, magazines, newspapers, books, information tools and technology such as mobile devices and applications, information objects such as models, and audio-visual resources. Participants cited a number of specific resources by name, such as JSTOR, an arts and humanities scholarship database; and Browzine, an application for accessing scholarly journals; as well as specific scholarly journal titles and special collections within the library’s larger holdings. Participants also made specific mention of numerous content delivery mechanisms and services provided by their institutional libraries, including interlibrary loan, course reserves, acquisitions services, and shipping services.

Participants with this conception did not necessarily experience the library as a means of discovery, which is described as a separate experience. Sources of discovery such as colleagues, Google Scholar, word of mouth, book reviews, open access content and references from other materials were described by participants as ways of identifying needed content, access to which was subsequently sought through the institutional academic library. The following quotation illustrates the referential aspect, or general meaning of this category:

“What I actually do now…I use Google Scholar, and then when I find the things I want, either I’m logged in and it automatically links to the ‘find it’ at our library, or if that doesn’t work I go to our library site and go in that way. So I don’t typically start with the library anymore.” (Participant 1)
4.2.2.1 Structural Aspect

With this experience, faculty members were focused on the full text information resources and content provided by the academic library at the foreground of their awareness. Called into the margins of their awareness when experiencing the library as content provider are the known items they wish to access or the size and rank and/or prestige of the library’s parent institution. Along with the known items they wished to access, faculty members were simultaneously aware of censorship imposed by governments in branch campus locations. Faculty members experiencing the library this way are involved in research and already know what specific materials they want to access; they expect the library to own this content or make it available by purchasing it and/or providing appropriate media to access it. They may have discovered the items they wanted by using a library service or an external source such as Google Scholar, professional publications or collegiate networks, as illustrated here:

“I’ve relied an awful lot on word of mouth, as to, you know going and talking to other folks in their areas and saying, what do you think I should read?” (Participant 5)

They also associate the library collections and content with institutional prestige, having the potential to attract scholars to the University, as in the following quotation:

“...they have a really fine library in the 5th floor, which is a major magnet for people to come there, there’s all sorts of journal collections...” (Participant 1)

The conceptual link between the library’s content and the nature of the parent institution is also reflected in this quote, in which the participant has employed the Carnegie classification R1, used in the United States to denote research-intensive doctoral level Universities, to explain what kind of library she expects will meet her content needs and expectations:

“I need to be next to...an R1 library for certain times of the year, as long as it’s a major research library, I’m, for what I’m doing now, I’m OK. It doesn’t matter if I’m in [city], or [city], or [state] too, as long as it’s a massive library.” (Participant 9)

This quote also reflects the background awareness of alternatives to the institutional academic library. Faculty members experiencing the library as content provider were aware of alternative
sources for content and pursued those sources in cases where they thought it would be faster or easier; for instance, visiting nearby libraries, acquiring content from friends or colleagues, or from Amazon or Google Books, which might be faster than employing acquisitions or interlibrary loan services. Likewise, as the library is discerned in the context of its larger regulatory environment, faculty members would anticipate content that could not be accessed through the library and would thus find alternatives modes of access:

“It’s the same process...unless customs doesn’t like it. Some books I know they’re going to obviously pick up on, you know I do [discipline] so one of the factual topics is like prostitution, and gendered history and things like that...I normally will buy those and have them sent to my house in [country], and I just collect them and bring them through, I just take off the jacket, rather than worrying about them getting stuck in customs.” (Participant 9)

4.2.2.1 Internal Horizon (Dimensions of Variation)

When experiencing the academic library as content provider, the library’s information assets are discerned largely as scholarly and are both electronic and print-based. The services of the library are seen as those which enable access to content, including acquisitions or purchasing, interlibrary loan, and course reserves services, as well as electronic search platforms which will quickly deliver requested content. In this experience, the library’s personnel are viewed as content managers whose role is to acquire and organize content for access. The library’s building and physical space is seen as housing content, and the proximity of that space to where faculty members spend most of their work time can be near or far.

Participants with this experience of the library were very functional in their descriptions of their use and expectations of the library and did not express strong affective responses aside from frustration when content was unavailable or inefficient to access through the library.

Participants described a number of barriers to accessing content through their institutional libraries, including uncertainty about the appropriate use and interpretation of library systems, a lack of geographic proximity to physical collections, a lack of time, a simple lack of content
availability, and censorship. The following quotation exemplifies how uncertainty about systems created a barrier:

“Actually, I was looking for some books earlier in the semester, and I thought I had located them in the library, and I came in and they weren’t there, and I just didn’t have time to follow up on it, and it wasn’t really that important to me at that point, but, I never did find them... Because it said on the internet, on the website that it was available, and when I came to the stacks it wasn’t available. So I’m not sure if everything was accurate and updated on the website, or maybe I was just misreading...” (Participant 9)

Participants with this experience also expressed an expectation that content would be readily available on demand. When the academic library is identified as its content, deficiencies in needed content are frustrating and content delivery services such as interlibrary loan are viewed as inadequate and time-wasting, as exemplified below:

“I would say that on the main campus it was relatively frustrating to get any access to journal articles online, resources, it was rather frustrating. In fact, just to give you, to illustrate how frustrating it was, what we did, I was part of what was called the [research institute] which is a joint program between [University X] and [University Y]. The [University X] had much better access to online journal articles through their library, so I gained access, because I had a [University ID] because I was part of this program, I all of a sudden gained access to – I mean it was like Christmas, I mean it was like – all these journals articles that I could never get, that I had to keep requesting through interlibrary loan or whatever – now were just free to me.” (Participant 5)

Faculty members who experience the academic library as content express functional purposes and goals, such as accessing and utilizing content for teaching and research purposes, as well as for the development of personally held collections/archives.

Participants in this experience described a wide range of alternative sources of content available to them, which were utilized when content was not immediately available through the
library. Alternative channels for content mentioned included Amazon, Google Books, other institutional libraries, and informal professional networks.

4.2.3 The Academic Library as a Discovery Service

With this category, participants experience the academic library as a way of finding or discovering needed and wanted resources and knowledge. This stands in contrast to the experience of the library purely as a content provider, where specific content is known and identified before being accessed through the library. With the discovery service conception, participants expect to be directed towards resources appropriate to their needs and consider the academic library a source of referral and recommendation concerning what content and materials they should be accessing. While not all participants who conceive of the library as a content provider also conceive of it as a discovery service, those who conceive of the library as a discovery service do also expect that discovered content will be made available in full by the library, suggesting a hierarchical relationship between these conceptions.

Participants describing this experience also heavily emphasized the idea of browsing content as a means of discovery. For these participants, the academic library either fills a need, or leaves a longing, for the kind of physical browsing and discovery that cannot be had elsewhere. Physical proximity, size of print collections and size of library space were mentioned by participants as critical elements to this experience. The following quotation expresses the referential aspect, or general meaning of this experience:

“I consider it my privilege to go to the library and roam through the stacks and see what I find there. Browsing, like. Old style. This de-stresses me, and this leads to important discoveries... I have all these different interests that feed into my research, so there’s a way to go and browse and find inspiration...” (Participant 5)

4.2.3.1 Structural Aspect

In the foreground of faculty members’ awareness in this experience was the act of browsing or discovering needed and wanted information sources. Called into the margins of their awareness in this experience were contexts such as expanding awareness of other disciplines, exploring, and having fun. Faculty members described browsing and discovering content for the
purposes of exploring new academic territory, as well as for leisure. Participants described enjoyment, entertainment and positive emotions associated with browsing and discovery of content, exemplified by the following quotation:

“...three floors up from my office I can just go there and browse and look at things that I was specifically looking for, but also just entertaining myself...” (Participant 2)

However, expanding awareness of other disciplines and exploration in general is prompted by questions and problems which were sometimes unresolved and led to uncertainty and doubt:

“But what I haven’t done, and I will tell you this is something for the future for me, which is the [discipline] literature. Which is just terrifying to me. And a lot of it is in [discipline], but there are so many things, so how do I structure in my mind – what are the best periodicals? What are the top, like most prestigious ones? You know, so I’m still not quite sure I get it, because I will need to break into this field at some point, but how and where, and how do I locate all the relevant stuff, it’s really intimidating.” (Participant 5)

“I feel like there is hidden knowledge here that I wish, boy I wish somebody would teach me how to tap into that. But the problem is, you know to kind of just to lay the cards on the table, is once you’ve reached a certain level, you don’t want to admit to not knowing something. So there’s self-efficacy issues for everybody.” (Participant 4)

4.2.3.1.1 Internal Horizon (Dimensions of Variation)

When experiencing the academic library as discovery, the library’s information assets were viewed mainly as print-based, both scholarly and popular. Faculty members emphasized browsing physical materials on shelves, thumbing through books, and visiting the library’s physical space, as in the following quotations:

“Basically it’s just about like browsing stacks, about just quick access to secondary materials. I mean I found a book I really wanted to read...I preferred getting my own, because like the books around it are just as useful as the book if not more so.” (Participant 3)
“I would probably...just go over to the library, wander through the stacks, the kind of areas where I know that most of my books are coming from, and literally just flip through books and look at chapters. And that’s something that I can’t do very easily here...” (Participant 1)

They also contrasted this with the difficulties of utilizing electronic mediums while browsing and discovering:

“...and then I really loved to go up and thumb through books and feel the paper, and I have a kind of spatial memory, so it can be frustrating for me looking at electronic sources, because I can’t remember where that is, you know in this book...” (Participant 4)

“...every once in a while there’s a...digital edition that you can look through, but a lot of times those digital editions won’t let you print the chapter that you want to print, because of copyright restrictions, so at this point in my career I would be over in the library stacks a lot more often if I could.” (Participant 1)

In this category, the library’s services are viewed as acquiring and curating content and making it possible to discover. Library personnel are primarily viewed as content managers, who acquire and organize material, while the library building and physical space was viewed as housing for collections and a venue for the activity of browsing. The size and layout of the library space was important to the discovery experience, as exemplified in the following quote:

“And, I think that in part because, a few reasons, I don’t come back and use this space, one is I think because it’s not a space you can get lost in. It’s not four floors and you go back in your cubby and thumb through stuff.” (Participant 4)

In this instance, the faculty member stopped entering the library building and space after moving from the home to branch campus because the space did not support the discovery experience. The proximity of the physical space to faculty members’ primary work location was also important to this experience and the library space was perceived as near when experienced as discovery. The following quotation exemplifies this, as a participant describes a
change in their experience of the library first being located far from the library at the institution’s home campus, and then being near the library at the branch campus:

“Part of that’s the fun part, I always you know in book stores and stuff, I always like wandering around and just looking at shelves, before I stopped going to the library that was probably one of the ways that I got professionally-related books the most, is finding an area and walking through it. So that’s sort of fun [now], being able to do that.” (Participant 7)

Barriers to the use, impact and value of the academic library in the discovery experience include the affective responses of this category as described above. Participants with this experience may change or cease their discovery activities due to uncertainty or self-doubt, as illustrated here:

“I feel like there is hidden knowledge here that I wish, boy I wish somebody would teach me how to tap into that. But the problem is, you know to kind of just to lay the cards on the table, is once you’ve reached a certain level, you don’t want to admit to not knowing something. So there’s self-efficacy issues for everybody.” (Participant 4)

In this case, the discovery value of the library is not being utilized because of a lack of confidence or knowhow concerning information seeking. Participants do not want to reveal these perceived deficiencies in skill or know-how by asking questions.

With this experience, participants are using the academic library to accomplish teaching and research objectives, satisfy curiosity, entertain themselves, engage in information-seeking for leisure or pleasure, and to relax.

4.2.4 The Academic Library as a Facilitator for Engaging With the Academic Community

When experiencing the academic library as community, participants are focused on the powerful intellectual and affective experiences resulting from human interactions within and around the library. These included learning and intellectual development, the experience of losing oneself, and engagement with peers and students. The referential aspect, or general meaning of this category is exemplified in the following quotation:
“You know in the library...I mean the library in [home campus location], it’s this huge series of buildings, it’s a big space, it’s got several coffee houses and things like that, so it becomes a meeting point for an exchange of ideas...also it was a place where you would see other faculty members, you would just run into them – it became a social space, but a place that had a strong intellectual bent to it, so that you could talk to people and exchange ideas.” (Participant 3)

4.2.4.1 Structural Aspect

With this experience, faculty members were focused in the foreground of their awareness on their interactions with other members of the academic community, including other faculty members and students. In this conception, the academic library serves as a medium for the exchange of ideas and facilitates collaboration.

“So the notion of a physical space that you can inhabit, and live, and have discussion, that was very very limited.” (Participant 10)

“...they reflect on the space, and sort of like very personal, they talk about how good the energy is and how much they get done here, so they do love to work here and the proximity of books is very important...I was in [university] the other day, they do not have this kind of space that we have, this is like the heart of this community is how I think of the library...This is something private that they do between them and themselves and the work and the knowledge, so that’s very important.” (Participant 5)

In the margins of their awareness are disciplinary boundaries and their accessibility to students and colleagues. Faculty members in this experience are aware of disciplinary and physical silos that may inhibit collaboration and view the academic library as a forum for exchange with parts of the academic community which exist outside of their office hallways. They also talk about being visible to students.

4.2.4.1.1 Internal Horizon (Dimensions of Variation)

In this experience, the information assets of the library, in terms of owned content, do not enter the awareness of these faculty members and this suggests that this is not a critical aspect
which does anything to define the library. The library’s services are viewed as hosting events and activities or facilitating group activity. Library personnel are conceived of as hosts who maintain a space and ambience conducive to community engagement. The library’s building and physical space are important in this experience, as the community experience is expressed as being physically face-to-face. The library’s physical space is perceived as being intellectual and inspiring. Its contents, such as comfortable seating spaces and coffee shops, support individuals to spend lengthy amounts of time in the library space and to encounter other members of the academic community. The proximity of the library building to the primary work location of the faculty members is important to this experience; it should be near.

4.2.5 The Academic Library as a Champion of Reading Books

When experiencing the academic library as reading books, faculty members were focused on the value of reading and on the traditional print book format. The following quotation exemplifies the referential aspect, or general meaning of this category:

“I will tell you this – so, I belong to a very old European lineage of readers. I go to the library whenever I have time...I think it’s very important to keep in touch with the actual books...” (Participant 5)

4.2.5.1 Structural Aspect

In this category, faculty members are focused on print books and the act of reading in the foreground of their awareness, and called into the margins of their awareness are nostalgic feelings associated with positive memories of reading, conceptions of personal identity such as reader vs. non-reader, the intellectual endeavour of the University, and apprehension about the rise of e-publications.

Participants describe a very strong emotional connection to books and to interacting with them. Books are described as personal, intimate objects, and participants have a desire to possess or own them and keep them nearby. For example:

“...especially for my personal research, I just want to write on the page. There’s a personal interaction, kind of, it becomes mine – I don’t know, it’s weird to talk about
books in that way, but they are, they become personal, intimate kind of artefacts for research and things like that. I do [purchase books] a lot for research related things, because sometimes I really want to write in the books, and I’m not going to write in the library book obviously, and I want the whole book...” (Participant 1)

“I tend to be a book collector, so there’s books that I need for my research, I tend to purchase them and acquire them...To develop my own private library, so, you know I tend to purchase those books and keep those in my own library rather than use the book collections in the library to check things out...” (Participant 9)

This participant describes books as powerful, and describes sadness at the potential of losing the experience of print books:

“Yeah, and I feel a bit sad about the end of print. Because, especially when you’re looking at these oversized books, for the kinds of designers’ work, that kind of thing, you really can’t reduce this down to an iPad size. It takes away all of the power. It’s like saying a picture of the Eiffel tower is the same as seeing it and being able to walk around it...” (Participant 4)

This love of books and reading is conflated with the library, resulting in a conception of the library as a noble entity, but somewhat paradoxically, also results in the participants preferring to acquire and utilize their own personal collection of resources rather than the library’s collections. Because they are unable to write in the margins of library books or retain the books in their homes and offices permanently, they do not use the library’s books for their highest learning and research priorities, yet still believe strongly in the value of the library, which is conceptually linked to the value of books. Despite a lack of immediate relevance to actual needs, one participant described plans to use the library because,

“...it’s a local facility and I think it’s important for them to be seen to be used ...” (Participant 2)

This statement reflects a desire to support the institution for the sake of other users who are presumed to benefit more directly.
4.2.5.1.1 Internal Horizon (Dimensions of Variation)

In this category, the library’s information assets are viewed as its print books. Its services are perceived as acquisitions, namely of print book material. Library personnel are seen as gatekeepers who protect and preserve books, as well as promoters of reading. The library’s building and physical space is viewed as collections housing, and the proximity of the library space can be near or far in this experience.

4.2.6 The Academic Library as a Compliance Centre for Information Ethics

When experiencing the academic library as ethics, faculty members are focused on compliance or non-compliance with copyright and information licenses. In this conception, the library has moral or ethical value which is derived from its status as a legal, authorized means of information access. The following quotation, which describes what the participant believes is unauthorized sharing of information resources, exemplifies the referential aspect, or general meaning of this category:

“Yeah, through the grapevine. Yeah, help me, does anyone have this article? And it’s, I’ve had a colleague from [institution], who’s now, I can’t remember what school she’s in but she’s in [location], and every once in a while she’ll do the same, and I don’t know how this jives with copyright, and I’m probably making myself look bad for copyright reasons, but she’s got a good ethic, she just wants to use it for her own research, so if I have the article I will copy it to her, just knowing that in theory she should have access to it...” (Participant 1)

4.2.6.1 Structural Aspect

In this category, faculty members are focused in the foreground of their awareness on the legality or morality of their information access and use. The institutional academic library is viewed as the most legitimate source for licensed content but is not always the most practical source. Called into the margins of awareness are issues of copyright infringement, information costs and economy, and information needs for which costs and licenses are a barrier.

Pursuing licensed content through the academic library is thought of as “the right thing to do”, although often, alternative channels of information are easier and faster. Various participants
“confess” to sharing or acquiring content via informal channels within practice communities rather than utilizing official channels such as interlibrary loan or purchasing services available through the institutional academic library. This is because informal channels are faster and easier. These participants express concern over the idea that they may be doing something immoral or illegal; yet these concerns are not significant enough to overcome the benefits of the non-official information channels employed.

“I collect my literature that I have it on my hard drive, 1 terabyte, carrying it with me, heavily in violation of copyrights, but as a practical approach...” (Participant 2)

“...the bad thing is then that other people started to find out I had access to all those, and so then I just became the repository for everybody dumping their needs and saying can you get me this, can you send me this article – so I’m just constantly downloading and sending PDFs to all my colleagues and friends because they couldn’t access, so that’s how bad it was...” (Participant 6)

“...to be honest, as long as this can’t be connected back to me, I have utilized other, even after that, because when I came out here it was still bad enough and I was still finishing up writing a paper that I was trying to get published, even the provost who’s going to be coming out here gave me his access to the [institution name] resources, I mean we would share them because it was so nice to have that available...” (Participant 6)

4.2.6.1.1 Internal Horizon (Dimensions of Variation)

In this experience, the library’s information assets are perceived mainly as scholarly and electronic, licensed materials. The library’s services are conceived of as those which enable legal and ethical access to content, such as acquisition and interlibrary loan services. Library personnel in this experience are seen as compliance officers. The library’s building and physical space are not focused on by these faculty members, suggesting that this is not a critical characteristic of the library when experienced this way. The proximity of the library space can be near or far in this category.
4.3 Outcome Space
The outcome space includes the categories of description along with the logical relationship of the different experiences and concepts reflected here.

The categories are somewhat hierarchical in relation to one another. The *Academic Library as Content* concept is the broadest of the categories discovered, and some participants experience the library as content to the exclusion of any other type of experience. For instance, one participant who extensively described and emphasized content when thinking of the library, further relayed:

“I don’t know the last time I knew a librarian by name…. I haven’t been to the main library in I don’t know how long, 10 years or so.” *(Participant 8)*

This participant had not had any experience or developed any conception of the library as described in other categories related to people, librarians, space, or place, and in fact had not physically stepped inside the library in a decade. Therefore, the content experience was the only one held by this participant. However, the content experience was expressed in some way by all participants and many of them went on to illustrate other conceptions of the academic library, held simultaneously, which came to the forefront when thinking about different contexts and purposes. Another hierarchical relationship is found where participants who experienced the academic library as *discovery* also experienced it as *community*, though not necessarily vice versa. The frequency and co-existence of certain experiences seems to suggest that if a participant has experienced the academic library as *community*, they necessarily will have experienced it as *discovery* and *content*, either simultaneously or in another context.

Figures 3 and 4 illustrate how the categories relate to one another. They show that the content category encompasses all other categories of description, and thus sits at the top of a relational hierarchy. They also show that the other categories of *librarians, ethics* and *reading books*, are logically subordinate to the content category but are not apparently related in any other way substantiated by the existing evidence.
4.4 Summary of Findings

This research finds that faculty members in international branch campus contexts experienced the academic library in at least six qualitatively different ways, characterized by varying purposes and contexts. These experiences are logically related to each in a somewhat
hierarchical way, in that experiencing the library as discovery logically leads to experiencing the library as a content provider. The following summarises the defining characteristics of each category of description or experience to serve as the foundation for a discussion of the implications for the findings in chapter five.

**Librarians**

The academic library is experienced as librarians. Faculty members interact with the library through librarians. They consult with librarians in order to identify and acquire resources, discover new content, and support the students they are teaching. The nature of the interpersonal relationship with librarians is deeply influential to the experience. The physical proximity of faculty members to librarians is important to this experience.

**Content Provider**

The academic library is experienced as a provider or purchaser of content, including print, electronic and multimedia content of a variety of types and formats, but mostly scholarly in nature. Faculty members know which specific materials they want. Content is used and needed for scholarly research activities or teaching. Library content reflects an institution’s status and prestige. Faculty members access content via purchasing services, interlibrary loan services, overseas shipping services, and course reserve services. The library as a content provider is constrained by information regulations in the environment, such as government censorship. It is also complemented by an increasing number of alternative free content channels.

**Discovery**

The academic library is experienced as discovery, allowing for exploration into new subject areas and knowledge disciplines. Faculty members are conducting research of an interdisciplinary nature, or having fun and leisure. Print collections and physical browsing are critical to this experience. Proximity to the library building or space is also important to this experience to enable browsing. The experience of browsing, manipulating and exploring electronic information is unsatisfactory, and therefore the library’s print holdings are uniquely
valuable. The discovery experience sometimes provokes uncertainty and anxiety related to breaking into unfamiliar knowledge domains.

**Community**

The academic library is experienced as the interactions with other members of the academic community which it facilitates. The library has an intellectual ambience which encourages discussion and the exchange of ideas. Faculty members are meeting with students and each other or pursuing intellectual growth through conversation. The library’s physical space is comfortable and welcoming enough to make spending enough time there for serendipitous interactions to occur, possible. The library space features coffee shops, meeting rooms and lecture halls. The proximity of faculty members to the library building and space is important to this experience, in that it allows easily spending time there.

**Reading Books**

The academic library is experienced as print books and reading. Faculty members are engaging deeply with written words and texts, including annotating and bookmarking materials for research and learning purposes. The library does not provide content for this purpose; faculty members buy and retain their own copies. The library is a medium for promoting and sharing the love and value of books and text with students and others.

**Ethics**

The academic library is experienced as a centre for compliance with information regulations and laws. Faculty members are accessing licensed materials and complying with copyright laws for teaching and research purposes. The library is an authorized source for material and a lawful venue for obtaining information sources. Accessing information sources ethically is at times slow and inefficient. Deficiencies in content provision by the library drive faculty members to operate outside the bounds of licenses and regulations in accessing and sharing intellectual property.
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

This chapter discusses the findings of this research in terms of their contribution to practice and research, before concluding with recommendations, limitations of the research, and suggested questions for further study. It outlines how the insights provided by the study about faculty members’ experiences of the library can be used to inform academic library practice and services to faculty members in branch campus settings. It also outlines how the findings contribute to research about faculty members in IBCs and transnational higher education, research about faculty information behaviour, and research about academic library roles and identity.

The findings of this research show that faculty members experienced the academic library in at least six qualitatively different ways, had a variety of purposes for interacting with the academic library and situated the academic library in distinct ways alongside other tools and supports for information work. The nature of these experiences have a number of implications for practitioners and administrators of academic libraries in institutions with international branch campuses, as well as for research about the situation of faculty members in IBCs and of information behaviour. These implications are related to the practical aim of building academic library identity and value, which the literature review shows is a significant problem for practitioners in the current information era.

This chapter is divided into seven sections. The first section places the findings in the framework of information worlds (Jaeger & Burnett, 2010) in order to assist readers with the interpretation and application of findings in other contexts. The second section discusses the implications of the findings for academic library practice in branch campus settings. The third section discusses the contribution this study makes to research about faculty members in transnational higher education contexts. There is limited knowledge about the practices and experiences of faculty members in the increasingly prevalent situation of transnational educational delivery, and this study therefore contributes important evidence of issues which may impact faculty member experiences. The fourth section discusses the contribution this study makes to research about academic library roles, identity and value. The fifth section
discusses contributions to the study of faculty information behaviour. The sixth section details the limitations of the study and recommendations for further research, and the final section closes the thesis with insights and recommendations for practice.

5.1 Relationship of Findings to Information Worlds Theory
This section revisits the theory of information worlds (Jaeger & Burnett, 2010). The intention is to couch the discussion of results within this framework to assist readers with the interpretation and application of findings to other practical and research contexts. The findings of this research are not generalizable in the traditional scientific sense; but in order to be useful for practitioners, they should be transferable. The effective transfer of knowledge from one context to another requires an analysis of variable factors and elements which might create expectations about what might be true in our own context, separate from that of the original research. The information worlds framework provides assistance for this type of knowledge transfer. The following brief summary and examples are intended to set the stage for readers to read the remaining discussion while holding the question in mind, “how does this apply to my institution/country/situation?”.

Phenomenography investigates and describes the relationship of people with their world. The “world” under study in this research is the one which incorporates and necessitates interaction with the academic library in the context of IBCs. It is the world of information and communication in which faculty members must conduct their core work of teaching and/or conducting research. The characteristics of this world are conceived of through the lens of Jaeger and Burnett’s theory of information worlds (2010), which states that the total lifeworld of information within which individuals and groups operate is comprised of numerous small, medium and large information worlds which border and overlap with each other, each with its own norms and values. The potential information worlds occupied by faculty members in the IBC context are conceived of and explained in the introduction to this thesis using evidence from the literature on transnational higher education and library and information science. They include the small worlds of co-workers and friends, the medium worlds of the branch campus or the parent institution, and the large worlds of global information technology, faculty subject
disciplines, and national governments. However, a view on information worlds from the perspective of faculty member participants themselves is also derived from the contexts described by participants and conceived of in the descriptive structure of awareness framework (Marton & Booth, 1997) as the external horizon. The external horizon, or the context and background against which a phenomenon is situated and discerned, is evidence that helps to illuminate the nature of the worlds in which these participants operate and how they may affect the library experience. The findings of this research show that across the categories of experience for the academic library in the IBC environment, faculty members discern their experiences against a range of contextual factors and situations. These include: teaching and working with students, reaching across disciplinary boundaries in research, attracting top researchers to the institution, institutional prestige, institutional status and classification, censorship and restrictions on information access, research skills and abilities, intellectual growth, intellectual stimulation and leisure, information laws and regulations pertaining to licensing and copyright, personal identity and habits related to reading and writing, and the nature of scholarly disciplines. These different activities and purposes reveal the kinds of worlds that faculty members are operating in when they interact with the academic library. The discussions in this chapter reveal how factors such as the government hosting a branch campus, the institution governing a branch campus and employing a faculty member, the discipline to which that faculty member belongs, the number and type of institutions neighbouring the branch campus, and the librarians at a branch campus all influence the faculty member’s experience of and relationship with the academic library. According to Jaeger and Burnett (2010), each of these worlds is comprised of:

- **Social norms**, or socially acceptable behaviours
- **Social types**, or roles played by social actors
- **Information value**, or socially accepted importance of different kinds of information and the nature of the value attached to it (e.g.; emotional, cultural, economic, or other types of value)
- **Information behaviour**, which is similar to other definitions of IB presented in this thesis and refers to the range of interactions between information and social actors, and:
  - **Boundaries**, the points where different information worlds come into contact and can exchange information

This framework can be applied to analyse how information world influences are acting differently on the information behaviour and academic library experiences of faculty members in given contexts. For example, the findings of this research show that the faculty member participants are acutely aware of government censorship policies and employ behaviours to circumvent those regulations. This may represent the overlap of two information worlds: the macro-social information world of the state and its information policies, and the meso-world of Western academic culture. We might compare these two worlds as in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Foreign/host state (macro)</th>
<th>Western academic culture (meso)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social norms</td>
<td>The state should protect individuals from harmful or offensive content</td>
<td>It is acceptable to privately circumvent censorship regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social types</td>
<td>Government censors (protectors)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Citizens (protected)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private media outlets (regulated)</td>
<td>Government censors (obstacles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Citizens (uninformed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Private media outlets (pawns)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Info. value</td>
<td>Information is not important enough to override security and morality concerns</td>
<td>Information is more important than any security/morality concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Info. behaviour</td>
<td>Trust information permitted by authorities</td>
<td>Break the local laws to import or access regulated material privately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundaries</td>
<td>University branch campuses; where many different actors and norms are being introduced and crossing physical/intellectual borders and experiencing mutual influence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5: Comparing Information Worlds**

By examining these factors as expressed in the data from this research, we can see that the faculty member participants in this research did not interact with the library when trying to access regulated or restricted content. Instead, they packed censored or banned materials into personal bags and shipments or obtained digital copies or accessed them while travelling outside of the regulatory zone. The library, it seems, is bound by the local regulations and
restrictions on information specific to the host state/environment. These factors may vary, however, when it comes to different contexts. For instance, this research did not include any representation from branch campuses of non-Western institutions. There are several institutions of Indian origin operating IBCs in various parts of the world including the Arab Gulf, and the role of the library for faculty in these institutions should be analysed in light of the findings presented here but also in light of the fact that academic culture for these faculty members might be different; socially acceptable information behaviours might be different; and so forth. This analytic structure, again, will hopefully provide a vehicle for transferring these findings to different but similar contexts and basing further inquiry upon them.

Additionally, this discussion illustrates later that faculty members sometimes view the information “lifeworld” and the situation of the academic library within it in ways that are diametrically opposed to the way that library practitioners view it. These factors, taken into account, should enable an informed consideration of practice-based concerns and issues for academic libraries in a variety of contexts.

5.2 Contribution to Academic Library Practice in the IBC setting
The findings of this research suggest a number of avenues for practical development for library practitioners and administrators in international branch campus settings. This section reviews each category of description with its practical implications separately, followed by summary implications.

5.2.1 Category 1: Librarians
In this category, participants experience the library as librarians. Librarians possess special knowledge and have the ability to guide participants, support students, and develop collections in line with faculty needs. Participants experienced the library as librarians when enabled by physical proximity to the library space and the librarians in it. The interactions described by participants with their librarians involved face-to-face contact, and collaborations and access to library services via librarians began or ceased when the primary working space of the participants was moved closer to or further from the library.
For several participants, moving to a branch campus meant their primary workspace was located physically closer to the library and to librarians, due to branch campuses being overall smaller. This enabled contact with librarians, which was reported as a positive development. However, the library building or physical space, aside from proximity, was not a characteristic of the library discerned or focused on in this experience, suggesting that this is not critical to experiencing the library in this way. Also, in some cases, moving to a branch campus meant faculty were made distant from subject specialists and librarians whose support they were accustomed to in the home location. This disrupted the experience.

This finding suggests that physical proximity to librarians is a requisite for creating or maintaining this experience. It indicates that for these participants, tools and technologies which facilitate communication and collaboration at a distance have not yet been able to replace physical proximity and face-to-face contact. Within the branch campus context, a significant implication is that faculty members’ relationship with the library should be mediated through on-site librarians. With few available published statistics, it is difficult to know how prevalent this is in branch campuses or other forms of transnational higher education provision. It is not necessary to have a physical library full of information resources for this experience; and therefore faculty members could conceivably relate to the library in this way through on-site librarians situated in an office or other space.

5.2.2 Category 2: Content Provider

Participants in this category experience the academic library as the content it provides. Content, whether electronic, print, multimedia, or some other format, is needed for scholarly and educational purposes. The library’s services exist to deliver that content, and these include acquisitions, shipping, interlibrary lending, and course reserves services.

The findings of this research suggest that the provision of paid content continues to be an important role for academic libraries. This experience of the library, in being Universal across participants, is consistent with the findings of other research such as the Ithaka faculty survey (Housewright, et al., 2013a) which suggested that the library’s role as a purchaser or buyer of content is still the most important role for faculty members. In this experience, the relationship
between faculty members and their library, therefore, depends on the ability to quickly and effectively obtain the content they want to access. The findings from this study suggest that faculty members routinely pursue alternative channels to content when it is perceived as quicker or easier, even if this constitutes a perceived infringement on license agreements or copyright. The implication for libraries in general is to continue to support the content provision role but to watch for opportunities to turn this role over to external services when they become superior in terms of ease and efficiency. Faculty members who are accustomed to accessing content through academic libraries and experience this as a primary responsibility of the library may experience dissatisfaction at having to pursue multiple avenues for content after the first one (the library) fails to meet their needs. There is a potential for libraries to mitigate this by linking to and synthesizing other free content providers, such as institutional repositories. However, this is a transitional strategy, not a long-term identity strategy. Many of the information-world trends identified in the literature review, such as the rising popularity of open-access scholarly publishing, will continue to affect the relationship between faculty members and academic libraries vis-à-vis content.

For libraries in the context of international branch campuses, special implications exist for faculty members relating to the library through the content it provides. Government censorship of materials and information is a factor which binds libraries as to the types of materials they may acquire and which drives faculty members in this study to access content outside of the academic library channel. Numerous participants in this study mentioned censorship concerns and indicated on some occasions that they did not even request material, knowing the request would be rejected on censorship grounds. However, the experiences as described always pertained to print or hard copy material, suggesting the possibility that the transition from print to electronic for many kinds of materials, which makes them more difficult to identify and censor, is lessening the impact of this over time.

The level of access to content provided by branch campuses libraries varies, and in some cases has been described as superior, in some cases inferior, to the corresponding home campus (Green, 2013). Being newer and smaller, many branch campuses offer limited print collections.
However, the quality, size and extent of electronic collections may match and exceed those of the home campus. In cases where content was not immediately accessible through the branch campus library, and also not easily available through alternative channels, participants in this study described acceptable delays in accessing content as a result of working at a branch campus. They described for instance, waiting for materials to be shipped from overseas or waiting for periodic travel to the home campus.

In this experience, participants discovered the materials they wanted access to through a number of discovery mechanisms outside of the library. Opportunities may exist to better leverage external discovery channels and link them to library-provided content or purchase-request and loan services.

Overall, this category of experience reveals that there are various factors affecting this experience in the branch campus context, including government censorship, the transition from print to electronic for many types of materials, and the existence of available alternative content channels. The magnitude of the influence of these factors on faculty members’ relationship with the library, however, appears minimal.

5.2.3 Category 3: Discovery
The academic library as a discovery service category of experience will be significant to practitioners who are considering the discovery role of the contemporary academic library. In this experience, participants are exploring in new scholarly disciplines or engaging in fun and leisure. They view the academic library a source for recommendation and referral of materials. Browsing is a very important information behaviour or activity in this experience.

While contributing to the discovery of scholarly information seems to be a priority for academic library directors (Long & Schonfeld, 2013), Schonfeld (2014) acknowledges that discovery is a function which increasingly occurs outside the context of the academic library, going on to summarize a number of arguments that the library’s value for discovering resources has been in retreat for a substantial period of time and that libraries should not really be trying to compete for market share in discovery against competitors such as Google. Discussion around discovery services in libraries does tend to focus on discovering electronic content through technologies
such as federated search systems, as in Schonfeld (2014). The findings from this study reveal that these participants did frequently discover content outside of the library, consistent with the prior research. This research also reveals an important distinction between electronic and print content formats where the academic library experience as discovery is concerned. While participants in this study did opt for alternative services such as Google Scholar for the discovery of electronically formatted scholarly information, and thus experienced the library first as a content provider, participants still very much experienced the library as discovery when its information assets were seen as print-based. The notion of *browsing* for information in print format is an experience which participants associated very closely with the academic library and does not seem to be replicated by other services at this point in time. Numerous comments about the nature of electronic information alluded to its incompatibility with browsing, and it may be that attempts to better serve discovery needs through visual, spatial and geographic presentations of information, rather than textual, is a role for the academic library to embrace and derive unique value from in the near- to mid-term future. The success of such efforts, however, will clearly rely on factors such as physical space, footprint, and proximity to users. Participants in this study relied on proximity and physical access to the library’s space and collections to carry out browsing and discovery functions. This is potentially a limitation for libraries in international branch campuses which face limited resources in terms of time, space, money, or some combination, to construct browse-able print collections.

In the context of greater mobility, internationalization and remote work by faculty and students, there may be opportunities for academic libraries to initiate or partner with entities involved in the development of more effective technologies for browsing and content discovery. Some limited applications to meet these needs have already gained a foothold, for instance *Browzine*, which is a mobile application developed by the company Third Iron to replicate the experience of browsing scholarly journals through physical stacks and was specifically cited by one participant in this study as a valuable service provided by the academic library.
Another important potential area of development for libraries may be in more effectively communicating the support role of librarians in the discovery experience. When experiencing the library as discovery, faculty members in this research express a range of unresolved dilemmas. Participants expressed discomfort, anxiety and self-doubt concerning their ability to adequately identify sources and judge their merit for particular purposes. This seemed to be especially true when the purpose of information-seeking veered into disciplinary areas that were not the participants’ native areas, as in cross-disciplinary projects and research. Librarians and library administrators know that the identification, retrieval and evaluation of information, particularly scholarly information, is an area of unique expertise for librarians. However, the data reveal that faculty members seemed either unaware that assistance was available from librarians to resolve these questions, or unwilling to seek help for fear of appearing uninformed or unskilled. Creative alternatives to amassing large print collections for browsing may be able to support and enhance the discovery experience for faculty members.

5.2.4 Category 4: Community

Participants in this category experience the library as the intellectual exchange between members of the academic community that it facilitates. The findings of this study suggest that this experience is actualized when faculty members work in proximity to the academic library space and are able to spend time there comfortably.

The role of community for libraries poses special challenges. While this is a valued, high-impact experience for participants, this is also an area where increasing physical distance between users and their libraries poses a challenge. International mobility and distance education in particular pose barriers to realizing the community experience for faculty members. While there is some potential for technology to play a role in recreating such experiences, it does not appear that the current state of technology is capable of fully enabling or supporting such experiences. The implication for branch campus libraries is that space does matter, and not just for the housing of collections. Given the short-term nature of many faculty appointments at branch campuses as well as the use of faculty without home campus experience (Altbach, 2013)
it may be that the cultivation of community and intellectual exchange has a greater imperative in the branch context.

The findings of this study suggest that participants feel that the library has an intellectual bent or ambience to it which supports and stimulates the serendipitous exchange of ideas and information, which raises a question about whether other spaces or departments would be able to replicate this experience.

5.2.5 **Category 5: Reading Books**

In this category, participants are focused on the activity of reading print books, an act which also involves writing, taking notes, and synthesizing information. The library is viewed as a resource which enables others to read books and fulfils the intellectual endeavour of the University.

The fact that faculty members are intellectuals, many with an innate love of the written word, presents an opportunity for libraries to capitalize on this emotional attachment and to partner with faculty in their intellectual mission. This is a form of social or emotional capital which appears to exist within the University setting among this constituency and can be leveraged by University libraries to achieve their shared goals. The practical implications of this experience are somewhat limited. In this experience, faculty members do not use the library’s collections for their deep engagement with text, because it would require keeping them for far too long and damaging them with dogears and margin notes. The library “serves” faculty in this experience therefore by promoting reading and intellectual growth among other members of the academic community, including students.

5.2.6 **Category 6: Ethics**

Participants in this category experience the library as an authorized channel for information access and as a compliance centre for information regulations.

This category may take on special significance as regulations around data sharing, open access, copyright, intellectual property and related data services come to the fore. In the context of the international branch campus, numerous overlapping policy and regulatory requirements
pertaining to information access, sharing and data acquisition and retention may create questions and problems for faculty which they expect the academic library to have answers to. Such problems may include the replication of material for sharing in an international classroom; the posting of copyrighted material within course management systems, within or across national borders local requirements for the retention of research data, and others. Libraries have recently been adopting roles related to University and researcher data management, engagement in scholarly communications, and “opening up” research in terms of negotiating freer publication and access agreements with publishers and content suppliers. The findings from this research suggest that these roles may align with existing consciousness in the minds of faculty members about the role of the library in information ethics. The implication for branch campus libraries is that, in addition to extending and replicating traditional content, discovery, and instruction services from the home campus, libraries will want to ensure a continuation and extension of research, data management and compliance services which may be even more greatly needed in a branch context than at the home campus.

As with the library as librarians category, the library building or physical space was not a characteristic of the library discerned or focused on in this experience, suggesting that this is not critical to experiencing the library in this way.

5.2.7 General Implications

In addition to the above implications which are summarized as:

- Ensure access to on-site librarians in branch campus contexts for face-to-face contact
- Enable direct access to content where possible, even if not paid for by the library
- When replicating or extending services to the branch, include emerging services such as research and data management in addition to traditional services
- Find ways to facilitate true browsing of electronic materials; recognize that until this is achieved, browsing print materials will continue to be an important means of discovery for faculty
There are several implications for practice which arise from general observations about the whole outcome space. These observations include the experiences which were not articulated by these participants, as well as the information-related problems and challenges they articulated, and they lead to recommendations for communications with and services to faculty members in the international branch campus setting.

First, participants in this research did not discuss any kind of experience with or role for the library which aligned with some of the identities that have been put forth by practitioners in recent history, including the library as a publisher, the library as a conduit or support for scholarly communications, and the library as a centre for research data management. These roles, which were introduced in the literature review in chapter two, are new and somewhat experimental in the sense that they are not universal among academic libraries at this time. The implication is that these roles may not be intuitive or natural from the perspective of users who have no similar type of experience or conception of an academic library working in this way, necessitating a strategic communications effort. The relative importance of these and other roles is another area where this research reveals some possible conceptual gaps between faculty members and library practitioners. For example, as pointed out in the library as discovery category, library directors have prioritized the importance of discovery as a role for the academic library (Long & Schonfeld, 2013), whereas data seem to suggest that faculty members are increasingly turning to better external discovery services (Schonfeld, 2014). The findings from this research contribute additional evidence to this conceptual gap and show that the library as discovery experience seems to be limited and circumscribed by factors like physically browsing print collections. Library practitioners frequently advertise their collections and services to faculty members through means like websites, orientation sessions, and marketing materials, and they frequently ask faculty members for feedback on collections and services. These areas of practice may directly benefit from the findings of this study, as questions about library value and use to faculty members can be posed within the structure of the experiences described here. To be very concrete, practitioners could use the empirical evidence provided by this research to design orientation materials which are organized by experience, such as discovering new material, acquiring the material you want, or complying
with data regulations rather than typical organizational structures such as finding books, findings articles, booking a seminar room, and so forth. The structure which captures and reflects knowhow based on common experiences has the potential to be more meaningful to faculty members.

Second, the educational and guidance role of librarians for faculty members may be an area to target for sustainable development. Participants in this research express self-doubt, frustration and anxiety over navigating new information landscapes, both inside and outside of the academic library. There may be new and more important roles to play in terms of guiding faculty members through their scholarly information landscapes, even absent of content provision or content discovery roles. The evaluation of scholarly information and the production of scholarly information are areas where faculty members express significant doubts but participants in this study did not register the academic library as a source of support for these doubts for various reasons, including not knowing help was available, not wanting to ask and reveal knowledge deficiencies, and deeming the information not worthwhile to continue expending effort to pursue. These barriers and the potential value of finding ways to overcome them are potential avenues for further inquiry.

Third, the background context or external horizon for the experiences described by these participants illuminate elements which seem unique to the branch campus environment, for example, instances of government censorship, which appears to be a widespread experience, and the experience of having to wait for some period of time before travelling to access physical collections or while shipping physical collections. Participants described these contextual factors only in passing, however, remarking that their impact on the teaching and research work of these faculty members is negligible or non-existent. Overall, the findings of this research suggest that the branch campus work context may not be a major factor in how the academic library is experienced and perceived.

5.3 Contribution to the Study of Faculty in TNHE

The findings of this research enhance understanding of the experiences of faculty members engaged in transnational higher education provision. While the literature review in chapter two
showed that there is very little research into this area at present, and that most existing research regarding faculty in TNHE concerns cultural and linguistic aspects of teaching preparation, the findings if this study suggest additional challenges and benefits for faculty members in this context. First, participants in this research presented evidence of disruption to their interactions with colleagues and professional networks, as exemplified with this quotation:

“I’ve been you know talking to folks in [discipline], and asking them what should I make sure that I read…and because I go back and forth between those two places [home and branch], that’s you know, hit or miss…” *(Participant 4)*

Second, they described delays in accessing content which required sometime putting research projects on hold for periods of time, for instance until they were able to travel back to the home campus and physically visit libraries or archives. However, participants who encountered these issues described them as non-critical, as exemplified by this statement:

“I may have to wait three weeks or four weeks, until I get back to [city]… I’m actually more than two years behind in my publications so it doesn’t really matter to wait a couple of months more…” *(Participant 1)*

Third, in contrast to some of the studies presented which emphasize a lack of quality infrastructure or institutional supports for faculty in TNHE, participants in this research often described superior infrastructure, resources and support available to them at the branch campus, including better proximity to libraries and interaction with librarians and better funding for information resources. Participants hinted that this could be related to the smaller campus size of many branches and/or superior support staff-to-faculty ratios than might be found in extremely large domestic campuses. This finding supports the idea that the quality of transnational offerings varies considerably where different institutions and implementations are involved *(Lynch, 2013)*.

Fourth, an important constraint for participants in this study was information censorship. Many participants described difficulty acquiring or accessing needed information in print or electronic
format due to legal restrictions in the host country. Participants did not experience their academic libraries as helpful with regard to these challenges and this came through in the experiences described as *ethics* and *content provider*. These frustrations may be more intellectual than material, as participants all described finding ways of “getting around” legal restrictions on information through electronic means such as proxies and virtual private networks or physical means such as importing censored material in personal packages and luggage, at minimal personal expense, rather than through institutional channels. The findings in this study suggest that while censorship and information restrictions may be a concern for faculty members working in international branch campuses, they appear willing and able to circumvent regulations with little consequence.

The findings of this research reveal that faculty members working in branch campuses encounter a variety of challenges and benefits to carrying out their information work. We cannot assume that a branch campus setting will be superior or inferior to the home campus in terms of infrastructure. And, while what little research has been conducted to date on transnational higher education work has focused on the challenges of such work and ways of addressing or overcoming them, a potential avenue of future research may be on the benefits and opportunities which arise in the branch campus setting which could potentially inform or model practice and innovation back home.

### 5.4 Contribution to the Study of Academic Library Roles, Value, Identity

The findings of this research offer several points of value to the study of academic libraries and their relationship with constituents.

First, the categories of description articulated here may provide vocabulary and conceptual structure both to talk about a library’s offerings and to inquire about faculty perceptions in a way that ensures common understanding between faculty members and library administrators. For example, the Ithaka S+R survey of faculty perceptions (Housewright, et al., 2013a) puts forth six conceptions or experiences of the library to faculty and asks them to prioritize their relative importance: *gateway* (discovery service), *buyer* (providing content), *archive* (preservation service), *teaching support*, *research support*, and *undergraduate support*. These
conceptions have something in common with the experiences revealed by this research, but they are not identical. Faculty members talked about enhancing their teaching and research activities while experiencing the library as content provider, as discovery, and as reading books – the categories which seem to most closely resemble Ithaka’s *gateway, buyer, and archive* conceptions. Therefore, while the survey designers have separated teaching and research support into discrete conceptions which may connote specific services or activities to the questioners, this research suggests that faculty members may think of these purposes as linked with roles like content provision. The categories of description identified in this thesis therefore provide some evidence base for designing surveys, questionnaires and other inquiries which employ meaning structures with the potential to be shared and understood similarly between those asking and those responding.

Second, the findings provide evidence of differences between faculty members and librarians in conceptions of library roles and value. Faculty members participating in this research did not provide any indication of experiencing the library in certain ways that are talked about among LIS practitioners and which were introduced in chapter two. One of these is as a platform for creation, sharing or publication of creative endeavour. Another is the library as a conduit for scholarly communications. A third is as a support or centre for research data management. In recent history, many libraries have begun to conceive a role for themselves as *makerspaces* (Bolt, 2014; Fisher, 2012), providing software, hardware, and other support for the design and production of intellectual output. No use, conception or awareness of such services or roles was expressed by any of the participants in this research, although these may be designed and targeted mainly for a different audience, such as students. Similarly, academic libraries have also begun to take on new roles in scholarly communications (Carpenter, et al., 2011), such as providing financial support to faculty to pay the article processing charges for open access publishing of scholarly works. However, participants in this research did not express any concept or experience of the library as being involved in scholarly communications or publication beyond the discovery and access of already-published materials. Finally, new and future roles in research data management have been put forth (Corrall & Lester, 2013), services which again participants expressed no awareness of or conception about in this study.
However, such services do logically fit with expressed conceptions of the library as a center for information ethics and compliance with information regulations, as captured in the \textit{library as ethics} category, since the openness and preservation of research data are increasingly included in funding mandates (Corrall & Lester, 2013). There are many possible reasons that these concepts or roles of the academic library, increasingly espoused by library practitioners, have failed to become established or take root in the minds of these participants. They could simply be too new; they may not be reflected in the services of the specific institutions represented in this research; they may exist but are not being communicated effectively; or they may exist but not be perceived as necessary or significant enough to these participants to come to mind in a conversation about the library. The absence of awareness is certainly evidence of conceptual gaps around what the library is and can do which may currently exist between faculty members and library practitioners. The implication is that there is work to do in terms of finding ways to bridge these gaps.

Third, the findings of this research do reveal some consistencies with prior research involving the role of the academic library. The most prevalent and basic way of experiencing the academic library for participants in this study was as a content provider, which is consistent with prior findings prioritizing this role (Nitecki & Abels, 2013; Housewright, 2013a). However, analysis of this role reveals what are possibly additional conceptual and perceptual gaps between librarians and faculty members in the context of the international branch campus. Library practitioners have characterized the content provision role of the library in IBCs as critically and uniquely valuable due to the lack of alternative providers in the foreign environment (Green, 2013); however, participants in this study all described regularly accessing a wide range of alternative channels for content, including not only freely available content but also subscription-based or paid content via neighboring institutional and public libraries. One participant describing her access to materials from the branch campus stated:

“...it’s always possible to get it one way or another. And we have other libraries in the city. So I don’t feel disadvantaged in any way...” (Participant 5)
Therefore the role of the library as a content provider is still a significant role or identity but it sits alongside numerous other content channels available in the various information worlds of these faculty member participants.

In summary, the findings of this research reveal important differences in how the academic library may be experienced, perceived and talked about by faculty members in the branch campus context and by library practitioners and administrators. This finding has important practical ramifications around aligning these understandings to enable better service delivery and communications.

5.5 Contribution to the Study of Faculty Information Behaviour

Consistent with prior research into the information behaviour of faculty members (Case, 2012), the participants in this study frequently describe reliance on collegiate networks for the satisfaction of their information needs. Participants experiencing the academic library as content, for example, describe accessing content through the library that they have discovered, or identified for consumption, by recommendation or referral from colleagues and professional communications. Participants experiencing the library as ethics describe both acquiring content from and distributing content to colleagues when it is not readily available through the library. The findings of this research lend insight into how the library may relate to the flow of information through these informal networks.

Research about faculty information behaviour has highlighted importance differences across scholarly disciplines, likely driven by the nature of information production, formats and distribution channels specific to those disciplines (Case, 2012). The findings of this study support this idea, as participants often mentioned the nature or format of information in relation to their discipline as an explanation for their needs and habits. The following quotations from participants working in different scholarly disciplines exemplify this:

“…our librarians are busy building up a physical library, which in [discipline] and related fields is important, because a lot of the stuff is not electronically available…” (Participant 1)
“...Since we are moving to an online world and all the journal articles are now online, that’s primarily what I need the library for, is the web portal....” (Participant 2)

This suggests that despite trends towards digitization of scholarly materials and electronic publishing, in the year 2014 there still exist important differences in the nature of scholarly materials in different disciplines which influence both academic library practices and faculty information behaviours.

Another important insight from this study regards the uncertainty and unresolved questions which participants described arising in both the discovery and content categories. Excerpts from the data reveal that faculty sometime leave their questions and information needs unmet when they are not aware that assistance is available, are aware that assistance is available but do not want to ask for it, or determine that the need/question is not important enough to warrant additional effort in pursuing. The following quotations illustrate this:

“I think that, yeah I mean we rely a lot more on downloading something, you know looking on a database, downloading from there, and that’s again where I feel like there is hidden knowledge here that I wish, boy I wish somebody would teach me how to tap into that. But the problem is, you know to kind of just to lay the cards on the table, is once you’ve reached a certain level, you don’t want to admit to not knowing something. So there’s self-efficacy issues for everybody.” (Participant 4)

“...the [discipline] literature. Which is just terrifying to me. And a lot of it is in [discipline], but there are so many things, so how do I structure in my mind – what are the best periodicals? What are the top, like most prestigious ones? You know, so I’m still not quite sure I get it, because I will need to break into this field at some point, but how and where, and how do I locate all the relevant stuff, it’s really intimidating...[are there] such services or assistance available for faculty?” (Participant 5)

“I was looking for some books earlier in the semester, and I thought I had located them in the library, and I came in and they weren’t there, and I just didn’t have time to follow up on it, and it wasn’t really that important to me at that point, but, I never did find
them...it said on the internet, on the website that it was available, and when I came to the stacks it wasn’t available. So I’m not sure if everything was accurate and updated on the website, or maybe I was just misreading...” (Participant 2)

In each case, the behaviour is that participants do not or have not yet pursued their information needs, however there appear to be a number of underlying causes. This data contributes to existing models of information behaviour, such as Kuhlthau’s information search process (1988) which focuses on the cognitive and affective aspects behind information behaviour.

Across the categories of experience, there is data which contributes to the principle of least effort theory of information behaviour (Case, 2012), as faculty members describe multiple instances where they pursue information needs outside of the academic library because it is faster and easier, while still being acceptably informative. Examples of this behaviour include the heavy reliance on collegiate networks mentioned above, as well as the use of unauthorized or potentially illegal information sharing practices and channels described through the library as ethics category of experience. These behaviours are exemplified across the participant set and do not appear to be constrained by scholarly discipline or other factors which typically sub-divide faculty information behaviour studies.

The findings of this research, in summary, reveal a number of consistencies with existing research of and theories about faculty member information behaviour, suggesting significant overlap in the factors that drive these behaviours between the faculty member participants in this study, who were all drawn from international branch campus contexts, and faculty member participants in prior research and studies. The exact details and manifestations of these behaviours appear to be influenced by some contextually-specific factors, such as government censorship within branch campus settings and remoteness from physically accessible scholarly materials.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

The conclusions of this research are limited by a number of factors. First, this study was conducted with faculty members. It has been stated widely that academic libraries serve very different roles and hold different value to different stakeholders, including students,
administrators, funding agencies, library staff members, and others (Nitecki & Abels, 2013). The findings of this research pertain only to a single type of academic library constituent and do not address important roles that the library serves for other groups, such as information literacy instruction for undergraduate students.

Another limitation is the size of the data set. An unexpectedly small number of branch campus faculty screened actually met the study’s participation criteria, and those criteria were important for ensuring participants had enough relevant experience to share for the purposes of the research. One way of addressing this limitation in the future would be to design a different questioning technique which relied on more common or prevalent types of background or work experience. Although several hundred individual expressions of conception were gathered and analysed across the ten interview transcripts for this research, it is possible that additional ways of experiencing the academic library would be identified if participants continued to be recruited and interviewed, particularly if drawn from additional disciplines or practical contexts. The participants for this study were all drawn from international branch campuses in either the Arab Gulf or Southeast Asia, so may not reflect the experiences of faculty members in other types of TNHE provision or in other geographic regions. Another limitation is that, while full-time, regular faculty members with transnational experience were selected for this study in order to ensure enough relevant experience to generate meaningful data, it is also true that this is hardly a majority faculty member profile in modern Universities. The use of large bodies of contingent and adjunct faculty in particular (Altbach, 2013), is a trend which academic libraries should be concerned with and which is not considered here. Specific to branch campuses and transnational programs, the use of “local hire” faculty, as opposed to faculty from the home campus, is prevalent. The participant recruitment process for this thesis was, in fact, stymied by the overall rarity of faculty members working within branch campuses who had any home campus work experience. Also prevalent in transnational contexts is the use of “flying faculty” (Smith, 2014) on short-term assignments rather than the faculty members on long-term assignments who participated in this research. An investigation designed to capture the experiences of some of these additional sets of faculty members in additional transnational contexts would extend and complement the findings presented here.
Additionally, due to the research paradigm employed as well as the overall methodological approach and assumptions, this research is not intended to, and cannot be used to generalize about how individual faculty members experience academic libraries. The research findings describe “collective consciousness” (Marton & Booth, 1997) about the academic library. The context of the research involves international branch campuses, and full-time regular faculty members; it seeks to generate understanding of the variance in experience that can be found across this group, and to draw connections between user experiences and context which can inform tacit knowledge development for academic library and higher education administrators and practitioners. It contributes to a wide range of data captured in studies of various contexts and thus contributes to expert decision-making. It serves as a vicarious form of professional experience upon which expert practitioners can derive knowledge and confidence in their own contexts.

Finally, the study is also limited by the relationship between the researcher and the participants and the nature of these interactions. Specifically, participants may have been influenced by ideas of how they should talk about or discuss libraries with a librarian. When describing actions which enabled access to licensed material but which circumvented traditional, library-enabled access, participants frequently took care to justify these actions with statements like “she should have access…”, “she’s got a good ethic…”, “that’s how bad it was…” and similar utterances which emphasize the fact that these actions do not make their actors bad people. I find it probable that participants would talk about issues of information access, copyright and other regulatory issues differently with different audiences, such as other faculty members, students, or administrators. While this is one specific and obvious example of how my role and relationship with participants may have circumscribed the study, the influence of the researcher on the research can manifest in many ways in all kinds of qualitative research and therefore readers are cautioned to exercise scrutiny about how the findings can be interpreted and applied in different contexts.
5.6.1 Recommendations for Further Research

An important and natural follow-on to this research would be to extend beyond description to investigate how the presence or absence of certain types of academic library experience might be associated with more effective or more productive teaching and research; and what organizational factors might contribute to creating or building certain types of experience. Essentially, this would be the development of a framework which lends practical guidance into which types of experience are most desirable in terms of their influence on academic work, and how to encourage those experiences.

Additional phenomenographic studies examining experiences of the academic library and/or its elements are needed to extend the currently limited body of inquiry in this area. Numerous opportunities to examine the experiences of various library constituencies using this approach exist and would contribute to counterbalancing the view and conceptions of librarians, which are reflected in the majority of research on academic libraries. The experiences of students, faculty on short-term assignments, as well as adjunct or contingent faculty, and those in specific disciplines or engaged in other specific types of transnational higher education provision are all as-yet unexplored in this way.

This research would also be extended and complemented by research about faculty members’ relationships with other institutional elements and supports in branch campuses and in the transnational higher education context. As this is an area of educational provision which is expanding rapidly but is still inadequately researched, additional insight into the experiences of faculty members in this context and their relationship with research offices, academic services departments, and other institutional elements which support their teaching and research work is needed.

As this study has been conducted in a time of rapid growth and change, both in the information environment and in transnational higher education provision, it is also recommended that additional phenomenographic studies be carried out for similar populations and contexts in order to compare the results over time and place.
This study also opens an avenue to pursue the association between certain ways of experiencing or relating to the library and various faculty outcomes. In the same way that the study of variation in experiences of learning has led to associations with learning strategies deemed more or less effective (Marton & Saljo, 1976), and teaching methods geared towards encouraging better learning strategies in students, the study of variation in experiences of the academic library may potentially lead to the identification of experiences and their associated behaviours which are considered more or less effective for practicing information work. This thesis has made no value judgments about particular experiences, and has not suggested that one or another way of experiencing the academic library might be more or less beneficial to faculty members’ work and outcomes. There is potential to pursue this idea through further inquiry, however, and to continue on to develop services, communication strategies or other actions from the academic library side which encourage and facilitate the most desirable experiences or types of relationship between constituents and the academic library department.

Participants in this study revealed several unresolved questions and dilemmas related to information search and access which they did not approach the library or librarians for support with because they either didn’t know help was available, didn’t want to appear unknowledgeable, or deemed the information need was not worth the effort of pursuing it further. This suggests a very interesting potential line of inquiry in identifying the nature and prevalence of these barriers further and in finding out the costs and benefits of ways to overcome them.

Participants in this study also showed signs of behaviour consistent with the principle of least effort (Case, 2012). There is a potentially powerful theoretical link to be made between Jaeger and Burnett’s theory of information worlds and this principle; as information worlds theory may help to illuminate the unique opportunities and barriers available to people and groups across their information worlds which make the access of different kinds of information easier or more difficult and thus steer their behavioural patterns.
5.7 Conclusions

This thesis has chronicled the planning, development and execution of a single piece of practitioner research. The research has concerned investigating and describing the qualitatively different ways that faculty members in international branch campuses experience the academic library, with the aim of informing the development and evaluation of academic library services to faculty members in this context. The findings of this research, generated through phenomenographic inquiry, reveal that the participants in this study experienced the academic library in at least six different ways, denoted by the academic library as librarians, content provider, discovery, community, reading books, and ethics. These results are argued to be valid and reliable in the sense associated with qualitative research, based on established criteria for judging the merit and validity of qualitative research in general and phenomenographic research in particular, such as interpretive awareness (Sandberg, 1997) and the parsimoniousness of the research results (Marton & Booth, 1997). The practitioner research questions addressed in this research are significant, in that they address important unresolved problems at the forefront of the information studies and higher education disciplines. These problems concern both the development of academic libraries in the modern information and higher education context, and the practice of faculty members in international branch campuses, a setting which represents a transnational higher education style of educational provision which is expanding rapidly and is greatly under-researched. The findings of this research have generated actionable knowledge about the way the academic library is experienced, perceived and discussed by this constituency, which directly inform the prioritization and development of services as well as having ramifications for the way the services of academic libraries can be effectively communicated to faculty members. Some of the important insights derived from this research include:

- There are important differences between the way that faculty members in this study experience the academic library and the way that academic library practitioners and administrators conceive of the academic library
• Faculty members in branch campus contexts experience both challenges unique to the environment, as well as benefits and opportunities which are possibly being given inadequate weight and attention as this body of research develops

• Faculty members in this study reveal many consistencies with prior research about faculty member information behaviour, and reveal a few factors which influence their activities which appear unique to the context, such as censorship

• In the face of challenges from the branch campus work environment or inadequate institutional library services, faculty members in this study are remarkably resourceful in terms of meeting their information needs through alternative information channels, content providers and strategies. Most times barriers like censorship or inadequate local library collections were characterized by participants as having a negligible impact on their teaching and research work

In addition to practical significance, the findings of this research offer several important contributions to knowledge and research about faculty members in TNHE, academic libraries, and information behaviour. These contributions include data which extends and supports a number of prior findings in these domains as well as avenues for further inquiry from a phenomenographic perspective. This research has contributed to the development and application of the phenomenographic method by detailing the procedures used for data gathering and analysis, thus contributing to data about the similarities and differences between phenomenographic implementations and providing a rationale for a particular interview/questioning technique.

In total, the research presented here is significant to both theory and practice, valid, ethical, reflects a thoughtful consideration of a number of closely related areas of inquiry, and contributes original data and insights to the study of information, academic libraries and higher education. It reflects a substantial and original piece of practitioner research which will serve as a foundation for further inquiry and professional scholarship into the future.
Word Count

Word count with appendices: 42787
Word count without appendices: 38391
References


Oliver, P. (2003). Research and the respondent: Ethical issues when data collection has been completed. In The student’s guide to research ethics (pp. 62–73). Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.


Appendices

Appendix A – Ethical Approval Form, University of Liverpool

Dear Alicia

I am pleased to inform you that the Virtual Programme Research Ethics Committee (VPREC) has approved your application for ethical approval for your study. Details and conditions of the approval can be found below.

Sub-Committee: EdD. Virtual Programme Research Ethics Committee (VPREC)
Review type: Expedited
PI: Lifelong Learning
School: Impact of changes in academic library services on faculty
Title: member teaching and research practices
First Reviewer: Prof. Morag A. Gray
Second Reviewer: Dr. Peter Kahn
Other members of the Committee

Date of Approval: 27th November 2013

The application was APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mandatory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M: All serious adverse events must be reported to the VPRE C within 24 hours of their occurrence, via the EdD Thesis Primary Supervisor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This approval applies for the duration of the research. If it is proposed to extend the duration of the study as specified in the application form, the Sub-Committee should be notified. If it is proposed to make an amendment to the research, you should notify the Sub-Committee by following the Notice of Amendment procedure outlined at http://www.liv.ac.uk/media/livacuk/researchethics/notice%20of%20amendment.doc.

Kind regards,

Morag Gray

Chair, EdD. VPREC
Appendix B – Institutional Review Board Approval, Carnegie Mellon University

Carnegie Mellon University
Office of Research Integrity and Compliance (ORIC)
Carnegie Mellon University
5000 Forbes Avenue
Warner Hall, 4th Floor
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213-3876
412-268-7166
irb-reviews@andrew.cmu.edu

Institutional Review Board
Federalwide Assurance No: FWA00004205
IRB Registration No: IRB00000603

Certification of IRB Approval

IRB Protocol Number: HS13-726
Title: Impact of Changes in Academic Library Services on Faculty Member Teaching and Research Practices
Investigator[s]: Alicia Salaz and Clare Pickles (FA)
Department[s]: Library - CMU-Q
Date: January 23, 2014

Carnegie Mellon University Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed the above referenced research protocol in accordance with 45 CFR 46 and CMU’s Federalwide Assurance. The research protocol has been given APPROVAL as Exempt by the IRB on January 23, 2014, in accordance with 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2).

This approval does not expire. However, if you wish to make modifications to this protocol, please contact the IRB regarding these changes prior to their implementation to ensure compliance with this designation.

The Investigators listed above in conducting this protocol agree to follow the recommendations of the IRB and the Office of the Provost of any conditions to or changes in procedure subsequent to this review. In undertaking the execution of the protocol, the investigators further agree to abide by all CMU research policies including, but not limited to the policies on responsible conduct research and conflict of interest.

Please call the Office of Research Integrity and Compliance at 412-268-7166 if you have any questions regarding this determination. Thank you.

David Danks, Ph.D., IRB, Chair
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET and CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in a research study of the ways in which academic library resources and services affect teaching and research. The researcher is inviting faculty members who have taught or conducted research in both the home and branch campuses of an international University with foreign branches to be in the study. To qualify, you must have taught or conducted research for at least one semester at your institution’s home campus during the past three years. This form is part of a process called “informed consent” to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by Alicia Salaz, who is a doctoral student at the University of Liverpool. You may already know the researcher as a faculty reference and instruction librarian at Carnegie Mellon University, Qatar, but this study is separate from that role.

Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to examine how the availability of academic library services and resources affects teaching, learning and research, in order to develop those services and resources to meet the needs of faculty member users both at home and in the context of an international branch campus.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:
• take part in an audio recorded interview that will last 30-60 minutes
• be available for a few minutes of follow up in the weeks subsequent to your interview, in case the researcher requires clarification from you

Here are some sample questions:
• For how many semesters have you taught or conducted research at your institution’s home campus, and at its branch campus?
• In what ways did you normally utilize the library at your institution’s home campus?
• Did your use of the library change at the branch campus? Why or why not?
• What strategies have you employed to achieve the same teaching and research objectives in the new environment of a branch campus?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one at your institution or anyone involved in this study will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind during or after the study. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:
Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as fatigue and discomfort over analyzing your own practices. If you experience any adverse effects from participating in this study, you may wish to continue participating, cease participating, contact the primary researcher, or contact the study’s ethical supervisors in order to resolve your concerns (contact information below). Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing. Even so, all participants taking part in a University of Liverpool ethically approved study have insurance cover.

This study aims to provide new knowledge that may permit academic libraries to better support the core teaching and research functions of their academic institutions in the context of greater

Version 5
Page 1 of 2
26 November 2013
internationalization and wider educational change. You will be provided with a free copy of the finished study report at the conclusion of the research.

Compensation:
There is no compensation for taking part in this study.

Privacy:
Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by being transmitted and stored only on secured University servers and networks which are encrypted and password-protected. Hard copies of data (such as a consent form, if applicable) will be digitized and stored in this way, and any hard copies will be stored securely in locked physical storage, accessible only to the researcher, for up to three months before being physically destroyed. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the University, but at the conclusion of the study’s data collection and analysis phase (by the time you receive a copy of the study report) your name and contact information will have been completely disassociated from all data and replaced with generic identifiers.

Contacts and Questions:
You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via telephone or e-mail at +974 4454 8403 or asalaz@cmu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the University of Liverpool representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 001-612-312-1210 and her email address is liverpool@liverpool@ohecampus.com.

Please print or save this consent form for your records.

Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By replying to this email with the words, “I consent,” I am agreeing to participate in the study as described above.