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An Examination of the Influence of Emotional Solidarity on Value Co-Creation with International Muslim Travelers**Abstract**

Given the rising Muslim travel market and the scarcity of research on Muslim inbound market, it is important to elucidate how international Muslim travelers are perceived through the lens of residents in non-Islamic countries. This study provided an insight into how value co-creation is created through emotional solidarity and attitudes in the context of the Muslim travel market. Results of the structural model for American residents were comparatively similar to those of their Korean counterparts, which is indicative of both countries' acceptance and tolerance of international Muslim travelers. In particular, residents' openness to experience and the perceived benefit of international Muslim travelers for development of the tourist destination were significant predictors of emotional solidarity. Residents' emotional solidarity subsequently explained their attitude towards international Muslim travelers. Attitude towards international Muslim travelers would lead to a positive attitude towards Muslim tourism, which in turn, triggered value co-creation behavior with international Muslim travelers.

Keywords: emotional solidarity, resident attitudes, value co-creation, Muslim tourism, cross-culture

Introduction

The Muslim population made up about 1.9 billion of the world's total population of 7.8 billion in 2020, representing approximately 24% of the total population (World Population Review 2020; Worldometer 2020), and it is expected to increase. The rise in the Muslim population contributes significantly to the growth of the Muslim travel market (Han, Al-Ansi, Olya, and Kim 2019). In recent years, Muslim travelers have become a fast-growing segment of the global travel and tourism industry. The top Muslim outbound countries include Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Egypt, Iran, Germany, and Azerbaijan (GMTI 2018). With global Muslim traveler arrivals expected to be 156 million and travel expenditures of US\$220 billion by 2020 (GMTI 2018), Muslim travelers have certainly emerged as a crucial segment in the travel market. The Muslim travel market is estimated to grow further to reach travel expenditure of US\$300 billion by 2026 (GMTI 2018). The Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI)(2019) report revealed that the ten non-Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries most visited by Muslim travelers were Spain, France, Russia, Thailand, Singapore, Georgia, Italy, India, United Kingdom, and Greece. America and South Korea are absent from the list, implying that it is important for both countries to tap into this emerging market and maximize the number of international Muslim travelers.

The U.S. Travel Association (2020) reported that international arrivals in the United States totaled about 79 million in 2019. Muslim arrivals in the United States was forecast to reach about 4.45 million with expenditure of US\$12.8 billion by 2020 (Crescent Rating 2015). In the case of South Korea, according to the tourist arrivals statistics reported by Korea Tourism Organization (2020b), the total number of international tourists visiting South Korea in 2019 was approximately 17 million. Of these, over one million were Muslims, partly attributed to the growing interest in Korean culture and tourist attractions (Yonhap News 2019). Muslim travelers form a substantial proportion of total international traveler arrivals in both countries. It is noteworthy that the international travel and tourism sectors have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared it a pandemic on March 11th, 2020 (WHO 2020). This global health crisis has diminished outbound travel greatly in 2020, but the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has estimated that the international travel demand will recover mostly in 2021 and return to pre-pandemic 2019 levels in 2023 or later (UNWTO 2020b). International Muslim travel is thus anticipated to recover when global tourism has resumed.

Muslim travelers are shaping the future of the travel industry with their unique needs (GMTI 2019). Muslim travelers are distinct from non-Muslim travelers because they are guided by Islamic teachings and therefore expect products and services to be Halal compliant (Mazrui 1997; Mohsin, Ramli, and Alkhulayfi 2016). In tourism, Muslim travelers are a differentiated travel segment with faith-based needs, such as seeking Halal food, prayer facilities, water-friendly restrooms, and non-Islamophobic destinations while traveling (GMTI 2018). Therefore, Muslim travelers' expectations and behaviors should be valued by stakeholders if the needs of this travel segment are to be fulfilled. Moreover, the Muslim travel market has experienced

significant changes in the tourism experience. International Muslims are dynamic travelers. They are relatively young with a growing disposable income (GMTI 2018). They seek authenticity and unique experiences through human connectivity at various points of contact, which include transport, lodging, and attractions that can serve their travel needs, along with fulfilling religious needs while traveling (Al-Ansi, Han, Kim, and King 2021). Recognizing the importance of connectivity in the Muslim travel market, it is important for stakeholders to converse and engage actively with Muslim travelers to co-create better value.

The idea of value co-creation is based on the principle of service-dominant logic that people within the network play an active role in the service encounter (Vargo and Lusch 2004). The role of tourists in the value co-creation process has been recognized in the travel and tourism literature, with many authors considering tourists as a key resource integrator in co-creating value (Malone, McKechnie, and Tynan 2018). Tourists co-create value through the consumption experience that they produce and consume while traveling (Campos, Mendes, do Valle, and Scott 2018). Tourists are involved in the co-creation process by spending time, effort, and monetary resources on their trip (Prebensen, Vittersø, and Dahl 2013). The availability of Halal food and beverages, Muslim-friendly hotels, and Muslim-friendly airports are some of the essential attributes that can attract Muslim travelers and stimulate their (re)visit intention (Battour and Ismail 2016; Han et al. 2019). Hence, in the context of Muslim tourism, the value of a Muslim traveler's travel experience seems to derive from the construction of an experience that fulfills both travel and religious needs (Han et al. 2021; Jeaheng, Al-Ansi, and Han 2019). From a tourist perspective, being present, engaged, and interacting in the value co-creation process contributes to enhanced tourism experience (Campos et al. 2018).

The tourism industry is certainly dependent on tourist experiences in host destinations. In identifying the perceived value of Muslim tourists, Eid and El-Gohary (2015) revealed the importance of the social factor in perceived value. In this regard, local residents play an important role in lifting tourists' travel experiences (Ward and Berno 2011). Residents' perceptions of tourists and attitudes toward tourism development have been established as key issues for the success and sustainability of tourism development (Bimonte, Punzo 2016; Woosnam 2012). Listening to local residents' voices in destination planning can make sure that the destination is developed in a socially responsible way and that the consequent impact is perceived favorably by residents (Gursoy, Chi, and Dyer 2010). In light of the importance of local residents' support of their country's tourism development, numerous studies have focused on the relationship between resident attitudes and destination development (Moghavvemi, Woosnam, Paramanathan, Musa, and Hamzah 2017; Ribeiro, Pinto, Silva, and Woosnam 2017; Woosnam, Draper, Jiang, Aleshinloye, and Erul 2018a). While a body of research finds empirical support for the influence of emotional solidarity on attitudes from the local resident perspective (Erul, Woosnam, and McIntosh 2020; Li and Wan 2017; Woosnam 2012), limited studies have considered how this relational aspect can serve to elucidate residents' attitudes toward international Muslim travelers and Muslim tourism. The presence of the Islamophobia phenomenon could significantly influence Muslims' attitudes and intention to visit destinations that seem to hold prejudice and discriminate against Muslims (Moufakkir 2020). Considering that the behavior of local residents toward tourists is the significant determinant of the tourist experience (Nunkoo, Smith, and Ramkissoon 2013), understanding the perspective of local residents living in a non-Islamic country is important in order to get their continuous support. Therefore, Muslim-friendly tourism should be developed in a socially congruent and harmonious

manner. For Nunkoo et al. (2013), tourism is a community platform in which residents are greatly affected by the intended and unintended consequences of development. Given the rising Muslim population and Muslim travel market, it is important to elucidate how international Muslim travelers are perceived through the lens of residents in non-Islamic countries. This echoes Jafari and Scott's (2014) assertion that how different religious values are tolerated are the principal issue in a globalizing world, and that travel destinations serve as contexts within which people of different religious backgrounds meet and interact. The present study advances an understanding of local residents' openness to experience and perceived benefit as a result of tourism development as the driver of emotional solidarity which in turn, may influence their attitudes. Shedding light on the integrated relationships from the local resident perspective can potentially provide an insight into their value co-creation with travelers and pro-tourist behavior (Lin, Chen, and Filieri 2017).

Research on the Muslim inbound market is relatively recent. To date, the model of emotional solidarity and its antecedents and consequences in the context of the Muslim travel market remains unverified from the perspectives of Western and Eastern countries. The mechanism by which local residents respond to Muslim travelers may vary depending on their cultural background. It is commonly known that Western culture, including the United States of America, is portrayed as being individualistic and possessing low uncertainty avoidance. On the contrary, Eastern culture, including South Korea, is depicted as being collectivistic and having high uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede 2001). The radical Islamic terrorism in the United States since the September 11, 2001 attack may further complicate the perspective of the nation with regard to the acceptance of international Muslim tourists in the country. How does the perception of Americans differ from Koreans with regard to the international Muslim traveler segment,

which is inherently linked to Muslim tourism? The answer to this question will provide insight from non-OIC countries' perspective. Recognizing cultural differences, cross-cultural perspectives should be adopted to gauge the differences in Western and Eastern residents. How the magnitude of the responses differs between Americans and Koreans in non-OIC countries must be grasped in order to strategically design memorable travel experiences for Muslim travelers.

The role of emotional solidarity, together with the scarce investigation into cross-cultural impact on local residents' pro-tourist behavior, justifies undertaking this study. It was designed to investigate the antecedents and consequences of local resident attitudes toward international Muslim travelers and Muslim tourism. More specifically, the objectives of this study were: (1) to examine the structural relationships between openness to experience, perceived benefits, emotional solidarity, attitudes, and value co-creation, and (2) to analyze the moderating role of cross-culture in influencing the magnitude of the relationships between constructs specified in the structural model.

Literature Review

Emotional Solidarity in Tourism

Emotional solidarity is characterized by perceived emotional closeness, affectional bond, and the degree of contact that people feel with one another (Hammarstrom 2005). It is also perceived as an individual's feeling of identification with other people (Wallace and Wolf 2006). Durkheim's theory of emotional solidarity (Durkheim [1915] 1995) has been commonly employed to understand the emotional bonds between individuals. The theory explains that an individual's emotional solidarity arises from interacting with others as well as sharing beliefs and behaviors during interactions. It is a feeling of togetherness that binds people and brings about cohesion among individuals (Jacobs and Allen 2005; Wallace and Wolf 2006). This is further supported by the affect theory of social change (Lawler 2001), that pleasant emotions in a social exchange process and relationship could lead to increased solidarity. Over the past decades, emotional solidarity has been widely applied in various social science disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, and anthropology (Bahr, Mitchell, Li, Walker, and Sucher 2004; Street 1965; Rosengren 1959; Suchman 1964) to understand an individual's sense of connection with others within a social structure. Emotional bonds between individuals have been centered on contexts such as family relations (Bahr et al. 2004; Klapp 1959; McChesney and Bengston 1988; Mills,

Wakeman, and Fea 2001) and religion (Fish 2002; Tole 1993; Wallwork 1984, 1985).

Applications of emotional solidarity in the tourism context started to emerge in the early 2010s (Woosnam and Norman 2010).

Tourism can be interpreted from a structural perspective in which residents and tourists are key components in destination development (Leiper 1990; Murphy 1985). It entails an interaction involving both residents and tourists (Bimonte 2008). The nature and quality of the interaction may not only affect tourists' perception of the experience, but also residents' perception of, and attitude toward tourists (Bimonte and Punzo 2016). Resident attitudes toward tourism development have been prevalent in the travel and tourism literature for decades (e.g., Andereck and Vogt 2000; Belisle and Hoy 1980; Gursoy et al. 2010; Long, Perdue, and Allen 1990; Teye, Sonmez, and Sirakaya 2002). Understanding resident attitudes is fundamental considering that tourism development can have substantial economic, social, cultural, environmental, and/or political impacts on the lives and livelihoods of local residents (Wall and Mathieson 2006), and sustainable tourism development should take into account resident perceptions and feelings in tourism development planning (Tyrrell, Paris, and Casson 2010). Undoubtedly, tourism can be a platform promoting solidarity by bringing people across the world together.

Measures of emotional solidarity can be traced back to Gronvold's (1988) scale of affectual solidarity. Five single-item measures which included affection, respect, understanding, trust, and fairness were developed to measure solidarity. However, due to the limitations of measurement associated with single-item scales (Netemeyer, Bearden, and Sharma 2003), alternative measures of emotional solidarity pertaining to tourism have been proposed. The theoretical framework of emotional solidarity in tourism was first introduced by Woosnam,

Norman, and Ying (2009). It is a practical framework to explain relationships among residents and tourists in a destination. A sense of solidarity develops when both residents and tourists hold similar beliefs and engage in reciprocal interactions. Later, Woosnam and Norman (2010) developed a three-dimensional emotional solidarity scale to measure residents' emotional solidarity with tourists. The three dimensions of emotional solidarity are welcoming nature, emotional closeness, and sympathetic understanding. The multifaceted concept of the emotional solidarity scale has been validated across tourism studies (e.g., Joo et al. 2018; Li and Wan 2017; Moghavvemi et al. 2017; Patwardhan et al. 2020; Ribeiro, Woosnam, Pinto, and Silva 2018; Woosnam 2012). The three dimensions of emotional solidarity are discussed as follows.

Welcoming nature. As Woosnam (2012) suggested, the welcoming nature of residents could be explained from the idea that residents are interested in destination development. Moreover, they have pride in their destination, thus are likely to welcome tourists. Previous studies have consistently shown that residents welcoming tourists to their destination is a means of showing their support for the tourism destination's development (Hasani, Moghavvemi, and Hamzah 2016; Moghavvemi et al. 2017; Woosnam 2012). It has been suggested that among the three dimensions of emotional solidarity, residents' welcoming nature contributes most to positive perceptions of tourism development (Woosnam 2011). In the present study, welcoming nature is operationally defined as American (Korean) residents' degree of welcome towards international Muslim travelers visiting the United States of America (South Korea).

Emotional closeness. Emotional closeness is the most intimate form of emotional solidarity among the three dimensions (Woosnam 2012). The concept of emotional closeness is implicit in the idea that residents feel close to tourists and develop friendships with them (Woosnam and Norman 2010). The friendship between residents and tourists is an indication of

positive social impacts of tourism (Teye et al. 2002). Such closeness is typically fostered through interactions with tourists in a tourism destination where residents and tourists are physically present (Woosnam et al. 2009). Furthermore, emotional closeness is developed when residents appreciate the contributions tourists make to the destination's economic growth (Woosnam 2012). In the present study, emotional closeness refers to American (Korean) residents' degree of emotional closeness and friendship with international Muslim travelers visiting the United States of America (South Korea).

Sympathetic understanding. Sympathetic understanding theoretically implies residents develop feelings for tourists by putting the travel experience into tourists' perspective, and so they tend to be empathetic towards tourists (Draper, Woosnam, and Norman 2011). Residents who have had their own international travel experiences will have a greater understanding of what it is to be an international tourist (Moghavvemi et al. 2017). It is also anticipated that residents who closely interact with tourists will have a better understanding of tourist behavior. For example, Besculides, Lee, and McCormick (2002) argued that residents who interact with tourists would understand that some tourists simply want to learn and experience the local culture and the local people's way of life. In the present study, sympathetic understanding is operationally defined as American (Korean) residents' degree of identification with and understanding towards international Muslim travelers visiting the United States of America (South Korea).

Value Co-Creation in Tourism

Value co-creation is a process of resource exchange. The value will be mutually created when the parties involved in the resource exchange process interact with each other (Vargo and Lusch

2004). The resource theory of social exchange provides a theoretical underpinning of value co-creation. According to the resource theory of social exchange (Foa and Foa 1975), individuals obtain resources from others involved in the exchange through social interactions. The exchange resources can be tangibles (also known as operand) and intangibles (also known as operant). The value of co-creation depends on how the tangible and intangible resources are integrated (Lusch and Nambisan 2015). According to Vargo and Lusch (2004), while providers provide both tangible and intangible resources in the value creation process, consumers provide intangible resources in terms of knowledge and skills. Value co-creation can ultimately contribute to mutually beneficial relationships associated with consumer involvement in service provision (Plé and Cáceres 2010).

Ranjan and Read (2016) described two distinct elements of how mutual resources are integrated into value formation. First, value co-creation can be configured through co-production. Co-production is characterized by individual participation in the product or service delivery process by playing either a facilitation role or an active role (Ordanini and Pasini 2008). Furthermore, it involves people's interaction within the network through a set of physical and intellectual activities, such as knowledge sharing, constructive participation, and interactive engagement (Vargo and Lusch 2008). Second, value co-creation can be derived from value-in-use. Value-in-use arises from product or service consumption. Value manifests itself through consumer assessment of the product or service (Vargo and Lusch 2004), and is generated in accordance with experiential interaction, uniqueness of the consumption process, and reciprocal relationship (Ranjan and Read 2016). This concept underlines customer experience and the extent to which they derive value from the consumption experience (Sfandla and Björk 2013). The rationale of value co-creation has commonly been understood from a consumer (tourist)

perspective (e.g., Cabiddu, Lui, and Piccoli 2013; Ma, Gu, Wang, and Hampson 2017; Malone et al. 2018; Rihova, Buhalis, Moital, and Gouthro 2015). It has been proposed that value co-creation extends beyond consumers, including collaboration among various stakeholders, such as providers, suppliers, and competitors, to co-create value (Ranjan and Read 2016).

In the context of travel and tourism, co-creation value arises when a tourist physically and/or emotionally participates in tourism activities and actively interacts with other people within the environment (Campos et al. 2018). This explicitly indicates that co-creating a travel experience entails interaction with others (e.g., tourist and host, tourist and tourist) in the value exchange process. A tourism destination is a platform where local residents, tourists, and tourism service providers coexist (Sfandla and Björk 2013). Residents are regarded as intangible resources to co-produce value by sharing information and knowledge about the destination with tourists (Lin et al. 2017). Co-production is integrally contingent upon the interdependence of residents and tourists in the tourism destination, residents' willingness to participate, and non-command relationships (Ranjan and Read 2016). Tourists and local residents will need to interact for resources to be mutually exchanged (Cabiddu et al. 2013). It is an unintentional and spontaneous interaction between residents and tourists (Chen, Cottam, and Lin 2020). For example, residents can play an active role through sharing knowledge with tourists. Co-production value is therefore anticipated to emerge when residents play a part in tourism services.

To date, understanding value co-creation from the perspective of residents is rather scarce in the tourism literature. As previously discussed, the interaction between local residents and tourists has been recognized as the core of tourism (Sharpley 2014). Residents' behavior towards tourists is an interactional process involving both residents and tourists (Bimonte and Punzo

2016). The friendliness and attitude of a local community towards tourists is a prerequisite for the success of the tourism industry (Sharpley 2014). The positive participation of residents is important to make tourists feel welcome and create a favorable travel experience, which ultimately fosters the construction of tourism value (Sharpley 2014). The value of tourism for residents and the community emerges in the form of economic growth and cultural exchange benefits (Nunkoo and Gursoy 2012). On an individual basis, it has been identified that residents' subjective well-being is a positive function of the social environment (Chi, Cai, and Li 2017; Suess, Woosnam, Mody, Dogru, and Turk 2021; Wang, Berbekova, and Uysal 2021). Tourism has been explicitly established as a platform for facilitating and stimulating host-tourist interaction (Morgan, Pritchard, and Sedgley 2015). While tourists can obtain value when participating in on-site tourism activities and interacting with locals, subjective well-being, which symbolizes a part of value for residents, stems from their interaction with tourists. This theorization is reflected in a recent empirical study by Chen et al. (2020), finding that resident involvement in value co-creation with tourists was positively related to subjective well-being at an individual level. Consequently, including local residents in tourism value co-creation is indispensable (Lin et al. 2017). Nevertheless, much of the existing empirical work on value co-creation has been from the tourist perspective (Malone et al. 2018), with the exception of the work by Lin et al. (2017). The understanding of value co-creation in tourism is hence limited because how value co-creation is formed from local residents' perspective is lacking. In this study, value co-creation is operationally depicted as American (Korean) residents interacting with international Muslim travelers to co-create tourism value.

Resident Attitudes to Tourism

People hold different attitudes about an object/issue depending on how they process and interpret the information (Rydell and McConnell 2006; Wilson, Lindsey, and Schooler 2000). The ways a stimulus is created, stored, retrieved, and activated would explain individual attitudes (Ajzen 2001). According to Fazio and Towles-Schwen (1999), attitude is commonly formed through a dual process, that is, spontaneous processing and deliberate processing. A spontaneously processed attitude is the immediate appraisal of an object/ issue. It is a stable, subtle and implicit evaluation of a stimulus that is determined a priori, and attitude is instantaneously activated upon exposure to the stimulus (Serenko and Turel 2019). On the other hand, a deliberately processed attitude is built after the advantages and disadvantages of a stimulus are consciously and systematically considered. The stimulus is driven by an explicit and thoughtful process of which people are largely aware (Serenko and Turel 2019). Indeed, attitudes are regulated by different systems of reasoning approach and are formed in response to deliberate and subliminal priming (Rydell and McConnell 2006).

The travel and tourism literature has constantly acknowledged the significance of resident attitudes in tourism development and the associated factors. Openness to experience is a personality that is typically expressed in behavior (McCrae and John 1992). Intellectual interests, need for variety, and unconventional values are important aspects where people are more open to new experiences (McCrae 1993). Furthermore, openness to experience is synonymous with broad-mindedness and appreciation of different aesthetic, cultural, or intellectual experiences (McCrae and Costa 1985). As people are more open to new experiences, they are thought to be more excitable (Lin and Worthley 2011), implying that this personal trait may spontaneously arouse one's attitude. On a different note, the success of a tourism development could be

achieved when local residents exhibit positive attitudes toward tourists and tourism (Sharpley 2014). It has long been recognized that residents' acceptance of tourists and tourism is vital for the sustainability of the tourism industry (Jurowski, Uysal, and Williams 1997). At a basic level, residents cognitively assess the benefits and costs that arise from tourism (Lin et al. 2017). When residents perceive the benefits of tourism offset the costs, their support for tourism is heightened (Pizam 1978). Considering that residents' perceptions and attitudes are the driving force behind tourism sustainability (Ap 1992), it is logical to suggest that the perceived benefits of tourism may consciously formulate attitude.

Much research has focused on the rationale behind resident attitudes toward tourism (e.g., Gursoy et al. 2010; Nunkoo and So 2016; San Martín, García-de los Salmones, Herrero, and Pérez 2018). Attention to explicit and deliberately-formed sets of factors could partially reveal resident attitudes toward tourists and tourism. Expanding this view with personal factors at an individual level can enhance understanding of resident attitudes (Woosnam 2012; Sharpley 2014). To this end, in this study, openness to experience and the perceived benefits of Muslim tourism, along with emotional solidarity, are the antecedents used to explain resident attitude towards international Muslim travelers. This endeavor underlines the different forms of processing and the degree to which resident attitude towards Muslim travelers may be influenced by deliberate and spontaneous factors.

The Influences of Openness to Experience and Perceived Benefits on Emotional Solidarity and Attitude towards International Muslim Travelers

The existing tourism literature is centered on emotional solidarity as either a precursor or an outcome variable. When emotional solidarity is used as an antecedent variable, it explains why

residents develop attitudes toward tourists and tourism (e.g., Moghavvemi et al. 2017; Ribeiro et al. 2017; Woosnam and Aleshinloye 2018). On the other hand, when emotional solidarity is treated as an outcome variable, a number of predictors have been empirically examined to explain the conception (e.g., Joo et al. 2018; Woosnam 2011; Woosnam, Maruyama, Boley, and Erul 2018b). Limited attempts have been made to establish the antecedents and outcomes of emotional solidarity in an integrated manner (Patwardhan et al. 2020). Woosnam and Norman (2010) suggested that emotional solidarity should be used together with additional relevant variables to elucidate the association between residents and tourists. Consequently, the present study developed an integrated model delineating the following paths: antecedents (personality trait, perceived benefits) → emotional solidarity → attitude towards tourists → attitude towards tourism → outcome (value co-creation).

In this study, residents' personality trait, which is openness to experience, is considered to explain emotional solidarity with international tourists. In a general sense, personality trait could predominantly influence individuals' responses and decisions in a particular circumstance (Triandis and Suh 2002). Openness to experience is the idea of individuals being receptive to change and new experience and of their proactive behavioral pattern (Black, Organ, and Morton 2010). Individuals who are open to experience are likely to have various interests and tend to be curious, imaginative, intuitive, insightful, and original (McCrae and John 1992). In addition, they would develop opinions, feelings, and behavioral intentions based on their personal experiences (Tan and Tang 2013). Openness to experience predisposes people to affective processing (DeNeve and Cooper 1998), showing its fundamental influence on affective evaluation of an object/ issue. In the tourism phenomenon, openness to experience is an important personality trait in understanding travel experiences (Ong and Musa 2012).

Moghavvemi et al. (2017) observed that residents' openness to tourists from different backgrounds and their interest in knowing more about international tourists visiting the destination is relevant in understanding resident attitude towards tourists. This is in line with Dinesen, Klemmensen, and Nørgaard (2016), that openness to experience indicates tolerance of out-groups. Therefore, as openness to new experience increases, residents may perceive international tourists favorably (Huang, Gursoy, and Xu 2014). Taking into account the inherent characteristics of openness to experience, the concept may provide a perspective explaining the emotional solidarity residents feel with international Muslim travelers and their attitude towards these travelers.

H1: Residents' openness to experience has a positive influence on emotional solidarity.

H2: Residents' openness to experience has a positive influence on attitude towards international Muslim travelers.

The association between tourism impacts and resident support for tourism development has been well-established in the tourism literature (e.g., Ap 1992; Gursoy and Rutherford 2004; Woosnam and Aleshinloye 2018). Nevertheless, the mechanism behind how residents' support for tourism is formed remains to be determined (Li and Wan 2017). This could possibly be attributed to the terminologies used in previous studies on resident attitudes. The terms residents' attitudes and residents' support for tourism development are often used interchangeably, which could impede understanding of the concepts (Moghavvemi et al. 2017). To address this limitation, this present study conceptualized the attitude measure as residents' psychological

inclinations toward international tourists and tourism manifested by some degree of favor and disfavor (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980; Eagly and Chaiken 1993).

While tourism provides opportunities to improve the residents' standard of living, it may pose a threat to the society and/or environment (Chen 2011; Kim, Uysal, and Sirgy 2013). Understanding resident perceptions of tourism impacts are undoubtedly important in order to develop sustainable tourism (Hung, Sirakaya-Turk, and Ingram 2011). Residents' positive (negative) perceptions of tourism development have been theoretically connected to their support for (rejection of) tourism in the destination (Perdue, Long, and Allen 1990). Residents typically support tourism destination development when they experience positive impacts associated with tourist inflow to the destination, such as employment and business opportunities, infrastructure and upgraded facilities, cultural exchanges, and enhanced social life. On the other hand, locals perceive tourism in a bad light when they experience negative consequences, such as vandalism, rising crime rates, and disruption to traditional culture (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, and Vogt 2005; Chen 2011; Gursoy and Rutherford 2004; Liu and Var 1986; Wall and Mathieson 2006).

Lawson, Williams, Young, and Cossens (1998) suggested that the success of destination development is determined by the balance of local residents' perceived benefits and costs. Hence, the perceived impact of tourism is thought to be driven by the deliberately perceived benefits and costs of residents (Chen et al., 2020). Besculides, Lee, and McCormick (2002) concluded that residents who are devoted to their community development are more concerned about the impacts of tourism. In addition, Andereck et al. (2005) claimed that residents' level of knowledge about destination development could shape their perceptions of tourism. Shtudiner, Klein, and Kantor (2018) concluded that although residents express mixed attitudes toward tourism development, they are generally supportive of tourism and hospitable to tourists when

tourists show respect for the local culture and religion. Given that tourists bring potential positive impacts to a destination, it makes sense that residents develop solidarity and attitudes toward tourists visiting the destination (Woosnam 2012). Drawing upon the theoretical and empirical foundations, the hypothesis put forward is that residents' perceived benefit of having international Muslim tourists in the destination is likely to result in increased emotional solidarity and a positive attitude towards the travelers.

H3: Residents' perceived benefit of Muslim tourism has a positive influence on emotional solidarity.

H4: Residents' perceived benefit of Muslim tourism has a positive influence on attitude towards international Muslim travelers.

The Influence of Emotional Solidarity on Attitude towards International Muslim Travelers

In addition to the abovementioned theoretical foundations of emotional solidarity (Durkheim's theory of emotional solidarity, affect theory of social change), how resident attitudes toward tourists are formed could be explained by the social distance theory of power. Social distance is a perception of distance between individuals. People have a certain expectation of closeness with others and the degree of social distance between individuals could be minimized through interactions (Magee and Smith 2013). During the interactions, people behave according to the perceived distance between them (Nyaupane, Timothy, and Poudel 2015). In general, people perceive less distance from others who are similar to themselves in terms of ethnicity, nationality, or religion (Triandis and Triandis 1960). This principle may be perceived differently in international tourism development. The meeting between residents and tourists involves

interactions as well as economic and cultural exchanges (Ap1992). As advocated by Woosnam (2011), some degree of commonalities and solidarity do exist between residents and tourists. Interaction is a means of increasing an understanding of another and minimizing prejudice, which can ultimately forge the relationship between individuals (Pizam, Uriely, and Reichel 2000). Residents' emotional feelings about tourists are indeed the prerequisite for their pro-tourist behaviors (Woosnam 2012). Ribeiro et al. (2017) observed that how residents feel about tourists can possibly affect their attitudes toward tourism development. Similarly, Wearing and Wearing (2001) purported that tourism development should be directed to understanding local residents' emotional feelings about tourists. Previous studies lend support to the assertion that resident attitudes are a positive function of emotional solidarity. For example, Wang et al. (2020) empirically proved that residents' emotional solidarity with tourists significantly predicted their attitude. Erul et al. (2020) illustrated that residents' emotional solidarity was an important determinant in explaining attitudes toward tourism destination development. Ribeiro et al. (2017) found a significant relationship between residents' welcoming nature and their attitudes concerning the impacts of tourism. Extending the argument that emotional solidarity is formed in the relationship between individuals, the following hypothesis focuses on the coherent relationship between residents' emotional solidarity and their attitude towards individual tourists. Because every tourist is a fundamental part of tourism development, the following hypothesis conjectures that residents' emotional solidarity is likely to shape their attitude towards international Muslim travelers visiting the destination.

H5: Residents' emotional solidarity has a positive influence on attitude towards international Muslim travelers.

The Influence of Attitude towards International Muslim Travelers on Attitude towards Muslim Tourism

Research on resident attitudes has constantly shown that residents' evaluation of individual components (e.g., economy, social, environment) of tourism development leads to overall attitude to tourism (Andriotis and Vaughan 2003; Vargas-Sánchez, Porrás-Bueno, and Plaza-Mejía 2014; Yeager, Boley, Woosnam, and Green 2020). Most studies concentrate on resident attitudes toward tourism development (Bimonte and Punzo 2016). Host community residents may evaluate the individual components of the tourism products, including the tourists, that make up the tourism development (Jurowski et al. 1997). Tourists spend considerable time, money, and effort while traveling and represent a key stakeholder in any tourism destination (Prebensen et al. 2013). Thus, it is logical to anticipate that tourist behaviors may explain a certain amount of variance in resident attitudes. In situations where tourists and residents in a tourism destination are inseparable, it is important to differentiate residents' attitude towards tourism from their attitude towards tourists. It is in the tourism destination that social interactions between residents and tourists are most likely to occur (Patwardhan et al. 2020). Given that resident – tourist relations are fundamental in tourism, the interactions between resident and tourist as well as feelings evoked in the encounters should be taken into consideration in understanding the process of forming residents' attitudes (Sharpley 2014). Residents' attitude towards international tourists in relation to their attitude towards tourism development has not been measured considerably despite the inherent association (San Martín et al. 2018). As residents' attitude towards tourists on an individual basis is favorable, a more positive attitude towards tourism seems to be a logical inference. In other words, positive feelings about tourists

visiting the destination may lead to favorable feelings about tourism destination development. This assumption is rooted in the idea that tourism is a social phenomenon that entails a meeting of residents and tourists within or between borders (Bimonte and Punzo 2016). The nature and quality of the meeting determines the experience of both residents and tourists, and subsequently, residents' responses to the tourism development (Egresi and Kara 2018). In this regard, an understanding of how important resident attitudes toward tourists are in shaping their attitudes toward tourism seems to be crucial to inform effective tourism development and management.

Consistent with the mainstream theoretical basis of resident attitudes, this study examined the role of resident attitudes in a Muslim tourism setting. Muslim travelers need to practice Islamic teachings in their everyday life, regardless of places (Din 1989). Provision of tourism products and services (e.g., Halal food and beverages, prayer rooms, Halal-friendly facilities and services) in compliance with Halal standards has therefore become essential in non-OIC destinations receiving a great many Muslim travelers (Han et al. 2019). The development of Muslim-friendly destinations is deemed to provide financial investments and business opportunities. It has been put forward that how residents feel about tourists may influence their attitude towards tourism development (Woosnam 2012), along with the significance of resident – tourist relations in tourism, a reasonable supposition is that residents' attitude towards Muslim tourism is a positive function of their experience with Muslim travelers. Linking the relationship between attitude towards international Muslim travelers and attitude towards Muslim tourism would give an insight into residents' degree of attitude. Thus, the following hypothesis is postulated.

H6: Residents' attitude towards international Muslim travelers has a positive influence on attitude towards Muslim tourism.

The Influence of Attitude towards Muslim Tourism on Value Co-Creation

As previously discussed, tangible and intangible resources are the essential constituents of the value co-creation process. Arnould, Price, and Malshe (2006) further categorized intangible resources into physical resources (e.g., physical and mental qualities), social resources (e.g., interpersonal relationships) and cultural resources (e.g., specialized knowledge and skills). In line with the theory of social exchange, residents' degree of support for tourism development increases when the perceived benefits are greater than the perceived costs and when the resource exchanges between residents and tourists are perceived to be impartial (Nunkoo and So 2016). Resident attitudes seem to be a resource in value co-creation. Attitude can regulate behavior in a situation that has value for the individual (Ajzen 1991). When intangible resources are unfavorable, such as a conflict between personal and collective goals, incongruence between individual need and tolerance, value co-creation could then be negatively formed (Malone et al. 2018).

Although the tourism literature has demonstrated that resident attitudes contribute to overall support for tourism development (e.g., Lepp 2007; Maruyama and Woosnam 2015; Prayag, Hosany, Nunkoo, and Alders 2013), it is not clear how likely residents are to simultaneously share resources (e.g., knowledge, information) with tourists visiting the destination. Thus, it is important to understand how resident attitude towards Muslim tourism contributes to value co-creation with international Muslim travelers. Local residents' predisposition to engage with tourists can draw on social representation theory. According to

social representation theory, social knowledge is the collective values, ideas, and practices created and shared by individuals in groups or communities (Murphy and Murphy 2004). It accentuates social influences and reactions to stimuli (Pearce, Moscardo, and Ross 1996). Residents' support for tourism development reflects their perceived tourism impacts (Gursoy and Rutherford 2004) and willingness to co-create value with tourists (Lin et al. 2017). In recognition of the unexplored viewpoint of value co-creation, this study hypothesizes the extent to which attitude influences local residents' value co-creation with international tourists. Based on the general idea that residents' attitude is an antecedent of their support for tourism development, a hypothesis concerning the influence of residents' attitude towards Muslim tourism on value co-creation is formulated.

H7: Residents' attitude towards Muslim tourism has a positive influence on value co-creation.

Moderating Role of Cross-Culture

While tourist behavior has been perceived to vary across cultural backgrounds (Amir and Ben-Ari 1985; Basala and Klenosky 2001; Pizam and Jeong 1996; Pizam and Sussmann 1995; Pizam, Uriely, and Reichel 2000; Reisinger and Turner 1997), Shaw and Williams (1994) advocated that the social impacts of tourism vary depending on the differences between residents and tourists in race, culture, or nationality. Those who come into contact with international tourists, including local residents, are likely to distinguish tourists based on their nationality (Pizam and Sussmann 1995). In addition, residents would perceive the tourists to be different from themselves in certain personal characteristics (Brewer 1984). In this regard, Reisinger and Turner (1998) noted that tourist dissatisfaction may occur when tourist expectations are incongruent with resident

attitudes as a result of cultural differences. As such, the tolerance, acceptance, and attitudes of local residents towards international tourists from different backgrounds could considerably determine tourist intentions to return to the destination and recommend it to others (Thyne, Lawson, and Todd 2006). In the context of Halal tourism, Han et al. (2019) mentioned the indispensable role of local residents in inducing Muslim tourists' favorable response to a non-Muslim destination, including being attentive to Islamic law when interacting with Muslim tourists.

The aforementioned discussion suggests that international tourism has undeniably been acknowledged as a platform for cross-cultural contact. Intergroup contact provides an opportunity for mutual understanding and acceptance of one another and may minimize preconceptions and tension against individuals from different backgrounds (Amir and Ben-Ari 1985). Individual attitudes toward varied demographic backgrounds (e.g., nationality, culture) can be explained from the perspective of social distance. Poole (1926) refers to social distance as the level of closeness of thought and behavior that occurs between persons or groups. Amir (1969) suggested that in order for intergroup contact to produce closeness, individuals should interact in a voluntary situation and pursue mutual goals in a reciprocal relationship. This proposition is particularly relevant to the resident – tourist relationship in a cross-cultural contact situation. Eastern and Western societies are known to display significant differences in cultural values, personal attitudes, ways of communicating, moral rules, and/or social behavior (Reisinger and Turner 1998). According to Reisinger and Turner (2002), the culture-related differences between Asian and Western countries determine their social interaction. Thyne et al. (2006) observed the importance of tourist culture in resident attitudes toward tourists. They concluded that residents are seemingly more tolerant of tourists who are culturally similar to

themselves. This is supported by Byrne and Nelson (1965), that there is a positive association between similar attitudes and attraction, implying that people are more attracted to others who share similar attitudes to theirs. Ironically, tourism and hospitality call for acceptance and tolerance of individual differences and diversities (Moufakkir 2015). This leads to the following questions: Would the lens of international tourism change if tourists and hosts shared the same cultural-related attributes (e.g., language, physical garments, core belief)? Would an international tourist still be an international tourist?

How non-Muslims view Muslims could possibly be understood by the concept of stigmatization. According to Goffman (1963), stigma is about how in-group members perceive and categorize out-group members based on a meta-stereotype. It is formed as a result of dissimilarity between in-group and out-group members. Negative stereotypes and stigma create tension and lead to hostility between in-group and out-group members (Goffman 1963). Stigma can indeed discredit the value and social identity of the stigmatized group especially when they are categorized into a discriminated group (Goffman 1963). Muslims are often stigmatized based largely on the attributes perceived to be divergent by non-Muslims (Moufakkir 2020). For example, they are identified by their racial appearance and physical symbols, such as a Muslim-looking man with a beard or a Muslim-looking woman wearing a hijab (Moufakkir 2015). They are also allegedly linked to terrorism and religious extremism (Stephenson and Ali 2010). Despite this, a recent study by Adelman, Yogeewaran, and Lickel (2019) found that people evaluate Muslims as lower in group entity in the case of Muslims' individual negative actions and higher in group entity in the case of Muslims' individual positive actions. In other words, people do not infer Muslims' individual negative actions to be those of the Muslim population.

Despite increasing respect and openness for Muslims, understanding of how people from non-OIC countries perceive them as tourists is rather restricted.

According to Hofstede (2001), Americans have been characterized by (1) pursuit of personal goals, self-interest, and self-reliance (individualist) and (2) a tendency of trying and accepting something new or different (low uncertainty avoidance). They are ready to approach and interact with out-groups. Theoretically, this implies that Americans are more accepting of culturally different tourists, including Muslims. Nevertheless, it has been conjectured that many Westerners, including Americans, have negative perceptions of Muslims due to their perceived reluctance to integrate, criminality, terrorism, and extremism (Moufakkir 2020). Furthermore, some jihadist terrorism cases in the United States since the September 11 attack (New America 2020) might heighten anti-Muslim sentiment, also known as Islamophobia, in the country. Consequently, it is natural to predict that Americans will have relatively more negative attitudes toward Muslims than other countries that have a very minimal risk of jihadist terrorism, including South Korea (Global Terrorism Index 2019). Koreans, on the contrary, have been characterized by (1) an emphasis on in-group connection and belongingness (collectivist) and (2) resistance to change from habitual patterns and intolerance of uncommon ideas and behaviors (high uncertainty avoidance). It has long been recognized that South Korea is a culturally homogenous society. South Korea has experienced swift urbanization and economic growth since the 1980s, and acceptance of foreigners into the country is a likely consequence (Kim and Kim 2012). A study by Yoon, Song, and Bae (2008) found that Koreans are generally more open and tolerant of foreigners than before, although they would be defensive if they perceived foreign culture posed a serious threat to South Korea's culture and economy. Therefore, it is conjectured that American and Korean residents would respond differently when encountering

and evaluating their experiences with international Muslim travelers, leading to the following hypothesis.

H8a-g: The strengths of the relationships among openness to experience, perceived benefit of Muslim tourism, emotional solidarity, attitude towards international Muslim travelers, attitude towards Muslim tourism, and value co-creation are significantly different between American and Korean residents.

Proposed Conceptual Model

Figure 1 presents the conceptual model of this study. The model theorizes that openness to experience and perceived benefit are likely to influence attitude towards international Muslim travelers through emotional solidarity. Attitude towards international Muslim travelers, in turn, functions as a determinant of attitude towards Muslim tourism. Attitude towards Muslim tourism is anticipated to shape value co-creation. The model further suggests that cross-culture (American versus Korean) moderates the magnitude of the relationships among the study's constructs.

<INSERT FIGURE 1>

Methodology

Measures and Survey Questionnaire

Multiple-item scales validated in the extant tourism literature were identified and adapted to fit this study. A survey questionnaire was designed containing eight constructs pertaining to residents' behavior towards Muslim travelers and tourism, as follows:

- Emotional solidarity was measured using three dimensions, which included (a) four items measuring welcoming nature, obtained from Ribeiro et al. (2017), (b) four items measuring emotional closeness, adapted from Moghavvemi et al. (2017), and (c) three items measuring sympathetic understanding, adapted from Moghavvemi et al. (2017). The 11 measurement items were primarily based on Woosnam and Norman's (2010) pioneering work on emotional solidarity. The object of each statement was modified (i.e., from "tourists" to "international Muslim travelers"). The multiple-items were gauged using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7).
- Openness to experience contained ten items adapted from Moghavvemi et al. (2017). The multiple-items were assessed using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from *very inaccurate* (1) to *very accurate* (7).

- Perceived benefit of Muslim tourism was measured using three items modified from Egresi and Kara (2018). The original six-item scale assessed how residents perceive the benefits of tourists visiting mosques in the destination. Three items (i.e., “need a place to pray”, “make donations”, “closer to Islam”) were eliminated because they appear to be too specific to be applied in this study. The multiple-items were evaluated using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7).
- Attitude towards international Muslim travelers was operationalized with five items adapted from Han (2015), Han, Hsu, and Sheu (2010), Han and Ryu (2012), and Perugini and Bagozzi (2001). The verb and object of each statement were modified (i.e., “interacting with/welcoming with international Muslim travelers”). The multiple-items were measured using a semantic differential scale (e.g., bad – good).
- Attitude towards Muslim tourism had six items adapted from Moghavvemi et al. (2017). The object of each statement was modified (i.e., from “tourists” to “international Muslim travelers”). The multiple-items were measured using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7).
- Value co-creation consisted of three items adapted from Lin et al. (2017). The object of each statement was modified (i.e., from “tourists” to “international Muslim travelers”). The multiple-items were measured using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7).

The questionnaire for this study was designed in two sets: (a) an English version for the American sample and (b) a Korean version for the Korean sample. It was first created in English. A bilingual (English – Korean) translator then translated the survey questionnaire into Korean.

Next, these two versions were compared by another bilingual translator to identify differences in the translation, making minor amendments for the consistency of the translation. The questionnaire was pre-tested with 12 tourism scholars. The wording was reviewed based on their comments. Finally, the questionnaire was reviewed by three academic experts in the field of tourism management who are fluent in both languages. The measurement items were slightly altered to be adequate for this study, based on the experts' feedback.

Data Collection Method and Sample Characteristics

The study population was made up of Americans living in the USA and Koreans living in South Korea. In line with the reasoning that an individual's emotional solidarity arises from interacting with others and sharing beliefs and behaviors during the interactions (Durkheim [1915] 1995), two screening questions were created in order to determine that the locals had prior experience of interacting with international Muslim travelers and emotional solidarity is developed in consequence of interacting with each other. Individuals who fulfilled the following criteria: (1) American [Korean] who visited tourist sites (e.g., shopping malls/districts, cultural food street, historical/heritage sites, cultural streets/districts, theme parks, nature attractions, resorts, museums, beaches) in the USA [South Korea] where there are many international Muslim travelers and other international travelers at least once in six months and (2) came into contact and interacted with international Muslim travelers were recruited to participate in the survey. This approach sought to understand resident attitudes from a local tourist's perspective. This resonates with the conception that people formulate attitudes as a result of reflecting on their own behavior (Bem 1967). In the travel and tourism context, the implication of residents' own leisure travel on their beliefs about tourism development in their local destination is manifest

(Draper et al. 2011). As stated by Woosnam et al. (2018a), residents who have experience of being tourists themselves will have a reflective opinion on tourism development in their own destination through the eyes of a tourist. Being a tourist in tourist destinations could provide residents with diverse viewpoints of tourism development that subsequently shape their attitudes toward tourism in their own destination (Woosnam et al. 2018a). Therefore, examining how American and Korean residents assess and formulate Muslim tourism development in their country could result in more introspective insights when their travel experience is taken into consideration.

Data was collected online. We contacted Qualtrics in the U.S. and Macromill Embrain in South Korea individually. Both market research companies distributed the online survey to their panel members in February 2020. The U.S. market research company sent the survey link to their 1,612 panel members. Of these, 371 responses were collected (a response rate of 23.0%). After removing insincere responses which included straight-lining and “fast-clicks” (Leiner 2019), the final American sample of 340 was retained for data coding, resulting in a completion rate of 91.6%. At the same time, the South Korean market research company distributed the survey link to their 7,340 panel members. Of these, 493 responses were received (a response rate of 6.7%). After removing unusable responses, the final Korean sample of 443 was retained, resulting in a completion rate of 89.9%. A total of 783 valid responses from both countries were used for data analysis and interpretation.

Table 1 presents the demographic profiles of both Americans and Koreans. The numbers of male and female respondents in both samples were proportionally equal. On average, Korean respondents ($\bar{x} = 39.74$) were relatively younger than the American respondents ($\bar{x} = 44.70$). American respondents reported the highest percentage in annual household income of \$100,000

or higher (28.2%), whereas Korean respondents reported the highest percentage in annual household income of \$25,000 – \$39,999 (28.7%). The majority of Korean respondents completed higher education, with 67.7% having a university degree, compared to 26.2% of the American respondents. The majority of both Americans (62.6%) and Koreans (51.0%) were married. A large proportion of the American respondents were Caucasian/White (76.2%) and all Korean respondents were Asian (100.0%).

<INSERT TABLE 1>

Results

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to assess how well the measurement items represent the respective constructs (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). The goodness-of-fit statistics of the measurement model proved that the model fits the data satisfactorily ($\chi^2 = 2680.352$, $df = 749$, $\chi^2/df = 3.579$, $p < .000$, RMSEA = .057, CFI = .943, IFI = .943, TLI = .937). All standardized factor loadings were loaded with values ranging between .600 and .936, which exceed the minimum threshold of .40 (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). The composite reliability (CR) values of the eight constructs ranged from .853 to .961, and all were above the recommended value of .70, thus establishing the internal consistency in the multiple-item constructs (Fornell and Larcker 1981). The average variance extracted (AVE) for welcoming nature, emotional closeness, sympathetic understanding, openness to experience, perceived benefit, attitude towards international Muslim travelers, attitude towards Muslim tourism, and value co-creation all achieved the cut-off value of .50, signifying that the amount of variance in each of the constructs was adequately explained by its measurement items (Fornell and Larcker 1981). The convergent validity of the eight constructs was substantiated. Additionally, the discriminant validity of the constructs was established by comparing the squared correlations between constructs against respective AVE values (Hair et al. 1998). The AVE values were all higher

than the squared correlations between constructs, indicating that the eight constructs were different from each other. In conclusion, the reliability and validity of the study's constructs are confirmed. Table 2 and Table 3 present the details of the CFA results. Prior to that, the SEM assumptions were considered by testing the resilience of data distribution. Thus, outliers and collinearity screening were firstly estimated. As shown in Table 2, the skewness and kurtosis values for each item reported acceptable range between -.033 and -.762 (std. error = .087) and between -.031 and .582 (std. error = .175), respectively. Further, the variable inflation factor (VIF) was tested to assess the collinearity of variables. The results determine acceptable values ranging between 1.139 and 5.583 which are less than the suggested statistical threshold.

<INSERT TABLE 2>

<INSERT TABLE 3>

Hypothesis Testing

Next, structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis was carried out to assess the proposed hypotheses in the structural model of this study. The higher-order model assessment exemplified that the first-order factors which included welcoming nature, emotional closeness, and sympathetic understanding were significantly associated with emotional solidarity. As reported in Table 4, the standardized coefficients were .945 (emotional solidarity → welcoming nature), .950 (emotional solidarity → emotional closeness), and .963 (emotional solidarity → sympathetic understanding). The variance in welcoming nature ($R^2 = .892$), emotional closeness ($R^2 = .902$), and sympathetic understanding ($R^2 = .928$) was sufficiently explained by emotional

solidarity. In general, it is statistically demonstrated that the three first-order factors are significantly linked to one higher-order construct.

<INSERT TABLE 4>

Table 5 shows the results of testing the hypotheses. The goodness-of-fit statistics of the structural model showed a satisfactory data fit ($\chi^2 = 4639.085$, $df = 1222$, $p < .000$, $\chi^2/df = 3.796$, RMSEA = .042, CFI = .944, IFI = .944, TLI = .939), thus providing a foundation for testing the hypotheses. Openness to experience had a significant effect on emotional solidarity ($b_{OE \rightarrow ES} = .098$, $t_{OE \rightarrow ES} = 4.484$, $p < .01$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was supported. Openness to experience, however, did not have a significant direct effect on attitude towards international Muslim travelers ($b_{OE \rightarrow IMT} = -.023$, $t_{OE \rightarrow IMT} = -1.557$, $p > .05$), thus failing to support Hypothesis 2. Perceived benefit significantly predicted emotional solidarity ($b_{PB \rightarrow ES} = .868$, $t_{PB \rightarrow ES} = 28.145$, $p < .01$), supporting Hypothesis 3, but it was found to be a non-significant predictor of attitude towards international Muslim travelers ($b_{PB \rightarrow IMT} = .021$, $t_{PB \rightarrow IMT} = .523$, $p > .05$). Thus, Hypothesis 4 was not supported. The effect of emotional solidarity on attitude towards international Muslim travelers was statistically significant ($b_{ES \rightarrow IMT} = .858$, $t_{ES \rightarrow IMT} = 17.511$, $p < .01$), supporting Hypothesis 5. Attitude towards international Muslim travelers was significantly associated with attitude towards Muslim tourism ($b_{IMT \rightarrow HT} = .995$, $t_{IMT \rightarrow HT} = 30.701$, $p < .01$), supporting Hypothesis 6. Value co-creation was a positive function of attitude towards Muslim tourism ($b_{HT \rightarrow VC} = .906$, $t_{HT \rightarrow VC} = 25.792$, $p < .01$). Hence, Hypothesis 7 was statistically supported. Overall, the study's constructs jointly accounted for about 82.2% of the variance in

value co-creation, indicating that the structural model of this study predicted residents' value-creation with international Muslim travelers well.

The indirect impact on value co-creation was tested using the bootstrapping method. The results in Table 5 show that openness to experience ($\beta = .061, p < .01$), perceived benefit ($\beta = .758, p < .01$), emotional solidarity ($\beta = .849, p < .01$), and attitude towards international Muslim travelers ($\beta = .990, p < .01$) had a significant indirect impact on value co-creation. The total impact on value co-creation was also examined. Attitude towards international Muslim travelers was found to have the greatest total impact on value co-creation ($\beta = .990, p < .01$), followed by attitude towards Muslim tourism ($\beta = .906, p < .01$), emotional solidarity ($\beta = .849, p < .01$), perceived benefit ($\beta = .758, p < .01$), and openness to experience ($\beta = .061, p < .01$).

<INSERT TABLE 5>

Multi-Group Comparison

Multi-group comparison analysis was conducted to examine the moderating role of cross-culture in the relationships among openness to experience, perceived benefit, emotional solidarity, attitude towards international Muslim travelers, attitude towards Muslim tourism, and value co-creation. We separated the respondents of this study into two independent groups: American residents ($n = 340$) and Korean residents ($n = 443$). Next, we created a baseline model comprising both the American and Korean groups. All loadings between the two groups were constrained to be equal. The baseline model estimation results indicated that the model had a satisfactory data fit ($\chi^2 = 4586.942, df = 1502, \chi^2/df = 3.054, p < .000, CFI = .913, IFI = .913, TLI = .905, RMSEA = .051$). Finally, we compared this baseline model against nested models using

chi-square statistical test by which a particular hypothesized path of interest is constrained to be equal across groups.

Table 6 summarizes the results of the multi-group comparison test. For the path from perceived benefit to attitude towards international Muslim travelers, while the path for the Korean group was significant ($p < .05$), it was not significant for the American group ($p > .05$). Hence, although the chi-square difference was not statistically significant ($\Delta\chi^2 = (1) = .688$, $p > .05$), H8d was supported. This moderation test result suggests that perceived benefit of having international Muslim in the destination is crucial in explaining Korean residents' attitude towards Muslim travelers. Except for the path perceived benefit \rightarrow attitude towards international Muslim travelers, results of the chi-square difference test confirmed that the moderating function of cross-culture was not significant within the paths in the model. Therefore, H8a, H8b, H8c, H8e, H8f, and H8g were not supported statistically.

<INSERT TABLE 6>

Figure 2 displays the results of all the hypotheses. In conclusion, residents' openness to experience and perceived benefit of international Muslim travelers to development of the tourist destination were significant predictors of emotional solidarity. Residents' emotional solidarity subsequently influenced their attitude towards international Muslim travelers. Attitude towards international Muslim travelers exerted a significant impact on attitude towards Muslim tourism which in turn, developed value co-creation with international Muslim travelers. Cross-culture (American residents versus Korean residents) significantly moderated the relationship between perceived benefit and attitude towards international Muslim travelers.

<INSERT FIGURE 2>

Discussion and Implications

This study was designed to examine the antecedents and consequences of local resident attitudes toward international Muslim travelers and Muslim tourism. The strength of the relationships between constructs specified in the structural model was cross-validated in American and Korean samples. The empirical data collected from both American and Korean residents has confirmed the following relationships: antecedents (personality trait, perceived benefit) → emotional solidarity → attitude towards tourists → attitude towards tourism → outcome (value co-creation). The results of the structural model for American residents were comparatively similar to those of their Korean counterparts, in which openness to experience and emotional solidarity play a significant role in predicting resident attitude towards international Muslim travelers. Despite the nuanced existence of Islamophobic attitudes in the West (Ciftci 2012), the Muslim population has increasingly gained acceptance in Western countries. According to a Pew Research Center (2019) survey, most people in the United States and Western Europe indicated that they accept Muslims as being part of their social environment. American residents' positive attitude to international Muslim travelers concurs with Boer and van Tubergen's (2019) assertion that negative news coverage surrounding Muslims does not increase Westerners' anti-Muslim sentiment in general. Moreover, the nature of the study's respondents might possibly explain

Americans' openness to and solidarity with international Muslim travelers. In considering the predictors of Islamophobia in the West, Ciftci (2012) found that the higher the level of education, the lower the anti-Muslim sentiment. Around 26.2% of the American respondents possessed a university degree and 29.4% had a higher degree, indicating that they were well-educated. On the other hand, although South Korea is generally known for its collectivist and high uncertainty avoidance culture, the society appears to be accepting when it comes to international tourists and tourism development. South Koreans appear to have empathy for foreigners in the country as long as they do not constitute a serious threat to the country's culture and economy (Ciftci 2012). This proposition can be supported by the fact that South Korea is a highly pragmatic and long-term oriented society (Hofstede 2001). Koreans' lives are driven by practical qualities and they prioritize future and long-term benefits for society and the country. The positive attitude to international Muslim travelers in South Korea is reflected in various travel initiatives organized by the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) to promote South Korea as a Muslim-friendly destination and assist Muslim tourists traveling to the country (Korea Tourism Organization 2020a).

From a cross-cultural perspective, Western and Eastern societies have been known to show different values, attitudes, ways of thinking, and behaviors (Reisinger and Turner 1998). Contrary to popular belief about cultural differences, the results of this study showed that the relationships between residents and tourists of different religious and cultural backgrounds might be interpreted in a different light. As Moufakkir (2015) advocated, the international tourism industry calls for acceptance and tolerance of individual differences and diversities. In addition, the similar findings in American and Korean residents might be explained by humans innately seeking harmonious co-existence with people with different religious beliefs and values (Tang

2010). Conforming to Woosnam et al. (2009), advocating the importance of psychological and emotional connection between individuals in a tourism context, the positive sentiments of both American and Korean residents toward international Muslim travelers indicate that people-to-people cohesiveness can be formed as a result of shared beliefs and behaviors in their interaction. Given that a tourism experience is socially-shaped and happens in a setting that holds residents and tourists together (Joo and Woosnam 2020), it stands to reason that American and Korean residents' relationships with international Muslim travelers are instrumental in determining their attitudes and value co-creation. The contributions of this study are discussed below.

The study's findings illustrated that welcoming nature, emotional closeness, and sympathetic understanding sufficiently explained the variance in emotional solidarity in the context of culturally different encounters between residents and international tourists. Durkheim's theory of emotional solidarity is empirically proven to be valid and useful in understanding the emotional bonds between residents from non-OIC countries and international Muslim travelers. This theory has been gradually applied in the travel and tourism literature, in support of the affect theory of social change that pleasant emotions in a social exchange process and relationship could lead to increased solidarity. Given the significant growth in the Muslim travel market, this rationalizes that residents see the potential contribution of this segment to their destination, thus welcoming the tourists to their country. The role of welcoming nature is consistent with the GMTI (2019) report that Muslims would avoid traveling to a destination that is perceived to be unwelcoming. With the existing hate crimes around the globe, the safety and security of a destination has undeniably become a key concern for most Muslim travelers. The welcoming nature of non-Muslim residents is therefore crucial to explain their emotional solidarity with international Muslim travelers. The role of residents' emotional closeness and

sympathetic understanding in forming solidarity with international Muslim travelers is also confirmed in this study. This supports Woosnam's (2012) theorization concerning the significant role of these two dimensions of emotional solidarity. In this study, when American and Korean residents develop emotional closeness with Muslim travelers and put themselves in the travelers' shoes, they are more likely to be aware of Muslim travel needs. As GMTI (2019) reported, Muslim travelers are heterogeneous in their attachment to faith-based needs, which can be categorized into necessary services (i.e., Halal food, prayer facilities, water-friendly washrooms, no Islamophobic sentiments), good to have services (i.e., socially-responsible travel, Ramadhan services, local Islamic experiences), and nice to have services (i.e., recreational facilities with privacy, no non-Halal services). Positive relationships between non-OIC countries' residents and international Muslim travelers are therefore the key to building positive social impacts. This is in accordance with Bimonte and Punzo (2016), that the quality of interaction between residents and tourists determines the social impacts of tourism.

Openness to experience positively explained residents' emotional solidarity towards international Muslim travelers. Openness to experience reflects an individual's degree of curiosity and interests as well as their desire to obtain new knowledge (McCrae and John 1992). So it stands to reason that American and Korean residents are inclined to foster an emotional connection with international Muslim travelers in the respective country. Furthermore, this finding suggested that Americans and Koreans accept out-groups and support international collaborations, which is in line with the traits of openness to experience (Schoen 2007). On the other hand, openness to experience did not significantly predict attitude towards international Muslim travelers for American and Korean residents. This could be attributed to the nature of the constructs of openness to experience and attitude. Openness to experience is an inherently

psychological quality that explains an individual's pattern of thinking, feeling, and behavior (McCrae and John 1992). Attitude is a summative evaluation of an object or issue that guides behavioral tendencies (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). The present study found that it was insufficient to trigger residents' summative evaluation of culturally different tourists in the tourism context. The influence of openness to experience in relation to emotions has been dominant in the literature (Faullant, Matzler, and Mooradian 2011; Jani and Han 2013; Orth, Limon, and Rose 2010). As Hammarstrom (2005) purported, emotional solidarity involves feeling identified with other people, making contact and having emotional bonding with them, implying the existence of an affective component in the concept. This might explain the study's finding that openness to experience is linked to feelings of closeness between residents and tourists, as shown by the positive relationship between openness to experience and emotional solidarity.

The positive relationship between perceived benefit and emotional solidarity for both Americans and Koreans provides valuable insight into the indicator of emotional solidarity. This exemplifies the reasoning that hosts and tourists' beliefs about a destination could serve to reduce stereotypes and eventually lead to an opportunity for solidarity (Woosnam 2011). On another note, while perceived benefit did not significantly explain American residents' attitude towards international Muslim travelers, it significantly predicted the attitude of Korean residents. The insignificant relationship for the American residents could be justified by the mediating effect of emotional solidarity on perceived benefit and attitude. The direct, significant relationship between perceived benefit and attitude towards international Muslim travelers for Korean residents might be a reflection of a tendency among Koreans to appreciate the benefit of having international travelers in the country. Recognizing the substantial growth in Muslim traveler arrivals to South Korea in recent years, there is growing evidence that the South Korean

government has made efforts to make South Korea a Halal-friendly destination (Korea Tourism Organization 2020a). For example, the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) categorizes Muslim-friendly restaurants into four categories (i.e., Halal-certified, self-certified, Muslim-friendly, pork-free), organizes a Halal Restaurant Week (HRW) event annually to promote Halal restaurants to tourists, encourages tourist attractions and hotels to prepare prayer rooms for Muslim tourists, and introduces e-books on Muslim-friendly restaurants, tourist maps, and routes in South Korea.

The positive association between emotional solidarity, attitude towards international Muslim travelers, and attitude towards Muslim tourism for both Americans and Koreans suggested that when emotional solidarity is forged between host residents and Muslim travelers, residents' attitude towards the travelers is favorably developed, which eventually shapes their positive attitude towards Muslim tourism development in the destination. The present work illustrates the process by which residents internalize their affective state in forming attitudes. This linear relationship complements the extant research on the application of emotional solidarity to predict resident attitudes toward tourism development (e.g., Hasani et al. 2016; Moghavvemi et al. 2017; Woosnam 2012). The finding could be supported by the social distance theory of power in that residents have a certain expectation of closeness with international Muslim travelers and the degree of social distance between them could be lessened through interactions. Fundamentally, emotional solidarity is understood on the basis of the relationships between individuals (Durkheim [1915]1995). The study showed a great variance in American and Korean residents' attitude towards Muslim tourism was explained ($R^2 = 62.8\%$) when emotional solidarity and attitude towards international Muslim travelers were included in the structural relationships. This provides empirical evidence that attitude towards Muslim tourism is

influenced by emotional solidarity through the attitude residents form with individual Muslim travelers.

To date, little is known about how residents can play a role in co-creating value with international travelers. This study extended resident – tourist relationships by examining American and Korean residents' value co-creation with international Muslim travelers. The results confirmed the positive correlation between attitude towards Muslim tourism and value co-creation, indicating that when local residents have a positive attitude toward Muslim tourism, they are willing to co-create value with Muslim travelers by sharing resources with travelers visiting the destination for mutually beneficial purposes. Residents' value co-creation with international Muslim travelers appeared to lie in their attitudes. This study alludes to the central role of local residents as intangible resources to co-create value with international Muslim travelers and lends support to the claim that residents' involvement is crucial to enhance the travel experiences of Muslim travelers in non-Islamic destinations. The present findings echo social representation theory, which emphasizes social knowledge as a tool used by people in communities/ societies when interpreting and reacting to events or stimuli. The theory explains how a social reality formed of different groups of people can be shaped by social influence (Cluley and Green 2019). Of relevance to this study, being involved in co-creating value indicates the resident's interest in resource exchange, which eventually leads to social knowledge construction within the realm of Muslim tourism. Additionally, the link of attitude and value co-creation purports the impact of social exchange in tourism development, which social exchange theory has posited. In other words, residents are likely to exhibit pro-tourism behaviors if they perceive tourism development in a good light (Ap 1992). Taken together, this study provides a nuanced understanding of how value co-creation is created within the context of Muslim tourism.

While the important role of emotional solidarity between residents and tourists is increasingly acknowledged in the travel and tourism literature, the present study offers an insight into how residents' emotional solidarity forms value co-creation through attitudes. The findings echo the Global Muslim Travel Index 2019 on Halal travel trends. The Halal travel trends reported by GMTI (2019) indicate the need for host destinations to interact and engage with Muslim travelers in order to deliver value and unique travel experiences. Recognizing the fact that Muslim travelers are increasingly seeking authentic travel experiences that diverge from the ordinary (GMTI 2019), activating the connection between residents and international Muslim travelers can serve to create valuable travel experiences.

This study offers practical implications for the destination marketing organizations in non-OIC countries. The degree of affectional closeness between non-Muslim residents and international Muslim travelers dictates how residents develop attitudes toward Muslim travelers and Muslim tourism in the destination. Tourism planners should develop strategies to stimulate favorable relationships between residents and Muslim travelers in an effort to develop and sustain Muslim tourism in the destination. For example, providing opportunities at popular tourist attractions (e.g., Myeongdong in South Korea, Washington D.C. in the United States) for residents and Muslim travelers to engage with each other and organizing annual Halal or Muslim tourism events (e.g., Halal food exhibitions, Islamic culture exhibitions) in the destination may trigger such relationships. Most importantly, local resident involvement in Muslim tourism planning and their inputs should be taken into account for the approach to succeed. Tourism planners, together with local residents, need to determine how and when value co-creation should emerge. Tourism planners can directly and indirectly influence international Muslims' travel experiences, but it is local residents who directly engage with Muslim travelers visiting the

destination. Consequently, it is imperative for tourism planners to involve residents who can principally co-create value with Muslim travelers and greatly influence Muslim travel experiences.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Here, residents were sampled using two non-OIC countries – United States and South Korea. The findings should thus be interpreted with a certain caution so as not to refer to all non-OIC countries. Similar research is recommended using top Muslim inbound non-OIC destinations as reported by GMTI (2019), such as Spain, France, Russia, Thailand, and Singapore, which may serve to increase the validity of the model. The data for this study were collected from Americans and Koreans who visited tourist sites and had experience of interacting with Muslim travelers, implying that they were generally open to international tourism. Nonetheless, it should be understood that local hosts are not homogenous in their tolerance and acceptance of culturally different tourists. Additional research can be conducted to segment non-Muslim residents by their degree of welcoming international Muslim travelers to the destination and compare the perceptual, affectual, and behavioral responses of each segment. Such clustering may provide additional insight into resident attitudes to the development of Muslim tourism in non-OIC destinations. Moreover, residents' demographic heterogeneity might have factored into the relational connection between residents and international Muslim travelers. Future research on modeling of resident attitudes toward tourists and tourism development across nationalities or cultures should not only consider appraisal valence of different nationalities or cultural groups but also capture the underlying demographic characteristics of residents that may explain the

structural relationships. Lastly, this study provides support for extending resident attitudes toward Halal tourism research in non-OIC destinations. Halal tourism conforms to Islamic teachings, thus the provision of tourism products and services for international Muslim travelers should meet their faith-based needs while traveling (Mohsin et al. 2016). The availability of Halal products, services, and facilities for Muslim travelers must be created adhering to the Islamic law (Jafari and Scott 2014). For example, Han et al. (2019) identified attributes that must be considered when developing Halal tourism in a non-Islamic destination. The attributes include serving Halal food and beverages in tourist attractions, creating prayer rooms in major tourist attractions, providing Halal-related information in tourist information centers, delivering Halal service quality, and utilizing Halal-friendly decorations and designs. Future research investigating how residents think and feel about Halal tourism in non-Islamic destinations is indispensable to ensure the viable development of this tourism segment. Additionally, while the findings of this study suggested that residents generally display positive attitudes toward international Muslim travelers and Muslim tourism, it is likely that residents may be concerned about the costs of Halal tourism development in their community, such as crime, overcrowding, vandalism, higher prices, and noise. Residents' reaction to tourism development largely depends on the numbers and behavior of tourists (Ap and Crompton 1993). As suggested by Gursoy et al. (2010), residents tend to support tourism development that promotes positive impacts while diminishing negative impacts. In addition, how conservation of local cultural heritage should go in tandem with Muslim tourism development in a non-OIC destination deserves future investigations. The development of Muslim tourism in Muslim minority countries may pose social and economic challenges when seeking to increase Islamic presence and achieve competitive advantage of Muslim tourism (Mohsin et al. 2016). Having said that, the tourism

industry is dynamic that requires strategic synergy between stakeholders in creating a tourism environment that is safe, friendly, and diverse for international Muslim travelers. Recognizing the importance of sustaining the place identity and sense of place of a country (Lalicic and Garaus 2020), finding a balance between uniqueness of host country and viability of Muslim tourism is essential for sustainable tourism development. The feasibility of developing Muslim tourism in a non-Islamic country while safeguarding the country's local culture offers an avenue for future investigations. In that sense, future sustainable tourism research is recommended to delve deeper into understanding of Muslim tourism development from the behavioral perspective of residents and Muslim travelers for practical implications. In other words, an understanding of how residents perceive changes in the local cultural heritage following the development of Halal products and facilities in their non-Islamic community appears to be critical, along with an understanding of Muslim traveler expectations in traveling to non-OIC countries. In spite of the inherent limitations associated with this study, its theorization presents future research opportunities with regard to how non-OIC destinations can stimulate local residents to co-create value with international Muslim travelers and ultimately heighten Muslims' travel experiences.

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