

IMEMGS

Research Papers : Muslims in Japan No.10

**Determinants of
Local Residents' Perceptions
and Attitude toward Islam and
Muslims**

-A Case Study in Gifu City, Japan-

IMEMGS

**Institute for Multi-ethnic and Multi-generational Societies
WASEDA UNIVERSITY, Tokyo, Japan**

February, 2012

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A Paper prepared for International Workshop:
"Life Styles of Muslim Minorities in Asia: Survey Results in Comparative Perspective"
at Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan in January 07, 2012

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January 2012

Determinants of Local Residents' Perceptions and Attitude toward Islam and Muslims
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1. Introduction

This paper examines the determinants of perceptions and attitude of non-Muslim Japanese citizens toward Islam and Muslims.

As of 2009, there were approximately 2.18 million foreigners living in Japan, which is a decline of about 30,000 since 2008 when the population of foreigners had reached a record-high. The foreign population accounted for 1.71% of the total population in Japan, which was a 0.03 percentage point decline from the previous year. In addition, the number of registered foreigners in 32 prefectures was down from the previous year. A factor contributing to this decline is considered to be that foreigners of Japanese descent—a relatively large population within the country—continue to leave Japan because of the economic slowdown. As a result, the number of registered foreign residents in Japan, which had consistently increased during the postwar period, has begun to decline. However, the increase in the foreign population in the past has resulted in the creation of a body of research on foreigners in Japan in fields such as sociology, anthropology, and demography.

The numerous studies on foreigners living in Japan have dealt with such subjects as the increasing number of foreigners in local communities and the resulting conflicts with local residents, the formation of ethnic communities, and how foreigners create a sense of identity (Okuda and Tajima 1991; Okuda and Tajima 1993; Onai and Sakai, ed. 2001; Hirota 2003; Okuda 2004; Hirota 2006; et al.) In addition, a body of research now exists that analyzes foreigners' socioeconomic conditions and also systemic issues such as labor conditions, human rights, childhood education, suffrage, and coexistence and integration within the community (Kanegae, ed. 2001; Kajita and Miyajima 2002; Miyajima and Kano, ed. 2002; Miyajima 2003; Miyajima and Ohta 2005; Kajita, Tanno, and Higuchi 2005; et al.) However, many of these studies dealt only with relatively large foreign populations in Japan, such as Koreans and foreigners of Japanese descent, and it is difficult to assert that much progress has been made in accumulating a sufficient number of individual studies on other groups. So there is a pressing need for research findings on the lives of new immigrants and their relationship with Japanese society.

This can be said about Muslim's living in Japan, the group we discuss in this paper. After the 1990s, we gradually began to see research being conducted on Muslim's living in Japan. But it was not until Sakurai (2003) opened up this field with her comprehensive study of Islamic communities that research into this group became increasingly common. Currently, majority of the studies on Muslims living in Japan focus on Muslims themselves. Consequently, while we still do not have a sufficient body of knowledge on such areas as labor issues, the immigration process, the community-formation process, and identity issues created by international marriages, at least to a certain extent we have some findings in this area. However, almost no research has been done on Muslims' relationships with non-Muslim

Japanese society, the location where they have formed their new communities. Moreover, few studies even address the need for such research (Katakura and Senba 2003; et al.)

Currently, one of the problems associated with research on Muslim immigrants in Japan is that, although these studies are described using categories such as “Islam in Japan” and “Muslims in Japan,” there has been little research into their relationship with non-Muslim Japanese society, which is the other side of this research picture. To address this situation, this research paper assesses the attitudes and perceptions of non-Muslim Japanese citizens toward Islam and Muslims within their local community.

2. Overview of Previous Studies

2.1 Perceptions and Attitude toward Foreigners

In this section, we organize and report on the results of empirical studies into the perceptions and attitudes of Japanese people toward foreigners.

In the past, studies on the exclusionary attitude held by the Japanese toward foreign residents in Japan have been based mainly on the contact hypothesis (Nagayoshi 2006: 260), which states contacts and interactions with outside groups increase tolerance and suppress anti-foreign sentiment (Allport 1954/trans. 1961; Cook 1978; Brown 1995/trans. 1999; et al.) In Japan, the contact hypothesis has been evaluated by researchers such as Tanabe (2001) and Otsuki (2006). The results obtained by Otsuki based on responses to the Japanese General Social Surveys (JGSS) demonstrated that even casual contact, such as seeing foreigners around or exchanging basic greetings, can reduce prejudice and the exclusion of foreigners (Otsuki 2006).

Recent research has investigated whether the perceived threat hypothesis is a factor in the contact hypothesis in Japan. The perceived threat hypothesis states that when a person perceives foreigners as a threat to their economic and social status and cultural integration, their anti-foreigner sentiment increases (Quillian 1995; Scheepers et al. 2002; Gibson 2004; et al.) In Japan, a study conducted by Hamada on communities with highly concentrated populations of foreigners produced results that support this hypothesis (Hamada 2008). This study evaluates the determinants of an exclusionary attitude, verifies the impact of variables such as occupation and personal income, and presents findings that there is a strong correlation ($p < 0.001$) between “a perception of a deterioration in living standards” and an “exclusionary attitude.” While Hamada’s study investigated the applicability of the hypothesis in a residential communities of foreigners, according to Nagayoshi, who examined this hypothesis while taking into considering the low ratio of foreigners in Japan, the actual perception of a threat is not the only factor, but that Japanese people’s exclusionary attitude is also effected by their vague anxiety about foreigners as a “unknown entity” and a favorable attitude when foreigners are “out of view” (Nagayoshi 2006).

A factor closely associated with these studies is that personal attributes are variables that influence perceptions and attitude toward foreigners, which implies that the tolerance of Japanese citizens toward foreigners is determined by their individual characteristics. But whether this effect exists or not, and how strong it is, varies from study to study.

Next, we will look at how the way the Japanese form an image about foreign countries and foreigners

is a determinant for their perceptions and attitudes about foreigners. According to Mido-oka, perceptions of foreign countries and foreigners are shaped by our individual norms, such as the organizations to which we belong, the influence of our parents, education, indirect contact via mass media, direct contact through travel, international relations, and the influence and persuasive communication of international events (Midooka 1991). Midooka states that citizens of one country do not need to have direct contact with foreign countries and foreigners to form an image about them. In particular, in those countries where the local population have little opportunity for such direct contact, the impact of the information provided to them by the mass media is especially important in shaping their attitudes. Research has verified that in such countries, people's images are formed through media events, news programs, and so on (Kamise and Hagiwara 2003; Hagiwara 2006; Mukaida, Sakamoto, Takaki, and Murata 2008; et al.)

Furthermore, Tanabe (2008) used the individual differences multidimensional scaling method (INDSCAL) to examine Japan's pluralistic structure and identified two dimensions of favorability among the Japanese for a given foreign country or its citizens: "whether the country is a Western industrialized nation" and "whether media coverage is positive or negative for that country." According to this analysis, Japanese will feel a low level of favorability toward a country that is "not a Western industrialized nation" and that is the subject of "negative media coverage." Although these studies were conducted to clarify how the Japanese construct their views about foreign countries and foreigners, it has been noted that research such as this into 'levels of favorability' and 'criteria' is related to other studies on discrimination against foreigners and their exclusion in Japan (Tanabe 2008: 383). The category of 'foreigner' includes the sub-category of 'country of birth' and even for foreigners with whom they have no direct contact, we can expect that Japanese people's perceptions of foreigners living in Japan will vary considerably when we consider the different conditions in which they form their images.

2.2 Perceptions and Attitude Toward Islam and Muslims

Next, we will review studies that focused on the perceptions and attitudes of the Japanese people toward Islam and Muslims. The empirical research on this topic has mainly been conducted in the U.S. and Europe (Zick and Küpper 2009; Bevelander and Otterbeck 2010; et al.) Smith used the data from the General Social Survey (GSS) to study levels of tolerance toward various groups with different social and cultural backgrounds (anti- or non-religious, white supremacist, communist, militarist, homosexual, and Muslim extremist), and found an especially low level of tolerance for Muslim extremists (Smith 2009).³ However, this research did not fully explain levels of tolerance toward social and cultural minorities because only the above groups were targeted. In addition, the situations used to measure tolerance in this research were extremely limited, being only "making a public speech," "teaching at universities," and "their books being included in the library collections." Furthermore, the report doesn't explain levels of tolerance toward Muslims in general, as it is limited to researching "extremists."

Studies of Islam and Muslims as a whole, however, seem to have analyzed variables relevant to the expression of perceptions and attitudes toward Muslim immigrants. Looking at the determinants for these attitudes, we see that this research points to determinants according to personal attributes. Specifically, the attributes associated with more positive attitudes include gender (female), residence

(urban dwelling), age (younger), education level (higher), family's socioeconomic status (high), and whether there is or is not direct contact (there is) (Bachner and Ring 2004; Bevelander and Otterbeck 2010; et al.) However, these results are not consistent across all the studies—a variable correlated with a positive attitude in one study may not be correlated in the same way in the others.

In addition to these variables, Wike and Grim used the results of the Pew Global Attitudes Survey to explore the determinants of negative attitudes toward Islam across Western countries. In this study, they used the perceived threat hypothesis (Quillian 1995; Scheepers et al. 2002; Gibson 2004) to build and tested a structural equation model that incorporated the hypothesis that perceiving Muslims as a threat leads to negative attitudes toward them (Wike, R. and Grim, B. J., 2010). They found that when introducing the negative attitude determinants of “security threats,” “cultural non-integration,” “cultural conflict,” “low-level general ethnocentrism,” “religiosity,” “low overall sense of satisfaction,” “age,” “socioeconomic status,” and “gender,” the results indicated that “security threats” and “cultural non-integration” were most closely correlated with negative attitudes.

So it seems that research dealing with the perceptions and attitudes toward Islam and Muslims in Japan is still quite scarce. The first study that can be cited that addresses this subject is the pioneering research conducted by Matsumoto (2006), who studied high-school students in Tokyo to identify factors that influenced their formation of an image of Islam. Following the investigation, the students were categorized into two groups, which revealed a paradoxical situation where the model students—namely, those who exposed themselves to more information about Islam than their counterparts—had a more negative image (Matsumoto 2006). Interpreting these results, Matsumoto speculated that information contents and the bias within it influenced their formulation of an image of Islam because “although they are strongly aware of the need for a rational understanding of Islam, they tend to be strongly influenced emotionally by the large amount of biased information in circulation” (Matsumoto 2006: 201)⁴.

Other studies of the Japanese on this topic include a series of papers by Yoshitoshi (2008a, 2008b) and Tanigawa (2009a, and 2009b) on Japanese who have lived in the Middle East. A characteristic of these studies of long-term residents of the Middle East, such as officials involved in development assistance or business people, is that they were able to capture how the respondents' impressions about their local community and Islam changed before and after living in the Middle East. The studies explain how images formed in Japan, where Islam is unfamiliar, change when an individual is in an Islamic local community and has direct contact with the local people. The studies concluded that their images change for the better after living in these communities.

We have reviewed previous studies on perceptions and attitudes toward foreigners, as well as Islam and Muslims. Based on this, we can summarize the issues facing research in Japan on attitudes toward Muslims and Islam into the following two broad areas: 1) while research has recognized the need to study the mutual relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims in a local community where Muslims reside, there has been a lack of empirical research about it, and 2) previous research into the perceptions and attitudes of non-Muslim Japanese toward Islam and Muslims has been limited and has only partially verified those determinants that have been presented in the relevant research up to the present time. Therefore, based on the findings and issues described above, this paper conducts analyses toward

understanding what the perceptions and attitudes toward Islam and Muslims actually are in a local community in Japan, as well as elucidating their determinants.

3. Study Overview and Analysis Methods

3.1 Study Overview

The research data used for the analyses in this paper were collected through the *Survey of Attitude toward Foreigners* conducted by the Research Laboratory of Asian Society Theory, Faculty of Human Sciences, Waseda University. The questionnaire survey for this paper was carried out in Gifu City, Gifu Prefecture during October 2009. While this survey was designed to be attitudes toward foreigners in general, it contained questions about Islam and Muslims. The overview of the survey is as follows.

[Overview of the Survey]

- (1) Purpose: To understand attitudes toward foreign residents
 - To explore the determinants of the attitudes toward foreigners
 - To build a causality model for image formation and attitude expression
 - To explore the perception of Muslims and Islam (by providing questions on Islam in the survey)
- (2) Study area: Gifu City, Gifu Prefecture (Kuroho District, Katagata District, and Saigo District)
- (3) Survey subjects: local residents (ages, 20 to 75)
- (4) Survey questionnaire: created in Japanese
- (5) Sampling method: systematic sampling using the Basic Resident Register
- (6) Valid responses: 446 responses out of 999 surveyed (44.6% response rate)
- (7) Survey method: mail-in questionnaire
- (8) Study period: October 1 to October 31, 2009
- (9) The survey conducted by: the Research Laboratory of Asian Society Theory, Faculty of Human Sciences, Waseda University

As mentioned above, the target area was Gifu City in Gifu Prefecture; in 2010, the population of this area was approximately 420,000 people, of whom 8,700 people were foreigners⁵. The area has a large mosque that was established in July 2008 in the countryside near Gifu University. This mosque is unlike most mosques in Japan that are established by purchasing an existing property and converting it to a mosque, as this mosque was newly constructed specifically to be a mosque. Moreover, at the time of its opening, the mosque positioned “cooperation with the local community” as one of its most important roles. In other words, in addition to being a place of worship, the mosque stated that it was to function as a “cultural center,” especially in the context of community relations. The survey area targeted was around this mosque.⁶

The target survey population included residents in the aforementioned districts. Systematic sampling was conducted using the Basic Resident Register to poll 1,000 individuals, which included one ineligible name. Fielding was done by mailing the survey questionnaire; it resulted in responses from 446 individuals (a 44.6% response rate). The gender ratio was 50.0% men and 48.4% women (1.6% did not

specify), and the average age was 48.4. However, for our analyses we used 322 responses after excluding those with incomplete observation variables.

3.2 Methodology

To understand the perceptions and attitudes toward Islam and Muslims in a local community, as well as their determinants, analyses using structural equation models were performed. First, an exploratory factor analysis of the variables relevant to perceptions and attitudes toward Islam and Muslims was conducted and the pattern of factors confirmed. The results were used to develop hypotheses about causality among the determinants of perceptions and attitudes. Next, to verify this causality, constructs (factors) of perceptions and attitudes toward Islam and Muslims were set as dependent variables, and constructs of other perceptions and images were set as independent variables in order to conduct a structural equation model analysis and to verify the fit of the resulting model. The perceived threat hypothesis by Quillian and Wike et al. was also to be validated in the course of this analysis. Then, socioeconomic attributes and the frequency with which information about Islam and Muslims was received were introduced into the model as exogenous variables and their influence was analyzed. In this analytical process, the personal attributes hypothesis by Bevelander et al. and the contact hypothesis by Allport et al. was verified. This structural equation modeling is based on factor analysis modeling that assumes there are unobserved latent variables underlying observed variables, and the ultimate goal is to build a model that expresses the effect of attributes on each factor. For performing the analysis, SPSS 17.0 and Amos 17.0 were used.

3.3 Variables

Based on the hypotheses described above, the analysis uses four sets of questions included in the *Survey of Attitude toward Foreigners*. Each set was created by reviewing the questionnaire by Onai et al. (2006) as a model and adding questions about the perceptions and attitudes toward Islam and Muslims. These four sets consisted of the following 12 questions about the respondent's perception of Islam, attitude toward Muslims, mutual understanding with foreigners, and changes in the community caused by foreigners. Answers to each question were obtained based on a 4-point or 5-point scale rating.⁷

[Question Sets]

(1) Perceptions of Islam

“Islam is an advanced form of teaching“

“Islam is a religion of tolerance”

“Islam is a religion that values peace”

“Islamic society is an important member of world society”

(2) Attitudes toward Muslims

“What do you think of Muslims (followers of Islam) coming into Japan?”

“Do you think you can personally get along with Muslims (followers of Islam)?”

(3) Mutual understanding with foreigners

- “Increased opportunities to interact with foreigners”
- “Enhanced international education for local residents”
- (4) Changes to the local community caused by foreigners
- “A decline in security”
- “The rules for daily living have deteriorated, such as those for putting out garbage”
- “Worsened living conditions”
- “Fewer jobs for Japanese people”

4. Analysis and Results

4.1 Interrelations Among Question Items

To proceed with the analysis, the correlations among the 12 variables on Muslim and Islam described above were verified. As the results indicated that these variables were significantly correlated, we could assume that there were factors that were determining the correlations. To elucidate these factors, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis by using the principal components extraction method,⁸ and on selecting factors based on the criteria of eigenvalue ≥ 1 , confirmed that the 12 variables could be divided into four underlying factors (Table 1).

Table 1: Results of Factor Analysis

| | Factor | | | | Communality |
|---|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| Worsened living conditions | .887 | -.022 | -.024 | .077 | .769 |
| The rules for daily living have deteriorated, such as those for putting out garbage | .822 | -.023 | .051 | .042 | .640 |
| Decline in security | .799 | -.001 | -.031 | -.008 | .659 |
| Fewer jobs for Japanese people | .449 | .081 | .020 | -.219 | .278 |
| Islam is a religion of tolerance | .053 | .879 | .030 | -.084 | .712 |
| Islam is an advanced form of teaching | -.025 | .585 | .007 | .033 | .369 |
| Islam is a religion that values peace | -.059 | .495 | -.020 | .291 | .482 |
| Increase the opportunities to interact with foreigners | -.036 | -.002 | .898 | -.034 | .799 |
| Enhance international education for the residents | .048 | .026 | .810 | .044 | .681 |
| Do you think you can personally get along with Muslims? | -.012 | -.116 | .076 | .794 | .619 |
| What do you think of Muslims (adherents of Islam) coming into Japan? | -.025 | .065 | .054 | .599 | .448 |
| Islamic society is an important member of world society” | .029 | .142 | -.113 | .565 | .354 |

Factor extraction method: Principal components

Rotation method: Promax with Kaiser normalization

The first factor was labeled *Images about Community Change* because four variables, including “worsened living conditions,” “the rules for daily living have deteriorated, such as those for putting out

garbage,” “the decline in security,” and “fewer jobs for Japanese people” had large loadings. The second factor seemed to be related to how Islam is perceived because “Islam is a religion of tolerance,” “Islam is an advanced form of teaching,” and “Islam is a religion that values peace” were the ones with large loadings; therefore, it was labeled *Perceptions of Islam*. The third factor was labeled *Willingness to Achieve Mutual Understanding* because “increased opportunities to interact with foreigners” and “enhance international education for the residents” showed large loadings, indicating that they were related to a mutual understanding with foreigners. The fourth and last factor included three variables with high loadings: “Do you think you can personally get along with Muslims (adherents of Islam)?” “What do you think of Muslims (adherents of Islam) coming into Japan?” and “Islamic society is an important member of world society.” As these variables are related to accepting Islam and Muslims, this factor was labeled *Receptive Attitudes*.

Based on the factor analysis above, we verified that the variable “Islamic society is an important member of world society,” which was included in “Perceptions of Islam” during the question selection process, was actually one of the variables that comprise the factor *Receptive Attitude*.

Next, when developing a structural equation model, intercorrelations between these factors were verified in order to consider whether causal relationships could be established. According to the correlation matrix (Table 2), each correlation coefficient is relatively low: -0.12 between the first factor—*Images about Community Change*—and the second factor *Perceptions of Islam*, and -0.24 between the second factor—*Perceptions of Islam* and the third factor—*Willingness to Achieve Mutual Understanding*. Intercorrelations between other factors are somewhere between 0.3 and 0.5. At this point in developing causal relationships between each factor, we employed the previously discussed hypothesis by Wike et al. and assumed that the fourth factor, *Receptive Attitude*, was determined by other factors related to image and perceptions.

Table 2: Intercorrelations among Factors

| | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 | Factor 4 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Factor 1 <i>Images about community change</i> | 1.000 | -.121 | -.310 | -.289 |
| Factor 2 <i>Perceptions of Islam</i> | -.121 | 1.000 | .237 | .491 |
| Factor 3 <i>Willingness to achieve mutual understanding</i> | -.310 | .237 | 1.000 | .484 |
| Factor 4 <i>Receptive attitude</i> | -.289 | .491 | .484 | 1.000 |

4.2 Determinants of Perceptions and Attitudes Toward Islam and Muslims

Next, using the four factors obtained through factor analysis, we developed a causality model that positioned *Receptive Attitude* as the dependent variable and verified its goodness of fit. The perceived threat hypothesis was also validated during this analytical process.

Figure 1 is a path diagram that shows the non-standardized solutions in the paths of the model created. The paths and coefficients are all statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). First, as criteria to evaluate the fit of the data for this model, indices including chi-square test,⁹ goodness-of-fit index (GFI),¹⁰ adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), comparative fit index (CFI),¹¹ and root mean square error of

approximation (RMSEA)¹² were calculated. The results of the causality model fit indices for receptive attitudes toward Islam and Muslims were: GFI = 0.95, AGFI = 0.92, CFI = 0.96, and RMSEA = 0.06. These index values are generally in a tolerable range to be a model fit.

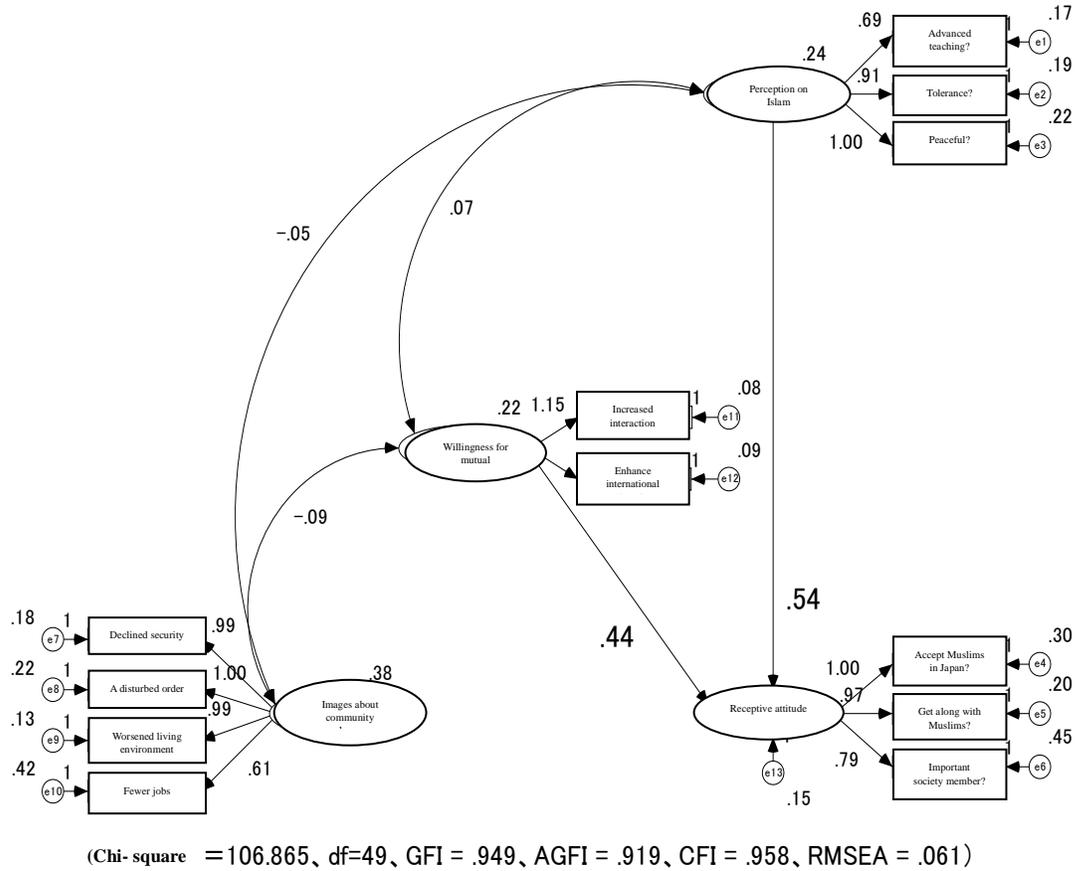


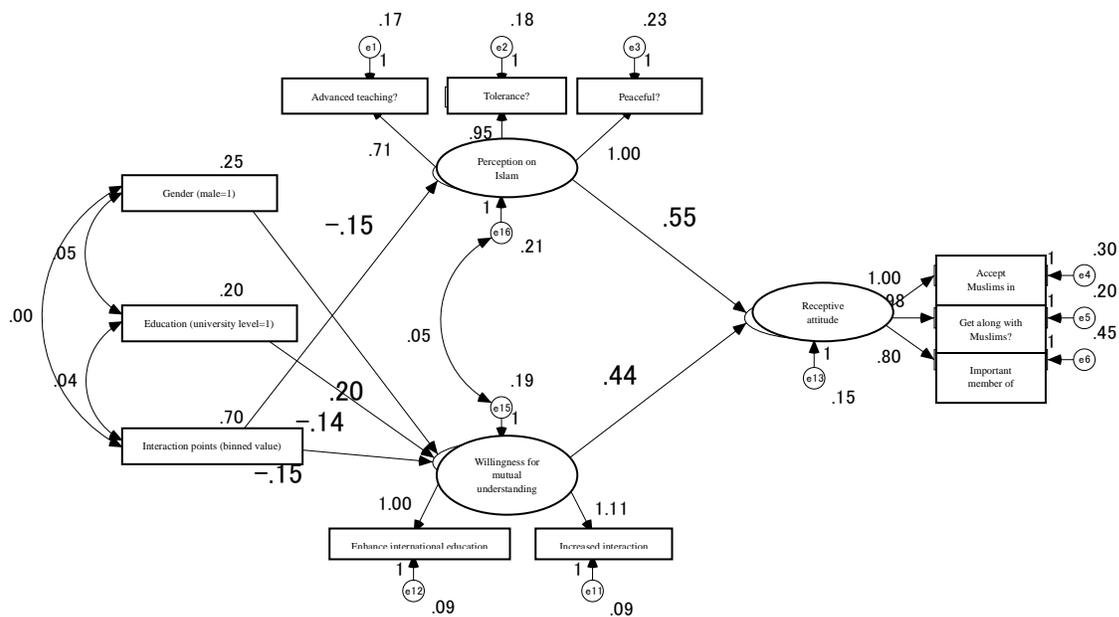
Figure 1: Causality Model for Receptive Attitude towards Islam and Muslims (Non-standard analysis)

We then verified the path coefficients (the strength of the relationship) for each factor and corresponding observed variables, and found that their relationships were adequate, with no extremely low values. Next, we looked at the causal relationships between the constructs (factors) and found that the path coefficient from *Willingness to Achieve Mutual Understanding* to *Receptive Attitude* was 0.44, and the path coefficient from *Perceptions of Islam* to *Receptive Attitude* was 0.54, which confirmed that the higher the willingness to achieve a mutual understanding with foreigners and the more positive the attitude toward Islam without feeling threatened by it, the higher the acceptance of Islam and Muslims. On the other hand, according to the results of the exploratory factor analysis, *Images about Community Change* had a relatively low correlation with *Receptive Attitude* and also didn't show a statistically significant path to *Receptive Attitude*.

Next, we recoded relevant variables into dummy variables and introduced them into the model as

exogenous variables in order to verify the personal attribute hypothesis and contact hypothesis. The attribute variables introduced into the model included gender (male = 1), age (actual age), education (university level = 1), occupation (white collar = 1), and annual household income (6 million yen or more = 1). In addition, the interaction score variable, which is the total number of places where one interacts with foreigners (divided into four groups based on standard deviation ± 1), and the information exposure score variable, which is the total number of media sources from which one obtains information about Islam (grouped in the same way), were introduced into the model to verify the hypotheses.

Figure 2 is a non-standardized path coefficient diagram showing the effect of each attribute variable. The fit indices for this model were GFI = 0.93, AGFI = 0.90, CFI = 0.93, and RMSEA = 0.06. The path coefficients were all statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).



(Chi-Square = 118.067, df=37, GFI = .941, AGFI = .894, CFI = .909, RMSEA = .083)

Figure 2: Causality Model of Receptive Attitude towards Islam and Muslims after Introducing Attribute Variables (Non-standard analysis)

Looking at all personal attribute variables entered into the model, we found that age, occupation, and household income had no significant effect on perceptions of Islam and Muslims or the images of foreigners. The variables that did have a significant effect were gender, education, and the interaction score. First, the coefficient of gender and *Willingness to Achieve Mutual Understanding* was 0.20, indicating the tendency that males were less willing to understand each other. Second, the coefficient of education, which was -0.14, suggested that the higher the education, the more willing people are to understand each other. Last, the interaction score indicated that the greater the number of places where

one interacts with foreigners, the more positive the perception the individual has of Islam (coefficient = -0.15) and the more willing they are to reach a mutual understanding with foreigners (coefficient = -0.15). We also found that the number of media sources used to obtain information had no significant influence.

5. Discussion

As was discussed above, this analysis has verified the hypotheses regarding determinants of perceptions and attitudes toward Islam and Muslims that have been presented in various previous studies. These include the perceived threat hypothesis, the personal attributes hypothesis, and the contact hypothesis. In the following section, we discuss each of these hypotheses according to the results of this analysis.

First, the perceived threat hypothesis by Quillian, Wike, et al., which explains receptive attitudes based on perceptions of Islam and Muslims, was validated when the model explaining *Receptive Attitude* by *Perceptions of Islam* and *Willingness to Achieve Mutual Understanding* was verified and found to be valid. In addition, based on the earlier described results of the exploratory factor analysis, *Images about Community Change* had a relatively low correlation with *Receptive Attitude* and had no significant path to *Receptive Attitude*. In other words, it demonstrated that there was no direct relationship between community change caused by foreigners and receptive attitudes toward Islam and Muslims.

That being said, at this stage we cannot completely discount the possibility of finding a relationship between images about community change caused by foreigners and receptive attitudes toward Islam and Muslims.

In this study, 90% of the respondents in the target area had no contact with Muslims. Therefore, in the areas where the frequency of contacts with foreigners (including Muslims) is high, where Muslims directly represent typical foreigners in the community, or where there are situations in which Muslims are identified as being closely related to the formation of images about community changes, the model identified in this analysis could possibly alter. These kinds of alterations due to different circumstances should be considered as items that will need to be verified in the future.

Next, of all the attributes indicated by Bevelander et al. in the personal attributes hypothesis (gender, place of residence, age, education, socioeconomic status, direct contacts, and so on) only gender, education, and direct contacts were found to be correlated with perceptions of Islam and Muslims. First, the findings for gender were the same as in previous studies; that females are more willing to mutually understand foreigners and are therefore more receptive to accepting Islam and Muslims. The results for education in this study also showed the same tendencies found in previous studies: The higher the education level, the more receptive the attitude. On the other hand, this analysis indicated that income, which is part of socioeconomic status, and age, do not have a significant impact on the perceptions and attitudes toward Islam and Muslims. These results suggest the need to continue verifying this hypothesis in multiple areas, including evaluating the relationship between attitudes and place of residence.

Finally, we will discuss the contact hypothesis that has been put forward by Allport et al. In this study, the results of the analysis of this hypothesis indicate that the more opportunities a person has to directly interact with foreigners—not just Muslims—the more likely it is that this person will have a positive

perception of Islam and Muslims. This supports the findings of previous studies. In addition, it was apparent from the analysis that the effects of direct contact are not limited to the perception of Islam and Muslims; the greater the frequency of direct contact, the more likely it is that people are willing to achieve a mutual understanding with foreigners and have a positive image of community changes. These results support the contact hypothesis, which states that contacts and interactions with foreigners increase tolerance of foreigners. However, the finding from our analysis, that “direct contact affects the *Willingness to Achieve Mutual Understanding* with foreigners and the perceptions of Islam, which, in turn, ultimately determines receptive attitudes of people,” helps to clarify the process through which this influence occurs in the contact hypothesis and refines the findings of previous studies. It also became apparent that the number of media sources for obtaining information had no significant influence. This finding must be considered in conjunction with the study by Matsumoto mentioned earlier, which reported that the higher the information intake, the less positive the perception of Islam and Muslims. In addition to the need to verify personal attribute factors, such as gender, age, and income, as well as the relationship between the image of community change and receptive attitudes, there is a need to develop a framework that will enable us to verify even more findings.

6. Conclusion

Based on the consideration that there is currently not a sufficient body of research on the relationship between Muslim communities and local communities in Japan, the purpose of this research was to clarify the determinants of the perceptions and attitudes toward Islam and Muslims in a local community in Japan. In this paper, we examined the various determinants, which previous studies had only considered in a piecemeal manner, by incorporating an integrated viewpoint into our analyses. As a result, the findings we obtained and presented in the previous section can be considered to corroborate research on non-Muslim Japanese society in the field of “Islam in Japan.” Therefore, in the future there is a need to conduct more sophisticated modeling while continuing to validate hypotheses by including data from other regions.

We also need to point out some limitations in our analyses. One is that the analyses in this paper are within the scope of studies of foreigners. The survey was designed to study foreigners and the questions about the perceptions of Japanese citizens were structured within this context. Therefore, a structural limitation is that the sections about Islam and Muslims can only be analyzed and interpreted in terms of them being a foreign country or culture. As such, in the future it may be necessary to construct a questioning framework on the relationship between Islamic society in Japan, including Japanese Muslims, and non-Islamic society.

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[Notes]

¹ Visiting Fellow, Institute for Multiethnic and Multi-generational Societies, Waseda University

² Visiting Fellow, Advanced Research Center for Human Sciences, Waseda University

³ The questionnaire was originally developed by Stouffer (1955). “Muslin Extremist” was added as a response choice in 2008.

⁴ Matsumoto conducted his study among high school students; however, he presumes that the overly circulated one-sided information also has the effect of causing the general Japanese population to develop negative images toward Islam. (Matsumoto 2006: 202). Nevertheless, the question, “How many negative images do ordinary Japanese people have of Islam?” has not been fully examined in any study, including this one.

⁵ Based on “Population Statistics: Population and the Number of Households by District (Monthly Data)” by Gifu City Hall.

⁶ The need for interaction in the local community has also been raised from the Muslim side and initiatives have been carried out to position the mosque as a cultural center and to facilitate interactions with local residents. When the Bab al-Islam Gifu Masjid & the Muslim Culture Center held a grand opening ceremony, invitations were extended to Japanese guests, including the Vice Governor, kindergarten principals in the area, and community leaders, in addition to the ambassadors of various countries. In his speech, the director of the mosque explained the role of mosque to be a place for Muslims to interact with members of Japanese society and expressed the intent that it would function as a point of contact with Japanese society. (Recorded by the authors at the opening ceremony of the mosque on July 27, 2007.)

⁷ Questions about perceptions on Islam were rated based on a 4-point scale, where 1 means “I completely agree” and 4 means “I completely disagree.” One of the questions regarding attitudes towards Muslims, “What do you think of Muslims (adherents of Islam) coming into Japan?” was rated based on a 5-point scale, where 1 means “I completely approve” and 5 means “I completely disapprove,” while the other question about attitudes towards Muslims “Do you think you can personally get along with Muslims (adherents of Islam)?” was rated based on a 4-point scale, where 1 means “I’m sure I could” and 4 means “I’m not sure I could.” Answers to the questions about mutual understanding with foreigners were obtained based on a 4-point scale, where 1 means “I completely agree” and 4 means “I completely disagree.”

⁸ The Promax rotation method was utilized in order to confirm the correlations between the factors.

⁹ Chi-square test: the value is 0 when the model fits the data perfectly.

¹⁰ GFI: as with the r-squared of regression analysis, the value is 1 when the model fits the data perfectly.

¹¹ CFI: defining the independence model = 0 and saturated model = 1, it represents the relative position of the max ($\chi^2 - df$, 0) of the current model. A value 0.95 or higher is considered a good fit, while 0.9 or lower is considered a poor fit.

¹² RMSEA: a chi-square statistic that has been standardized based on the sample size and degree of freedom. A value between 0 and 0.05 is a good fit; 0.1 or higher is a poor fit.



付記：

本論文は、以下の論文を英訳したものである。

岡井宏文・石川基樹

「地域住民におけるムスリム・イスラーム意識・態度の規定要因
—岐阜市調査の事例より—」

『イスラーム地域研究ジャーナル』 Vol. 3 (2011.3) 36—46 頁。

平成 21~23 年度日本学術振興会科学研究費補助金（基盤 C）による調査研究「滞日ムスリムの生活世界における多文化政策の影響と評価」（課題番号 21530567）による研究成果の一部である。