

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
SCHREYER HONORS COLLEGE

DEPARTMENTS OF ASIAN STUDIES AND APPLIED LINGUISTICS

THE PERCEPTIONS OF HALAL FOOD IN SOUTH KOREA

BANAN MOHAMMAD ALTHOWAINI  
SPRING 2019

A thesis  
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for a baccalaureate degree in English Literature  
with honors in Korean

Reviewed and approved by the following:

Susan G. Strauss  
Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics, Asian Studies, Education, Linguistics  
Thesis Supervisor

Sharon Childs  
Assistant Teaching Professor in Applied Linguistics  
Second Reader

Jessamyn R. Abel  
Assistant Professor of Asian Studies  
Honors Adviser

\* Signatures are on file in the Schreyer Honors College

## **ABSTRACT**

This study documents the perceptions of halal food in South Korea. South Korea, through the Korean Wave phenomenon, began to gain popularity and become noticeable by many countries around the world which, as result, allowed South Korea to export its culture. In return, South Korea is able to import various cultures due to the rise of tourism. The importation of cultures can come in various forms, but in this study, it focuses on food as a form of cultural importation, particularly with halal food. While “halal” is an Islamic guideline on what is permissible to do, think, have, and consume, the idea that there are Muslims around the world means that halal food can virtually represent all kinds of cuisines of various countries and cultures. Since South Korea is currently working on improving its tourism marketing, one of which by meeting Muslims’ religious needs, the importation of halal food is becoming evident. Hence, for the study, I have gathered South Koreans’ perception on halal food by analyzing YouTube videos. I collected the data from the videos, coded them, grouped the themes, and then discussed the patterns I have found.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	v
1.0 Introduction .....	1
2.0 Globalization of South Korea.....	2
2.1. Cultural Diffusion.....	2
2.2. The Influence of the Financial Crisis of 1997 on South Korea .....	3
2.3. Korean Wave and Cultural Diffusion .....	4
3. Halal Food as a Form of Ethnic Food.....	8
3.1 Meaning of Halal. ....	8
3.2. Halal as an Exotic Food. ....	11
4.0. Muslims in Korea.....	14
4.1. Timeline of Muslim Presence in South Korea .....	14
5.0 The Project: The Perception of Halal Food in South Korea .....	18
5. 1 Data .....	18
5.2 Methodology .....	22
6.0 Findings .....	23
6.1. Theme 1: Halal Marketing .....	23
6.2. Exotic Experiences and Exploring Various Cultures via Food .....	33
6.3. Familiarity and Connection with Korean Food .....	42
6.4 Religious Convictions and Connections .....	46
7.0 Conclusion .....	51
8.0 Bibliography .....	52

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. A “Muslim Friendly” Sticker	28
Figure 2. Korean Explanation of "Halal" Dishes	28
Figure 3. "Halal Guys" Certificates	30
Figure 4. Halal Sushi Restaurant	39
Figure 5. Interior Design of the Turkish Restaurant	40
Figure 6. Traditional Turkish Tea Cup	40
Figure 7. American-Mediterranean Style Restaurant	41
Figure 8. Plates and Qurans	50
Figure 9. Pictures of Masjids	51

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. List of Videos with Descriptions	22
Table 2. Theme of Halal Marketing	26
Table 3. Theme of Exotic Experience	37
Table 4. Theme of Familiarity and Connection with Korean Food	44
Table 5. Religious Convictions and Connections	48

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, all praise and thanks is due to Allah, God. With His guidance and blessings, I was able to continue you my academic journey and complete my degree at Pennsylvania State University.

I am grateful for my thesis supervisor, Dr. Susan Strauss. There were countless long hours and nights that were spent in the creation of this thesis. Had it not been the continuous patience, guidance and dedication of Dr. Strauss to push me to develop this thesis in the best quality it can be, especially with the tight time frame we had to work with, the quality of the thesis would not have been as it is right now. Even moments where I felt like I lost hope and motivation, she never failed to successfully find the light that would keep me guided and going in the completion of this project. Her kindness is not just seen -- it is also felt; her guidance come from her sincere wishes to see her advisees succeed in their discipline and projects. Thank you Dr. Strauss, for being who you are and for your exceptional support and love. I will always appreciate you for your selfless guidance. Thank you so much.

I would also like to share my gratitude to Dr. Sharon Childs for her continuous support as well, and for always being a mother figure when I felt like I doubted myself and when I was faced with a problem. I am grateful to have her be a part of my thesis journey and to be a part of my last major accomplishment at Pennsylvania State University. I appreciate Dr. Jessamyn Abel, too, for also generously accepting to be my honor's advisor and for helping me with my thesis work as well.

Thirdly, I would like to thank my family and friends for their continuous support. Thank you Mama and Baba for always pushing me to do the best in my education, and for always giving me the best platforms to strive for the dreams and education I desire. Thank you for being so patient and selfless just so that I can be happy. I will always be grateful for you both.

Finally, I would like to also express special appreciation to my sweet little sister, Bayan. The amount of emotional support that this young and kind soul has given me is immeasurable. During my lowest times she has never failed to be there for me. Despite being so young (16 years old in the year of this thesis' publication), she is so wise beyond her age, so intelligent, kind, and beautiful, inside and out.

**Bayan — I did it...WE did it!**

## **1.0 Introduction**

Since the financial crisis of 1997, South Korea's cultural demographic began to change in ways that were unexpected, giving the opportunity for South Korea to not only export their culture, but also import culture as well. This interchange inevitably introduces and weaves in diversity within the once homogeneous country in ways that are both non-invasive and accepting. In addition, the rise of the Korean Wave gave South Korea visibility around the world. The Korean Wave is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that refers to the successful economic and worldwide spread of Korean entertainment and pop culture. The phenomenon introduced many opportunities, one of which will involve the focus of this paper: the importation of halal ethnic food. Understanding what has led to South Korea's importation of a Muslim dietary practice and how South Korea has come to market it will be analyzed in this paper. The Korean Wave was not simply a unidirectional sharing of culture. By virtue of the Korean Wave, many foreign tourists, including Muslims, began to visit South Korea. With the influx of so many visitors from abroad also came a variety of ethnic foods, including halal foods. I will explain the impetus behind halal food importation and marketing. Then, I will provide data that reflect how South Koreans perceive halal food in their own country. My data are comprised of five videos that center on multiple perspectives of South Koreans on halal food. In the video data, I identified a number of intriguing themes regarding halal marketing and exotic food tasting, and I will discuss those observations and themes in detail in Sections 5 and 6.

## 2.0 Globalization of South Korea

### 2.1. Cultural Diffusion.

The Korean Wave, while largely present in East Asian countries, has reached South Asian, South-East Asian, and Middle Eastern countries as well, which are all areas that have a large Muslim presence. According to Yu, Park, and Park (2015), the way the Korean Wave functions is threefold via *diffusion*: 1) diffusion where it is controlled by strong corporations and governments known as centralized diffusion: diffusion that is aided by “grass-root communities,” coined as decentralized diffusion, 2) economic diffusion, which interweaves the exposure of new practices and products in order to receive economic gain and 4) cultural and political diffusion which involves the development and exposure of “ideas, practices and artistic forms, aimed at not just economic goals, but also cultural and political influence” (Xu, Park, and Park, 2015, p 44).

As it pertains to this paper, cultural diffusion is evident in the Korean Wave phenomenon, which spreads movies, music, fashion, food and games globally. In particular, global diffusion of national cultures has been useful aiding the formation of the national portrayal and broadening of markets for regional cultural offerings (Otmazgin, 2008; Xu, Park, and Park, 2015). For instance, given how cultural diffusion can function via national governments, this can be applied to South Korea by examining how the Korean government strategically places cultural policies that purposely encourage the promotion of Korean popular culture *globally* (Jin, 2006; Xu, Park, and Park, 2015). In addition, as hypothesized by “world-system” theorists, the influential spread of a country’s national culture is highly correlated with the country’s power politically and economically, which, as Xu, Park, and Park (2015) have underscored, “shapes a core-peripheral cultural influence sphere, with the economically and politically powerful countries, such as the



United States and European countries, in the core” (p. 44). Similarly, decentralized diffusion can be done with the support of ordinary communities, and that can be seen with the Korean Wave when considering how local Koreans participate in online fan clubs that are even reaching a global audience as well (Lee, Bai, and Busser, 2019).

## **2.2. The Influence of the Financial Crisis of 1997 on South Korea**

It was from the financial crisis of 1997 that South Korea first started to experience globalization from a newly found perspective. Because of the 1997 financial crisis, the country was forced to reform its strict and rigid economy that avoided the neoliberal way of global capitalism. This change was especially difficult as taking on a neoliberal platform would greatly upset South Korea’s strong Confucian value system that influenced many aspects of Korean life, including social behaviors, expectations, and structures (Chang, Seok, and Baker 2009). As Lee and Lee (2015) underscored, “Korea's state-mobilized export-driven growth model was forced to accept the neoliberal conditions of globalization-market democratization and minimization of state involvement-imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a condition of its bailout of \$58 billion in 1997” (p. 133). Hence, as a result, the exponential economic rise of the country has provided South Korea with powerful economic nationalism, which inevitably became the threads that were needed to guide Korea to its modernization regulation since the 1997 financial crisis (Kim and Kim, 2015). The economic and central diffusion were prevalent and played a crucial and timely role in the late 1990s for being the catalyst for establishing the start of the Korean Wave phenomenon. It was because of the 1997 financial crisis that the Korean Wave phenomenon began. In addition, globalization was only possible after South Korea gained the attention of regional countries, particularly gaining their attention for being able to serve their high demand for re-defining modern music (more discussion about this in Section

2.3). According to Yun, Lee, and Lim (2002), the 1997 financial crisis was the impetus for Korea to radically restructure its economy. Included in this restructuring was Korea's investment in Information Technology (IT), and the "IT industry grew from 8.6 percent of GDP in 1997 to 13% in 2000" (p. 9). With the increase of broadband connections and high speed internet came the dramatic upward shift in international telecommunications in South Korea.

As Xu, Park, and Park (2015) have discussed, cultural discount theory indicates that cultural diffusion happens more naturally among regional neighboring countries who share common and/or similar historical and linguistic connections. Hence, the level of popularity and attention that Korean pop culture has received all over Asia is credited to the likeness Korean pop culture has with Japanese popular culture which, alone, had great cultural influence for a long period of time all across Asia.

### **2.3. Korean Wave and Cultural Diffusion**

The big question is why and how South Korea, a country of a little over 50 million people, could have such great impact across the globe. This is noteworthy when we consider American pop culture, Hollywood stars, and world-renowned American singers who would naturally be overshadowing Korean pop culture artists. As noted earlier by Xu, Park and Park (2015) this assumed overshadow is as a result of U.S's powerful economic and political power that allowed them to spread their national culture at global level (Xu, Park, and Park, 2015). What allowed South Korea to not be overshadowed is highly correlated to cultural diffusion. Even though South Korea is not as powerful as global giants, like the United States, it cannot be ignored how much the popularity of Korean pop culture is broadening in continents beyond Asia (Kim and Kim, 2011; Siegel and Chu, 2010), to the extent where it even reaches Latin America, whose culture is greatly different from South Korean culture (Han, 2017; Xu, Park, and Park

2015). The Korean Wave allowed South Korea to have major economic accomplishments, which, as result, gave South Korea high economic nationalism. South Korea inevitably challenged “world-system” theorists’ hypothesis on how one’s country’s worldwide influence is correlated with the country’s high economic *and* political power in respect to other countries (Xu, Park, and Park, 2015). There are multiple influences that have paved the way to allow the Korean Wave to be where it is standing today. As mentioned earlier, the 1997 financial crisis was what started it, but multiple influences helped grow the phenomenon as well. The first influence was the high demand in re-defining music in Asia in general. There was a strong demand for modern music to be composed by Asian artists themselves. However, given cultural norms and social taboos of Asian countries, there was a need to balance the execution and making of modern music for it to be well received and invested by large entertainment companies regionally but also internationally. Hence, South Korea was able to execute this convergence successfully. As Lie (2012) explained:

Not only had there been a global convergence of pop-culture norms, exemplified most clearly in lyrics - the idea of romantic love, for example - but also in the very nature of acceptable and accessible musical performance - the percussive beats, the diatonic scale, syllabic singing, the fusion of voice and dance etc. - across East Asia. Precisely at [a] time when enrichment allowed greater demands of the youth market for cultural consumption, national barriers were lowered. (p. 355)

There were still Asian consumers who were loyal to American artists but there were also consumers who valued their local Asian artists as well. The key difference between American and Korean pop culture is the notion that Korean pop culture offers entertainment that is appropriate (in the sense of conforming to such Confucian values as modesty) yet creative, appealing, and high quality. Korean pop culture was essentially able to fill in “the gap left vacant by the urbanized and sexualized American performers - celebrating sex and violence, replete

with tattoos - and the staid, tried popular music of local, national performers - in effect, their parents' music" (Lie, 2012, p. 355). K-pop offers a take on a world that is so ideal, exhibiting no violence nor social discrimination, issues, or hardships. In addition, Korean stars represent themselves in respectful and gentle behaviors and nearly perfect appearance -- an ideal that is universally appealing to every ethnicity and culture around the world (Lie, 2012).

## **2.4 Cultural and Economical Diffusion via Tourism**

### **2.4.1 Halal Marketing**

One of the major themes that resonates within this paper is the idea of globalization. As globalization becomes more and more prevalent, the global tourism industry has also expanded and has become a competitive market. South Korea began to carefully consider and understand the diverse groups of travelers' interests, requests, needs, and behaviors in order to successfully develop itself into an attractive tourist destination (Shafaei and Mohamed, 2015). That said, one of the major important recognitions that researchers and marketing management firms have made was the consideration of halal tourism and how halal food can be a worthy market (Battour and Ismail, 2016). The rapid rise of Muslim populations around the world is partly why there has been heightened interest in establishing stronger halal tourism (Battour and Ismail, 2016). In fact, it has been estimated that Muslims make up thirty percent of the world population, and beyond that, it is expected to continue rising (Shafaei and Mohamed, 2015).

In regard to South Korea's margins relating to halal tourism, it makes up to roughly 5.3% in respect to its total inbound tourism market (Han, Al-Ansi, Olya and Ki, 2019). However, despite the small margins, Muslim travelers are expected to reach around 1.3 million by 2020 especially with the influence of the Korean Wave (KTO, 2015). Additionally, with the number of

incoming Muslim tourists, South Korea is expected to make an estimated tourism revenue of 40 billion US dollars, and through production costs, South Korea's tourism profit will be 20 billion US dollars (Han, Al-Ansi, Olya and Ki, 2019). Also, with these rises and hopeful changes regarding the halal tourism market, South Korea is expecting that it will create over 80,000 jobs that are either directly or indirectly related to tourism in South Korea (Han, Al-Ansi, Olya and Ki, 2019).

The presence of the high competition regarding halal tourism destinations in South Korea is especially evident when comparing with other non-Islamic countries. This essentially pushes South Korea to improve on what they can offer to Muslim travelers and how they can continue to attract them. According to the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI, 2018) report, South Korea does not even make it to the top 10 most Muslim-friendly countries. One of the problems that holds South Korea behind is the lack of understanding of what halal means and how that can be translated through halal tourism. According to Henderson (2016), food items that Koreans label or market as “halal friendly” actually tend to be inadequate to Muslim tourists. The services in the hotels, restaurants, and shopping places that international travelers often visit are hardly available for Muslim travelers. This can be explained by Kim et al.'s (2015) discussion on the influence of cultural and national backgrounds on tourists' choice of traveling destination:

The evidence that cultural or national backgrounds influence tourist preferences is convincing because tourists develop familiarity with social or cultural practices by learning or absorbing language, history, philosophy, ideology, or religion (Chong, 2008; Testa, 2002). The above findings are congruent with the influence of social norms or religion on destination preferences. (p. 7)

Hence, for Muslims, they may prefer to choose to travel to locations with easy access to masjids or places that integrates prayer rooms in them. These are some of the inadequacies that South Korea inevitably fail to consistently provide despite their efforts to start incorporating various

accommodations for Muslim tourists. This failure could be due to the lack of coherent understanding regarding the religious beliefs of Muslim tourists, which is cited to be a common occurrence. In fact, there were multiple complaints cited from Muslim tourists regarding the food, adjustments, shopping and so forth when they were in South Korea, such as ones regarding “Halal Friendly” labels and the absence of prayer rooms and masjids (Henderson, 2016, Kim et al., 2015). While South Korea is struggling to meet halal requirements, the country acknowledges the great benefits that will come when they successfully employ halal products and services appropriately. The idea of halal appears to be an excellent tool to help South Korea expand their tourism market, and, as result, increase their tourism revenue.

### **3. Halal Food as a Form of Ethnic Food**

#### **3.1 Meaning of Halal.**

While halal is being perceived as a marketing tool, halal, from a decentralized diffusion point of view, is also being viewed as a form of ethnic food exposure to local Korean residents. In fact, the perception of halal food in South Korea seems to be a combination of a label regarding the “others,” and yet one that can be associated in ethnic cuisines and hence to a degree welcomed by ordinary curious Koreans. This is especially the case when understanding the meaning of “halal” and what forms of cooking style it entails.

The term halal in Arabic refers to something being lawful or permissible within Islamic rulings. While it is most commonly associated with food, it branches beyond what is simply edible, as it revolves around every aspect of a practicing Muslim’s life. For Muslims, it becomes the “laws” of their life, as they make the serious commitment to follow the rules of Islam in various aspects of their lives, including how they dress, how they behave, act, how and what they believe, how they treat various relationships, as well as how they earn, spend, and deal with

money. In regard to food and preparation of halal food, this includes multiple micro aspects, including parts that start from the farm and the live animal itself, how it is fed, up to how it is set up on the dining table of a halal-practicing Muslim household. (Al-Qaradawi, 1999; Soon, Chandia, Joe, 2017).

Starting from a basic standpoint, to consume anything that is considered “halal” it must be free of any ingredients that have been strictly noted as unlawful to be consumed, which is also described as “haram” (Al-Qaradawi, 1999; Soon, Chandia, Joe, 2017). According to the guidelines of the Quran, the holy book of Islam, there is only a small list of things that are “haram” in Islam, hence, anything beyond that list is considered halal (*Qur'an*, 2:168, cited in Chandia, 2015). Food that are considered haram could be coherently understood when broken down into groups, including all the products that have traces of anything from those food groups. Beyond swine, which is a commonly known prohibited food group in Islam, the consumption of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, blood, carnivorous mammals, reptiles and food contaminated with any form of impurity, such as urine, manure, and infectious fluids are impermissible. These kinds of avoidances are easy to apply, but halal practice in food becomes most controversial when it comes to the slaughtering methods and processing of permissible animals (Bergeaud-Blackler, 2007). The majority of the debates stems from the fact there are various schools of thought on Islam and how to practice it, since the guidelines regarding this information are described vaguely in the Quran (Soon, Chandia, Joe, 2017).

### **3.1.1 Slaughtering Method**

Given various schools of thought on the slaughtering of an animal the “correct” way, there has been common ground on multiple steps when it comes to slaughtering meat in an Islamically lawful way, and these include five major steps. Firstly, according to the Shari’ah --

which refers to the laws of Islam, describing the secular and religious duties as well as the penalties of breaking various micro and macro rules -- it states that the animal must be a halal (permissible) animal (for consumption). In extreme cases, however, such as if a famine spreads, or if a person is experiencing serious starvation, then they are allowed to eat what would be considered haram/unlawful to be consumed (Samiullah, 1982).

The second step is that the animal must be slaughtered with care, such that electrocuting, shooting, boiling, and beating the animal are impermissible (EU, 1993). The reason it is haram is because it connects with one of the rulings of Islam regarding the general treatment of animals and how it is unlawful to torture them. As suggested by the Shari'ah law, slaughtering should be done in as humane a manner as possible to minimize the animal from suffering (Al-Qaradawi, 1999). An example provided by prophet Mohammed is that he would urge that those who slaughter should do so in the "best possible manner," which translates to having the slaughtering knife sharpened after being used on each animal, to slaughter the animal out of the sight of the other animals, and to allow the animal that will be slaughtered to be fed and well rested prior to it being slaughtered (Samiullah, 1982).

The third step is that while the animal gets slaughtered, the name of God (Allah) must be said. Beyond a Muslim, it is permissible for the recitation to be executed by a Jew or Christian in his or her own language. In the Quran, it states that meat that has been slaughtered without saying the name of God is considered haram: "Ant eat not of that whereon Allah's name hath not been mentioned, for Lo! it is abomination. Lo! the devils do inspire their minions to dispute with you. But if you obey the, ye will be in truth idolaters" (6:122; Samiullah, 1982).

The fourth step relates to slaughtering the animal in the manner of allowing for proper drainage of blood as specifically required within the Islamic teachings (given that blood



consumption is haram). To slaughter, it must be in the form of cutting the throat, specifically cutting the windpipe, esophagus and the major two jugular veins all in one go to achieve the least pain for the animal (Riaz and Chaudry, 2004). The purpose of cutting the jugular veins is so that blood can be drained out of the animal's body. During this process, it is imperative that the spinal cord is not cut as it may interfere with the "nerve fibres to the heart [which] may be damaged during the process, causing cardiac arrest and hence stagnation of the blood in the blood vessels of the animal" (Samiullah, 1982, p. 76-77).

The final step is composed of multiple micro considerations. Firstly, the animals that will be slaughtered must be owned lawfully by the person and that the animal must be in good health and free of any impurities. When slaughtering, it should not be on a grave nor an idol, and the person who is slaughtering the animal should be a sane Muslim person or a Christian or Jewish person. Slaughtering is not allowed to be done by a person who is mentally challenged, a drunk person, nor a child. Finally, while not necessary, it is "desirable" that the animal faces the Qibla, the location of Mecca, during the entire slaughtering process (Riaz and Chaudry, 2004; Samiullah, 1982, p. 77).

### **3.2. Halal as Exotic Food**

In discussion of halal food, when putting these options in perspective with South Korea, it is important to understand it in regard to the presence of exotic food in the country in the past recent years. The idea of experiencing globalization through ethnic food became prominent especially when it has been observed that Western culture is quickly expanding and influencing cultures at fast rates (Bak, 2010). Furthermore, the idea of appreciating a variety of local practices and cultures have influenced people's values toward ethnic cuisine because it was an inexpensive and accessible form of exploring a different culture without actually being in the

country of the cuisines being consumed (Bak, 2010). As defined by Robertson (1995), the term to explain this phenomenon is “universalization of particularism,” which essentially means that a wide array of particular ethnic foods have become favored and well known within various areas in the world (p. 71). For example, this can be seen with sushi, which is widely known to come from Japanese cuisine, and it is highly favored by many around the world. Hence, Water’s (2001) discussion as cited in Bak (2010), points out that the major reasons that globalization is occurring in South Korea is due to the recognition that all diverse ethnic backgrounds and identities are equally important, especially ones that carry state-less and nation-less statuses. Hence, this is why the West has been so active in this regard as they have been opening ethnic restaurants of various kinds, such as the United States which has been gaining many incoming permanent immigrants for many years. This combination with the value of celebrating individuality in the U.S. further encourages the presence of ethnic restaurants, where such ethnic restaurants act as a bridge to create a sense of belonging and individuality within the U.S. for immigrants (Weller and Turkon, 2015).

Generally speaking, food tends to be an important signifier for “distinction” (Bak, 2010, p. 113). Bak (2010) cited Goody’s (1982) evaluation on the correlation of cuisine and identity throughout history. Goody has found that the idea of consuming food is known to hold an important meaning as food becomes a part of a person’s physical self. The correlation between food and one’s identity can be traced clearly through multiple examples. For instance, this relationship can be found in Judaism and its specific dietary restrictions (Kosher laws) as well as in Hinduism and their avoidance of beef. Likewise, Bak (2010) cited Appadurai’s (1988) explanation about that the new “middle-class Indian cuisine” had great influence in making a new unifying identity after the British colonialism (p. 113). So, given how deeply multifaceted

food can be, it can also be an excellent and inexpensive way for local Koreans to venture into the unknown and exotic side of things: something that was not Korean (Bak, 2010).

What is particularly appealing to Koreans on visiting ethnic restaurants is the idea that it still allows them to stay within their comfort zone while still being able to explore and have an “exotic” experience; it satisfies both expectations (Bak, 2010). This is generally the case with all ethnic restaurants around the world: they allow for an experience that is “safe” and to a certain degree modified to fit the country’s locals’ taste (hence, in this case, Koreans’ taste). Thus, the exotic experience is a full package where the interior designs and decor are all also influenced by traces of the culture and history, and where there is a select menu of known and distinct dishes that are customized to a degree to suit the taste of Korean consumers (Bak, 2010). Through these steps, ethnic restaurants are able to successfully execute their brand in a way that will attract consumers, especially Koreans (Urry, 2002). Hence, in that regard, the experience that Korean customers have with ethnic restaurants is that of a distinctively unusual yet comfortable form of exoticism (Bak, 2010). So, naturally, their perspective of halal food is like any other ethnic food. Koreans do not think about its religious aspects nor does the term “halal” discourage them from eating it. However, it is important to note that upon understanding what halal means and understanding how it is not a set menu helps expose the idea that what may be labeled as “halal” could be virtually anything. In fact, Korean food can be halal (if they meet the halal guidelines), which makes it no different from the typical Korean comfort food that Koreans are so used to eating every day. Halal food can also be perceived as a hybrid, which supports Urry’s (2002) claim regarding suiting Korean local’s palates rather than staying authentic to a country’s original recipe for a specific dish. In a sense, it can be observed that it is through halal ethnic food that another form of cultural diffusion is evident. In fact, in this case, via the Korean Wave,

the importation of ethnic halal food in South Korea introduces diversity in the country which reflects and underscores the multifaceted phenomenon of the Korean Wave and how much it further influences the continuing growth of South Korea's national economy, encouraging more foreigners to connect with the country in ways that are unexpected but typically quite positive.

#### **4.0. Muslims in Korea**

##### **4.1. Timeline of Muslim Presence in South Korea**

Generally speaking, the general public of South Korea today is still unfamiliar with the religion of Islam, as it is only recently that it has been introduced to Koreans. South Korea has a very brief history with Islamic civilization on a cultural and economic level (Lee, 2012).

Between the 1500s to the 1900s, there were only a handful of artifacts that note the involvement and interactions of Muslims in the Korean peninsula. The lack of knowledge and understanding regarding Islam in South Korea could be due to the subconscious fear and discouragement of exterior influences that could sway Koreans from their ideology regarding nationalism -- which is centered on being one, pure, homogeneous ethnic group (Chung et al. 2011; Yim 1999).

However, things shifted in the 1950s when the South Korean war occurred. The U.N. joint armed forces had among them Turkish soldiers who started the presence of Muslims in South Korea today (Eum, 2017). This opened opportunities that allowed Muslim presence and for Muslims to practice their religion in South Korea as Muslim soldiers would offer Islamic services for other Muslim soldiers (Eum, 2017). It was also through the oil crisis of the 1970s, where South Koreans began to grow interest in the Middle East as well as its predominant religion -- Islam ("Seoul Metropolitan Government", 1996). Koreans, prior to the 1970s, viewed Islam as something foreign -- having little to no knowledge about it due to the lack of interactions with Muslims in South Korea in the past. Due to the 1991 Gulf war, many Muslims, seeking refuge

and safety, immigrated to countries that were stable and safe, such as South Korea (Eum, 2017). Hence, a number of immigrants were employed in the construction industry in the region during the 70s and 80s since South Korea was in need of labor workers. This worked well and to South Korea's mutual advantage because they viewed laborious jobs to be "dirty, difficult, and dangerous" for them to deal with (Eum, 2017). As a result, Muslim presence began to spark interest among some Koreans. Some Koreans even converted to Islam. According to Chung et al. (2011) and Oh (2007), in South Korea, there is an estimated of 30,000 ethnic Korean Muslims. However, despite the growing number, Islam and the culture it carries is still viewed as "foreign" and disconnected to the Korean culture due to South Korea's deep rooted ideology stemmed from a homogenous nationality and culture (Chung et al. 2011, p. 403; Oh 2007).

The start of a growing Muslim population began within the region of Itaewon, which is found in Yongsan district -- the center of Seoul, South Korea. The neighborhood of Itaewon is particularly distinct from other regions as it has been considered the "foreigners' territory" for many decades given how diverse it is (Song, 2014, p. 406). The reason why Itaewon is diverse is largely due to how, in the 1950s, the region began as a "service area" for soldiers and army workers who worked for the U.S. ("Seoul Metropolitan Government," 1996). As a result, the U.S. Army authority had strong influence that turned Itaewon into a distinct region that normalized English and the American dollar in its streets. In addition, the army's power even led to preventing male Korean residents from entering many of the bars and shops (Song, 2014). This combination of influences turned Itaewon into a foreigners' zone, where foreigners felt the freedom of expressing themselves as if they were in their own country of origin without feeling the need to follow the cultural social Korean rules. This was especially the case for Westerners (Choe 2003; Song, 2014). As Itaewon was transforming and South Korea was becoming more

and more involved with the Middle East, the conversation on building a masjid in Seoul was prompted. These conversations became a reality and the masjid was built in 1976 (Song, 2014). When the government did build the Islamic Central Masjid, the most evident location to have it was on a very high hill in Itaewon. Given the Masjid's tall and attractive Islamic building, the chosen location ensured the most minimal amount of fuel to be ignited by local Koreans (Song 2014). The geographic location that the South Korean government chose reflects concerns about whether local Koreans would approve of a decision like this. The government knew their people, so by having the Masjid put in a place that would be the least visited reflects that the government wanted to conceal Muslims and their place of worship. This could underscore the uncertain perspectives of Koreans on Muslims and their faith (Song, 2014).

However, as time passed, the images of Muslims have slowly been accepted and acknowledged in Seoul. In fact, in the 70s and 80s, the very first visitors and users of the Masjid were made up of visiting businessmen from the Middle East, Islamic countries' diplomats who were living in Seoul in order to work in their embassy area, and finally a small group of Korean Muslims (Song, 2014). They would often come together to the Masjid on Fridays during the noon prayer and/or often during the weekends; they would return again during the same times in the following weeks. These times and days often worked best for a lot of the Muslims since it did not interfere with their work hours. At the bare minimum, visitors from Islamic countries who were here for business purposes would join in the Friday noon large prayer as much as possible. Upon finishing, they briefly conversed among their fellow worshipers and then left the area. (Song, 2014)

Beyond businessmen and diplomats, however, a rise of foreign Muslim residents was seen near the end of the 1980s, when the first round of Southeast and South Asian immigrant

workers came to reside in Korea (Cho et al. 2008; Lee 2011). This had a noticeable influence on Itaewon's appearance as it began to change exponentially on a weekly basis, especially in the area around the Central Masjid. Many of the new Muslims, who were mostly blue-collar workers, resided around factories within the province of Kyung-gi, near Seoul. Hence, many of these Muslims were only able to visit the Central Masjid on Sundays given that that was the only work-free day they had during the week (Song, 2014). Since, their visits allowed them the uncommon opportunity to gather among their fellow countrymen, many would often stay after the prayers at the Masjid, chatting among one another and eating out together in the neighborhood. Hence, this sense of a growing Muslim community who gathered at large during specific days and times of the day actually initiated the start of halal restaurants in Seoul, South Korea. In fact, a handful of halal restaurants sprouted in Itaewon in the early 1990s, employing a few Muslims from South Asian countries (Song, 2014).

This, in return, has led to the growth in the number of Muslim immigrants working in Korea. Many of these immigrants would try to extend their time in Korea despite having a temporary resident status, as they started to witness the benefit they would receive in maximizing their economic opportunities in Itaewon as what they would be able to earn in their home countries (Song, 2014). Beyond that, however, new immigrants would continue to apply and work in South Korean factories since there was a need for manual workers. Thus, given the respective stabilization of Muslim immigrants, and their smooth adaptation and transitions among the Korean community, the environment surrounding the Islamic Central Masjid began to transform. A large number of Muslim people participated in the Friday noon ritual prayers, which, in return, had a lot of them occupying the surrounding streets that led to the Masjid. These streets began to be filled with many halal stores, restaurants and Islamic book stores,

which also displayed the flags of different Muslim countries and Arabic words on the signboards. Many local Seoul natives began to refer to this neighborhood as the "the Muslims' street" of Itaewon (Song, 2014, p. 408).

## **5.0 The Project: The Perception of Halal Food in South Korea**

Due to the existence of Muslim residents, Muslim tourists, and halal restaurants in South Korea, I undertook a project to learn more about how South Koreans perceive halal in their own country. To that end, I located a number of YouTube videos to view and analyze. In section 5.1, I describe the data. In section 5.2, I explain my methodology, and in section 6 provides the findings, which is broken down and discussed by themes.

### **5.1 Data**

The data that I collected and analyzed are YouTube videos made by native South Koreans. The content of the videos includes a mixture of Koreans tasting halal food, visiting halal restaurants, and answering questions regarding their thoughts on halal food. The ages of the speakers in the videos range from 21-30 years old. In fact, the majority of the videos on YouTube regarding Koreans and halal food are made by Koreans within this age range. There were no videos featuring older speakers.

There are a total of five videos that have been analyzed. The shortest video is approximately three minutes long, and the longest is 15 minutes long. There is a variation in the styles of the videos. The more formal ones tend to be longer which makes them more informative, organized and planned with a specific goal in mind. The shorter ones, however, seem more personable, unplanned and raw (minimal editing and screen cuts). They seem to be more about sharing personal experiences. My purpose for including a mixture of both types of



styles is because of the variation that all the videos offer that would be meaningful to share and analyze regarding the perceptions of halal food in South Korea.

Regarding the longer videos, their stylistic differences allow for the content to focus on a particular theme, which is to market halal food in a particularly inclusive way. This inclusive element can be seen by how the longer videos attempt to make finding halal restaurants as something simple. Above that, those halal restaurants the videos introduce offer quality ingredients and service, suggesting that practicing a halal dietary lifestyle can be easily practiced in South Korea. In addition, for the two of the long videos, they are made by the same channel, “YallaKOREA.” The word “yalla” is a very popular loaded Arabic term that has many meanings. It originated from the Arabic word meaning "hurry up" or "come on," where “ya” is a vocative prepositive that is used to call or address someone (yallayallaarabic, 2013). The word can be used to show acceptance, confirmation, urgency, as a way to cheer, and finally to request to initiate or start something (yallayallaarabic, 2013). Given that the word has the noun “Korea” after it, “yalla” means “let us go” but in a way to cheer for Korea in an inclusive way since it would translate, “let’s go, Korea!” So, not only are the videos framed in an inclusive way, but even the videos’ channel is inclusive, too. This can be seen by how the channel is encouraging globalization just from code-switching, which is the mixing or alternation of two or more languages (Nilep, 2006), with one of the most popular slangs in Arabic. YallaKOREA is also known as, according to the videos, “a specialist travel agent for Muslims under the sponsorship of the city of Seoul.” The same videos are also sponsored by multiple local Korean tourism promotion groups. including Seoul Tourism Organization and I Seoul U. Additionally, the two videos from the channel come from the series they made called "The Halal Road" which is described to be "a journey to hidden halal foods in Seoul" (YallaKOREA, 2018).

The other longer video (Video #5) is in the style of a “vlog” (short for video blog) and has a “follow me around” kind of theme to it. The independent Youtuber, sweetandtastyTV, tends to produce videos on food tours of various kinds, where her focus is mostly on South Korea. So, she does walk-throughs of specific food options in South Korea. For example, she did a vegan food tour in Seoul, a seafood tour in Busan (a large southern port city), and a Myeongdong (a popular tourist province in Seoul) street food tour and much more. So, for the video I chose, she is touring the halal options available in South Korea, where she specifically chooses the region of Itaewon naturally, because, as mentioned in the literature by Song (2014), the region has a large Muslim population given how it is considered the “foreigners’ neighborhood.” Her video acts as a combination of a tour but also as a way to record her experience and reactions to the places she visits in Itaewon, so the raw elements are present despite it being goal-oriented with a kind of structure to it.

As for the shorter videos, they are both led by Koreans who are based in South Korea. For Video #1, their channel is called 스튜디오V (STUDIO V), and they are known to format their videos in a way where they, the producers, prepare questions that they ask a group of people (who will be the focus of the videos) with. Depending on their focus for each video, the participants they have are ordinary Koreans whom they use to have them try something they never had before. They would record their reactions and ask them follow-up questions about it. They also have other videos where they would select a specific group of Koreans who practice a particular discipline or occupation and ask them questions regarding things that people tend to be very curious about but would not feel comfortable asking them about. Thus, the questions tend to elicit interesting and personal information, making their videos engaging and popular. This channel is the most formal, given that it also has a production team. As for the second shorter video (Video #2), the style and idea are similar to the first video, but it is far less formal and the

videos produced are more raw. The channel is similar to Video #1's channel, but it does not have a production team, so it is more amateur-like. The channel is led by two Korean men that make videos recording Koreans' reactions on different things. Sometimes they would record their own reaction of different things as well. In this case, Video #2 is a recording of the channel creators' reaction to halal food. A summary of these datasets are found in Table 1.

Video number	Video Title	Channel Name	Length	Description
<b><u>Video #1</u></b>	What if Koreans try HALAL FOOD? [ STUDIO V ]	스튜디오V [ STUDIO V ]	4:44 min	Q/A style of where a couple of South Koreans are told that they will try a halal dish. Their reaction of them trying the dish was recorded, followed by questions about their experience on eating the dish, halal, and Islam. The video is in Korean.
<b><u>Video #2</u></b>	Koreans eat their first "Halal food" ever!	COCONUT Channel 코코넛 채널	3:13 min	Two South Korean men record on the streets of Itaewon, with the intention of sharing "Halal Street" and trying a halal dish for their own experience in learning about Islam. The video is in Korean.
<b><u>Video #3</u></b>	"SUSHI" GANGNAM STYLE With "IMAN" [ARB/ENG][THE HALAL ROAD-15]	YallaKOREA	15:00 min	A sponsor-led YouTube video that aims to market towards a Muslim audience by sharing with them a halal restaurant in South Korea. A Korean host and Muslim permanent resident lead the video and share their experience with eating at a halal sushi restaurant in Gangnam, Seoul, South Korea. The video is in Korean
<b><u>Video #4</u></b>	"HALALGUYS" in SEOUL With "IMAN" [ARB/ENG][THE HALAL ROAD-16]	YallaKOREA	13:22 min	Similar to Video #3, a sponsor-lead YouTube video that aims to market towards a Muslim audience by giving a walk through and "live" experience of what it is like eating in a halal restaurant. In this video, a Korean host and Muslim resident lead the video and record their experiences eating at a Mediterranean-American restaurant. The video is in Korean.

<b><u>Video</u></b> <b><u>#5</u></b>	Halal Food in South Korea	sweetandtastyTV	12:04 min	A vlog (video blog), led by a South Korean, of halal food finds and Islamic spots in Itaewon province. She visits a Turkish restaurant, masjid, and a halal dessert shop. The video is in English.
---	---------------------------	-----------------	-----------	--

**Table 1. List of Videos with Descriptions**

## 5.2 Methodology

The approach I took when analyzing the videos was that I first watched them without taking any notes. Then I watched the videos a second time, taking notes on a word document. The types of notes I took include direct lines uttered by the speakers in the videos, words that were on the video screen, my observations of the interior designs of the places visited, as well as the kind of music being played in those places. I also took notes on the kind of food being eaten and the facial expressions and vocal tones of the speakers.

In addition, since four out of five of the videos I am analyzing are recorded in Korean, I also took note of particular Korean word choices and sentence structures in contrast to how the words were translated in English in the subtitles. I did this to specifically to check for any inconsistency. Given I am a Korean language learner, and a native Arabic speaker, I was able to successfully do this. For instance, as noted in Table 3, Video #2 had the following subtitle: “In this street, you can find the mosque, halal restaurants, Islamic bookstores and all sorts of things that have to do with the Islamic culture.” However, in Korean, the speakers described every object with the same single adjective: “halal.” So patterns like these were noted and further analyzed in the findings’ section.

After watching the videos a second time, I examined the data that I had collected to identify themes. From there, I color coded all the themes and then I highlighted each data with the appropriate theme. After doing this, I watched the videos a third time and repeated the same

cycle of data collection, but I did this after a hiatus of one week in order to ensure that there was enough time in between for me to watch the videos a fresher perspective so that I could capture more data. I color coded the new data and then regrouped my findings into thematic tables as shown in sections 6.1 to 6.4. Finally, I examined the data once more after approximately one month and noted a few additional data points, coded them, and then grouped them in the appropriate theme.

## **6.0 Findings**

Overall, among the five videos, there were four emerging major themes that emerged in the data: 1) Marketing and attracting Muslims through their religious needs and interest, 2) Koreans perceiving halal as just another exotic/foreign experience 3) Koreans bridging connections and familiarity with Korean food in halal food, and 4) Koreans connecting the idea of halal beyond a cultural practice and cuisine by connecting it with religious laws and lifestyle expectation. Each theme will be examined separately and closely among all the videos.

### **6.1. Theme 1: Halal Marketing**

Given the turn of globalization via the Korean Wave and how economic diffusion is occurring in South Korea (Xu, Park and Park 2015), it is not surprising that halal marketing, which is the marketing of halal food, products, and restaurants, is the primary theme that emerged from the data. Marketing occurred through numerous mentions in the videos, including strict halal certification, halal versions of popular Korean products for export, and even encouragement of ordinary Koreans expressing a need for more halal options for Muslim tourists and residents. While halal is being used as a tool to attract and welcome Muslim tourists through their religious needs, the videos also show how South Korea is, to a degree, encouraging

diversity in their country. Table 2 below contains the elements from all five videos that evoke the theme of halal marketing.

Video #	Points related to halal marketing
Video #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kimchi and kim (Korean word for “seaweed sheets”) recently got certified as halal, so they discussed how they can export kimchi to Muslim countries and have Muslims eat kimchi and kim.</li> <li>- “There are not a lot of places to find halal in our country (South Korea), so I think that would be a problem”</li> <li>- “There are a lot of foreign people in Korea, so there needs to be improvement in the supply chain to allow foreigners to eat ‘their food’ and make it more accessible”</li> </ul>
Video #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The YouTubers expressed how they are sorry as they wanted to “introduce Halal Street”, but given it is Sunday, many stores are closed               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The street is not actually called “Halal Street”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Video #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When the production team said it was in a private room, the host emphasized “a private room?” which almost shows how rare this opportunity tends to be for halal restaurants. He repeated and emphasized this three times:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Host again emphasizes that it was the production team’s first time to shoot on halal food in an "intimate, exclusive, private mood" (the words, in English are on the screen, bolded)</li> <li>- Host: “It is so nice that they got you a room, they are providing you with good treatment!”</li> </ul> </li> <li>- the video shows a visual of the map, showing how the restaurant is “5 minutes away from the Gangnam exit ”</li> <li>- The menu is largely in Korean, while there are English names of the dishes, the details and explanations of each dish is in Korean.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This gives a sense that the restaurant’s aim is not to focus on only Muslims, but to gain more customers, they decided to get a halal certification to attract Muslim customers. This is interesting because seafood is largely halal as fish does not require a certain slaughtering process.</li> <li>- "...this is one of the Muslim Friendly Restaurants certified by the Korea Tourism Organization..."</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In the video, it shows the certification on the restaurant entrance</li> <li>- They try each of the sashimis, including salmon, white fish, describing how delicious it is             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- host makes it seem like he never had salmon this good anywhere else, making the halal restaurant extra special</li> <li>- The experience itself focuses less on the idea of halal but more on the idea of trying new food with the comfort of knowing that it is halal especially since there a few dishes, such as swellfish (pufferfish), that even the Korean host never tried before</li> <li>- They also try rice with fish roe, which is something the Muslim guest also never tried before either. However the host explains that the dish is "famous among Muslims"</li> </ul> </li> <li>- The video acts as a marketing tool to gain Muslim tourists comfort in the idea of traveling to Korea. Near the end, the guest is asked by the host to rate the restaurant; she gave it five stars. She explained how she "enjoyed the variation" and it was "so worth it"             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Reliable food"</li> <li>- "Muslim Friendly" classification attests to the halal menu, but alcohol is sold in the restaurant as well</li> <li>- "I think I can bring my friends here when they visit Korea"</li> <li>- "Very reasonable price"</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Video #4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The video showed a snapshot of the restaurant location on the map, emphasizing how close it is to the subway station exit, bolding the fact that it is "5 minutes" away</li> <li>- the restaurant is "very" close to the subway station, hence explaining that naturally a lot of customers would come here</li> <li>- The host said, in Korean: "Get ready for this, my Muslim tourists," (he is saying that that there might be a long wait line if they come during peak times.)</li> <li>- 6:10 Official halal certification verbally said and with a sign on the restaurant             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Muslim tourists can enjoy it reliably because of the halal certificate"</li> <li>- "The Halal Guys use 100% halal-slaughtered meats"</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Host talks about the additional topping of humus “I think Muslim tourists can enjoy it well” as well as talking about other various toppings and options available to add on to their dishes</li> <li>- Host asked her to rate the restaurant, to which she gave it four stars because of the "limited variety “while still "offering something for everyone"</li> <li>- The video ends with the host asking what the guest's favorite dish, and she says it is the platter because it has basmati rice which "reminds her of her mom and hometown."</li> </ul>
Video #5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The video is made from a request to have a halal food guide in Korea</li> <li>- On her way, she points out markets that have halal goods and options as "Egyptian, Malaysian, and Korean Halal food"</li> <li>- There is also a place she points out with "halal version of Korean foods," while taking a shot of 3D food art of different bowls showing popular Korean food</li> </ul>

**Table 2. Theme of Halal Marketing**

While not all the videos aim to market halal food, Video #3 and #4 have that strong aim given that their sponsor is a Muslim tourism company. Additionally, the host, which is the same for both videos, has a particular way of speaking that encourages Muslims to come travel to Korea, The viewers they cater to are Muslim viewers, especially because there are Arabic and English subtitles. The artistic text edits within the video frames (apart from the subtitles) are in English, not in Korean, which could further imply that the target audience are foreigners, not Koreans. I have also noted a pattern of how the host also emphasizes the convenience and “reliability” of South Korea in providing accessible and adequate numbers of various halal restaurants for Muslims. Hence, the host essentially shows them that practicing their own religion would not be difficult in the country, and by having a Muslim guest accompany him for each episode further helps reinforce this idea.



For instance, the idea of inclusivity can be seen in the two videos when the host said, in Video #4 said “Get ready for this, my Muslim tourists.” While that was the translated subtitles, the English phrase, “my Muslim tourists,” was bolded and framed in another color. The production team’s choice of using “my” reflects inclusivity and acceptance. In addition, his line is referring to the line in the restaurant they were visiting which is known to sometimes have a long wait line if they come during peak times. This shows another element of inclusivity; that Muslims will not be isolated because the food is halal; it is also loved and accepted by many people.

While notably only two of the five videos choose to tour Itaewon to find halal options, the other two videos focus on places that do not have a high international or diverse presence. So, for Video’s #3 and #4, the location that was explored was Gangnam, which is known to be a wealthy neighborhood that tourists often visit. For Video #3, the restaurant they went to was a sushi place and Video #4 was an American-Mediterranean place. Both videos shared a few seconds of screen time of where the places are located relative to the exits of the subway, where Video #3 says that the restaurant “is 5 minutes away from the Gangnam exit” and Video #4 also states that “Halal Guys” (restaurant name) is “5 minutes [away]” from the subway.

Beyond the location, however, there is also a pattern of mentioning the credibility of the restaurants’ halal certification. It seems very common to have not only “halal” markers on the outside of the restaurants, but even fully framed certifications that the restaurants would receive from certified local Islamic organizations and/or tourism organizations. For instance, in Video #3, the host says “...this (the restaurant) is one of the Muslim Friendly Restaurants certified by Korea Tourism Organization...” The video even takes a few seconds to capture the halal marker on the glass windows that he was referring to (see Figure 1). It appears as though the producers

put emphasis on showing these markers to show to the Muslim viewers that their halal practices are being taken seriously and ethically, which is significant as it is creating a sense of trust for the Muslims to eat comfortably in South Korea, knowing that the restaurants are truly practicing halal guidelines correctly.

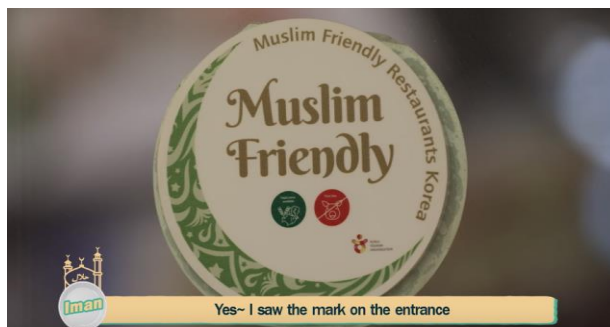


Figure 1. A “Muslim Friendly” Sticker

However, there seem to be different levels of “halal,” which is why these certificates appear to be taken very seriously in South Korea. For instance, in Video #3 the host explains that “Muslim Friendly” means that the restaurant does not serve pork, but it does, however, serve alcohol.

Beyond that, what was also notable was that while the restaurant in Video #3 held this level of certification, the restaurant’s menu is largely in Korean. There are English names for the dishes, but the details and explanations of each dish is in Korean as seen in Figure 2 below:

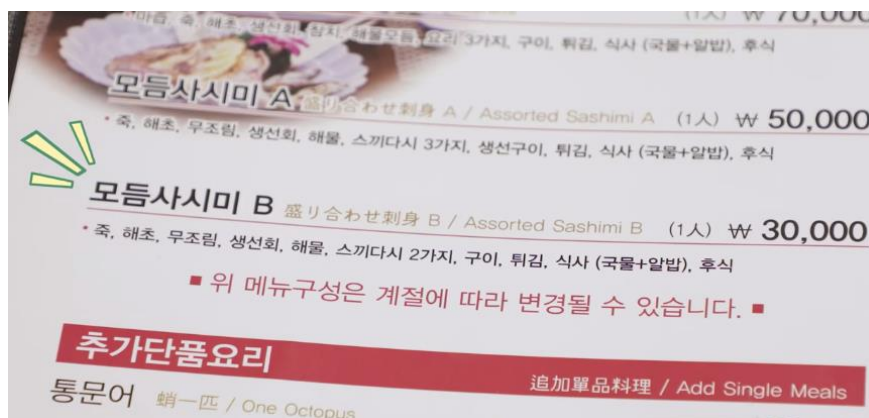


Figure 2. Korean Explanation of "Halal" Dishes

This gives a sense that the restaurant's aim is not to only focus on catering for Muslims alone, but rather, to gain more customers by accommodating to Muslims' needs. In fact, they may have been aware of the lacking options available for halal restaurants especially given that the location is in Gangnam, which is mostly filled with Korean residents as opposed to international residents. Hence, the choice of getting a "Halal Friendly" certification to capture Muslim customers was likely a marketing strategy.

For Video #4, the restaurant that the host and guest dined in is called "Halal Guys," and from the name, it is evidently halal. The restaurant itself is a popular and well known halal franchise that started in New York. Yet, this restaurant has an even more elaborate halal certification, as there are two large frames that certify the credibility of the restaurant and their halal practices, as seen in Figure 3.





Figure 3. "Halal Guys" Certificates

The host not only went over the history of the start of Halal Guys, but he also took a moment to emphasize and point out how “[t]he Halal Guys use 100% halal-slaughtered meats,” hence, “Muslim tourists” can be at “peace” while eating their food. The choice of using the word “tourist,” which was used multiple times to address the Muslim viewers, further reflects that the main audience are not local Muslims in Korea but rather tourists. This confirms their marketing goal and purpose.

In relation to certifications, Video #1 also mentions halal certifications regarding kimchi and dried seaweed sheets (kim). One of the participants states: “kimchi and kim received halal certification recently, so now we can export [it to Muslim countries,] and Muslims can eat kimchi and kim.” The significance of this is the fact that the two food items do not actually need a halal certification since both of these items are vegetarian, but seeing that Korean marketing food industries push to attain halal certification for popular Korean foods, even if they are vegetarian, reinforces the ideas that Shafaei and Mohamed (2015) underscored on how Korea is attempting to globalize themselves to expand their tourism market and food exports. Interestingly, however, the participants in Video #1 explained the availability of halal food in Korea, and they felt that there are not a lot of places to find halal in [their] country (Korea),”

hence expressing that “that would be a problem.” Another person said that “[t]here are a lot of foreign people in Korea, so there needs to be improvement in the supply chain to allow foreigners to eat their food more easily.” Seeing that these ordinary Koreans expressed this as a reaction from their brief experience of trying out a halal dish correlates with the cited complaints from Muslim tourists regarding the inadequacy of accommodations when it comes to practicing their religion and eating halal food (Han et al., 2018).

That being said, while South Korea attempts to globalize themselves, even if it means getting halal certification on their vegetarian exports, the element that Koreans lack understanding about is the meaning of Halal and the kind of certification they really need, which should be beyond vegetarian and fish products. This follows what Henderson (2016) found regarding complaints Muslim tourists gave about their stay in South Korea and how they felt that places and items that were labeled “halal friendly” were not sufficient. However, it could be that from then on, South Korea has put more effort into their halal certification rules, which could have led to the multiple levels of halal certification that the host in Video #3 discussed. This correlates with Han, Al-Ansi, Olya and Ki’s (2019) explanation regarding how South Korea is dealing with high competition with halal tourism destinations within South Korea in comparison with other countries, which as a result push them to improve on being more Muslim friendly and accommodating.

In fact, regarding accommodations, Video #3’s dining experience was in a private room within the restaurant, and when the host revealed that to the Muslim guest, he made it sound like the experience is “amazingly” possible for Muslims to experience it, too. He kept repeating the idea multiple times, saying it was the production team’s first time to shoot on halal food in an “intimate, exclusive, private mood” and that “[i]t is so nice that they (production team) got you

(the Muslim guest) a room; they are providing you with good treatment!” The host also says that “you (the Muslim guest) can comfortably enjoy your time in a separate room” and adds that this is also the “perfect place” to have “dinner meetings [with a] bride and groom's family.” The host shows that there are easy accommodations for when it comes to special occasions for Muslims, too, especially at a restaurant like this, that is known to be a “famous halal Japanese restaurant...run by a chef with 30 years of experience and [who] only works with ingredients directly delivered from the producer.” Hence, this not only markets inclusivity, but it also acts as a way to show Muslims that they can enjoy a high quality experiences at a “very reasonable price.”

When it comes to experiencing something new, Video #3 provides exactly that. Not only does the Muslim guest experience eating new things, but even the Korean host does, too. When they try each of the sashimis, including salmon and shrimp, they describe how delicious it is. In fact, the host makes it seem like he never had salmon this good anywhere else, framing the halal restaurant as extra special when he emphasizes how the salmon “melts” in his mouth,” joking that “seniors wouldn't need their dentures” when they eat the salmon. It was also the host’s first time trying swellfish (also known as pufferfish), and he seemed more excited to try it as the focus seemed largely on him than the Muslim guest. This essentially shows that the experience itself focuses less on the idea of “halal” but more on the idea of trying new food with the comfort of knowing that it is halal. This video, along with Video #4 highly act as marketing tools to gain Muslim tourists’ comfort in the idea of traveling to Korea. Near the end, the guest is asked by the host to rate the restaurant; she gave it five stars. She explained how she “enjoyed the variation” and it was “so worth it,” which further asserts the Muslim audience to travel to South Korea. The

same practice of “rating” was done in Video #4, which makes it seem like a consistent part within the series from the YouTube channel.

## 6.2. Exotic Experiences and Exploring Various Cultures via Food

The next common theme that was evident in all the videos is that halal food is being viewed as something foreign, hence when Koreans do try it they treat as an exotic experience. In fact, in many of the videos, as Koreans try the halal food, they forget about its connotation to “halal” and focus more on the country’s origin of the food and general flavor. In a way, the idea of halal food provides an opportunity to taste foods from various countries and coming to the realization that halal has no interference in flavor and cooking style of the food. Table 3 below summarizes the data collected that matches this theme:

Video #	Points related to exotic experience
Video #1	<p>4.3 For experience/bridging culture/exotic experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The same guy who teased the girl says, “Are you sure this is halal food?” -- in a disbelief joking tone</li> <li>- A: “so this is halal food?” responded with another Korean saying, B: “Halal food is not a set menu” A: “so this (dish) itself is not the menu, it means it's (an) allowed/permissible food” B: “Yes!”</li> <li>- The one who has heard of halal says “I think this is better than what I thought”</li> <li>- ” One responds to her: "I had no idea of religions before, so I didn't know about it (halal process) at all”</li> <li>- “I think people who are sensitive to spice might not like it (the dish).”</li> <li>- “The rice does not taste good, it just shatters in my mouth”</li> <li>- The girl who ate halal food a lot explains how you eat the dish with bread. The guy next to her ask in a confirmation tone, "So you usually eat with your hands?" Bare hands?" which the girl laughs and says no</li> </ul> <p>After reaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Unique"</li> <li>- "surprised"</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "I thought it was going to be foreign food" (this is said by the same guy who teased about common sense)</li> <li>- "Isn't Korean rice is better"</li> <li>- "Let us try other country's food next time"</li> </ul>
Video #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Location is in Itaewon, Seoul</li> <li>- "We are going to visit the "halal street" They wish to learn and experience more about Islam by eating halal food</li> <li>- Subtitles: "In this street you can find the mosque, halal restaurants, Islamic bookstores and other things that relates to the halal culture " <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exact Korean line " In this street you can find the mosque, halal, halal restaurants, halal bookstores and other things that relates to the halal cultures</li> <li>- In Korean, the hosts here are using "halal" as an adjective equivalent to "Islamic" and "Muslim." Hence, the meaning of halal in this context is not the same authentic meaning of Halal</li> </ul> </li> <li>- This is interesting as this is not seen in the other videos, but the way they frame it this way make it sound like halal is a foreign thing that is separate from Korea, even if there is a Korean Muslim.</li> <li>- When they expressed their reaction about the food, they no longer associated it to its religious connection. Instead, they saw the food as part of the culture. They were trying a Indonesian dish and referred it by its name rather than "halal food" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Indonesian food is very new to me, but I would definitely try it again"</li> </ul> </li> <li>- "It was extremely good"</li> <li>- "Overall, it was an extremely satisfying halal meal"</li> </ul>
Video #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When host opens menu, he vocally expressed how in awe he is, pointing out the grand king crab on the first page of the menu.</li> <li>- Host emphasizes how the salmon "melts" in his mouth," as he jokes that "seniors wouldn't need their dentures" when they eat the salmon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The host makes it seem like he never had salmon this good anywhere else, making the halal restaurant extra special</li> </ul> </li> <li>- They try raw shrimp, which the host showed how excited he was trying it. The guest explained how she never had it before, but found the experience trying it "interesting"</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The experience itself seemed new to both host and guest, as they try swellfish for the first time.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The experience itself focuses less on the idea of halal but more on the idea of trying new food with the comfort of knowing that it is halal</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Video #4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The opening intro music is traditional Arabic beats</li> <li>- The restaurant is described to be an "American-halal food industry, which is all about harmonious flavors" of the middle east and the Mediterranean</li> <li>- There are snapshots of the restaurant's interior, showing a clean burger place design rather than an ethnic vibe. Very American 20's vibe.</li> <li>- The workers don't know Korean, so the host got nervous and let the guest order for the two of them</li> <li>- They move on to the sandwiches which are very overfilled. The host asks the guest how to eat it, expecting that she would know despite this a new restaurant for the two of them.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Korean host expects the guest, a non-Korean, to know how to eat the dish because it is non-Korean. It could be that the idea that halal automatically gives the guest the certification that she may know better than he does. Hence, there is an assumption that halal is something that is associated with foreigners</li> </ul> </li> <li>- The host explains that the way to eat the sandwich is "a unique experience"</li> <li>- The host prefers the sandwich over the platter since it has no rice. He felt that the Indian (basmati) rice felt "unfamiliar" to his taste, so he "would not eat it as often as the sandwich"</li> <li>- The host enjoyed the sandwich because of how eating it was "unique," as it varied from eating it with a spoon, "to folding the bread and eating it like a normal sandwich" further insisting that "it was very interesting" and "beguiling"</li> <li>- Association of "hummus" to Arabs cultures expecting all Muslims to like it l topping of hummus "I think Muslim tourists can enjoy it well" as well as talking about other various toppings and options available to add on to their dishes</li> <li>- The menu revolves around Mediterranean food, including basmati rice, gyro meat, hummus, flat Arabic bread, and Mediterranean spices and sauces</li> </ul>

Video #5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Went to Itaewon; she explained the significance of how Itaewon is a place where there is a lot of “international” restaurants             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the idea of halal is automatically assumed ethnic, given she chose to find halal at a location known to be present with "international" restaurants</li> </ul> </li> <li>- The first restaurant she visited is a Turkish restaurant with a notably Turkish name             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interior design of the restaurant has chandeliers and ethnic wall papers and tiles that give a very Turkish accent.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- The food she tried was salad, lentil soup and Turkish bread             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Soup was notably plain in flavor, not very strong</li> <li>- The bread she noted it as being plain and acting as a the “rice” of a dish; hence being labeled as Turkish bread was confusing for her                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The food she tries and comments about is focused on the idea of its flavors in terms of the food as a cultural cuisine rather as a "halal" food. The way she labels it is by the dish name rather "the halal..." she calls it "the salad," "the Turkish bread," "the lentil soup," etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- She had Turkish red tea. The tea is served in a Turkish cup which is glass, small, with no handle. It is placed over a saucer plate that has traditional Turkish pattern design on it.</li> <li>- The tea is described to be “very strong” (emphasized with a clipart covering the screen for a second of an arm muscle, and “very dark” and has a “bitterness to it”</li> </ul> </li> <li>- When she first entered the restaurant, it was playing traditional Turkish music, but then it was playing a song by Rihanna, and then it continued with the Turkish music again. She observed that they keep “rotating” the music</li> <li>- The closer she gets to the masjid she finds number of halal restaurants.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The restaurants are all ethnic in non-English names.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- The mosque is decorated with intricate traditional Middle Eastern light blue patterns throughout, along with traditional architecture.</li> <li>- She points out “I finally found the halal bakery I went to the last time I was in Korea”</li> <li>- The name of the bakery is “Salam Bakery” which is filled with specifically Turkish and Arabic desserts such as baklava and Turkish delights</li> </ul>
----------	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The sweets are all very sweet and have pistachio in a lot of them. No element of Korean cuisines seen combined in the deserts</li> <li>- rather than just halal, it focused on a specific cultural cuisine</li> </ul>
--	--

**Table 3. Theme of Exotic Experience**

As I have mentioned, in all the videos, except the Video #5, when they try the food, they judge the food as it is, assuming that halal is a set menu. For instance, in Video #1, the participants were asked about whether or not they know what halal food is, and one girl said she does not. The guy sitting next to her was taken aback and joked to her, “how can you not know what halal food is? It is common sense.” Yet, ironically, this same man, when given the food, was in disbelief when he tried the halal dish they gave them (it was a Middle Eastern rice platter with meat on it) he asked “Are you sure this is halal food?” This implies that he was expecting something very different and particular, because near the end of the video he said "I thought it was going to be foreign food." Similarly in that video, a participant who was trying the dish, asked a confirmation question, “so this is halal food?” to which one of the participants who happens to be very knowledgeable on what halal is responded by saying “halal food is not a set menu...so this (dish) itself is not the menu, it means it's [an] allowed/permissible food.” The participant was accurate in explaining the meaning of halal, as stated earlier in the literature, halal simply describes something that is permissible or lawful within Islamic laws (Soon, Chandia, Joe, 2017). That being said, the participants treated the dish as any other foreign dish given it was not a Korean dish, as participants now focused on the flavors and textures, commenting that “the rice does not taste good, it just shatters” in their mouth, and one girl commented that those “who are sensitive to spice might not like it (the dish).” Others expressed the idea that it was "unique," another said that they were “surprised” by the taste, and one ended

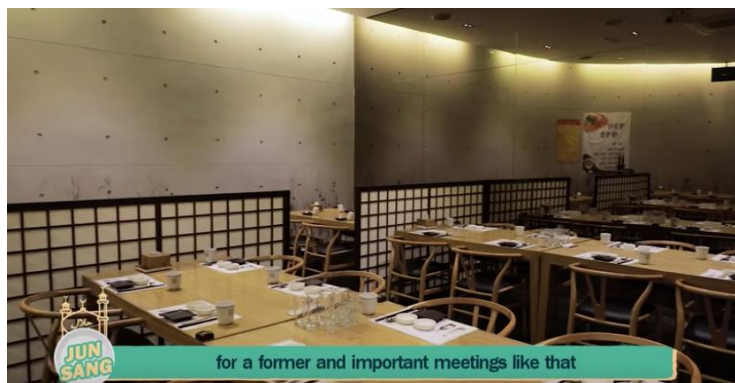
the video by saying “let us try other country’s food next time,” which shows that they saw halal as a cultural experience rather than only a concept related to religion.

Similarly, in Video #2, they had an Indonesian dish, and when they expressed their reaction about the food, they no longer associated halal with its religious connection. Instead, they saw the food as part of the Indonesian culture. This was evident because they referred to the dish as “Indonesian food” rather than “halal food” each time. They also referred to the dish by its Indonesian name, too, and have expressed that “Indonesian food is very new” to them, but they “would definitely try it again.” However, near the end they did bring back its association with halal food, as they said that the dish “was extremely good,” and that “overall, it was an extremely satisfying halal meal.” A possible justification on as to why Koreans automatically assume halal to be a set menu could be explained by the literature where Goody (1982) noted a correlation between cuisine and identity. The South Korean participants expect that halal carries a particular and distinct set menu style, subconsciously stripping it of any country’s cuisine. So, when they realize that cuisines like Middle Eastern, Indonesian, and even Japanese and Korean cuisines can also be halal is when a sense of familiarity, connection and acceptances sparks from Koreans on halal food practices.

Yet, while the element of familiarity is there, there also comes an element of exoticness, as halal is being used as a baseline to explore foreign cuisines. As seen in Video #4, the Korean host expresses how he enjoyed eating the sandwich as it was “unique” and “beguiling.” He further continued saying that the platter was not enjoyable for him because the “basmati rice” felt “unfamiliar” to his taste, so he “would not eat it as often as the sandwich.” Again, all kinds of rice are halal, but here he was commenting on the idea of basmati rice and how the taste of it feels unfamiliar, he is commenting on the food from a cultural experience rather than just how

the food tastes, being halal. Likewise, in Video #5 the YouTuber mentions that the Turkish tea is “very strong” and “very dark” and has a “bitterness to it,” but all kinds of tea are technically halal, so here she would be expressing her reaction to Turkish tea specifically; hence, yet again an exotic experience.

However, the exotic experience is further emphasized through the interior designs, plates, and music of the places visited in the videos. This was not necessarily evident in Video #1 since they were in a studio where they were given take-out versions of the halal dishes, but for the rest of the videos they all had this to some degree. In Video #3, the restaurant was a Japanese sushi place, so the dishes and plates had Japanese accents in their designs, and the interior design had styles that adapted the Japanese shoji panels, too. See Figure 4 below.



**Figure 4. Halal Sushi Restaurant**

For Video #5, the YouTuber visited a Turkish restaurant that had blue panels with traditional Turkish designs on it (see Figure 5), and it also had lanterns hanging from the ceiling, making the whole environment feel not only exotic but exciting, too. Additionally, when the YouTuber was drinking her Turkish tea, it was not given to her in an ordinary mug - it was given in a traditional Turkish glass tea cup and a saucer plate that had traditional designs on it, too. See Figure 6.



**Figure 5. Interior Design of the Turkish Restaurant**



**Figure 6. Traditional Turkish Tea Cup**

The YouTuber also noted how there was “traditional Turkish music” playing, but she also observed how the restaurant “rotates” the music they play with American popular music. This move could be explained by Henderson’s (2016) discussion on how restaurants try to provide an exotic experience to a certain level while still making it feel familiar to locals. In regard to Video #4, since it is an American-Mediterranean place, the interior design is heavily American style, resembling a burger pub but with a classy twist to it. As the Korean host said in the video, he thought, at a brief glance, that the place was a “fast food” restaurant because of its design, which had vibrant yellow and red colors that made it resemble McDonalds. See Figure 7.



**Figure 7. American-Mediterranean Style Restaurant**

Beyond the exotic decor and environment, *the way* the participants were eating these halal dishes also reflected an exotic experience, too. As seen in Video #1, #4, and #5, their dishes come with flatbread, and they were commenting on how to eat the dish with the bread. In Video #1, one of the participants asks in a confirming tone, "So, you usually eat with your hands? Bare hands?" as he grabs the piece of bread in his hand, to which the girl, who is knowledgeable about halal food, responds by showing him how to eat the dish. In Video #4, the Korean host asks the Somali-American guest on how to eat the sandwich. His question is notable because the restaurant is an American-Mediterranean place that she never visited before. As to why the host asked the guest could be because the dish is halal which automatically makes the guest certified to know how to eat the dish better than he does because she is the foreigner. It also could be because the dish has basmati rice, which is something that the guest said "reminds" her of "her mom" because her mother makes Somali dishes that use basmati rice. Yet, the host's action reflects that there is an assumption that halal is associated with the foreigners, and they would know best, particularly the Muslim foreigners.

Finally, one more pattern to point out is distinctively noticeable in Video #2, and how the hosts in the video introduced the street they were visiting in Itaewon, as they called it "Halal Street." In fact, the street they are referring to is the long street that leads up to the Seoul Central

Masjid, and has a different name, not “Halal Street.” One of the speakers in the video expresses that “[i]n this street you can find the mosque, halal restaurants, halal bookstores and other things that relates to the halal culture.” However, while this line was taken from the English subtitle, the way the he said it in Korean was “[i]n this street, one can find the halal mosque, halal restaurants, halal bookstores and other things that relates to the halal culture.” Hence, in Korean, the host is using “halal” as an adjective equivalent to "Islamic" and "Muslim,” so the meaning of halal in this context is not the same authentic meaning of halal that was described and outlined in the literature earlier by Al-Qaradawi (1999) and Soon, Chandia and Joe (2017). Instead, this use makes the word “halal” describe anything that relates to Islam, which is intriguing as this is not seen in the other videos. However, this title closely correlates very closely with Song’s (2014) explanation on how some “Seoulites” call this particular area “the Muslims’ Street” (p. 408). So, the intention of the speaker using halal as an adjective to describe something denoting to Islam can be justified.

### **6.3. Familiarity and Connection with Korean Food**

As the Koreans in the videos try what halal food taste like, a lot of what they also realize is that it is more familiar to them than they think, and that could be because various cuisines, while different, can have similarities that connect people of different ethnicities and backgrounds. In addition, how Koreans found familiarity in halal food could largely be related to the fact that while a lot of halal food are cuisines of various Islamic countries, the restaurants modify the original recipes to adhere to Koreans’ typical taste buds to ensure that customers would come again, which is validated in the literature regarding Urry’s (2002) argument about this subject. Table 4 is a collection that contains all the data that connects with the theme of familiarity with Korean cuisine.



Video #	Familiarity and connection with Korean food
Video #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “This rice is not what we (Koreans) are used to, so I thought the taste would be very unique, but it's really good and familiar”</li> <li>- "When we eat Halal food, we would just eat it without noticing it's really Halal food</li> </ul>
Video #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One of the hosts compared the preparation difference of the fish dish with their Korean style of cooking dish, explaining how it is “was not extremely salty” unlike Korean fish, so “it was perfect” for his “appetite” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Second host agreed, and explained that he liked the “healthy taste” of the dish</li> </ul> </li> <li>- One of them made a connection on how the chicken is similar to Korean chicken, and the other agreed, adding that “it was very well cooked.”</li> </ul>
Video #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Host emphasizes that “Koreans need to eat rice whenever and [with] whatever they eat.” He explains that “it feels empty without rice. So, I always need to have another meal after Halal Road” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Host is a “Korean to his bones” - (the phrase was displayed on the screen)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Video #4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As they try the platter dish, the Host explains that it tastes good and reminds him of a Korean dish called “bokkeumbap” to which the guest also agrees with him <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He explains that the dish is spicy but not too much so it tastes good. The sauce is known to be very spicy, and people are cautioned to about it; a little goes a long way</li> </ul> </li> <li>- The host points out that there are a lot more foreigners than Koreans in the restaurants</li> </ul>
Video #5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The salad she had was sweet and salty, where the olives give a savory flavor and apples give the sweetness. Additionally the parsley was unexpected her, but it gave her that ”herb-y” Mediterranean vibe. The salad had corns and red cabbage, too. Overall, she enjoyed the salad a lot.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The dish, while not noted in the menu she showed in the video, is served with kimchi             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- She described the kimchi to be "so soft that it is like biting into a [piece of] fish. There is no crunch. I have never had Kimchi that tasted like this</li> </ul> </li> <li>- There were three different types of sauces with the chicken dish, two of the sauces were described to be sweet and spicy, one of them notably reminding her of typical sweet and spicy Chinese American sauces.</li> </ul>
--	---

**Table 4. Theme of Familiarity and Connection with Korean Food**

To be begin, the theme follows with the same participant in Video #1 where she explained how halal food “is not a set menu,” which means that any Korean food can be halal if they honor the halal requirements. As a participant states in Video #1, he says that “this rice is not what we (Koreans) are used to, so I thought the taste would be very unique, but it's really good and familiar.” Another participant said that “[w]hen we (Koreans) eat halal food, we would just eat it without noticing [that] it's really halal food,” to which another participant adds, “[e]ven if I had tried halal food before, I would have not known or tell that I did.” Here, the two participants essentially come to the realization of what is meant when halal food is explained to not be a set menu. To these participants’ realization, a lot of food can actually be halal especially pescatarian and vegetarian food since they don’t have meat that must be slaughtered Islamically. Here, the two participants’ perception of halal food has greatly been reshaped. In Video #2, one of the hosts compared the preparation difference of the fish dish with their Korean style of cooking the dish, commenting how it “was not extremely salty” unlike Korean fish, so “it was perfect” for his “appetite.” The second host agreed, and explained that he liked the “healthy taste” of the dish. Here, the hosts bridged their own home food with the halal Indonesian style of cooking the dish, finding familiarity, comfort and even a healthy taste to it, which is what halal also encourages, too (Soon, Chandia, and Joe, 2017). In Video #3 and #4, the host eats a rice dish that has meat in it, and points out on how good it tastes and says how it reminds him of a

Korean dish called “bokkeumbap.” The guest agrees with him with the connection, since bokkeumbap is also a rice dish with meat and vegetables on top but the only difference it has compared to the dish he was eating was the different spices and rice type. In fact, the host even asks in Video #4 if the guest has any dish similar to this in Somalia (her ethnicity). So, there is an evident pattern of how halal is connecting cultures, and even bringing in familiarity in what is considered to be the unknown and exotic.

In Video #5, it showed a lot of aspects of how restaurants cater to Koreans taste palates, which was again outlined by Henderson (2016) and Urry (2002) on how restaurant owners do this to satisfy Korean consumers. In the video, while the YouTuber visited a visibly Turkish restaurant, the place modified a couple of their dishes that added a Korean touch to it. For instance, when the YouTuber was eating the salad, she described it to be “sweet and salty” where “the olives give a savory flavor” and the apples gave the salad its sweetness, and that it was “herb-y” which made the salad taste very Mediterranean. The addition of apples in the salad is the modification, because traditionally, Turkish salad are only filled with savory flavors. In Korea, their salads tend to be a mixture of sweet and savory, so they knew that this would appeal to Koreans’ taste buds. This is also seen again when she was eating her main dish, which was Turkish grilled chicken strips. On the side, the dish had three different sauces, two of which she described to be “sweet and spicy,” which notably reminded her of the “typical sweet and spicy Chinese American sauces.” These sauces are again adaptation to Korean taste buds as Turkish sauces are not sweet and savory, but they are, to the very least, spicy. In the dish, there was also kimchi, a staple Korean food. However, when she tried it she described it to be “so soft that it is like biting into a fish...there is no crunch...I have never had kimchi that tasted like this.” The way the restaurant made their own twist on Korea’s national fermented food, kimchi, was intriguing

and also unexpected to be served with what is labeled to be a “traditional Turkish” dish. So, while the idea of halal is the baseline focus, the continuous connection on Korean food creates a bridge with not only halal food but also exotic food. This further affirms with Bak’s (2010) points on how the experience of eating these kinds of foreign foods, let alone halal, allows Koreans to explore different cultures while still being within their comfort zone.

#### 6.4 Religious Convictions and Connections

Finally, one of the first association that Koreans are able to easily make regarding the term “halal” is its religious convictions and connections. However, not all of the videos talk about what halal means especially Video #3 and #4 since the main audience are Muslims, so explaining the meaning of halal is unnecessary. For the rest of the videos, however, there were a mixed array of knowledge regarding halal food and what it means in the religion and how connected it is to Islam.

Video #	Data
Video #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The same girl explains halal also says that “halal food includes meat like chicken, beef, sheep because these are allowed, so that is why they (the makers of the dish) use it (sheep) as topping (for the dish. Pork is prohibited.” She explains in such a bright manner, as she has a kind and smiley demeanor the whole time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- She also explains that she took a class on Islam which explained the slaughtering process that makes a meat halal, and the type of meat that is prohibited. “...there is a special way to slaughter the animals</li> <li>- She also further explains the unheard of sides of what it is also prohibited,</li> <li>- “Haram’s signature food is pork.” -- on display it defines haram in English and Korean <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “So, our favorite Samgyeopsal, stir-fried pork, and boiled pork that Koreans really love are forbidden”</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “Even though this (dish) is delicious, if I can’t eat pork I would be too sad”</li> <li>- One of the girls explains how an international Muslim friend of theirs from Turkey drove her way to Bulgaria to try pork because of how curious she was about it. The girl then explains “So I thought, ahhh for Korean, pork is the best.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A man responds to her telling her “but the Muslim Turkish man eats pork” -- implying that the haram/halal rules aren’t that serious</li> </ul> </li> <li>- ““Even if I had tried halal food before, I would have not known or tell that I did”</li> <li>- All food have to get confirmed for Halal food, which really limits a lot”</li> </ul>
Video #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Since we are not very familiar with Islamic culture, we wish to learn and experience more about Islam" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bridging knowledge of Islam through halal food</li> <li>- This somewhat bridges with an ethnic experience, but not completely as they do separate the idea as Islam without any country denotation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Video #3	--
Video #4	--
Video #5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- After eating at the Turkish restaurant, she goes to the Seoul Central Masjid. She says that if she sees “any halal bakery on the way, [she] will stop by and have some baklava” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Once she arrives the masjid, she points out to a halal meat shop, which is exactly attached to the masjid</li> <li>- She explains that the last time she was there, “there was a lot of people because it was a weekend” and “a man upfront explaining the religion”</li> <li>- A man interrupts her and tells her that “Muslims pray five days here [the Masjid].” and how “on Fridays at 1pm there is a congregation”</li> <li>- She takes brief shots of the mosque with live worship music in the background coming from the Mosque. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- She takes shots of pictures hanging on the walls of different mosques within South Korea.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- She also take shots of traditional plates with name of “Allah” on it in Arabic, as well as decorative Qurans on display in a closed glass shelve</li> <li>- “Guys when you come here make sure you don’t wear anything scandalous.”</li> <li>- As she walks out she continues to point out halal stores. A lot of the stores have Islamic proverbs above or below their n</li> </ul>
--	---

**Table 5. Religious Convictions and Connections**

In Video #1, again one of the participants seems to be the most knowledgeable Korean out of all the videos being analyzed because of the amount knowledge she shares about halal food, which stems largely from the fact that she has “taken classes on Islam.” In fact, a lot of her comments are so informative, and she explained everything so positively and with great respect and passion, which reflects her respect toward the religious rulings and reasons behind halal food. For instance, she explained and listed the different types of meats and items that are prohibited as well as well as explain in detail the slaughtering process that makes a meat halal, which all accurately match with the literature describing the meaning of halal by Bergeaud-Blackler (2007), Samiullah (1982), and Soon, Chandia and Joe (2017). She explained how “...there is a special way to slaughter the animals.” She also discussed about the unheard of sides of what is “prohibited,” which includes things that “contain blood” including foods such as “blood sausage, internal organs, and beef tripe.” When she talked about pork, and how it is the “haram’s signature food,” that is when a lot of the participants started to see halal seriously as a religious requirement through a Korean lifestyle lens. This is especially the case when she says, “so, our (Koreans’) favorite samgyeopsal, stir-fried pork, and boiled pork that Koreans really love are all forbidden.” One participant expresses that “even though this (halal dish) is delicious, if I can’t eat pork I would be too sad,” adding that pork has a “distinct special taste.” Another participant explains how an international Turkish Muslim friend of hers once drove to Bulgaria

just to try pork because of how curious he was on how it tastes. The participant then expressed, “so I thought, ‘Yes, for Korean, pork is the best,’” showing that while it is not allowed, pork is undeniably delicious and an integral part to Korean cuisine and culture. Hence, the idea of halal may greatly interfere with Korean cuisine. A participant responds to the last participant, refuting “but the Muslim Turkish man eats pork” -- implying that the haram/halal rules are probably not that serious, so there should be some kind of flexibility in the religion. Another participant states that because “all foods have to get confirmed for halal food” that “really limits a lot [of options on what to eat].”

As for Video #2 and #5, rather than through a Q/A setting, they were physically venturing Itaewon and the halal options that were available. In fact, what appears to be similar in both of the videos is that they share anything they see that regards to the religion and not necessarily the things that regard to halal itself. For instance, in Video #2, the hosts expressed that because they “are not very familiar with Islamic culture,” they “wish to learn and experience more about Islam.” Thus, they wish to bridge their knowledge of Islam by going to Itaewon and experiencing what they consider the “Islamic culture” which they defined by pointing out in a popularly known Muslim neighborhood in Itaewon the “halal mosques, halal restaurants, halal book stores and other things that relates to the halal culture.” While this somewhat bridges with section 6.2, the video’s theme was to explore Itaewon’s Muslim neighborhood to learn about Islam rather than just to eat halal food, only. So, the hosts wanted to visit the bookstores and mosques and so forth but were unable to because they were “closed” since it was “Sunday” when they were shooting the video. Hence, they had no choice but to experience the “Islamic culture” by eating at a halal Indonesian restaurant.

Similarly, for Video #5, the YouTuber focuses the video on being a guide for halal food in Korea, but beyond food, she visited the Central Masjid in Itaewon and records about it. She even takes a moment to record in the mosque, and she talks to some of the people who work in the mosques. For example, when she was walking up to the mosque, there was a man who interrupted and told her that “Muslims pray five days here [the mosque].” and how “on Fridays at 1pm there is a congregation.” She was then explaining how the last time she was here, “there was a lot of people because it was a weekend” and that there was “a man upfront explaining the religion.” After that, she takes brief shots of the mosque inside with the live worship music in the background that is coming from the mosque itself. Among the shots, she records pictures hanging on the walls of different masjids (See Figure 9) within South Korea. She also take shots of traditional plates with the name of “Allah” (God) on it in Arabic, as well as decorative Qurans on display in closed glass shelves (see Figure 8).



**Figure 8. Plates and Qurans**





**Figure 9. Pictures of Masjids**

By the YouTuber incorporating the religious aspect of halal in her video, it further connects halal to Muslims and to Islam in particular. Additionally, the small blurbs on things such as the Friday congregation and how Muslims pray five times a day almost underscores how much the religion is so interconnected with the worshippers' daily lives unlike other religions. This shows how serious Muslims are about leading a halal lifestyle, and why there are many restaurants that offer halal for Muslims, especially in a country like South Korea that has a large population that do not identify with a religion.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

Overall, Koreans perception on halal food is relatively very positive and well reciprocated. With the Korean Wave being a major catalyst in not only exporting the Korean culture, but also being used as a bridge to import culture as well, including halal items. While notably the word halal is often quickly assumed to be a particular kind of diet, the exposures of different restaurants with halal certifications seem to help reform Koreans perceptions on the meaning of halal. As seen in Video #1, a lot of the Koreans' reactions after they had halal food reflected how unaware they were with how common halal food is, which quickly made them question their own country's halal options and availability. Surely, while the idea of marketing

seems to be very evident among all the videos, the way the Koreans expressed their thoughts about the availability of halal food in Video #1 was more as a way to be helpful and welcoming to different people, including Muslims. This shows how a very homogeneous country that had once deeply valued the idea of one race (minjok) is starting to comfortably accept and accommodate a lifestyle that is not practiced by them at all within their culture.

In fact, the idea that there were not really any negative reactions other than the dejection of the prohibition of pork, shows that even the negative media's portrayal of Muslims do not damage Koreans views on Muslims. It appears as though Koreans can especially accept halal given how it can be a useful channel to offer ethnic cuisines that local Koreans can comfortably explore and enjoy. Beyond exotic cuisines however, Koreans have also realized how familiar halal food can be, finding no reasons to dislike it and go against it. Hence, the acknowledgement that halal diet is simply there to encourage ethical and healthier eating lifestyles is, to a degree, relatable as it is a generally viewed as an acceptable reason. Seeing how the grass-root community is accepting of halal options in their country shows how the diffusion of culture is working effectively, as not only the economical diffusion is happening through the government's aim of globalizing South Korea, but even the decentralized diffusion too. This, as a result aims to bring Korea at competitive level globally with their efforts in honoring even Muslims and their halal dietary practices.

## **8.0 Bibliography**

Al-Qaradawi, Y. (1999). *The lawful and the prohibited in Islam*. Plainfield, IN: American Trust Publications.

- Bak, S. (2010). Exoticizing the familiar, domesticating the foreign: Ethnic food restaurants in Korea. *Korea Journal*, 50(1), 110-132.
- Bak, S. (2004). Negotiating national and transnational identities through consumption choices: Hamburgers, espresso, and mobile technologies among Koreans. *The Review of Korean Studies*, 7(2), 33-51.
- Battour, M., & Ismail, M. N. (2016). Halal tourism: Concepts, practises, challenges and future. *Tourism management perspectives*, 19, 150-154.
- Bergeaud-Blackler, F. (2007). New challenges for Islamic ritual slaughter: A European perspective. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 33(6), 965-980.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. (R. Nice, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University
- Cho, H., Kim, D., Ahn, J., Oh, J., & Kim, H. (2008). Muslim communities in Korean society: Focusing on the influx, adaptation, and social network of Muslim immigrants in Korea. *Joong-dong-yeon-gu (Middle East Studies)*, 27(2), 81-124.
- Chong, E. (2008). Managerial competency appraisal: A cross-cultural study of American and East Asian managers. *Journal of Business Research*, 61(3), 191-200.
- Chung, B., & Song, D. (Eds.). (2011). *Hanguk-ui-da munhwa-gong-gan [Multicultural spaces of South Korea]*. Seoul, South Korea: Hyeon-am-s.
- Eum, I. (2017). Korea's response to Islam and Islamophobia: Focusing on veiled Muslim women's experiences. *Korea Observer*, 48(4), 825-849.  
doi:<http://dx.doi.org.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/10.29152/KOIKS.2017.48.4.825>
- Goody, J. (1982). *Cooking, cuisine and class: A study in comparative sociology*. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.

- Han, B. (2017). K-pop in Latin America: Transcultural fandom and digital mediation. *International Journal of Communication, 11*, 2250-2269.
- Han, H., Al-Ansi, A., Olya, H. G., & Kim, W. (2018). Exploring halal-friendly destination attributes in South Korea: Perceptions and behaviors of Muslim travelers toward a non-Muslim destination. *Tourism Management, 71*, 151-164.
- Henderson, J. C. (2016). Muslim travellers, tourism industry responses and the case of Japan. *Tourism Recreation Research, 41*(3), 339-347.  
doi:10.1080/02508281.2016.1215090
- Jin, D. Y. (2006). Cultural politics in Korea's contemporary films under neoliberal globalization. *Media, Culture & Society, 28*(1), 5-23. doi:10.1177/0163443706059274
- Kim, D., & Kim, M.S. (2011). *Hallyu: Influence of Korean popular culture in Asia and beyond*. Seoul, South Korea: Seoul National University Press.
- Kim, S., Im, H. H., & King, B. E. (2015). Muslim travelers in Asia: The destination preferences and brand perceptions of Malaysian tourists. *Journal of Vacation Marketing, 21*(1), 3-21.
- KTO (2015). Annual report of tourism statistics. Seoul, South Korea: Korea Tourism Organization.
- Lee, H. (2012). *Eeseulamgwa Hanguk munhwa [Islam and Korean culture]*. Seoul, South Korea: Chong-ah.
- Lee, N. (2011). A study about on conflict and solidarity in foreign Settlement – Focused on Itaewon Muslim settlement. *The Korean Cultural Studies, 21*, 237-263.  
doi:10.17792/kcs.2011.21.237
- Lee, S., Bai, B., & Busser, J. A. (2019). Pop star fan tourists: An application of self-expansion theory. *Tourism Management, 72*, 270-280. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2018.12.006

- Lee, Y., & Lee, K. T. (2015). Economic nationalism and globalization in South Korea: A critical insight. *Asian Perspective*, 39(1), 125-151. Retrieved from <http://ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/docview/1655119060?accountid=13158>
- Lie, J. (2012). What is the K in K-pop? South Korean popular music, the culture industry, and national identity. *Korea Observer*, 43(3), 339-363. Retrieved from <http://ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/docview/1268147490?accountid=13158>
- Nilep, C. (2006). "Code switching" in sociocultural linguistics. *Colorado Research in Linguistics*, 19(1), 1.
- Oh, K. (2007). *Han-guk-e-seo-ui-da-mun-hwa-ju-yee [Multiculturalism in South Korea: Facts and debates]*. Seoul, South Korea: Han-wool Academy.
- Otmazgin, N. K. (2008;2007;). Contesting soft power: Japanese popular culture in East and Southeast Asia. *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 8(1), 73-101.  
doi:10.1093/irap/lcm009
- Robertson, R. (1995). *Global modernities*. London, England: Sage.
- Samiullah, M. (1982). The meat: Lawful and unlawful in Islam. *Islamic Studies*, 21(1), 75-104. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20847191>
- Seoul Metropolitan Government (1996). *Seoul-yook-baek-nyon-sa [Seoul, six hundred years of history]* (Vol. 6.). Seoul, South Korea: Seoul Metropolitan Government.
- Shafaei, F., & Mohamed, B. (2015). Involvement and brand equity: A conceptual model for Muslim tourists. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*,

9(1), 54-67.

Siegel, J., & Chu, Y. K. (2008). The globalization of East Asian pop music. *Harvard Business School Case Study*

Song, D. (2012). Spatial process and cultural territory of Islamic food restaurants in Itaewon, Seoul. *Migration and Diversity in Asian Contexts*, 233.

Song, D. (2014). The configuration of daily life space for Muslims in Seoul: A case study of Itaewon's "Muslims' Street". *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economic Development*, 43(4), 401-440.

Soon, J. M., Chandia, M., & Regenstein, J. M. (2017). Halal integrity in the food supply chain. *British Food Journal*, 119(1), 39-51. doi:10.1108/BFJ-04-2016-0150

Testa, M. (2002). Leadership dyads in the cruise industry: The impact of cultural congruency. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 21(4), 425-441.

Urry, J. (2002). *The Tourist Gaze* (2nd ed.). London, England: Sage.

Waters, M. (2001). *New world chaos: Globalizing cultures*. London, England: Routledge.

Weller, D. L., & Turkon, D. (2015). Contextualizing the immigrant experience: The role of food and foodways in identity maintenance and formation for first-and second-generation Latinos in Ithaca, New York. *Ecology of Food and Nutrition*, 54(1), 57-73.

Xu, W. W., Park, J. Y., & Park, H. W. (2015). The networked cultural diffusion of Korean wave. *Online Information Review*, 39(1), 43-60.

doi:http://dx.doi.org.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/10.1108/OIR-07-2014-0160

YallaKOREA. (2018, January 7). "SUSHI" GANGNAM STYLE With "IMAN"

[ARB/ENG][THE HALAL ROAD-15] [Video file]. Retrieved from

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7ZVBs5qA8Q&dt=223s>

yallayallaarabic. (2013, Dec 24). Wallah! Yallah? Inshallah... [web log comment].

Retrieved from <https://yallaarabic.wordpress.com/2013/12/24/wallah-yalla-inshallah/>

Yim, J. (1999). *Minjok-ae-nin banyogida [Nationalism is treason]*. Seoul, South Korea: Sonamu.

Yun, K., Lee, H., & Lim, S. H. (2002). The growth of broadband Internet connections in South Korea: Contributing factors. *Asia-Pacific Research Center, Stanford Institute for International Studies*

## ACADEMIC VITA

# BANAN MOHAMMAD ALTHOWAINI

banan.m.alt@gmail.com

---

### LANGUAGE SKILLS:

**Arabic** (native); **English** (second language); **Korean** (advanced-intermediate)

### EDUCATION:

*\*Schreyer Honors College · Paterno Fellow Scholar · Integrated Undergraduate/Graduate Program*

#### **Honors Bachelor of Arts in English Literature**

**Summer 2014 - Spring 2019**

From the English Department

*The Pennsylvania State University: Schreyer Honors College*

University Park, P

#### **Honors Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Second Language** **Fall 2017- Spring 2019**

From the department of Applied Linguistics

*The Pennsylvania State University: Schreyer Honors College*

University Park, PA

Combined BA Honors Thesis / MA Paper: *The perceptions of halal food in South Korea*

Thesis advisor: Susan Strauss, Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics, Asian Studies, Education, and Linguistics

#### **Yonsei University**

**Summer 2017**

Yonsei international summer study abroad program

Seoul, South Korea; Sinchon Campus

### PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION:

#### **A member of the Phi Beta Kappa Society**

**2017 - Present**

A prestigious honorary society of college and university undergraduates and graduates to which members are elected on the basis of high academic achievement. 10% of U.S. colleges and universities have Phi Beta Kappa chapters, and these chapters select only 10% of their arts and sciences graduates to join.

#### **Paterno Fellows Program, College of the Liberal Arts**

**Spring 2016 – Spring 2019**

Extended rigorous honors program including advanced academic coursework, thesis, Study abroad and/or internship, ethics study, and leadership/service commitment

### PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT:

#### **Attended the Symposium for Teaching & Learning with Technology**

**March 18, 2017**

The symposium is an annual one-day event to showcase ways that technology can be



used to enhance teaching, learning, and research. It is a platform that allows faculty, staff, and students the opportunity to share how they are using technology in unique ways, network with other colleagues and generate new project ideas.

**Presented at the Mid-Atlantic Writing Center Conference (MAWCA) *March 2018***

Presentation: *Navigating Translingual Tutorials: A Journal, An Apology and a Chance to Get It Right*

**Presented in the International Writing Centers Association (IWCA) *October 2018***

Presentation: *Considerations on Navigating Translingual Tutorials*

**Co-Presented in the National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing *November 2018***

Presentation: *Centering Anti-racism in translingual tutoring: how can we do better?*

Presented with Dr. Karen Moroski; Penn State Learning's Co-Curricular Programs Coordinator for Writing and Languages and is an Assistant Teaching Professor of English.

**A member of the Sponsored Student Leadership Panel (SSLP) *January 2018 -Spring 2019***

SSLP is a group of sponsored students that develop and carry out programs and events to meet sponsored students' needs and be of resource to fellow sponsored students on campus.

**A study abroad peer advisor at Penn State Study Abroad office *Fall 2017 - Spring 2019***

A competitive voluntary position where we advise other students on education abroad opportunities at Penn State and provide guidance to their concerns and questions. We also do miscellaneous office work, such as answering emails and phone calls.

The position also asks us to give presentations on studying abroad. We also have various events and presentations throughout campus where we represent education abroad.

**Schreyer Honors College Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program *August 2018 - Spring 2019***

A mentor for new incoming Schreyer Scholars. I gave them a tour around the Schreyer Honors' building and served as their group leader during their welcome orientation event. I also answered any questions they had. I am in touch with them so that they can contact me when they need anything or have any questions regarding Schreyer Honors.

**SSLP Mentorship program *September 2018 - Spring 2019***

A mentor for seven sponsored graduate students; each mentor is trained in a six hour program to ensure we are informed of all the vital information & resources at PSU to prepare on being efficient mentors for sponsored students.

**Ohio State Leadership Exchange Program *September 28, 2018***

A program where Ohio State university's students and staff come together with Penn State's students and staff to talk about various relevant issues regarding the campus life, including diversity, politics, and minorities, and how we can navigate issues regarding these subjects.

**Global Engagement and Leadership Experience (GELE) *October 19-21, 2018***

GELE is a conference that brings together international and U.S. students to discuss and learn about aspects of global leadership. It is a platform that allows for serious conversations, engaging activities, and practical simulations. It also provides a space for diverse populations of students to talk about cultures and think critically about leadership skills through the variety of global perspectives. The goal is that participants will come out of the conference by positively affecting the global climate at Penn State, inspiring fellow Penn Staters--future leaders--to transform themselves into globally-engaged and responsible citizens.

## **LEADERSHIP POSITIONS:**

### **President of SSLP**

*Spring 2018 – Spring 2019*

I oversee, coordinate, delegate and guide the board members of this panel on projects and socials to reach our goals and objectives for our organization. I successfully started two permanent projects that greatly helped attract more members in coming to our socials and events. I also helped the club consolidate a stronger a PR by getting connected with one of the biggest radio stations at Penn state, Lion 90.7 FM, where we advertised our club and different socials over the radio multiple times.

### **Teaching Assistant for CAS 100 (public speaking course)**

*Fall 2018*

I assisted the professor with grading, teaching, and guiding the students with any concerns they pose. I have also given speeches to the class to serve as an example for their major speeches.

### **Teaching Practicum for ESL 15**

*Fall 2018*

Student taught an English Second Language (ESL) composition class as part of my master's degree requirement. The practicum provided me the opportunity to teach, lead activities, grade, delegate and assist ESL students in the class.

### **Secretary of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP)**

*Fall 2015 - Spring 2016*

I assisted the president with being the communicator between members. I also took meeting notes, sent emails to members on events and meetings, and managed all of our social media outlets.

## **EMPLOYMENTS:**

### **A Translingual specialist at Penn State Writing Center**

*September 2015 - Spring 2019*

An English writing tutor specialized in assisting translingual students at Penn State Learning's (PSL) Writing Center

### **PSL Writing Workshops**

*September 2015 - Spring 2019*

Coordinated workshops of a group of writing tutors from the Writing Center visit various classrooms to host ways to peer-review their writings

## **RESEARCH & INDEPENDENT STUDIES:**

### **Independent study: land-grant university extension systems**

*Summer 2015*

I worked with Dr. Ahmed Banya on a research paper that explores county extension directors' roles and the evolving changes in land-grant university extension systems. I helped write part of the literature review, theoretical framework as well as edit the paper and refine the reference list and in-text citations.

### **Independent study: Koreans' perspectives on Halal**

*Summer 2018-P Spring 2019*

I worked under the guidance of Dr. Susan Strauss where I write a large-scale discourse analysis-based research study on Korea's perspective on halal culture. The study became my BA/Schreyer Honors' thesis paper

## **AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS & SCHOLARSHIPS:**

### **Barry Directorship Scholarship (\$1,500)**

*Fall 2016*

### **Cantwell Liberal Arts Scholarship (\$4,000)**

*Fall 2016*

### **Rein Trustee Scholarship (\$4,000)**

*Spring 2017*

### **Jason & Martha Stone Hon Dietz (\$1,600)**

*Spring 2017*

### **Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship (\$4,000)**

*Summer 2017*

A congressionally funded program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State that enables students of limited financial means to study or intern abroad, thereby gaining skills critical to our national security and economic prosperity. This scholarship was provided for my study abroad in Seoul, S. Korea.

**CIEE Gilman Go (\$1,000)**

*Summer 2017*

**Schreyer International Study Scholarship (\$1,200)**

*Summer 2017*

**Sponsored by Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission (SACM)**

*May 2017 - Fall 2018*

My tuition and living cost are covered by this specialized agency created by the Saudi government to administer programs and policies to meet the educational and cultural needs of Saudis studying in the United States.

