



## Visitor Emotional Solidarity and Planned Behavior Effects on Leisure and Tourism Development in Ghana

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### Abstract

The study seeks to develop a relationship between Emotional Solidarity (ES) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) in predicting visitors' behavioral intentions to attend leisure events in Ghana. ES Scale (ESS) modified with Tourism Impact Attitude Scale was employed. The data used IBM SPSS 25.0 and SmartPLS 3.3.9 for analysis. The hypotheses were explored using PLS-SEM. ES factors significantly positively affect visitors' attitudes towards tourism development. The TPB significantly predicted the behavioral intentions of leisure event visitors. The study specifically suggests the promotion of tourism development with high perceived behavioral control, individual attitude, and subjective norms.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION



Emotional solidarity in the tourism and event field is dominated by residents' support for tourism development (Aleshinloye, 2015; Hasani et al., 2016; Li & Wan, 2017; Nunkoo & So, 2015; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Stylidis et al., 2020a; Suess et al., 2020; Woosnam et al., 2018; Woosnam, 2011b, 2012, 2016; Woosnam & Aleshinloye, 2018) and has contributed to one of its significant factors of tourism development sustainability (Stylidis, 2016; Stylidis et al., 2020a). The emotional bonds Individuals' interactions with one another, as measured by perceived proximity and degree of contact are referred to as emotional solidarity with no boundaries to any group of individuals but might be relevant to a particular group depending on the activity, especially the host.

Few can deny that during the last four decades, the majority of studies on the connection between residents and visitors (tourists) have concentrated on the former (Woosnam & Aleshinloye, 2013). This is largely due to the work that has progressed from tourism impacts to resident attitudes to studies on sustainable tourism development. The viewpoints of host residents as well as their ideas of how tourism and development affect their community are at the foreground of their concern, with tourists largely conceived as the "other" (Wearing et al., 2010). Local citizens have an important role in the processes at domestic leisure destinations, making it impossible to separate a location from its people

(Beerli & Martín, 2004; Trauer & Ryan, 2005). The visitor however draws effect to event locations generated by the development of complex relationships between tourists and residents to learn about traditions and customs through interactions (Babb, 2011).

As much as residents' support for tourism development cannot be arguably absent, there is the fact that another key stakeholder to support this tourism developmental success is the visitors (Patwardhan et al., 2020). Visitors or residents can have emotional bonds on their own but may not foster rapid future event growth. It is worthy of note that inhabitants who do not receive guests will not form emotional bonds that will necessitate the need for event expansion in the future. The study of event management is gaining popularity, however, most studies have concentrated on the characteristics of local events and resident satisfaction (Mensah, 2013). Much of the research on emotional solidarity in tourism has so far focused on the construct from the perspective of residents (Joo & Woosnam, 2019). As a result, there is a need to analyze visitor perspectives to determine the discrepancies.

Understanding why visitors prefer one event over another and what motivates attendees or participants to make such decisions depends on community ties and bonds (Woosnam & Aleshinloye, 2013; Woosnam, Dudensing, et al., 2015). The aim, venue, and purpose of an event are all key factors that influence the visitor's experience, as well as how the latter is handled through branding (Geus et al., 2016; Halim & Mokhtar, 2016; Kinnunen & Haahti, 2015). Regards to relationships, emotional solidarity however is a concept used to describe the relationship between visitors and inhabitants (Stylidis et al., 2020a).

To date, tourism research has mostly ignored how travelers perceive tourism impacts and development in the location they are visiting (Joo et al., 2019). In the study of Joo et al. (2019), there is the need to think to have a rise from a dichotomous viewpoint in which non-residents of a destination are assumed to have little say in how the destination is designed and administered. Nonetheless, such an opposing viewpoint should be questioned for two reasons. To begin with, travelers may develop an emotional attachment to the destination (Cardinale et al., 2016; Cheng & Wu, 2014) and may even identify with it (Su & Swanson, 2017).

In comparison to other parts of the world, there are few studies on leisure involvement in Ghana however primarily focused on student leisure patterns and restrictions (Adam, 2014; Adam et al., 2015; Yankholmes & Lin, 2012) and people with varying levels of disability with a geographical focus on Kumasi and the University of Cape Coast with no reflection on the general situation of Ghana. Extensive research linking emotional solidarity to leisure is still in its infant stages. The existing study, on the other hand, overlooks the visitor's or tourists' emotional solidarity (Patwardhan et al., 2020). Thorough knowledge of visitors' emotional solidarity with residents is vital for effective and efficient leisure activity planning, organization, and development (Joo & Woosnam, 2019). The purpose of the research is to develop a relationship that integrates emotional solidarity and the theory of planned behavior in predicting visitors' behavioral intentions to attend leisure events in Ghana. It is however critical to identify the type of visitor, their planned behavior, and their relationships or attachment with community inhabitants when planning events that are purposed at promoting tourism.

The five objectives of the study are to:

- a. develop a relationship that integrates emotional solidarity with visitor attitudes concerning tourism
- b. determine the influence level of barrier-free environment or Behavioral control on tourism development intentions
- c. establish how visitors' psychological factors or attitudes toward tourism affects behavioral intentions for tourism development.
- d. determine the extent subjective norms or normative beliefs have on visitor behavioral intentions for tourism development
- e. identify and establish how the behavioral intentions of visitors affect tourism development

## **Literature Review**

### **1.1. Emotional solidarity**

Residents' emotions toward tourists have been examined as an antecedent of support for tourism growth in previous studies (Hasani et al., 2016; Li & Wan, 2017; Moghavvemi et al., 2017; Ribeiro et al., 2017; Simpson & Simpson, 2017; Woosnam, 2012). Hammarström (2005) however defines emotional solidarity as the experience of individuals' effective relationships with one another as measured by the degree of touch and emotional intimacy. Individuals or groups in a certain scenario establish an emotional tie known as emotional solidarity (Woosnam, Shafer, et al., 2015). Mullins (2005) also defines emotional solidarity as a feeling of solidarity capable of holding a group together with "me and you" sentiments. Emotional solidarity thus denotes not only individual collaboration in attaining common goals (Bankston & Zhou, 2002), but also the building of a person's identity as a group member (Howard et al., 2004). Woosnam (2011a) looked at the relationship between emotional solidarity and resident tourists and discovered that group members' common behavior, attitudes, and interactions determine the extent of emotional solidarity among individuals.

Positive feelings for one another build an emotional tie (Aleshinloye & Woosnam, 2015; Joo & Woosnam, 2020; Stylidis et al., 2020b). As a result, the emotional solidarity experience feeling between tourists and residents reflects the levels of safety (Woosnam, Shafer, et al., 2015). Safety, according to Simpson and Simpson (2017), is a key predictor of emotional solidarity, which ensures that a person will recommend a destination. According to a study, emotional solidarity levels rise with the length of time spent with people, particularly through emotional proximity and sympathetic understanding (Woosnam & Aleshinloye, 2013). There is therefore a growing body of tourism research recently which is increasingly considering the roles of the social relationship between host residents and visitors or tourists in boosting tourism impact and development (Lai & Hitchcock, 2017; Li & Wan, 2016).

This has led to the creation of a scale to assess emotional solidarity, which includes emotional closeness, empathetic understanding, and a welcoming character (Woosnam & Norman, 2010). Following up on these ground-breaking findings, researchers examined the scales' reliability and validity in the context of the host-guest relationship in follow-up studies. As a result, this scale has been demonstrated to be effective (Joo et al., 2018; Li & Wan, 2017; Woosnam et al., 2014, 2017; Woosnam & Aleshinloye, 2018). However, the vast majority of current research situations are restricted to Western civilizations (Ribeiro et al., 2018).

The majority of Emotional Solidarity research is found in the fields of social psychology and sociology. As a result, there is a need to enhance the structures and so promote the concept of tourism (Woosnam et al., 2009). Even though two recent research in travel and tourism focus on the perspective of tourists (visitors) on the structure, the majority of previous studies focused on residents (Ribeiro et al., 2017).

### **1.2. Theory of Planned Behavior**

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which is an extension of reasoned action and one of the most significant ideas in the prediction and explanation of behavior, has been widely employed (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Explaining human behavior is a difficult endeavor with a high level of complexity. It takes a multi-level approach, ranging from physiological processes on one hand to concentration on social institutions on the other (Ajzen, 1991a, 2011). Personality traits and social attitudes are examples of behavioral disposition concepts that have made significant contributions and played a key role in predicting and understanding human behavior (Ajzen, 1988; Campbell, 2004; Sherman & Fazio, 1983).

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) was created to analyze and explain human behavior in certain situations (Ajzen, 2005). People's behavior is supposed to be based on careful analysis of information available, the importance of the behavior at the time the

decision is taken and in various contexts, as well as the potential consequences of taking account into account (Ajzen & Driver, 1991). According to TPB, people's motivation to behave in a given setting is based on three connected factors (behavioral beliefs individuals' attitudes toward behavior, normative beliefs-subjective norms, and control beliefs-perceived behavioral control) (Ajzen, 2005; Lange et al., 2011)

In this theory, subjective norms, attitudes, and control have a significant impact on an individual's intended behavior. These intents are said to be a forerunner of behavior (Hegner et al., 2014). Attitudes toward subjective norms, behavior, and control are all closely related to intention (Ajzen, 2011). On about an individual's impression of societal pressure. The performance of an individual's behavior is influenced by his or her attitude toward behavior. It should be mentioned, however, that the more favorable the attitude toward the behavior, the stronger the overall purpose to perform (Armitage & Conner, 2001).

The rationalization of the theory, non-accounting of established emotive and cognitive components, and human judgment bias are all common criticisms of TPB (Hegner et al., 2014). On the other hand, emotions are a product of beliefs, which in turn influence behavior and goals (Ajzen, 2011).

### **1.3. Emotional Solidarity and Planned Behaviors' support for Tourism development**

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) promotes the idea that an individual's purpose to engage in specific conduct is a fundamental component of the theoretical model, which is explained through attitudes, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms (Ajzen, 1991b). According to Ajzen (1991b), attitudes are a person's favorable (i.e., positive) or unfavorable (i.e., negative) judgments of completing a given behavior. Subjective norms are individuals' judgments of the social pressures involved in doing the activity, whereas perceived behavioral control is an individual's assessment of the potential obstacles involved in performing specific conduct (Ajzen, 1991b).

Emotional solidarity has extensively supported tourism development with the prediction of attitudinal support (Erul, Woosnam, & McIntosh, 2020; Li & Wan, 2017; Moghavvemi et al., 2017). Emotional solidarity characteristics strongly influenced attitudes about tourism, implying that as residents' emotional solidarity with tourists and vice-versa grows, people may become more supportive of tourism and its associated growth. As a result, policymakers, government officials, managers, and planners have the tendency of promoting and fostering a positive relationship between residents and tourists by providing opportunities for interaction at key attractions and planning special events and festivals to increase support for tourism development.

In the study of Erul, Woosnam, & McIntosh (2020), the Emotional Solidarity Scale (ESS) factors (Welcoming Nature (WN), Emotional Closeness (EC), and Sympathetic Understanding (SU)) and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) constructs (Attitudes Towards Tourism (ATD), Subjective Norms (SN), and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)) are effective and powerful in predicting residents' intentions to support tourism development. Visitors' sentiments regarding tourism development will however predict their behavioral intent to support significantly whilst perceived behavioral control predicts their behavioral intentions to assist tourism development significantly. Subjective norms can also predict their behavioral intents to assist tourism growth significantly (Erul, Woosnam, & McIntosh, 2020). Thus, the research model (Figure 1) and the following hypotheses are proposed.

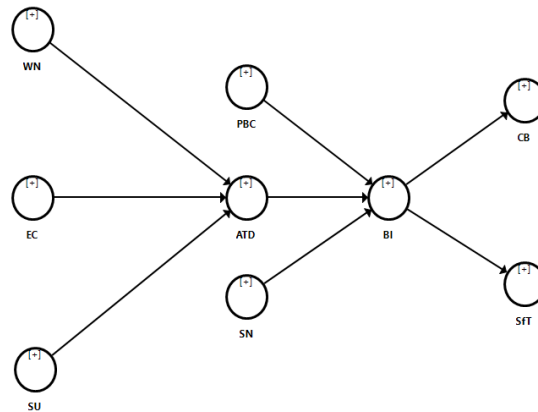
H1: Visitors' emotional solidarity with residents (welcoming nature - H1a, emotional closeness - H1b, and sympathetic understanding - H1c) significantly predicts visitors' attitudes concerning tourism.

H2: Perceived behavioral control significantly influences behavioral intentions for tourism development.

H3: Visitors' attitudes concerning tourism significantly influence behavioral intentions for tourism development.

H4: Subjective norms (normative beliefs) significantly influence behavioral intentions for tourism development.

H5: Visitors' behavioral intentions significantly influence tourism development in terms of community benefits (H5a) and support for tourism (H5b).



**Figure 1:** Proposed research model  
Source: Adapted from Erul, et al., (2020)

## 2. METHODS

### 2.1 Research Participants

This cross-sectional research comprises leisure events' attendees or visitors. Participants in this context have never attended leisure events in Ghana. Social media networks like WhatsApp were used to deliver links to the online survey instrument created using Google Forms to the participants. The participants were engaged in the study using convenience and snowball sampling techniques. These sampling techniques were adopted to engage participants based on their accessibility and desire to participate until the sample size was reached (Saunders et al., 2016). Further, given the low response rate and the difficulty of access (Al-Kurdi et al., 2020), the snowball sampling technique afforded the participants to forward the hyperlinks to the online survey instrument to others they attended the leisure events with (Saunders et al., 2016). A sample size of 721 was finally collected. Lastly, this study has adopted Podsakoff et al.'s (2003) suggestions to overcome common method variance concerns. Thus, before completing the online self-reported questionnaires, participants were made aware of their right to informed consent, their anonymity, and the confidentiality of the information they gave. Aside from that, participants were made aware of the fact that there was no right or incorrect response. A five-point Likert scale questionnaire that assessed the scale of the variables was used for the study.

### 2.2 Research Instrument

A five-point Likert scale survey questionnaire was divided into 2 sections. The first section gathers information on respondents' profiles including gender, age, marital status, profession, and income level. The second section focus on the main concepts of the study including emotional solidarity, tourism impact attitude, individuals' attitudes toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Emotional solidarity with residents was measured using the Emotional Solidarity Scale (ESS) (Woosnam, 2011), and their attitudes toward tourism were assessed via a modified version of Lankford and Howard's (1994) Tourism Impact Attitude Scale (TIAS). The final scale measuring behavioral intention was comprised of three items adapted from the work of Han et al. (2010). These scales have been proven valid and reliable in measuring tourists' emotional solidarity with residents and attitudes (Erul, Woosnam, & McIntosh, 2020; Hasani et al., 2016; Joo et al., 2019). All the items were assessed through a five-point Likert scale.

### 2.3 Statistical strategy

The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS 25.0 and SmartPLS 3.3.9 (Ringle et al., 2015). Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic features of the sample. The study framework and related hypotheses were then explored using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), which has greater statistical power for simultaneously predicting the correlations between all latent components (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler et al., 2016). The measuring model was examined before analyzing the structural model (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler et al., 2016). A PLS approach was employed, followed by bootstrapping sampling, to obtain factor loadings, path coefficients, and relative significance levels (5000 resamples).

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Profile of the sample

As represented in Table 1, most (37.3%) of the sample were aged between 36 to 45 years. The sample was female-dominated by 62.6% while 37.4% were males. Also, the majority of the respondents had a monthly income of less than GH¢ 3000 (72%); were first degree/diploma holders (66.9%); and were single (52.8%). Lastly, all (100%) of the respondents ever attended leisure events; however, most of them (52.7%) did so occasionally.

### 3.2 Measurement model assessment

Hair et al. (2019) suggested that the measurement model was evaluated to determine the constructs' validity and reliability. Table 2 summarizes the item loadings as well as the constructs' reliability and convergent validity. The results show that all construct indicators have significant loadings ( $p < 0.001$ ).

**Table 1.** Respondents' Profile

Characteristics	Frequency	%
Age		
Less than 25 years	197	27.3
25-35 years	141	19.6
36-45 years	269	37.3
46-55 years	96	13.3
56-65 years	16	2.2
Above 65 years	2	0.3
Total	721	100.0
Gender		
Female	451	62.6
Male	270	37.4
Total	721	100.0
Monthly income		
GH¢1 - 499	139	19.3
GH¢500 - GH¢999	188	26.1
GH¢1000 - GH¢2999	192	26.6
GH¢3000 - GH¢4999	155	21.5
GH¢5000 - GH¢9999	39	5.4
GH¢10000 - GH¢15000	5	0.7
Above GH¢15000	3	0.4
Total	721	100.0
Education		
Basic level	14	1.9
High school	33	4.6
First degree/Diploma	482	66.9
Masters	175	24.3

PhD	17	2.4
Total	721	100.0
Marital status		
Divorced	4	0.6
Married	285	39.5
Separated	35	4.9
Single	381	52.8
Widow(er)	16	2.2
Total	721	100.0
Ever attended a leisure event before?		
Yes	721	100.0
Rate of attending leisure events		
Sometimes	380	52.7
Often	127	17.6
Very often	53	7.4
Always	161	22.3
Total	721	100.0

Source: Data Processed (2023)

Furthermore, all the latent variables demonstrate adequate construct reliability and convergent validity as the Cronbach's alpha, rho\_A, and composite reliability values are greater than 0.70 as well as the AVE values are more than 0.50 (Hair et al., 2019; Shmueli et al., 2019). Subsequently, the most widely recommended criterion (i.e., the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT)) for establishing the discriminant validity of the constructs was examined. Thus, the results as reported in Table 3 confirmed the discriminant validity of the constructs as the HTMT values are less than the 0.90 criterion as recommended (Henseler et al., 2015; Roemer et al., 2021; Sarstedt et al., 2019). Consequently, the constructs' discriminant validity is proven.

**Table 2.** Reliability and Convergent Validity Results

Indicator	Indicator Loadings	SE	t-statistics	p-values	CA	rho_A	CR	AVE
<b>Individuals' Attitudes Toward Behavior (ATD)</b>					<b>0.875</b>	<b>0.878</b>	<b>0.909</b>	<b>0.668</b>
ATD1	0.780	0.021	38.014	0.000				
ATD2	0.849	0.012	69.291	0.000				
ATD3	0.849	0.013	63.980	0.000				
ATD4	0.814	0.016	51.058	0.000				
ATD5	0.791	0.023	34.523	0.000				
<b>Behavioral Intention (BI)</b>					<b>0.845</b>	<b>0.849</b>	<b>0.906</b>	<b>0.763</b>
BI1	0.856	0.016	52.984	0.000				
BI2	0.899	0.009	104.864	0.000				
BI3	0.865	0.014	61.681	0.000				
<b>Community Benefits (CB)</b>					<b>0.854</b>	<b>0.860</b>	<b>0.885</b>	<b>0.525</b>
CB1	0.695	0.026	27.123	0.000				
CB2	0.714	0.025	28.761	0.000				
CB4	0.792	0.018	43.290	0.000				
CB5	0.697	0.030	23.581	0.000				
CB6	0.759	0.030	25.274	0.000				
CB7	0.732	0.029	25.408	0.000				
CB8	0.676	0.032	20.897	0.000				
<b>Emotional Closeness (EC)</b>					<b>0.833</b>	<b>0.835</b>	<b>0.923</b>	<b>0.857</b>
EC1	0.930	0.007	131.133	0.000				
EC2	0.922	0.007	123.245	0.000				
<b>Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)</b>					<b>0.804</b>	<b>0.819</b>	<b>0.864</b>	<b>0.561</b>
PBC1	0.679	0.037	18.299	0.000				
PBC2	0.816	0.016	50.901	0.000				
PBC3	0.663	0.032	20.809	0.000				
PBC4	0.766	0.022	34.791	0.000				

PBC5	0.808	0.015	54.803	0.000					
<b>Subjective Norms (SN)</b>					<b>0.865</b>	<b>0.870</b>	<b>0.903</b>	<b>0.650</b>	
SN1	0.829	0.015	55.297	0.000					
SN2	0.835	0.016	51.099	0.000					
SN3	0.774	0.019	41.094	0.000					
SN4	0.762	0.021	36.909	0.000					
SN5	0.829	0.016	51.097	0.000					
<b>Sympathetic Understanding (SU)</b>					<b>0.813</b>	<b>0.821</b>	<b>0.877</b>	<b>0.641</b>	
SU1	0.781	0.021	36.665	0.000					
SU2	0.814	0.024	33.598	0.000					
SU3	0.837	0.012	68.633	0.000					
SU4	0.768	0.020	38.250	0.000					
<b>Support for Tourism (SfT)</b>					<b>0.942</b>	<b>0.944</b>	<b>0.952</b>	<b>0.687</b>	
SfT1	0.831	0.020	41.844	0.000					
SfT2	0.872	0.011	76.900	0.000					
SfT3	0.829	0.018	45.400	0.000					
SfT4	0.853	0.019	44.793	0.000					
SfT5	0.724	0.030	24.059	0.000					
SfT6	0.781	0.023	34.661	0.000					
SfT7	0.845	0.016	53.529	0.000					
SfT8	0.857	0.012	69.178	0.000					
SfT9	0.854	0.015	55.598	0.000					
<b>Welcoming Nature (WN)</b>					<b>0.840</b>	<b>0.850</b>	<b>0.886</b>	<b>0.608</b>	
WN1	0.748	0.031	24.391	0.000					
WN2	0.753	0.023	32.915	0.000					
WN3	0.788	0.016	48.703	0.000					
WN4	0.822	0.015	54.560	0.000					
WN5	0.786	0.017	47.202	0.000					

Notes: SE=Standard Error; CA= Cronbach's alpha( $\alpha$ ); CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted

Source: Data Processed (2023)

**Table 3.** Discriminant validity by Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT)

Constructs	ATD	BI	CB	EC	PBC	SN	SU	SfT	WN
ATD	-								
BI	0.858	-							
CB	0.712	0.561	-						
EC	0.663	0.568	0.534	-					
PBC	0.775	0.665	0.655	0.431	-				
SN	0.831	0.700	0.718	0.600	0.714	-			
SU	0.674	0.539	0.559	0.694	0.437	0.725	-		
SfT	0.801	0.683	0.563	0.446	0.718	0.518	0.502	-	
WN	0.676	0.570	0.536	0.644	0.561	0.645	0.850	0.630	-

Source: Data Processed (2023)

### 3.3. Structural model assessment

Having satisfied the measurement model's reliability and validity tests, the structural model was examined (Hair et al., 2019). This analysis covered the structural relationships (i.e., hypotheses testing), the model's predictive power, and relevance (Hair et al., 2019; Usakli & Kucukergin, 2018). As revealed in Table 4 and Figure 2, emotional solidarity characterized by a welcoming nature (WN), emotional closeness (EC), and sympathetic understanding (SU) explains 45.1% of the variance in visitors' attitudes towards tourism development (ATD). Similarly, perceived behavioral control (PBC), ATD, and subjective norms (SN) account for 56.4% of visitors' behavioral intentions (BI). Additionally, the visitors' BI accounts for 25.2% and 37.6% of the variation in community benefits (CB) and support for tourism (SfT), respectively. The structural model also exhibited adequate predictive relevance or accuracy as the  $Q^2$  values are above 0 ranging from 0.121 to 0.427 (Hair et al., 2019; Usakli & Kucukergin, 2018).



Examination of the eight hypotheses showed acceptance of all the hypotheses as demonstrated in Table 4 and Figure 2. Specifically, the results from the hypotheses tests revealed that ATD was significantly positively predicted by WN ( $\beta = 0.296$ ;  $t = 6.571$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), EC ( $\beta = 0.294$ ;  $t = 6.056$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), and SU ( $\beta = 0.191$ ;  $t = 4.030$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ). These results provide support for hypotheses H1a, H1b, and H1c. Likewise, PBC ( $\beta = 0.104$ ;  $t = 3.133$ ;  $p = 0.002$ ), ATD ( $\beta = 0.593$ ;  $t = 12.625$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ) and SN ( $\beta = 0.111$ ;  $t = 2.354$ ;  $p = 0.019$ ) have a significant positive bearing on BI, leading to the acceptance of hypotheses H2, H3 and H4. Lastly, BI significantly positively predicted CB ( $\beta = 0.502$ ;  $t = 13.037$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ) and SFT ( $\beta = 0.613$ ;  $t = 19.801$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ); hence hypotheses H5a and H5b are accepted.

**Table 4.** Structural equation model and hypotheses results

Paths	$\beta$	SE	t-statistics	p-values	Confidence Interval	
					LL 2.50%	UL 97.50%
<b>Direct effects</b>						
H1a: WN => ATD	0.296	0.045	6.571	0.000	0.208	0.384
H1b: EC => ATD	0.294	0.049	6.056	0.000	0.203	0.394
H1c: SU => ATD	0.191	0.047	4.030	0.000	0.100	0.284
H2: PBC => BI	0.104	0.033	3.133	0.002	0.038	0.170
H3: ATD => BI	0.593	0.047	12.625	0.000	0.503	0.683
H4: SN => BI	0.111	0.047	2.354	0.019	0.021	0.206
H5a: BI => CB	0.502	0.039	13.037	0.000	0.419	0.572
H5b: BI => SFT	0.613	0.031	19.801	0.000	0.548	0.668
<b>Model's summary</b>				<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup> Adjusted</b>	<b>Q<sup>2</sup></b>
ATD				0.451	0.449	0.299
BI				0.564	0.563	0.427
CB				0.252	0.251	0.121
SFT				0.376	0.375	0.253

Source: Data Processed (2023)

### Visitor Emotional Solidarity and Attitude towards Tourism

*H1: Visitors' emotional solidarity with residents (welcoming nature - H1a, emotional closeness - H1b, and sympathetic understanding - H1c) significantly predicts visitors' attitudes concerning tourism.*

According to Hypothesis 1 (H1a), Welcoming Nature (WN), (H1b), Emotional Closeness (EC) and (H1c) Sympathetic Understanding (SU) significantly influence visitor attitude towards Tourism with WN ( $\beta = 0.296$ ;  $t = 6.571$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), EC ( $\beta = 0.294$ ;  $t = 6.056$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), and SU ( $\beta = 0.191$ ;  $t = 4.030$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ) as shown in Table 4. These results however in Hypothesis 1a, 1b and 1c show that visitors' emotional solidarity with residents at events generates a positive attitude and influences tourism leading to its growth and development. The way leisure event visitors are welcomed by residents, residents' emotional closeness with visitors during the event, and sympathetic understanding influence the attitude of visitors to events. In the study by Erul, Woosnam, & McIntosh (2020), it is supported that Emotional Solidarity Scale (ESS) factors (Welcoming Nature (WN), Emotional Closeness (EC), and Sympathetic Understanding (SU)) and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) constructs (Attitudes Towards Tourism (ATD), Subjective Norms (SN), and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)) are effective and powerful in predicting residents' intentions to support tourism.

### Perceived Behavioral control and Behavioral Intentions

*H2: Perceived behavioral control significantly influences behavioral intentions for tourism development.*

Hypothesis 2 advances that Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) has a positive effect on Behavioral Intentions (BI). As shown in Table 4, PBC has a significant influence on BI ( $\beta = 0.104$ ,  $P < 0.002$ ), therefore Hypothesis 2 is supported. This show that high perceived behavioral control or an environment free of barriers influences high levels of behavioral

intentions of the leisure event visitors to support tourism development. The Theory of Planned Behavior posits that people's motivation to behave in a given setting is based on three connected factors (behavioral beliefs individuals' attitudes toward behavior, normative beliefs-subjective norms, and control beliefs-perceived behavioral control) (Ajzen, 2005; Lange et al., 2011). This theory however has a significant impact and influence on an individual's intended behavior. These intents are said to be a forerunner of behavior (Hegner et al., 2014).

### Visitor Attitude and Behavioral Intentions

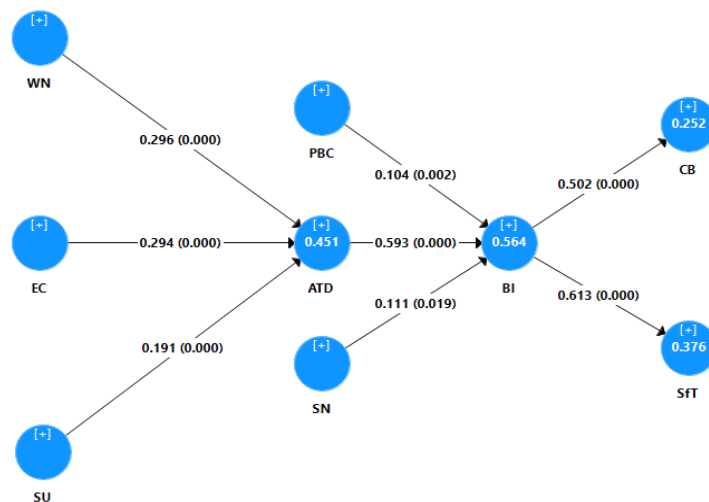
*H3: Visitors' attitudes concerning tourism significantly influence behavioral intentions for tourism development.*

Visitor Attitude (ATD) is positively connected to Behavioral Intentions (BI) ( $\beta = 0.593$ ,  $P < 0.000$ ) as shown in Table 4. This result support Hypothesis 3 which proposed that visitor attitude towards leisure event and tourism aid and influences the development of positive behavioral intentions for the promotion and development of tourism. Attitudes toward subjective norms, behavior, and control are all closely related to intention (Ajzen, 2011). On about an individual's impression of societal pressure. The performance of an individual's behavior is influenced by his or her attitude toward behavior. It should be mentioned, however, that the more favorable the attitude toward the behavior, the stronger the overall purpose to perform (Armitage & Conner, 2001). When visitor attitude towards tourism is positive, it significantly influences their behavioral intentions which positively affects tourism development.

### Subjective Norms (Normative Beliefs) and Behavioral Intentions

*H4: Subjective norms (normative beliefs) significantly influence behavioral intentions for tourism development.*

Hypothesis 4 is supported as the result shows that Subjective Norms (Normative Beliefs) (SN) are significantly related to Behavioral Intentions (BI) ( $\beta = 0.111$ ,  $P < 0.019$ ) as shown in Table 4. This show that the engagement of Subjective Norms (Normative Belief) which pronounces the individual judgment of social pressure involved in doing an activity influences Behavioral intentions that leads to the development of Tourism. Visitors' sentiments regarding tourism development will however predict their behavioral intents to support tourism development significantly whilst perceived behavioral control predicts their behavioral intentions to assist tourism development significantly. Subjective norms however predict behavioral intents to assist tourism growth significantly (Erul, Woosnam, & McIntosh, 2020).



**Figure 2.** Structural Model  
Source: Data Processed (2023)

### **Visitor Behavioral Intentions, Community Benefits, and Support for Tourism**

*H5: Visitors' behavioral intentions significantly influence tourism development in terms of community benefits (H5a) and support for tourism (H5b).*

Visitor Behavioral Intentions (BI) are significantly connected to Community Benefits (CB) ( $\beta = 0.502$ ,  $P < 0.000$ ) and Visitor Behavioral Intentions (BI) significantly influence Support for Tourism (SfT) ( $\beta = 0.613$ ,  $P < 0.000$ ) as supported in Hypothesis 5a and 5b respectively and shown in Table 4. It, however, shows that Visitor Behavioral Intention with its related motivational factors that influence the given behavior contributes to what the event host community benefits and therein positively affect largely the support for tourism and its development. Residents' emotions toward tourists however have been examined as an antecedent of support for tourism growth in previous studies (Hasani et al., 2016; Li & Wan, 2017; Moghavvemi et al., 2017; Ribeiro et al., 2017; Simpson & Simpson, 2017; Woosnam, 2012). As much as residents' support for tourism development cannot be arguably absent, there is the fact that another key stakeholder to support this tourism developmental success is the visitors (Patwardhan et al., 2020).

### **3.4 Discussion**

This study examined the interplay of emotional solidarity and the theory of planned behavior in predicting tourism development in Ghana. Consequently, eight hypotheses were tested, and the findings supported all these hypotheses. The results from the PLS-SEM analysis revealed that emotional solidarity characterized by a welcoming nature, emotional closeness, and sympathetic understanding significantly positively affects visitors' attitudes towards tourism development. This suggests the significant role of emotional solidarity in promoting visitors' attitudes toward tourism development. This finding is in support of the existing literature that suggests emotional solidarity fosters attitudes about tourism (Erul, Woosnam, & McIntosh, 2020; Li & Wan, 2017; Moghavvemi et al., 2017). This implies as visitors' emotional solidarity with resident grows, people may become more supportive of tourism and its associated growth.

Similarly, as projected the three predictors (i.e., perceived behavioral control, individual attitude, and subjective norms) from the theory of planned behavior significantly predicted the behavioral intentions of the leisure event visitors. This finding specifically suggests that high perceived behavioral control, individual attitude, and subjective norms were associated with high levels of behavioral intentions of the leisure event visitors to support tourism development. Additionally, the visitors' behavioral intentions positively influenced tourism development in terms of community benefits and support for tourism. These findings corroborate the theory of planned behavior which suggests subjective norms, attitudes, and control have a significant impact on an individual's intended behavior which then becomes a forerunner of behavior (Hegner et al., 2014; Hemdi & Nasurdin, 2007)

## **4. CONCLUSION**

The purpose of the study is to examine the effect of emotional solidarity and the theory of planned behavior in predicting tourism development in Ghana. The hypothesis was built on Emotional solidarity by use of planned behavior theory. The study considered Emotional Solidarity Scale (ESS) factors (Welcoming Nature (WN), Emotional Closeness (EC), and Sympathetic Understanding (SU)) and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) constructs (Attitudes Towards Tourism (ATD), Subjective Norms (SN), and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)) which are effective and powerful in predicting residents' intentions to support tourism development. All objectives in the quest to generate the purpose proved positive achievements.

The study concludes that visitors' opinions toward tourism development are significantly positively influenced by emotional solidarity, which is defined by welcoming nature, emotional closeness, and sympathetic understanding. The three theories of planned behavior predictors (i.e., perceived behavioral control, individual attitude, and subjective norms) significantly predicted and influenced the behavioral intentions of leisure event visitors. Emotional solidarity proved the fostering of attitude. The results proved that the emotional solidarity factors along with the theory of planned behavior constructs significantly influence visitors' behavioral intentions to support tourism development.

The first implication of the study, given the relationship that integrates emotional solidarity with visitor attitudes concerning tourism, there is a positive relationship that integrates emotional solidarity and the theory of planned behavior in predicting visitors' behavioral intentions to attend leisure events in Ghana. It is however evident in the result of the study that apart from residents' emotional solidarity towards visitors which is widely studied and known, visitors as another major stakeholder in leisure event management, their planned behavior, and their relationships or attachment with community inhabitants or emotional bond towards residents are critical considerations when planning events that are purposed at promoting tourism (Saad, 2013). The need for this discovery will help ascertain the fact that the identification of the giver and receiver of emotional bond or tie has the tendencies of changing attitudes to foster tourism development.

The second implication is that once the barrier-free environment or behavioral control levels are known, it will positively influence the tourism development intentions. The study however accepts that and concludes that the behavioral control levels influence the intentions of the development of tourism. This has been support in the works of Mair (2011), Steg and Vlek (2009) and Chiu et al. (2014) environmental stewardship is an important indicator of long-term tourism. As a result, empowering individuals to adopt environmentally responsible behaviors is a prerequisite for the development of sustainable tourism and ecotourism. When individual visitors have a barrier-free environment or self-efficacy and can control him or herself shares direct relationship to improvement of tourism.

The third implication is the need to establish how visitors' psychological factors or attitudes toward tourism positively affects behavioral intentions for tourism development. This has been achieved in the study. As tourist attitude significantly influences behavioral intention, tourist however have a wide range of behaviors. Visitors however with positive psychological attitude in connection with tourism reflects positively of repeat visit hence aids the development of tourism. The attitude that one holds about a behavior can be an accurate indicator of whether or not they intend to engage in that behavior. In addition, relevant research has indicated that opinions of visitors' environmental activity can be utilised to predict the visitors' intention to engage in environmentally responsible behavior in the future (Wang et al., 2018, 2019). This individual's perception of attitude evaluation however triggers effective positive mood for tourism transformation.

The fourth implication of the study however is the extent at which subjective norms or normative beliefs have on visitor behavioral intentions for tourism development. This has proven positive by the study. Subjective norms are which explain how individuals feel about the social pressures they face regarding expected behavior (Fang et al., 2017). A specific behavioral act by a visitor that is anticipated or desired in light of the existing conditions is an example of what the study referred to as a normative belief. The perspective of one's own subjective norms can have an effect on one's motivation to engage in a certain behavior. According to the findings of this research, one's attitude, in particular, has a favorable influence on their willingness to participate in leisure activities and form relationships with locals in an effort to increase tourism. Other studies have found that normative beliefs can influence people's subjective norms, attitudes, and behavioral intentions (Fang et al., 2017). These influence on behavioral intention directly affect positively the development of tourism.

The final implication to identify and establish how the behavioral intentions of visitors affect tourism development has been achieved and proven positive in the study. The growth of tourism is a two-way street, visitors and hosts each bear an equal amount of responsibility for its success (Wasaya et al., 2022). For the tourism industry to continue to thrive and for hosts to maintain their standard of living, it is imperative that current and past visitors who emotional bond leave a lasting impression on tourist (Wasaya et al., 2022). Visitors are more likely to return to a location after having a positive experience there, which demonstrates their devotion to the business (Vada et al., 2019a, 2019b). This behavior of visitors through repeat visits help shape and boost the tourism industry.

Most literature on emotional solidarity measured the residents' emotional solidarity with visitors. This study has proven to the other stakeholder in leisure event management that visitor emotional solidarity towards residents have a high tendency of developing future bonds and thereby developing tourism. It is evident to note that when the emotional solidarity of visitors grows stronger towards host leisure residents, visitors will increase their support for tourism development. The current study, therefore, offers a unique and better comprehension of the effects of emotional solidarity factors and the theory of planned behavior constructs on tourism development in a developing country.

Although this study has made a substantial contribution, it has certain flaws. As a cross-sectional survey, making conclusions regarding cause and effect may be challenging. As a result, researchers should turn to longitudinal studies in the future. Another drawback of the research is that it focused only on direct effects, ignoring the possibility of indirect consequences. Mediation effects may be used in future research to examine this link in further detail.

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