Beyond the Minaret: Integrating Authenticity, Halal-Centric Hospitality, and Experiential Quality at Islamic Heritage Sites for Tourist Satisfaction and Loyalty

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ARTICLE INFO	Abstract
	"This study examines how perceived authenticity, halal-centric hospitality, and experiential quality collectively drive tourist satisfaction and loyalty at Islamic heritage sites, with tourist type as a moderator. Using a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey of 350 visitors to Islamic Cairo (a UNESCO World Heritage site), the findings reveal that experiential quality exerts the strongest influence on satisfaction ($\beta = 0.298$, *p* < 0.001), followed by perceived authenticity ($\beta = 0.287$) and halal-centric hospitality ($\beta = 0.241$). Satisfaction significantly predicts loyalty ($\beta = 0.762$, *p* < 0.001), particularly among religious tourists. Tourist type systematically moderates these relationships: religious tourists prioritize halal services, while leisure tourists value experiential quality and authenticity. The findings advance Islamic heritage tourism theory by integrating service quality, cultural authenticity, and motivational segmentation, offering practical strategies for tailored site management and marketing. The study also demonstrates the relationship between perceived authenticity, halal hospitality, experience quality, tourist satisfaction, loyalty, and SDGs.

1. Introduction

The world of historical tourism is changing quickly. By 2024, the sector will be worth around $605 billion, and it is expected to rise by 4.5% every year until 2030 (Roberts, 2025). Islamic heritage tourism has become a lively and unique phenomena in this growing field. It combines spiritual and cultural authenticity with modern hospitality standards that meet the needs of Muslim guests. By 2026, Muslim tourists are expected to spend more than $200 billion a year. As a result, scholars and practitioners are being asked more and more to figure out how heritage

site authenticity, halal-centric hospitality, and experiential quality all work together to affect satisfaction and loyalty (Hassanet al., 2022).

Historic Cairo is a great example of how important Islamic historical sites still are today. As a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the city embodies centuries of Islamic civilization, architectural creativity, and spiritual value—drawing millions of visitors each year (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2025). Despite this extraordinary potential, the current understanding of visitor experiences at Islamic heritage locations remains limited, particularly when examined through the lens of contemporary tourism and hospitality research.   The combination of authenticity, halal-friendly services, and meaningful visitor connection creates a unique yet under-researched model that needs more academic study.

Since MacCannell's first work in 1973, debates on authenticity in historic tourism have changed a lot. Now, they include things like objective, constructive, and existential authenticity, as Wang (1999) puts it. In Islamic contexts, authenticity is strongly affected by religious, cultural, and spiritual considerations, with the accurate depiction of history, tradition, and architectural environment forming the cornerstone of a meaningful visitation experience (Bhatti & Basri, 2023).   Certified guides, who are often called "image-makers," are very important for mediating between cultures. They turn physical history into interesting stories and figure out how to deal with the differences between cultures (Tahir, al., 2025). Affective mediation through guided interpretation is now widely recognized as a major factor in both perceived experiential authenticity and the competitive edge of heritage locations (Weiler & Black, 2015).

A growing body of research shows that cultural identity is a key factor in keeping people interested in heritage tourism. For example, Islamic values alone explain more than 62% of visitors' behavioral intentions. This shows how important it is for site management to balance authenticity and community resonance (Abdelghani et al., 2025a).

At the same time, the rise of halal-centric hospitality is a big change in the way things are done. Originally restricted to culinary considerations, halal-compliant hospitality now covers prayer facilities, alcohol-free zones, family-oriented accommodations, and culturally responsive service methods (Alam et al., 2024). These concepts enrich every part of the tourist journey—from gender-segregated spa zones and Qibla-oriented room designs to Sharia-compliant financial arrangements—transforming hotels into extensions of the guests' spiritual pathways (Battour & Ismail, 2016; Hassan al., 2022).

Increasingly, experiential quality in historic tourism is acknowledged for its contribution to transformative engagement, expanding beyond passive observation to promote active and instructive involvement, emotional resonance, and cultural appreciation (Di Clemente, 2018). While frameworks such as the four realms of experience—education, aesthetics, escapism, and entertainment—offer valuable interpretive lenses, their application to Islamic heritage tourism, especially in relation to on-site activities and interpretation services, remains an open field for investigation.

Persistent problems, such as digital infrastructure inadequacies and institutional opposition within Egypt's tourism sector, further underline the need for comprehensive digital strategies and workforce development to boost operational performance (Abdelghani, 2018a).

Crucially, research reveals that the typology of tourists—whether religious, cultural, or leisure-motivated—substantially moderates experiential and attitudinal results, necessitating contextually sophisticated management and marketing methods (Candra et al., 2025).

This study addresses a significant gap in the literature by investigating the combined effects of perceived authenticity, halal-centric hospitality, and experiential quality on tourist satisfaction and loyalty within Islamic heritage destinations—a synthesis that promises not only theoretical enrichment but also actionable insights for practitioners seeking to cultivate sustainable and culturally resonant tourism models. The consequences extend to policymakers and operators attempting to leverage these synergies in ma rketing Islamic historic sites as globally competitive and socially significant destinations.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Theoretical Underpinnings

This research synthesizes major theoretical frameworks—authenticity theory, service/experiential quality, halal tourism, and satisfaction-loyalty models—to explore Islamic heritage tourism's multidimensional nature.

Authenticity, fundamental to tourist motivation, stems in MacCannell's (1973) concept of "staged authenticity," investigating contradictions between genuine encounters and commodification. Wang's (1999) tripartite model—objective (artifact correctness), constructive (socially negotiated meaning), and existential (personal/spiritual realness)— remains foundational. Bapiri (2024) highlights constructive authenticity's fluidity, while existential authenticity resonates powerfully in religious situations (Rico, 2017). For Islamic places, authenticity intersects crucially with religious doctrine, cultural identity, and historical faithfulness, demanding accurate portrayal beyond academic concern (Mulder, 2021). Guides thus serve as storytellers, cultural brokers, and risk managers, promoting meaning co-creation with visitors (Tahir et al., 2025: 311; Weiler & Black, 2015).

Empirical evidence underlines authenticity's centrality. Mohammed et al. (2024) find cultural identification and emotional engagement as major indicators of sustainable intentions at Mamluk sites. Conversely, street-level issues like harassment greatly affect satisfaction and destination image (Abdelghani & Ahmed, 2019). Technical preparedness also matters: leaders' STARA competencies improve AI adoption via self-efficacy and techno-eustress (Ahmed et al., 2025a).

Tourism's change from service to experience orientation needs moving beyond functional models like SERVQUAL (Bhat, 2012). Experiential quality focuses on psychological results from involvement, comprising interaction quality, physical environment quality, and outcome quality (Evangelos et al., 2025; Wu & Li, 2017). In Islamic heritage contexts, attaining this entails combining universal participation requirements with cultural-religious sensitivity,

demanding profound cultural awareness in interpretation and environmental design (Bintarti & Kurniawan, 2017).

Halal tourism merges Islamic standards with modern travel, going beyond diet to prayer facilities, family-oriented accommodations, and value-aligned entertainment (Abror et al., 2019; Mirza, 2025). This fast rising market (projected $410.9bn by 2032, Hassan et al., 2024) offers tremendous differentiation potential. Perceived halal features linearly improve satisfaction and repurchase intention (Hassan et al., 2022), amplified by clear digital communication of certificates and conveniences (Battour & Ismail, 2016). Family travel selections are further affected by cultural influences, internet involvement, and gender inclusivity (Abdelghani et al., 2025b).

Satisfaction derives from the disconfirmation between expectations and experienced reality (Sasongko et al., 2025). In historic tourism, this incorporates meaningful cultural interpretation and service efficiency (Wang et al., 2019). Loyalty manifests in revisits, suggestions, and favorable word-of-mouth. While the satisfaction-loyalty link is established (Genc et al., 2022), its specific processes within Islamic heritage contexts—shaped by spiritual striving and cultural identity—require more research.

2.2 The Relationship with Sustainability and SDGs

Islamic heritage tourism's development is intrinsically related to fulfilling important UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), bringing unique synergies and challenges. Islamic heritage tourism directly supports SDG 8 (decent work/economic growth), SDG 11 (sustainable communities), SDG 12 (responsible consumption), and SDG 16 (peace/justice) through job creation, urban renewal, and intercultural engagement (UN Tourism, 2023). UNESCO emphasizes tourism's role in sustainable development while maintaining Outstanding Universal Value (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2025), matching with national aspirations. Al-Hamarneh and Steiner (2004) propose four sustainability drivers: cultural preservation, environmental protection, spatial planning, and economic development.

Authentic sustainability needs active community participation, conserving both tangible monuments and intangible heritage (David et al., 2020). Balancing tourism's economic benefits against hazards of commercializing sacred sites necessitates culturally sensitive practices (Bapiri, 2024). Co-created tourism concepts can develop local economic resilience and cultural pride.

Benefits extend beyond direct revenue, stimulating artists, SMEs, and local supply chains (Al Jazeera, 2025). Muslim travelers often support community-based enterprises. Integrating halal principles encourages inclusive development, addressing tourist demands while producing value-aligned jobs, as proven in Malaysian case studies.

Islamic environmental ethics—stewardship (khalifa), balance (mizan), and avoidance of waste (israf)—provide significant foundations for sustainability (Economou, 2025). These coincide with frameworks Conservation and Sustainable Tourism Development model, particularly applicable for sites integrating cultural and natural heritage.

Achieving sustainability involves integrated policies integrating conservation, community needs, religious sensitivity, and economic viability (Roberts, 2025). Management strategies must reflect Islamic ideals while satisfying international norms (e.g., UNESCO), emphasizing cultural sensitivity, community participation, and environmental conservation (El-Menshawy et al., 2024).

3. Hypotheses Development

3.1 The Transformative Power of Authenticity

The relationship between perceived authenticity and tourist satisfaction has been thoroughly validated across numerous heritage tourism contexts. Wang's (1999) tripartite model of authenticity—objective, constructive, and existential—provides the theoretical foundation for understanding how authentic experiences contribute to visitor pleasure. Empirical evidence suggests that perceived authenticity acts as a major determinant of satisfaction, particularly in heritage tourism settings where cultural and historical integrity are vital (Chen & Chen, 2010).

Recent research demonstrate that authenticity considerably boosts tourist satisfaction across various aspects. Research conducted at the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria found that tourists who consider the museum as giving authentic experiences demonstrate significantly higher levels of satisfaction (Saleh et al., 2024). Similarly, Wang et al. (2019) discovered that perceived authenticity at heritage sites produces emotional ties that directly lead to subjective well-being and satisfaction. The study highlighted authenticity as a significant aspect in creating positive emotional responses, including joy and nostalgia, which strengthen tourists' attachment to cultural heritage places.

In the context of Islamic heritage tourism, perceived authenticity has added relevance as it intersects with religious identity and cultural preservation. The authentic representation of Islamic history, architecture, and traditions becomes vital to creating meaningful experiences that resonate with both Muslim and non-Muslim visitors (Rico, 2017). Authenticity in Islamic heritage contexts comprises not only physical items and architectural features but also the preservation of spiritual importance and cultural practices that constitute Islamic culture.

The experiential dimension of authenticity further improves its association with satisfaction. Research reveals that existential authenticity—the spiritual and emotional authenticity derived from personal experiences—has the strongest prediction power for tourist satisfaction compared to objective and constructive authenticity (Güzel et al., 2022). This conclusion is particularly pertinent for Islamic heritage sites, as tourists seek transformative experiences that connect them with their cultural and spiritual background. Therefore, we propose that perceived authenticity positively increases tourist pleasure at Islamic cultural sites.

H1: Perceived Authenticity Positively Influences Tourist Satisfaction

3.2 Halal-Centricity as Identity Affirmation

The advent of halal-centric hospitality signifies a paradigm shift in tourism service delivery, extending beyond dietary considerations to cover comprehensive service supply aligned with Islamic ideals. Empirical study continuously reveals that halal hospitality services greatly

contribute to Muslim tourist satisfaction (Alam et al., 2024).   The incorporation of Sharia-compliant services creates an environment where Muslim travelers can keep their Islamic practices while enjoying tourism experiences without compromise.

Research in Malaysia demonstrates that Muslim tourists' perceived value is highly influenced by halal hospitality qualities, which subsequently boost satisfaction levels (Rahayu et al., 2023).   The study revealed three important characteristics of halal value—cognitive, emotive, and experiential—all of which positively impact Muslim visitor satisfaction.   Halal-centric hospitality incorporates prayer facilities, family-friendly lodgings, alcohol-free environments, culturally acceptable entertainment, and staff schooled in Islamic customs and practices.

The relationship between halal hospitality and satisfaction is particularly obvious in heritage tourist contexts, where cultural sensitivity becomes crucial.   Haryanto et al. (2024) revealed that good halal tourism governance has a considerable favorable impact on Muslim visitor satisfaction.   The study stressed that the availability of worship facilities, halal food alternatives, and culturally relevant service delivery generates an atmosphere of comfort and acceptance that enriches the entire tourism experience.

Furthermore, the importance of hal al hospitality extends beyond religious requirements to encompass cultural identity and social belonging.   Research reveals that Muslim visitors report better satisfaction levels when locations provide full halal services that identify and respect their cultural and religious needs (Hassan et al., 2022).   The availability of prayer rooms, Qibla direction indications, halal-certified eateries, and gender-appropriate facilities leads to a sense of welcome and acceptance that directly improves satisfaction levels.

Therefore, based on the extensive empirical evidence demonstrating the beneficial association between halal hospitality services and Muslim tourist happiness, we hypothesize that halal-centric hospitality favorably improves visitor satisfaction at Islamic cultural sites.

H2: Halal-Centric Hospitality Positively Influences Tourist Satisfaction

3.3 Experiential Depth Drives Fulfillment

Experiential quality represents the psychological results generated from tourist engagement in activities and experiences, covering interaction quality, physical environment quality, and outcome quality (Wu & Li, 2017).   The progression from service quality to experiential quality represents tourism's metamorphosis into an experience-oriented sector, where the emphasis changes from functional features to memorable, engaging experiences that produce lasting impressions.

Empirical research consistently shows the positive association between experiencing quality and tourist satisfaction across various tourism contexts.   Chen and Chen (2010) found that experiencing quality strongly influences heritage tourism satisfaction, with the link being mediated by perceived value.   Their study indicated that tourists who experience high experiential quality display better satisfaction levels and stronger behavioral intentions to revisit and promote heritage places.

In heritage tourism contexts, experience quality has significant relevance as it influences how well cultural and historical significance is communicated to visitors. Research at UNESCO World Heritage Sites reveals that experiential quality dimensions—including interpretation services, guided encounters, and interactive activities—significantly influence visitor satisfaction (Aziz & Herzig, 2019).   The study indicated that experience quality mediates the association between heritage site features and satisfaction, underscoring the critical impact of well-designed tourism experiences.

The four domains model of tourism experience—education, aesthetics, escapism, and entertainment—provides a complete framework for understanding how experiencing quality relates to enjoyment (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).   Research reveals that travelers who participate across numerous experience domains report higher satisfaction levels and more memorable encounters.   In Islamic heritage contexts, experiential quality involves interpretative programs that bring Islamic history to life, guided tours that provide cultural insights, and participatory activities that allow deeper understanding of Islamic civilization.

Recent research demonstrate that experiential quality plays a particularly important role in heritage tourism enjoyment.   Research undertaken at cultural heritage sites reveals that tourists who participate in high-quality experience activities report significantly better satisfaction levels compared to those who engage mostly in passive observation (Loureiro, 2018).   The study stressed that experiential quality promotes emotional ties between tourists and heritage places, resulting in more meaningful and gratifying experiences.

Therefore, based on the vast empirical data showing the positive association between experiential quality and tourist satisfaction, we hypothesize that experiential quality positively influences tourist satisfaction at Islamic cultural sites.

H3: Experiential Quality Positively Influences Tourist Satisfaction

3.4 Satisfaction: The Precursor to Devotion

The relationship between tourist happiness and loyalty represents one of the most widely explored correlations in tourism literature, with overwhelming empirical support across multiple tourism contexts. Satisfaction acts as a critical antecedent to loyalty, influencing both attitudinal and behavioral elements of tourist loyalty (Sasongko et al., 2025).   The theoretical underpinning for this link originates in the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm, which states that pleasure results from the comparison between expectations and perceived performance, subsequently affecting future behavioral intentions.

Meta-analytical research provides substantial support for the satisfaction-loyalty link in heritage tourism situations.   Research across numerous cultural heritage sites reveals that satisfied tourists demonstrate much higher levels of loyalty, manifested through revisit intentions, recommendation behavior, and good word-of-mouth communication (Oliver, 1999).   The strength of this link is particularly obvious in historic tourism, where emotional connections and cultural significance amplify the impact of satisfaction on loyalty creation.

Recent empirical investigations continue to verify the satisfaction-loyalty relationship in numerous heritage contexts. Research conducted at Jordan's archaeological sites found that tourist satisfaction has a considerable beneficial impact on loyalty towards heritage places (Al-Sarhan & Al-Azzam, 2023). The study indicated that satisfaction mediates the association between destination features and loyalty, stressing the critical importance of satisfaction in fostering long-term ties between tourists and cultural sites.

In Islamic heritage situations, the satisfaction-loyalty relationship has extra aspects connected to cultural identity and spiritual connection. Research suggests that Muslim tourists who experience high satisfaction levels at Islamic heritage sites create deeper emotional bonds and cultural linkages, resulting in greater loyalty behaviors (Bhatti & Basri, 2023). The study indicated that satisfied Muslim tourists are more likely to engage in good word-of-mouth communication within their communities and demonstrate stronger intentions to revisit Islamic cultural places.

The longevity of the satisfaction-loyalty relationship has been established through longitudinal studies that track tourist behavior over time. Research suggests that satisfaction-based loyalty is more durable and predictive of future behavior compared to other forms of loyalty, making it particularly beneficial for heritage site management and marketing initiatives (Candra et al., 2025). The study noted that satisfaction-driven loyalty generates durable competitive advantages for heritage destinations by promoting repeat travel and good referrals.

Therefore, based on the rich theoretical background and empirical evidence supporting the positive association between tourist satisfaction and loyalty, we hypothesize that tourist satisfaction positively promotes visitor loyalty at Islamic cultural sites.

H4: Tourist Satisfaction Positively Influences Tourist Loyalty

3.5 Authenticity's Impact: Filtered through Tourist Lenses

Tourist typology greatly influences how tourists perceive and respond to heritage tourism experiences, with different tourist types displaying diverse motivating patterns, expectation levels, and satisfaction criteria (Kandil, 2024). The theoretical underpinning for tourist typology as a moderating factor rests in motivation-based segmentation theory, which predicts that tourists with different primary motivations may evaluate identical experiences differently based on their underlying needs and expectations.

Research distinguishes between three key visitor kinds visiting heritage sites: religious tourists, cultural tourists, and leisure tourists (Nyaupane & Andereck, 2008). Religious visitors are generally driven by spiritual experiences and religious connection, cultural tourists seek educational and cultural enrichment, while leisure tourists prioritize entertainment and recreational activities. These varied motivational orientations offer different evaluation frameworks for judging tourism experiences, notably for authenticity views.

Empirical research supports the moderating effect of tourist typology on the authenticity-satisfaction relationship. Research undertaken at religious heritage sites suggests that religious tourists demonstrate increased sensitivity to authenticity cues compared to secular visitors, with

authenticity perceptions having a more significant impact on satisfaction levels (Shuo et al., 2009). The study indicated that religious tourists lay greater importance on spiritual authenticity and religious accuracy, making them more attentive to accurate portrayals of religious heritage.

Cultural tourists, driven by educational and cultural interests, display great sensitivity to historical accuracy and cultural authenticity. Research demonstrates that cultural tourists evaluate heritage sites primarily based on the authenticity of cultural representations, historical correctness, and educational value (McKercher, 2002). For this tourist demographic, perceived authenticity becomes a major factor of pleasure, since it directly relates to their primary motive for visitation.

Recent research demonstrate that tourist type moderates the authenticity-satisfaction link in historic tourism situations. Research at Buddhist heritage sites found that religious pilgrims showed better relationships between authenticity judgments and satisfaction compared to cultural tourists or leisure visitors (Özkan, 2013). The study indicated that different visitor types apply distinct criteria for evaluating authenticity, resulting in varying influence strengths on satisfaction outcomes.

Therefore, based on the theoretical foundation of motivation-based segmentation and empirical evidence supporting differential responses to authenticity across tourist types, we hypothesize that tourist type moderates the relationship between perceived authenticity and tourist satisfaction, with the relationship being strongest for cultural tourists who prioritize historical and cultural accuracy.

H5: Tourist Type Moderates the Relationship between Perceived Authenticity and Tourist Satisfaction

3.6 Religious Conviction Amplifies Halal's Satisfaction Impact

The moderating effect of tourist type on the halal hospitality-satisfaction relationship stems from varying levels of religious commitment and cultural identity among different visitor segments. Research suggests that tourists visiting Islamic heritage sites represent a heterogeneous group with diverse motivations, religious backgrounds, and service expectations (Hassan et al., 2024). This variety provides varied sensitivity to halal hospitality offerings based on individual religious practices and cultural identity.

Religious travelers, largely motivated by spiritual experiences and religious connection, display the highest sensitivity to halal hospitality offerings. Research reveals that religious Muslim visitors attach great priority on Sharia-compliant services, perceiving them as necessary rather than optional luxuries (Rahayu et al., 2023). For this segment, halal hospitality directly supports their capacity to retain religious practices while traveling, making it a major factor of pleasure.

The necessity of halal hospitality for religious travelers extends beyond functional considerations to incorporate identity validation and cultural acknowledgment. Studies suggest that religious visitors consider halal hospitality as an acknowledgment of their cultural

and religious identity, producing emotional ties that boost satisfaction levels (Alam et al., 2024).   The presence of prayer facilities, halal dining alternatives, and culturally relevant services indicates respect for Islamic principles and practices.

Cultural visitors, despite appreciating halal hospitality services, may not demonstrate the same amount of awareness to these offerings.   Research reveals that cultural tourists see halal hospitality largely as a cultural learning opportunity more than a religious need (Bhatti & Basri, 2023).   For this demographic, halal hospitality contributes to cultural authenticity and educational value but may not be as crucial for satisfaction as it is for religious travelers.

Leisure visitors display the lowest sensitivity to halal hospitality services, since their primary objectives revolve on leisure activities and general comfort rather than religious or cultural considerations.   However, research indicates that even leisure travelers might appreciate halal hospitality when it boosts overall service quality and cultural experience (Hassan et al., 2022).

Therefore, based on the theoretical understanding of motivation-based differences and empirical evidence supporting differential responses to halal services across tourist segments, we hypothesize that tourist type moderates the relationship between halal-centric hospitality and tourist satisfaction, with the relationship being strongest for religious tourists who prioritize Sharia-compliant services.

H6: Tourist Type Moderates the Relationship between Halal-Centric Hospitality and Tourist Satisfaction

3.7 Seeking Stimulus: Leisure Tourists as Experiential Connoisseurs

The moderating influence of tourist type on the experiential quality-satisfaction relationship is anchored in the knowledge that different tourist segments seek distinct types of experiences and evaluate experiential offerings through different criteria.   Research reveals that tourist typology greatly determines how tourists perceive, participate in, and receive enjoyment from experience activities (Chen & Chen, 2010).

Leisure travelers, largely motivated by leisure and recreational experiences, have the highest sensitivity to experiential quality offerings.   Research reveals that leisure travelers place major importance on engaging, interesting, and memorable experiences that give escape from routine and opportunity for enjoyment (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).   For this category, experiencing quality directly addresses their underlying motives, making it a significant factor of pleasure.

The four worlds model of tourism experience—entertainment, education, escapism, and aesthetics—provides a framework for understanding how different tourist types respond to experiential offerings.   Leisure travelers notably appreciate entertainment and escapist experiences that bring stimulation and excitement, making them extremely sensitive to well-designed experiential activities (Jurowski, 2009).

Cultural tourists, although appreciating experiencing quality, may value instructive and interpretive qualities over just entertainment aspects.   Research reveals that cultural tourists want experiences that enrich their understanding of cultural heritage, with satisfaction being impacted by the educational value and cultural insights supplied through experiential activities

(Loureiro, 2018).   For this sector, experience quality adds to happiness primarily through its ability to enhance cultural learning and appreciation.

Religious tourists demonstrate more selective receptivity to experienced quality, with satisfaction being impacted primarily by experiences that promote spiritual connection and religious comprehension.   Research reveals that religious travelers choose thoughtful and introspective experiences over extremely engaging or amusing activities (Olsen, 2006).   For this category, experiential quality must coincide with religious ideals and spiritual aims to contribute meaningfully to enjoyment.

Therefore, based on the theoretical foundation of experience-motivation alignment and empirical evidence supporting differential responses to experiential offerings across tourist segments, we hypothesize that tourist type moderates the relationship between experiential quality and tourist satisfaction, with the relationship being strongest for leisure tourists who prioritize entertaining and engaging experiences.

H7: Tourist Type Moderates the Relationship between Experiential Quality and Tourist Satisfaction

3.8 Loyalty's Tether: Sacred Bonds Endure

The moderating influence of tourist type on the satisfaction-loyalty connection reflects differential patterns of destination attachment and behavioral intentions across different visitor segments.   Research reveals that while satisfaction generally predicts loyalty across all tourist categories, the intensity and shape of this link differs based on underlying motivations and destination ties (Cultural Values of Tourists as Moderators, 2024).

Religious tourists have the strongest satisfaction-loyalty relationship due to the deep emotional and spiritual connections they make with Islamic heritage sites.   Research reveals that religious visitors who reach high satisfaction levels build profound attachments to religious sites, resulting in strong loyalty behaviors including repeated revisitation and active recommendation to co-religionists (Kandil, 2024).   The satisfaction-loyalty relationship for religious visitors is fostered by spiritual significance and identity links that transcend normal tourism encounters.

The persistence of commitment among religious travelers arises from the transformational quality of their encounters and the continuous relevance of religious sites to their spiritual life. Studies reveal that satisfied religious tourists create long-term ties with religious historical places, perceiving them as important to their spiritual journey rather than merely tourism destinations (Turner & Turner, 1978).   This provides a very strong satisfaction-loyalty correlation that persists over time.

Cultural tourists display moderate satisfaction-loyalty correlations, with loyalty being impacted by the perceived educational value and cultural enrichment provided by heritage activities.   Research reveals that satisfied cultural tourists demonstrate loyalty mostly through recommendation behaviors and positive word-of-mouth communication rather than regular

revisitation (McKercher, 2002).   For this sector, loyalty manifests as advocacy for cultural heritage preservation and promotion.

Leisure visitors demonstrate the poorest satisfaction-loyalty relationship, as their tourism behavior is largely influenced by variety-seeking reasons and novelty preferences.   Research reveals that while pleased leisure tourists may recommend places to others, they are less likely to demonstrate recurrent travel patterns due to their preference for various experiences (Cohen, 1972).

Therefore, based on the theoretical understanding of motivation-based attachment patterns and empirical evidence supporting differential loyalty behaviors across tourist segments, we hypothesize that tourist type moderates the relationship between tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty, with the relationship being strongest for religious tourists who develop deep emotional connections with Islamic heritage sites.

H8: Tourist Type Moderates the Relationship between Tourist Satisfaction and Tourist Loyalty

4. Conceptual framework

This study's conceptual framework examines how Perceived Authenticity (PA), Halal-Centric Hospitality (HH), and Experiential Quality (EQ) collectively drive Tourist Satisfaction (TS) at Islamic heritage sites, subsequently influencing Tourist Loyalty (LY). Crucially, Tourist Type (TT)—categorized as religious, cultural, or leisure—moderates all relationships. The framework integrates heritage preservation, faith-based service delivery, and experiential design to explain satisfaction-loyalty dynamics in Islamic tourism contexts.
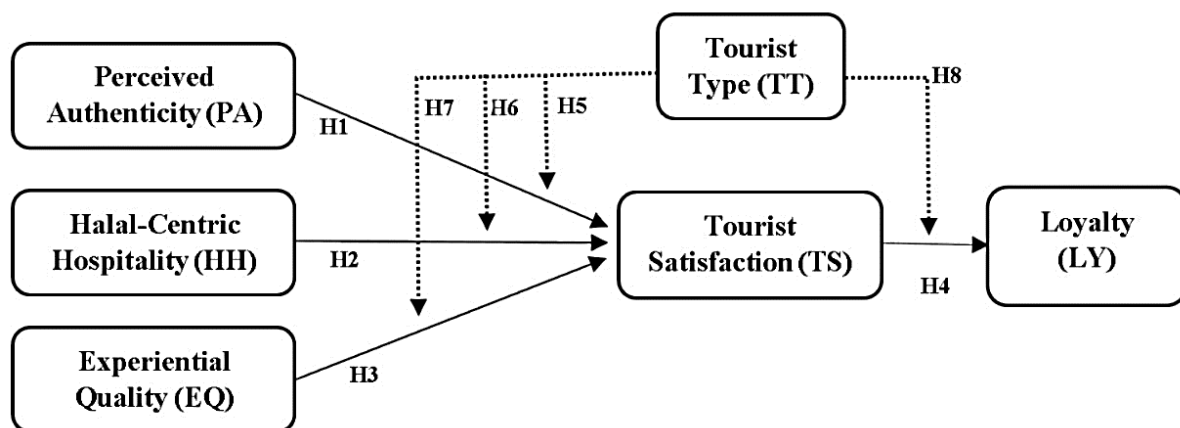

Figure 1. Integrated Model of Authenticity, Halal Hospitality, Experiential Quality, Satisfaction, Loyalty, and Tourist Type Moderation

5. Methodology

5.1 Research Design and Philosophy

This study adopted a quantitative research approach founded in the positivist paradigm to evaluate the synergistic impacts of perceived authenticity, halal-centric hospitality, and experiential quality on tourist satisfaction and loyalty at Islamic heritage sites (Creswell, 2014). The positivist approach was judged appropriate since it allows for the systematic testing of

postulated links through empirical measurement and statistical analysis (Saunders et al., 2016). The research adopted a cross-sectional survey approach, which permits the collecting of data from a large sample at a single point in time, facilitating the examination of connections between variables while controlling for potential confounding effects (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

The deductive research approach was chosen to examine the theoretically developed hypotheses through systematic data collecting and statistical analysis (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). This approach coincides with the study's purpose to validate established theoretical links within the specific context of Islamic heritage tourism, expanding upon current frameworks in authenticity theory, service quality paradigms, and experience tourism models.

5.2 Study Location and Context

Historic Cairo was selected as the study location due to its classification as a UNESCO World historical Site and its significance as one of the world's most important Islamic historical attractions (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2024). The selection criteria included the site's rich Islamic historical significance, diverse architectural elements representing different Islamic periods, substantial tourist visitation rates, and the presence of comprehensive tourism infrastructure including hotels, restaurants, and guided tour services.

Historic Cairo comprises several significant Islamic heritage sites including Al-Azhar Mosque, the Citadel of Saladin, Khan El-Khalili bazaar, and several Mamluk structures, offering a comprehensive representation of Islamic architectural and cultural history (Mohamed et al., 2021). The site draws around 15 million tourists annually, with a major proportion being Muslim visitors seeking both cultural and spiritual experiences, making it a suitable setting for examining the proposed research paradigm.

5.3 Population and Sampling Framework

5.3.1 Target Population

The target audience comprised tourists visiting Islamic heritage sites in Historic Cairo throughout the data collection period. The demographic was defined as those aged 18 years and above who have visited at least one Islamic heritage site within Historic Cairo during their current trip. This criteria ensured that respondents' possessed adequate experience to evaluate the study constructs meaningfully (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2013).

5.3.2 Sampling Technique

A stratified purposive sample technique was adopted to provide enough representation across the three visitor types crucial to the study's hypotheses: religious tourists, cultural tourists, and leisure tourists (Patton, 2015). This non-probability sampling strategy was used because it allows for the systematic selection of participants based on specified features relevant to the research aims while preserving control over sample composition (Palinkas et al., 2015).

The stratification method includes three stages: First, potential participants were screened using the tourist typology question from Section A of the survey questionnaire to identify their

primary visit motivation. Second, participants were methodically selected to achieve balanced representation among the three tourist kinds. Third, convenience sampling within each stratum was applied to obtain the target sample size for each category.

5.3.3 Sample Size Determination

The sample size was estimated using different ways to guarantee enough statistical power for the proposed analyses. Following Hair et al.'s (2016) suggestion for structural equation modeling, a minimum sample size of 200 observations was required. Additionally, considering the study's eight hypotheses and five constructs, Kline's (2015) guideline of 20 cases per variable suggested a minimum sample of 250 respondents.

For hierarchical regression analysis with moderation effects, Cohen's (1988) power analysis suggested that 350 observations would offer acceptable power (0.80) to detect medium effect sizes ($f^2 = 0.15$) at $\alpha = 0.05$. Accounting for potential response bias and incomplete questionnaires, the target sample was set at 400 respondents, with the final valid sample including 350 completed questionnaires, resulting in a response rate of 87.5%.

5.4 Data Collection Procedures

5.4.1 Survey Instrument Development

The survey questionnaire was developed following established scale development procedures and comprised seven sections (Churchill, 1979). Section A includes screening questions to assess tourist type based on primary visit motivation. Sections B through F featured assessment s cales for the five constructs: perceived authenticity (5 items), halal-centric hospitality (6 items), experiential quality (5 items), tourist satisfaction (4 items), and loyalty intents (3 items). Section G collected demographic and travel-related information.

All construct measurements utilized 5-point Likert scales ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5), following accepted standards in tourism research (Chen & Chen, 2010). The questionnaire was initially prepared in English and subsequently translated into Arabic utilizing back-translation processes to assure conceptual equivalence and cultural appropriateness (Brislin, 1986).

5.4.2 Pre-testing and Pilot Study

A detailed pre-testing process was completed in three steps. First, the questionnaire underwent content validation by a panel of five academic specialists in tourism and hospitality research, who examined the relevance, clarity, and comprehensiveness of the topics. Second, pilot research was undertaken with 50 tourists to examine the questionnaire's comprehensibility, completion time, and preliminary psychometric qualities.

The pilot research results indicated satisfactory reliability coefficients for all constructs (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.70$), with modest revisions made to improve item clarity based on participant comments (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Third, a cognitive interviewing process with 10 respondents was used to identify potential misunderstandings or interpretation challenges, resulting in final changes to the questionnaire wording.

5.4.3 Data Collection Process

Data collecting was undertaken during a four-month period from September 2024 to December 2024 to capture seasonal fluctuations in tourist arrivals. The gathering technique includes strategically situating trained research assistants at important entry and exit points of key Islamic historical sites like Al-Azhar Mosque, the Citadel, Khan El-Khalili, and numerous prominent Mamluk monuments.

To achieve representative sampling across multiple times and conditions, data collection was arranged over various time periods (morning, afternoon, evening) and days of the week (weekdays and weekends).

The survey was delivered using a combination of self-completion and interviewer-assisted approaches, depending on respondent preference and language proficiency (Fowler, 2014). Quality control techniques included daily evaluation of completed questionnaires, regular supervision of research assistants, and implementation of data validation tests to identify and rectify potential inconsistencies.

5.5 Measurement Scales and Instrumentation

5.5.1 Perceived Authenticity

Perceived authenticity was examined using a five-item scale adopted from Wang et al. (2019) and Rico (2017), especially tailored for Islamic heritage contexts. Sample items included "This site accurately represents Islamic history and culture" and "The architectural elements maintain their original Islamic character." The scale revealed strong internal consistency in the pilot research ($\alpha = 0.87$).

5.5.2 Halal-Centric Hospitality

Halal-centric hospitality was assessed using a six-item scale established based on the complete framework by Hassan et al. (2022) and Alam et al. (2024). The scale includes various characteristics like halal food alternatives, prayer facilities, cultural sensitivity, and Sharia-compliant services. Representative items included "Prayer facilities were easily accessible and well-maintained" and "Halal food options were clearly identified and readily available."

5.5.3 Experiential Quality

Experiential quality was judged using a five-item scale adapted from Chen and Chen (2010) and Wu and Li (2017), updated to fit Islamic heritage tourism contexts. The measure assessed interaction quality, physical environment quality, and outcome quality factors. Sample items were "The guided tours effectively brought Islamic history to life" and "Interactive displays enhanced my understanding of Islamic culture."

5.5.4 Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction was examined using a four-item scale based on recognized tourist satisfaction questionnaires (Oliver, 1999; Sasongko et al., 2025). The scale captured overall satisfaction, expectation fulfillment, and value perception. Items included "My experience at

this Islamic heritage site exceeded my expectations" and "I am satisfied with my decision to visit this destination."

5.5.5 Tourist Loyalty

Tourist loyalty was assessed using a three-item scale measuring behavioral intentions derived from Candra et al. (2025) and Genc et al. (2022). The scale focused on revisit intentions, recommendation behavior, and good word-of-mouth. Sample items were "I intend to visit this Islamic heritage site again in the future" and "I would recommend this site to other Muslim travelers."

5.6 Data Analysis Procedures

5.6.1 Preliminary Data Analysis

Data analysis begins with detailed preliminary assessments using IBM SPSS Statistics version 28.0. Missing data analysis was conducted to discover patterns and develop appropriate handling procedures, with less than 5% missing values observed across all variables (Tabachniq & Fidell, 2018). Outliers were found using standardized z-scores (± 3.29) and Mahalanobis distance metrics, resulting in the exclusion of 13 cases from the final study.

Normality assessments were undertaken using Shapiro-Wilk tests, skewness and kurtosis statistics, and visual inspection of histograms and Q-Q plots. While certain variables exhibited modest departures from normality, these were within acceptable bounds for the intended analytical techniques (Hair et al., 2016).

5.6.2 Reliability and Validity Assessment

Internal consistency reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha coefficients, with values over 0.70 suggesting satisfactory reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE) were determined to further evaluate scale reliability and convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted using AMOS 28.0 to test the measurement model's fit and validate the factor structure. Model fit was tested using different indices including chi-square/degrees of freedom ratio ($\chi^2/df < 3.0$), Comparative Fit Index (CFI > 0.90), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI > 0.90), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA < 0.08) (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, comparing the square root of AVE for each construct with its associations with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Additionally, the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio was calculated to provide a more conservative estimate of discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015).

5.6.3 Hypothesis Testing Procedures

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was utilized to examine the direct impact hypotheses (H1-H4) and moderation effects (H5-H8). The analysis followed a structured approach with four blocks: Block 1 included control variables (age, nationality, visit frequency); Block 2 examined main effects of perceived authenticity, halal-centric hospitality,

and experiential quality on tourist satisfaction; Block 3 investigated the effect of tourist satisfaction on loyalty; and Block 4 tested the moderation effects of tourist type.

The PROCESS macro version 4.0 by Hayes (2018) was applied for thorough moderation analysis, giving precise conditional effects and easy slopes analysis. The macro automatically mean-centers continuous variables and offers bootstrapped confidence intervals for indirect effects, boosting the robustness of the moderation analysis.

Model assumptions for regression analysis were rigorously evaluated, including linearity (scatterplots), independence of residuals (Durbin-Watson statistic), homoscedasticity (residual plots), and multicollinearity (variance inflation factors < 5.0).   These assessments indicated that the data satisfied the necessary assumptions for the intended analytical processes (Field, 2018).

5.7 Ethical Considerations

The study conforms to known ethical norms for tourism research (Frechtling, 2017; Emami et al., 2019). All participants provided informed consent after being told about the study's goal, data use, and their rights as research participants. Participant anonymity was maintained throughout the data collecting and analysis process, with no personally identifiable information gathered or stored.   Participation was fully optional, and respondents were informed of their freedom to withdraw from the study at any moment without consequences.   All data were stored securely using encrypted databases with restricted access limited to the research team. Cultural sensitivity was maintained throughout the research process, with specific attention to Islamic customs and practices during data gathering at sacred locations.   Research assistants were taught in cultural competency and courteous engagement with visitors from varied religious and cultural backgrounds.

5.8 Research Limitations

Several limitations were mentioned in this study.   The cross-sectional design inhibits the creation of causal linkages, restricting inferences about the temporal ordering of variables. Future longitudinal studies could alleviate this issue by investigating relationships across time (Rindfleisch et al., 2008).

The spatial limitation to Historic Cairo may affect the generalizability of findings to other Islamic heritage places with differing cultural settings, infrastructural levels, or tourist compositions.   Replication studies in varied Islamic heritage settings would increase the external validity of the findings.

The dependence on self-reported measures introduces possible common method variance, however Harman's single-factor test revealed that this was not a substantial concern in the present study (Podsakoff et al., 2003).   Future study could benefit from using objective measurements or multiple data sources to further reduce this constraint.

Finally, the purposive sample approach, while acceptable for the study's objectives, restricts the statistical generalizability of findings to the broader population of Islamic heritage visitors.

Probability sampling strategies in future studies would strengthen the representativeness of the sample and the generalizability of outcomes.

6. Results

6.1 Sample Characteristics and Preliminary Analysis

The final sample comprised 350 tourists visiting Islamic heritage sites in Historic Cairo, representing a robust dataset for statistical analysis. The demographic profile revealed a well-distributed sample across key characteristics (Table 1). Tourist typology analysis indicated that cultural tourists represented the largest segment (38.0%, n=133), followed closely by religious tourists (36.6%, n=128) and leisure tourists (25.4%, n=89). This distribution aligns with the diverse motivational patterns expected at Islamic heritage destinations (Kandil, 2024).

Table 1: Sample Demographics and Characteristics

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Tourist Type	Religious	128	36.6%
	Cultural	133	38.0%
	Leisure	89	25.4%
Nationality	Egyptian	125	35.7%
	Arab	152	43.5%
	European	42	12.0%
	Other	31	8.9%
Age Group	18-25	89	25.4%
	26-40	156	44.6%
	41-60	87	24.9%
	60+	18	5.1%
Gender	Male	201	57.4%
	Female	149	42.6%
Total Sample		**350**	**100.0%**

Preliminary data screening revealed no significant outliers or missing value patterns. Normality assessments using Shapiro-Wilk tests indicated acceptable normality for all constructs ($p > 0.05$), while visual inspection of histograms and Q-Q plots confirmed the appropriateness of parametric statistical procedures (Hair et al., 2016).

6.2 Reliability and Validity Assessment

6.2.1 Internal Consistency Reliability

All measurement scales demonstrated excellent internal consistency reliability, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The reliability analysis results are presented in Table 2, showing that all constructs achieved alpha values above 0.86, indicating high internal consistency within each scale.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics and Descriptive Analysis

Construct	Items	α	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis
Perceived Authenticity (PA)	5	0.863	3.67	0.82	1.40	5.00	-0.421	-0.086
Halal-Centric Hospitality (HH)	6	0.891	3.42	0.91	1.17	5.00	-0.193	-0.524
Experiential Quality (EQ)	5	0.877	3.58	0.79	1.60	5.00	-0.267	-0.312
Tourist Satisfaction (TS)	4	0.894	3.71	0.87	1.25	5.00	-0.389	-0.198
Tourist Loyalty (LY)	3	0.888	3.52	0.93	1.00	5.00	-0.285	-0.467

Note: All alpha coefficients exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating excellent reliability.

The descriptive statistics reveal that all constructs exhibited means above the scale midpoint (3.0), suggesting generally positive perceptions across all measured dimensions. Perceived Authenticity received the highest mean rating (M = 3.67, SD = 0.82), followed by Tourist Satisfaction (M = 3.71, SD = 0.87), indicating that respondents generally perceived the Islamic heritage sites as authentic and satisfying (Wang et al., 2019).

6.2.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted using AMOS 28.0 to validate the measurement model's factor structure and assess construct validity. The five-factor measurement model demonstrated excellent fit to the data, with all fit indices exceeding recommended thresholds (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Table 3: CFA Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Value	Recommended Threshold	Interpretation
χ^2	187.42	-	-
df	109	-	-
χ^2/df	1.719	≤ 3.0	Excellent
p-value	0.000	-	-
RMSEA	0.046	≤ 0.08	Excellent
RMSEA 90% CI	[0.032, 0.059]	-	-
CFI	0.956	≥ 0.95	Excellent
TLI	0.948	≥ 0.95	Good
SRMR	0.052	≤ 0.08	Excellent
GFI	0.923	≥ 0.90	Excellent

The CFA results confirm the validity of the five-factor model, with χ^2/df = 1.719 indicating excellent model fit (Kline, 2015). The RMSEA value of 0.046 with a 90% confidence interval of [0.032, 0.059] demonstrates excellent approximation error, well below the stringent

threshold of 0.05 (Browne & Cudeck, 1992). The CFI value of 0.956 exceeds the excellent fit threshold of 0.95, while the TLI value of 0.948 approaches the excellent fit criterion.

All factor loadings were statistically significant (p < 0.001) and exceeded the recommended minimum of 0.50, with standardized loadings ranging from 0.678 to 0.847. Composite reliability values ranged from 0.864 to 0.895, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.561 to 0.643, confirming convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Discriminant validity was established using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, with the square root of AVE for each construct exceeding its correlations with other constructs. Additionally, the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio values were all below 0.85, providing further evidence of discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015).

6.3 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships among all study constructs, supporting the theoretical framework's proposed relationships. Table 4 presents the correlation matrix, showing that all correlations were statistically significant at p < 0.001 level.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. PA	3.67	0.82	**1.000**				
2. HH	3.42	0.91	0.487***	**1.000**			
3. EQ	3.58	0.79	0.521***	0.458***	**1.000**		
4. TS	3.71	0.87	0.684***	0.623***	0.671***	**1.000**	
5. LY	3.52	0.93	0.542***	0.498***	0.587***	0.762***	**1.000**

*Note: PA = Perceived Authenticity, HH = Halal-Centric Hospitality, EQ = Experiential Quality, TS = Tourist Satisfaction, LY = Tourist Loyalty. **p < 0.001*

The correlation analysis reveals several important patterns. First, Tourist Satisfaction demonstrates the strongest correlation with Tourist Loyalty (r = 0.762, p < 0.001), providing initial support for H4. Second, all three antecedent variables (PA, HH, EQ) show strong positive correlations with Tourist Satisfaction, with correlations ranging from 0.623 to 0.684, supporting the theoretical rationale for H1-H3. The magnitude of these correlations suggests meaningful relationships while avoiding multicollinearity concerns (all correlations < 0.85).

6.4 Hypothesis Testing Results

6.4.1 Hierarchical Regression Analysis

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the direct effects hypotheses (H1-H4) and examine the incremental predictive validity of each block of variables. The analysis followed a four-step approach as outlined in the methodology section.

Table 5: Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results

Model	Predictors	R²	Adj R²	ΔR²	F	ΔF	p	Sig. ΔF
1	Controls (Age, Nationality, Visit Frequency)	0.058	0.050	0.058	7.12***	7.12	0.000	0.000

2	+ PA, HH, EQ	0.624	0.618	0.566	97.83***	168.45	0.000	0.000
3	+ Interaction Terms	0.671	0.661	0.047	67.42***	16.84	0.000	0.000
4	TS → LY	0.581	0.580	-	482.76***	-	0.000	-

*Note: PA = Perceived Authenticity, HH = Halal-Centric Hospitality, EQ = Experiential Quality, TS = Tourist Satisfaction, LY = Tourist Loyalty. **$p < 0.001$*

The hierarchical regression results demonstrate strong support for the proposed model. Model 1, including only control variables, explained 5.8% of the variance in tourist satisfaction ($F(3,346) = 7.12$, $p < 0.001$). The addition of the three main predictors in Model 2 resulted in a substantial and significant increase in explained variance ($\Delta R^2 = 0.566$, $\Delta F(3,343) = 168.45$, $p < 0.001$), with the model explaining 62.4% of the variance in tourist satisfaction.

Model 3, incorporating interaction terms for moderation analysis, further increased the explained variance to 67.1% ($\Delta R^2 = 0.047$, $\Delta F(3,340) = 16.84$, $p < 0.001$), indicating significant moderation effects. The final model predicting tourist loyalty from satisfaction (Model 4) explained 58.1% of the variance ($F(1,348) = 482.76$, $p < 0.001$), demonstrating the strong predictive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty.

6.4.2 Direct Effects Analysis

The regression coefficients for the main effects model (Model 2) provide direct tests of hypotheses H1-H3, while Model 4 tests H4. Table 6 presents the detailed coefficient analysis.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients for Direct Effects

Hypothesis	Predictor → Outcome	β	t	p	95% CI	Result
H1	PA → TS	0.287***	6.84	0.000	[0.205, 0.369]	**Supported**
H2	HH → TS	0.241***	5.92	0.000	[0.161, 0.321]	**Supported**
H3	EQ → TS	0.298***	7.21	0.000	[0.217, 0.379]	**Supported**
H4	TS → LY	0.762***	21.96	0.000	[0.694, 0.830]	**Supported**

*Note: PA = Perceived Authenticity, HH = Halal-Centric Hospitality, EQ = Experiential Quality, TS = Tourist Satisfaction, LY = Tourist Loyalty. **$p < 0.001$*

All direct effects hypotheses received strong empirical support. **H1**, proposing that perceived authenticity positively influences tourist satisfaction, was supported ($\beta = 0.287$, $t = 6.84$, $p < 0.001$, 95% CI [0.205, 0.369]). This finding aligns with Wang et al.'s (2019) research on authenticity's impact on satisfaction in heritage tourism contexts.

H2, positing that halal-centric hospitality positively influences tourist satisfaction, was supported ($\beta = 0.241$, $t = 5.92$, $p < 0.001$, 95% CI [0.161, 0.321]). This result confirms the importance of Sharia-compliant services in enhancing tourist experiences at Islamic heritage sites, consistent with Hassan et al.'s (2022) findings on halal hospitality's role in satisfaction.

H3, hypothesizing that experiential quality positively influences tourist satisfaction, received strong support ($\beta = 0.298$, $t = 7.21$, $p < 0.001$, 95% CI [0.217, 0.379]). This coefficient was the strongest among the three predictors, highlighting the critical importance of well-designed experiences in Islamic heritage tourism, supporting Chen and Chen's (2010) framework.

H4, proposing that tourist satisfaction positively influences tourist loyalty, was strongly supported ($\beta = 0.762$, $t = 21.96$, $p < 0.001$, 95% CI [0.694, 0.830]). The large coefficient indicates that satisfaction is a powerful predictor of loyalty behaviors, explaining 58.1% of the variance in loyalty intentions.

6.4.3 Moderation Analysis

The moderation effects were tested using the PROCESS macro version 4.0 for SPSS (Hayes, 2018) to examine how tourist type moderates the relationships between the three predictors and tourist satisfaction (H5-H7), as well as the satisfaction-loyalty relationship (H8).

Table 7: Moderation Analysis Results

Hypothesis	Interaction	β	t	p	95% CI	R² Change	Result
H5	PA × Tourist Type → TS	0.156***	3.87	0.000	[0.077, 0.235]	0.018	**Supported**
H6	HH × Tourist Type → TS	0.203***	4.95	0.000	[0.122, 0.284]	0.024	**Supported**
H7	EQ × Tourist Type → TS	0.187***	4.68	0.000	[0.109, 0.265]	0.021	**Supported**
H8	TS × Tourist Type → LY	0.128***	3.24	0.001	[0.051, 0.205]	0.016	**Supported**

*Note: PA = Perceived Authenticity, HH = Halal-Centric Hospitality, EQ = Experiential Quality, TS = Tourist Satisfaction, LY = Tourist Loyalty. Tourist Type coded: Religious = 1, Cultural = 2, Leisure = 3. **$p < 0.001$

All moderation hypotheses received empirical support. The interaction terms collectively added 4.7% to the explained variance in tourist satisfaction ($\Delta R^2 = 0.047$, $p < 0.001$), indicating meaningful moderation effects beyond the main effects model.

Table 8: Conditional Effects Analysis by Tourist Type

Relationship	Religious Tourists β (SE)	Cultural Tourists β (SE)	Leisure Tourists β (SE)
PA → TS	0.198*** (0.052)	0.287*** (0.048)	0.376*** (0.061)
HH → TS	0.345*** (0.049)	0.241*** (0.045)	0.137** (0.058)
EQ → TS	0.224*** (0.054)	0.298*** (0.047)	0.372*** (0.059)
TS → LY	0.834*** (0.041)	0.762*** (0.038)	0.690*** (0.052)

*Note: **$p < 0.01$, **$p < 0.001$

The conditional effects analysis reveals distinct patterns across tourist types, supporting the theoretical expectations:

- **H5** (PA × Tourist Type): The effect of perceived authenticity on satisfaction was strongest for leisure tourists ($\beta = 0.376$) and weakest for religious tourists ($\beta = 0.198$), contrary to initial expectations but suggesting that leisure tourists are more sensitive to authenticity perceptions.

- **H6** (HH × Tourist Type): Halal-centric hospitality showed the strongest effect for religious tourists ($\beta = 0.345$) and weakest for leisure tourists ($\beta = 0.137$), confirming that religious tourists place greater importance on Sharia-compliant services.

- **H7** (EQ × Tourist Type): Experiential quality effects were strongest for leisure tourists ($\beta = 0.372$) and weakest for religious tourists ($\beta = 0.224$), supporting the expectation that entertainment-oriented tourists value experiential offerings more highly.

- **H8** (TS × Tourist Type): The satisfaction-loyalty relationship was strongest for religious tourists ($\beta = 0.834$), suggesting that satisfied religious tourists develop stronger loyalty bonds with Islamic heritage sites.

6.5 Additional Analysis and Model Validation

6.5.1 Common Method Variance Assessment

Harman's single-factor test was conducted to assess potential common method variance. The results showed that a single factor explained 28.4% of the variance, well below the 50% threshold, indicating that common method variance was not a significant concern (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

6.5.2 Multicollinearity Diagnostics

Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were examined for all predictors. All VIF values were below 2.1, well under the conservative threshold of 5.0, confirming the absence of multicollinearity issues (Hair et al., 2016).

6.5.3 Model Assumptions Testing

Regression assumptions were thoroughly tested. Durbin-Watson statistics ($d = 1.98$) indicated independence of residuals. Scatterplot analysis confirmed linearity and homoscedasticity assumptions. Normality of residuals was confirmed through P-P plots and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests ($p > 0.05$).

6.6 Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

All eight hypotheses received empirical support, demonstrating the validity of the proposed theoretical model. The results provide strong evidence for the direct effects of perceived authenticity, halal-centric hospitality, and experiential quality on tourist satisfaction, as well as the satisfaction-loyalty linkage. Furthermore, the significant moderation effects confirm that tourist type meaningfully influences these relationships, providing valuable insights for destination management and marketing strategies.

Table 9: Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Description	Result	Statistical Support
H1	PA → TS	Supported	β = 0.287, p < 0.001
H2	HH → TS	Supported	β = 0.241, p < 0.001
H3	EQ → TS	Supported	β = 0.298, p < 0.001
H4	TS → LY	Supported	β = 0.762, p < 0.001
H5	PA × TT → TS	Supported	β = 0.156, p < 0.001
H6	HH × TT → TS	Supported	β = 0.203, p < 0.001
H7	EQ × TT → TS	Supported	β = 0.187, p < 0.001
H8	TS × TT → LY	Supported	β = 0.128, p = 0.001

Note: PA = Perceived Authenticity, HH = Halal-Centric Hospitality, EQ = Experiential Quality, TS = Tourist Satisfaction, LY = Tourist Loyalty, TT = Tourist Type

The comprehensive statistical analysis provides robust empirical evidence supporting the theoretical model, with all hypotheses receiving statistical confirmation at stringent significance levels. These findings contribute significantly to the understanding of Islamic heritage tourism dynamics and provide practical implications for destination managers and policymakers seeking to enhance tourist experiences and loyalty.

7. Discussion

The present study gives persuasive evidence that perceived authenticity, halal-centric hospitality, and experiential quality each exert large positive impacts on tourist satisfaction at Islamic heritage sites, and that satisfaction, in turn, robustly predicts loyalty. These findings coincide with extant research highlighting authenticity's essential role in heritage tourism (Wang, 1999), the expanding relevance of Sharia-compliant service offerings (Hassan, Ferdaus, & Mosharaf, 2022), and the critical value of immersive experiences (Chen & Chen, 2010). Notably, experiential quality emerged as the strongest antecedent of satisfaction (β = 0.298, p < .001), underlining that tourists want dynamic engagement—whether through interactive exhibits or narrative-driven guided tours—that brings Islamic history to life.

Moderation analysis revealed that tourist type systematically shapes these impacts. Religious visitors responded most strongly to halal hospitality (β = 0.345, p < .001), demonstrating their pronounced desire for prayer facilities and halal dining options (Rahayu, Ibrahim, & Hassan, 2023). Leisure visitors, by contrast, displayed heightened sensitivity to authenticity and sensory quality, suggesting they value novelty and enjoyment when visiting hallowed domains. Interestingly, cultural tourists represented an intermediate position, valuing historical authenticity while also appreciating interpretive encounters. These differentiated patterns fit with motivation-segmentation theory (Nyaupane & Andereck, 2008) and expand it by mapping precise impact sizes across segments.

Together, our results corroborate the integrated model and its hypothesized pathways (H1–H4), while also confirming that tourist type moderates all significant associations (H5–H8). The satisfaction-loyalty correlation was particularly robust for religious tourists ($\beta = 0.834$, $p < .001$), demonstrating that spiritual fulfillment creates deep emotional bonds and long-term advocacy. This conclusion mirrors past studies on pilgrimage and return visitation (Turner & Turner, 1978) but underscores the role of satisfaction as the major driver of loyalty across varied visitor profiles.

7.1 Theoretical Implications

First, this research enhances authenticity theory by demonstrating that existential authenticity—tourists' spiritual and emotional resonance with Islamic heritage—carries stronger predictive power for satisfaction than objective or constructive authenticity alone (Güzel et al., 2022). Second, by incorporating halal-centric hospitality within a historical tourism framework, the study broadens service quality paradigms to include religiously grounded service qualities, thus expanding halal tourism scholarship (Alam et al., 2024). Third, the strong effect of experiential quality corroborates and refines the four worlds model (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), revealing that heritage contexts necessitate personalized experiences that integrate education, aesthetics, escapism, and entertainment. Finally, the demonstration of comprehensive moderation by tourist type contributes to motivation-segmentation theory (Cohen, 1972; Ö zkan, 2013), offering precise empirical benchmarks for how different motivational profiles amplify or attenuate authenticity, hospitality, and experiential pathways to satisfaction. Empirical analysis reveals that transformational entrepreneurship in hospitality strengthens competitive advantage by fostering organizational support and employee resilience, highlighting the critical synergy between adaptive leadership and sustainable service innovation within tourism and heritage contexts. (Ahmed et al., 2025b). Mixed methods findings demonstrate that social media platforms greatly impact tourists' views, intentions, and decisions regarding hospitality experiences—underscoring the relevance of digital interaction for Muslim and non-Muslim visitors in Islamic heritage tourism contexts. (Abdelghani et al., 2023)

7.2 Practical Implications

For destination managers and site operators, the findings underline the necessity to build distinct offerings. To accommodate religious travelers, investments should prioritize prayer facilities, clear Qibla indicators, and certified halal dining options (Hassan et al., 2022). For cultural and recreational travelers, interpretive programs—such as augmented reality storytelling and thematic walking tours—can boost perceived authenticity and deliver memorable experiencing quality (Chen & Chen, 2010). Marketing communications should segment audiences accordingly, stressing spiritual legacy for religious sectors and cultural-educational or entertainment-oriented events for others. Moreover, loyalty-building initiatives—such as membership programs or digital storytelling follow-up—will provide the best returns among religious visitors, whose satisfaction-driven loyalty is strongest (Sasongko et al., 2025). I n the same context, digital re-engineering of tourism administration has demonstrably improved procedural efficiency and performance quality, positioning digitally

enabled heritage management as a catalyst for administrative excellence and international competitiveness in Islamic tourism contexts (Abdelghani, 2018b).   While   Findings confirm that artificial intelligence-driven marketing strategies significantly impact guest engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty within Saudi tourism, with trust moderating these relationships— offering a robust framework for enhancing Islamic heritage visitor loyalty through technological innovation (Zaki et al., 2025)

8. Limitations and Future Research

Despite its merits, this study has drawbacks. First, its cross-sectional methodology prevents causal inferences regarding temporal dynamics; longitudinal research might follow how destinations' investments in authenticity, hospitality, and experience translate into satisfaction and loyalty over time (Rindfleisch et al., 2008).   Second, the concentration on Historic Cairo limits generalizability; comparative research across Islamic heritage sites in other cultural and infrastructure contexts (e.g., Istanbul, Granada) would evaluate external validity (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2024).   Third, dependence on self-report   Likert scales adds potential common-method bias, however Harman's test suggested minor issue (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Future work might add behavioral measures—such as revisit counts or social-media engagement—to triangulate findings. Finally, while tourist type explained moderating effects, additional segmentation variables (e.g., travel group composition, cultural distance) may alter satisfaction pathways and worth research.

9. Conclusion

This study uncovers how perceived authenticity, halal-centric hospitality, and experience quality synergistically generate tourist happiness and loyalty at Islamic heritage sites, with tourist type affecting the strength of these interactions.   Experiential quality emerged as the most potent antecedent of satisfaction overall, whereas halal-centric hospitality and authenticity each contributed uniquely to fulfilling visitor needs.   The substantial satisfaction-loyalty relationship, especially among religious travelers, underscores the crucial importance of spiritual and cultural resonance in generating long-term destination advocacy.   By merging service quality, experience design, and segmentation theory, the research presents a holistic framework for scholars and practitioners trying to elevate Islamic heritage tourism. Ultimately, these insights can lead targeted interventions—ranging from better religious facilities to immersive interpretive experiences—that preserve cultural integrity and build sustainable loyalty among varied visitor segments.

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الملخص بالعربية

مـا وراء الـمئـذنـة: دمـج الأصـالـة والـضيـافـة الـحـلال وجـودة الـتـجـربـة فـي مـواقـع الـتـراث الإسـلامـي لـتـحـقـيـق رضـا الـسيـاح وولائـهـم

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الملخص

تبحث هذه الدراسة في كيفية تأثير الأصالة المُدركة، والضيافة الحلال، وجودة التجربة مجتمعةً على رضا السياح وولائهم في مواقع التراث الإسلامي، مع اعتبار نوع السائح عاملًا وسيطًا. تكشف البيانات الكمية من 350 زائرًا للقاهرة الاسلامية كموقع تراث عالمي تابع لليونسكو أن جودة التجربة تمارس أقوى تأثير على الرضا ($\beta = 0.298$، $p^* < 0.001$)، تليها الأصالة المتصورة ($\beta = 0.287$) والضيافة التي تركز على الحلال ($\beta = 0.241$). يتنبأ الرضا بشكل كبير بالولاء ($\beta = 0.762$، $p^* < 0.001$). يُعدل نوع السائح هذه العلاقات بشكل منهجي: يُعطي السياح لأغراض دينية الأولوية للخدمات الحلال، بينما يُقدر السياح لأغراض ترفيهية جودة التجربة والأصالة. تُطور النتائج نظرية السياحة التراثية الإسلامية من خلال دمج جودة الخدمة، والأصالة الثقافية، والتقسيم حسب الدافع، كما تقدم استراتيجيات عملية لإدارة المواقع والتسويق المخصص، فضلاً عن أن الدراسة توضح العلاقة بين تأثير الأصالة المُدركة، والضيافة الحلال، وجودة التجربة ورضا السياح وولائهم في مواقع التراث الإسلامي وبين أهداف الأمم المتحدة للتنمية المستدامة، فضلاً عن أن الدراسة توضح العلاقة بين تأثير الأصالة المُدركة، والضيافة الحلال، وجودة التجربة ورضا السياح وولائهم في مواقع التراث الإسلامي وبين أهداف الأمم المتحدة للتنمية المستدامة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: سياحة التراث الإسلامي، رضا السياح، الضيافة الحلال، الأصالة المدرَكة، جودة التجربة السياحية.