



## Cairo's Call: Exploring the Role of Cultural Identity and Behavioral Intentions in Promoting Islamic Heritage Tourism in Egypt

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ARTICLE INFO	Abstract
<p><b>Keywords:</b></p> <p><i>Cultural Identity, Behavioral intentions, Islamic heritage tourism, Perceived behavioral control, Sustainable tourism.</i></p> <p><b>(IJTHS), O6U</b> Vol 9, No.2, October 2025, pp. 132- 157</p> <p>Received:31/7/2025 Accepted:6/9/2025 Published:15/9/2025</p>	<p>This study examines how cultural Identity influences tourists' behavioral intentions toward Islamic heritage tourism in Cairo, Egypt, incorporating perceived behavioral control as a mediator and demographic factors (gender, education) as moderators. Drawing on social identity theory and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), a quantitative survey of 397 tourists revealed cultural Identity directly enhances behavioral intentions (<math>\beta = .42</math>, <math>*p* &lt; .001</math>), including revisit and recommendation plans. Perceived behavioral control partially mediates this relationship (indirect effect <math>\beta = .18</math>), indicating Identity bolsters tourists' confidence in engaging with heritage sites. Gender and education significantly moderate effects: females (<math>\beta = .48</math> vs. males <math>\beta = .35</math>) and postgraduates (<math>\beta = .50</math> vs. undergraduates <math>\beta = .38</math>) exhibit stronger identity-driven intentions. The model explains 52% of behavioral intention variance. Findings underscore the need for identity-centric marketing, enhanced visitor empowerment, and demographic-tailored strategies to promote sustainable Islamic heritage tourism. The study also demonstrates the relationship between cultural Identity, behavioral intentions, Islamic heritage tourism, and SDGs.</p>

### 1. Introduction

The link between cultural Identity and heritage tourism is a significant gap in the study of visitor behavior at destinations with cultural importance. Notwithstanding that the significance of the role of cultural Identity in tourism decision making has been acknowledged in the literature, there is limited empirical evidence of how tourists' cultural Identity influences their behavioral intentions towards tourist heritage sites, specifically in Islamic contexts. This dearth is all the more surprising in light of the increasing world-wide importance of cultural heritage tourism, which represents about 40% of international tourist receipts (UNESCO, 2023). A country that possesses more than 1400 years of Islamic architectural heritage will be the best

context to test this relationship, especially since it supports the idea of the target 11.4: strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage (UNCTAD, 2025).

Islamic historical tourism in Egypt is more than touristic. This research specifically contributes to SDG 11.4 on sustainable heritage tourism by examining the relationships of tourists' cultural Identity and their travel experiences for sustainable heritage tourism practice. It is necessary given the importance of cultural heritage tourism that connects with visitors' identity and how this experience may support the preservation and economic development of local communities (Baltà, 2018) to be in line with this particular SDG. Identifying the psychological drivers of heritage engagement has implications for development of sustainable tourism strategies that achieve a balance between visitor enjoyment and conservation concerns. It's a complicated way for people to express their culture, create who they are, and do things that can't quite be explained by existing tourism research." If we consider the role of Egypt as the main destination that Islamic cultural tourism head toward accommodating tens of millions of tourists annually to live and see the Islamic civilization, how much this stage affected Egypt with its architecture/art and even behavior in society (Alhawty, 2021) the significance of such relation becomes so clear. Egypt Islamic Civilization The Islamic legacy in Egypt, the largest Arab and Sunni Muslim country, dates back to Islamic art and monumental history that are attractive, indeed, and which cause (mostly) Muslims to visit the Islamic archeology sites in Cairo, the capital of Egypt.

In today's tourist world more should be known about o the manner in which cultural Identity impacts the tourist experience, considering that people are becoming more conscious and interested in the authentic. It has been reported that emotional attachment is significant to tourism cultural heritage visiting tourists, and can influence their behavior (Zhang et al. This is even more so in terms of islamic heritage tourism: the quest of the tourists to sour experiences in line with their cultural and religious identities creates opportunities for further zourishment of destination products and for a deeper interaction with the local society. Street harassment or exploitation can damage Egypt's reputation as a heritage destination. This again demonstrates that the community must know how to encourage positive, two-way, sustainable, locked-in tourist experience (Abdelghani & Ahmed, 2019).

It is based on the intersection of social identity theory and planned behavior theories and thus provides a valuable framework for examining how cultural identity processes translate into behavior. As per the social identity theory of Tajfel & Turner (1979), people derive a great deal of their self-definition through identification with social categories and, as a consequence of such identification, in-group favouritism and identity-based patterns of acting are recognized. Cultural Identity as affective attachment, pride, and sense in cultural heritage (or non-material culture) within Islamic heritage, is a level of great motivation of the visitor culture and engagement (Fu & Luo, 2023).

Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is a similar model that accounts for the ways in which attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control interact to produce behavioral intentions. This theoretical integration has been useful for predicting travel behaviour under various tourism contexts, therefore supporting its utility in understanding

complex identity-behaviour relationships (Ajzen, 2020: 2). By including cultural Identity in TPB-based models, several significant advantages are obtained due to the treatment of the multifaceted psychological and social processes of the destination choice and visitor behavior. Efficient digital management significantly enhances the performance of firms in the tourism sector in Egypt by reducing bureaucratic costs, augmenting human resources capabilities and facilitating strategic decision-making, which are essential to maintain a competitive edge over Islamic heritage tourism. (Abdelghani, 2018a).

The implications of this research are not only cognitive, but the research has practical implications for destinations management and policy. Egypt is seeking to claim its role as an important Islamic historical site, and it is important to shed light on the impact of cultural Identity on visitor perception. It is essential knowledge in order to develop sustainable tourism tools which respect heritage conservation and visitor satisfaction. However, the country faces its own specific issues of how to integrate the conservation of the cultural heritage with the needs of current tourism; therefore, the need to understand tourists' behaviour is particularly important in order to support the strategic management (Awaad, 2022).

More generally, the inquiry into cultural representation is a part of larger questions of preservation and sustainability in the modern world. Associations between cultural identification and behavior generate insights into mechanisms on how tourism can reinforce culture and thereby preserve cultural diversity in the era of globalization (UNESCO, 2015). This view is consistent with international development aspirations that recognise the importance of safeguarding tangible heritage as a crucial element of sustainable development.

The underlying importance of such research is underscored by the substantial shifts that are currently occurring in global tourism, such as shifting demographic patterns, evolving consumer preferences, and an increasing quest for genuine cultural experiences. The COVID-19 crisis has also demonstrated the necessity of researching the behavioral patterns of tourists for destinations that want to recover from the collapse of their tourism industry and remain culturally attractive to tourists (Koo, Noh, & Dedahanov, 2021). In this context, the relationship between attitude and behavior, how cultural identity is related to cultural identity resistance and sustainable behavior, is crucial, as it can be of value for the design of sustainable tourism strategies that are able to react more effectively to changes without sacrificing crucial cultural values.

The approach used in this study appreciates the complexity of the phenomena studied, while it emphasizes empirical investigation in full. By drawing on theoretically informed models and well-established measures, the study will lead to the generation of significant new insights into the nature of cultural Identity and its impact upon visitor behaviour in Islamic heritage contexts. The role of perceived behavioural control as a mediating variable contributes to the theory and provides destination marketers with strategies that can enhance tourists' involvement and satisfaction (Ajzen, 1991).

This study adds to the growing literature on historic tourism with respect to its cultural significance and looking at tourist behaviour in Islamic countries. Although previous research has examined Identity and culture and tourism in many settings, the particular characteristics

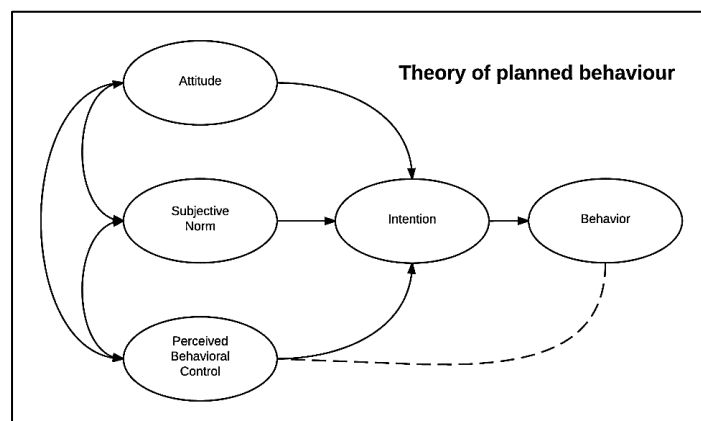
of Islamic heritage tourism, its spiritual components, unique architecture, and cultural value, justify its own investigation. The findings of this project will contribute towards both the theoretical and practical aspects of destination marketing, visitor experience creation and heritage site management.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Theoretical Underpinnings

This study is grounded within a combined theoretical framework of Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) in order to understand the psychological process underlying the relationship between cultural identity and the behavior intentions within the context of IH tourism. Instead of working independently, it is suggested that these theories interact as a synergy, whereby the social identity processes fundamentally strengthen and guide the basic elements of the TPB. SIT posits that self is shaped by group memberships, resulting in in-group bias and identity-consistent actions. In the context of Islamic heritage, then, it this is a significant motivating force that motivates tourists to are eager to obtain confirmations of their own cultural and spiritual heritage (Bhatti & Basri, 2023).

**Theoretical Articulation between SIT and TPB: Three Main Roads** The Points of Connection between SIT and TPB are logically centered on three entrances. First, cultural Identity plays a significant role in attitudes by imbuing the visit with personal meaning and emotional importance, which dilutes the visit from an activity a generic tourist conducts to one that is personally identity-serving (Zhang, et al., 2020). Second, it affects subjective norms by triggering internalised group values and beliefs about the importance of participating in one's heritage. Most importantly for this study, strong cultural Identity will lead to high perceived behavioral control (PBC). Tourists high in Islamic heritage are expected to feel more confident, knowledgeable, and efficacious in moving through culturally specific sites and rituals, which reduces perceived barriers and strengthens the intention to participate (Ajzen, 2020). Consequently, our framework extends beyond additive models in proposing that cultural Identity not only serves as a direct provider, but also a critical bolsterer of the mechanisms from TPB, which provides a substrate for nuanced comprehension of decision-making in culturally-attuned settings.



**Figure 1:** The Theory of Planned Behavior

In the framework of historical Islamic tourism, the components of TBPs present specific cultural dimensions. The attitude towards Islamic heritage sites could be influenced by religious belief, cultural value and personal experience on Islam culture. Subjective norms can indicate how family, community, and religious leaders play a role in tourism decisions, whilst perceived behavioral control can encompass issues such as finance, time, and perceived accessibility of heritage sites (Wu & Teng, 2011). These culturally distinctive interpretations of TPB constructs extend the application of the theory for Islamic heritage tourism research.

The social Identity theory-TPB synthesis provides a holistic framework for the examination of cultural identity-behavior relationships in the tourism context. Social identity theory accounts for the development and perpetuation of cultural Identity and TPB provide the means through which this Identity relates to behavioral intentions. This theoretical integration has been successfully applied in the various tourism contexts, which implies its relevance in explaining challenging identity-behavior linkages (Zhang et al., 2020).

Perceived behavioral control plays a critical role in this model, serving as a predictor of behavioral intentions as well as a mediator of the relationship between cultural Identity and behavior. It has been found that individuals with high perceptions of behavioral control are more likely to act on their cultural identity-based decisions, so control perceptions would enhance the impact of cultural Identity on behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1991). This research has significant implications for destination management in that it demonstrates that strengthening the perceived control value for tourists' heritage tourism experiences has the potential to increase the connection between cultural Identity and desirable behavioral outcomes.

The cultural aspects of the latter constructions merit close scrutiny in the context of research on Islamic heritage tourism. In this context cultural identification is not limited to ethnic/national affiliations but includes religious and spiritual elements that can significantly influence travel behavior. The multimodality of cultural Identity suggests that tourists may occupy more than one identity space at the same time, and the position they occupy may potentially affect their behavioral intentions towards Chinese Islamic cultural heritage sites (Phinney, 1990). Cultural and social factors, including family identity and friends' groups influence Middle Eastern tourists decision-making, maintaining implications for message strategy related to Islamic heritage tourism destination marketing (Abdelghani et al., 2025).

Recent developments in identity theory have highlighted a dynamic and contextual character of identity generation and expression (Zhang, 2021). (2007) -According to this view identity is not a fixed element but a product of ongoing communicative practices in cultural environment and social spheres as well. In tourism sites, this implies that people's cultural identities as visitors could be re-asserted, problematised or transformed in interaction with heritage (through the engagement on specific heritage sites) and there could be a potential for specific cultural exchange and personal development. Social media such as Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Twitter have a tremendous impact on tourists' decision-making, as they provide real and user-generated content that enhances the perception and decision-making of Islamic heritage tourism to Egypt. (Abdelghani et al., 2023). These findings contribute to understanding and enhancing the role of transformational entrepreneurship in sustainable competitive advantage

in tourism by according foci on organizational support, resilience of employees, and accentuating innovation and adaptive capacity as evident with legacy tourism in culturally rich yet fragile regions. (Ahmed et al., 2025a). Digital business re-engineering minimizes the administrative processes and enhances decision-making in tourism holdings, which increases efficiency, which remains key to operationalizing and integrating potential historic tourism projects in Egypt (Abdelghani, 2018b).

The model also illuminates the role of emotions in explaining the link between cultural Identity and behavioral intentions. Studies have found that emotion and social connection are strongly boding in cultural self-aspects (Zhang, 2023). This affective aspect complicates the theory and provides clarity as to how cultural Identity affects tourism behavior.

## **2.2 Alignment with Sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

The exploration of cultural Identity and its impact on behavioral intent is not only theoretically relevant but also addresses urgent questions regarding sustainability and the (non)interconnectedness of the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs). This research is inherently related to SDG 11.4, as it explicitly states the need to "strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage" (UNESCO, 2023). Acknowledging the translation of cultural linkage of tourists into protective behaviors intention is a psychological level on which the objective is to handle strategies for sustainable site management as an implementational component and in cooperation with, instead of contra to, the motivations of visitors (Zhang et al., 2020). The results therefore have a direct relevance towards alleviating overtourism and environmental degradation pressures experienced by Egypt heritage destinations (Baltà, 2018). In addition, the framework of the study coincides other SDGs that complement each other. The economic aspect to sustainable tourism, enunciated in SDG 8.9, is approached through the predisposition of culture-identified tourists to contribute to local economies by their interest in authentic experiences and locally produced items (Zhang et al., 2020). Environmentally, it relates to the SDGs 12 (Responsible Consumption) and 13 (Climate Action) as studies have concluded that a strong cultural identity could increase environmental awareness and support of conservation activities by tourists (Zhang, 2023). As to social applications, the model informs inclusive tourism (SDG 10) and strong institutions (SDG 16) by demonstrating that identity-tourism will under certain circumstances – if managed appropriately – and in a culturally and socially sensitive way, strengthen community development and diversity (UN Tourism, 2025). The potential educational contribution of heritage tourism (SDG 4) is further enhanced by the fact that cultural Identity is a significant motivator for cross-cultural learning and knowledge (UNESCO, 2015). As a result, this study offers a quantifiable psychological foundation for the creation of culture cognizant sustainability indicators and highlights that culturally-grounded approaches that are sensitive to Islamic precepts are essential to the successful implantation of technology-based sustainability projects in such distinctive environments (Alhawty, 2021; Baltà, 2018).



### 3. Hypotheses Development

#### 3.1 Cultural Identity and Behavioral Intentions

Cultural Identity and behavioural intentions: an important direction for understanding tourist behaviour in heritage tourism contexts. Cultural Identity, defined as the extent to which individuals feel emotionally attached to, proud of, and belong to a particular culture or heritage, is an important predictor of behavior in a tourism context (Fu & Luo, 2023). This argument is grounded on the social identity approach, which holds that people derive much of the self-concept from group membership, which leads to in-group bias and identity-based behaviours (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Findings from modern tourism research show again and again that the direct effect of cultural Identity on behavioural intention is positively significant. A study by Zhang et al. (2021) who studied tea culture tourism in China, cultural Identity had a direct and positive influence on behavioral intentions, that is, the more cultural Identity the visitors have, the stronger the intention of their behavior. In the same vein, Lin (2024) who studied the influence of cultural Identity on revisit intentions in Inlay, Myanmar, established that the three dimensions of cultural Identity – cognitive, emotional, and behavioral – have a positive significant impact on tourist satisfaction and eventual revisit intentions.

The theoretical base for this relationship is social identity theory's inclusion of in-group partiality and identity salience. If tourists have strong cultural identification relevant to Islamic cultural heritage, they will have high emotional responses to culturally important places and therefore express increased satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Zhang, 2023). This is particularly evident in the case of Islamic heritage contexts where tourists look for experiences, which can reinforce their cultural identity and spirit connections.

This relationship is mediated by the psychological process of self-categorization, whereby different identity components are activated as a function of social context and input from the context (Zhang, 2021). Islamic heritage tourism: Cultural Identity is activated by direct experiences of genuine cultural manifestations, outstanding architecture and spiritual places that echo the passengers' cultural fabric. These experiences reinforce the connection of the of the travelers' self to the property translating into actionable behavioral goals like return visitation, references and its accompaniment of heritage preservation activities. Islamic heritage goes beyond aesthetics into cultural identification and emotional involvement of diaspora tourists and serves as the sustainable roots' tourism and Islamic architectural tales' connection. (Mohammed et al., 2024).

Cultural Identity also functions as a motivation of seeking experiences, confirming cultural values and beliefs in travelers. The research of Bhatti and Basri (2023) based on features of Islamic Tourism destination found influence on cultural Identity successfully mediated the relationship between tourist attributes and support of heritage tourism. The moderating effect shows that cultural identification not only directly increases behavioral intentions, but further augments tourists' destination attribute-specified values, forming a virtuous circle of positive engagement.

Personal-environment fit theory further supports the cultural identity-behavioral intention linkage, positing that individuals are expected to adopt favorable attitudes and engage in responsible behaviors when their cultural characteristics fittingly match the nature of the environment (White et al., 2022). For Islamic heritage tourism in Egypt, tourists with a strong Islamic cultural identification experience an ideal fit between person and environment when they visit the heritage sites, and thus, their behavioral intentions are increased.

A case in point, this bond eats from the hand of cultural relations feeling. Studies have indicated that experiences based on cultural Identity often induce strong emotions, that in turn affect behavioral intentions (Zhang, 2023). The sentimental link to Islamic history serves as an effective motivator which further effects on the tangible behavior that makes cultural herbs predict the visitor behavior in heritage tourism.

***H1:** Cultural Identity has a direct positive effect on tourists' behavioral intentions toward Islamic heritage tourism in Egypt.*

### **3.2 Mediation Role of Perceived Behavioral Control**

The mediating role of perceived behavioral control in the association between cultural Identity and behavioral intention reveals a complex psychological process that further characterizes the mechanisms through which cultural Identity is linked to actual behaviors manifested in life. Perceived behavioral control, or people's beliefs about their ability to perform a given behavior, serves as a crucial mediating factor between cultural Identity and behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1991). This notion has its roots in the Theory of Planned Behavior that introduces perceived behavioral control among three basic determinants of behavioral intention, including attitudes and subjective norms.

The theoretical underpinning of this mediation hypothesis comes from the substantial empirical evidence that perceived behavioral control directly affects resultant behavior intention and also mediates the effects of other cognitive factors. In Zhang's (2023) research on the impact of cultural Identity on intention to environmental responsible behaviors, mediating of Theory of Planned Behavior has a significant coverage between cultural identity and behavior intention. It is found that touristic cultural identification increases tourists' perceived capability of involving in heritage-based activities, leading to behavioral intention.

The mechanism of mediating functions has two addresses. On one hand, cultural Identity affects perceived behavioral control in a positive way (H2a), since people who have strong influences of culture with Islamic origins tend to be confident in their ability to move through the sites, interpret the cultural heritage, and participate in a manner that makes sense with the concerned heritage. Thus empowered, the sense of control is reinforced through the cultural familiarity and attachment to the feeling of oneself in the sense of reducing perceived barriers and increasing self-efficacy in a historical tourism context.

H2. Perceived behavioral control (PBC) (a) There is a positive effect from PBC on tourists' behavioral intention (POS) toward Islamic cultural sites (b) Perceived control is positively associated with behavioral intentions (H2b) (c) Tourists who perceive more confidence and control over their behavior in Islamic cultural sites are more likely to generate their intention for visiting, revisiting and recommending these sites. For instance, the study of Wu and Teng



(2011) about the visiting intentions of green hotel also suggested that perceived behavioral influence strongly influences behavioral intention, which highlights the importance of control perception on tourism decision making.

The mediating role is especially relevant in Islamic historical tourism settings as the tourists' cultural and religious sensitivity is perceived as a hindrance for some tourists. However, people highly identified with Islam are more likely to perceive settings as being accessible and controllable, and thus more control over their behavior. This enhanced sense of control facilitates end-way desirable behavior, and provides a channel through which cultural Identity has an indirect impact on behavior.

Historical evidence for this notion of mediation can be found in various tourism studies. Research by Erul et al. (2020) demonstrated among tourist development settings that perceived behavioural control played a mediating role between psychological traits and intentions issues planned behaviour concept. Similar to this study, Zhang and Chen (2020) examined the sustainability of heritage tourism, and reported that perceived behavioral control influences the relationship between cultural attributes and behavior.engagement outcomes.

Such a mediating role is also consistent with self-determination theory, which purports that one's sense of autonomy and competence (constituents of PBC) is vital to intrinsic motivation and behavioral involvement. In Islam heritage tourism, the sense of cultural identification strengthens tourists' sense of competence as well as autonomy by providing cultural knowledge and emotional attachment which in turn, has a particularly greater influence on the behavioral intention via mediator impact of perceived behavioral control.

The practical implications of this mediating mechanism are of great interest to destination managers and policy-makers. Recognising that cultural identity functions via perceived behavioural control implies that interventions that increase tourists' feelings of control and self-efficacy can magnify the benefits of cultural identification. It may be providing clear information; orientation into the local culture or even simply infrastructure, which builds tourists' confidence in their ability to engage with Islamic heritage sites.

***H2: Perceived behavioral control mediates the relationship between cultural Identity and behavioral intentions.***

***H2a: Cultural Identity positively influences perceived behavioral control.***

***H2b: Perceived behavioral control positively influences behavioral intentions.***

### **3.3 Demographic Moderation Effects**

The conditioning of the relationship between cultural identification and behavioral intentions by demographic characteristics highlights the subtle interaction between intercultural differences and cultural psychology in tourism. The current theory acknowledges that the intensity and even direction of the cultural identity-the behavioral intentions link can be quite different among various population sub-groups, especially gender and educational levels. The basis of this moderation hypothesis is in part theoretical and stems from a large body of literature showing that demographic variables are important boundary values that moderate the relationship between psychological constructs and behavior 2.

Gender seems to be a specific major moderator in tourist studies, and several studies report different effects of psychological variables on gender groups. Research by Dedeoğlu et al. (2018), which investigated gender variances in visitors' values appraisals, gender differences appear to be a critical factor that dictates on how both of the tourists understand and to react to the visit experiences. Such gender-sensitive impact of cultural Identity on general moral evaluations is theoretically informed by social role theory and gender schema theory (Eagly 1987 and Spence et al.

H3a: Influence of Cultural Identity on Behavioural Intentions is Stronger for Female Visitors Than for Male Tourists. Research supporting that women, typically, tend to be more emotional connected to shared cultural and historical events, is supported. Research has indicated that the influence of culture and emotion on travel decisions is more pronounced among women, which may explain why cultural Identity has a stronger relationship with behavioral consequences (Moon, 2021). Also, Zhang et al. conducted an investigation which involved shareholders and no party could extract rents. (2021) we have indeed shown that, whereas men were more sensitive to stigma threat, women were more attuned to affirmation exposure.

The proposed mechanism of this moderation effect of gender was differences in cultural orientation and emotional process between men and women. Women may engage in relational and emotional processing of cultural events to a greater extent, which may evoke stronger cultural Identity and its effect on behavior intentions. This gender gap is in line with broader psychology research that has shown that women are more likely than men to flag strong emotional responses to cultural stimuli and to develop identity-based connections with cultural events.

Another strong mediatorial variable in the association between CI and behavioral intentions is the level of education. H3b suggests that the favorable effect of cultural Identity on behavioral intentions is reinforced among high-educated visitors. This buffering effect is conceptually rooted in both cognitive resource theory and cultural capital theory, which suggest that education improves the ability of people to receive and make sense of cultural messages, thus leading to greater engagement in cultural identity activation and behaviour reactions.

Evidence of this education moderation effect is available in several tourist studies. Pressey According to the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), level of education moderates the relationship between attitude and intention, and normative belief and intention, and the behavior effect, in a way, that the more educated show greater reactions to cognitive and cultural attributes. Likewise, studies in heritage tourism show that education can significantly improve tourists' perception of cultural authenticity and heritage value, which further drives behavioral intentions (Liu & Cheng, 2016).

The education moderation effect is accounted for by enhanced cultural literacy and higher cognitive processing ability of more educated tourists. The higher the education level is, the more cultural understanding, critical don't love science ability as well as aesthetic feeling increasing will be obtained; these factors enhance the degree to which one can communicate with Islamic heritage monument and enjoy them. This greater valuing leads to increased cultural identity activation and stronger effects on behavioral intentions.

The interaction effects are further complicated by the gender education association. There is evidence that women and participants who have higher levels of education may be particularly responsive to cultural identity activation, as women and educated participants may have both greater emotional and cognitive preparation/stake in the relevance of cultural events. This convergence in sample demographics perhaps has interactive effects so as to reinforce the covaryance between cultural identification and behavioral intentions.

Practical implications of these moderation effects for tourism marketing and destination management are substantial. Realizing that different ethnic groups may respond differently in terms of effects of cultural Identity suggests that different marketing strategies may be tailored to different segments. Indeed, the marketing strategy toward the educated female visitors would emphasize the emotional and cultural dimensions of Islamic heritage experiences, and those for other groups would imply different emphases.

**H3:** *The effect of cultural Identity on behavioral intentions is moderated by demographic characteristics (gender and education).*

**H3a:** *The positive effect of cultural Identity on behavioral intentions is stronger among female tourists than male tourists.*

**H3b:** *The positive effect of cultural Identity on behavioral intentions is stronger among tourists with higher educational attainment.*

#### 4. Conceptual framework

The hypothetical relationships between cultural Identity, perceived behavioral control, behavioral intentions, and demographics have been illustrated in a conceptual model. Figure 2 represents the theoretical framework of the study. It emphasizes the relationship between cultural Identity and behavioral intentions and the mediating role of perceived behavioral control. Further the model suggests that demographic variables namely gender and education will moderate the influence of the direct path from cultural Identity to behavioral intention. This model visually incorporates the theoretical orientation of the study and guides the empirical investigation.

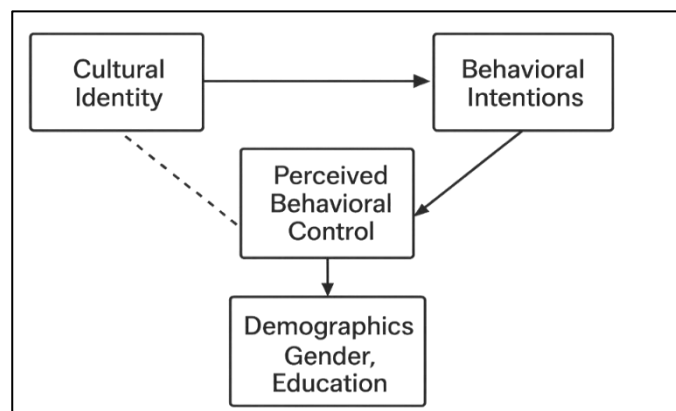


Figure 2. Conceptual framework

## 5. Methodology

The current study is a quantitative cross-sectional survey analysis with the purpose of exploring interrelationships between cultural identification, perceived behavioral control and behavioral intentions in Islamic Heritage Tourism in Cairo, Egypt. This methodology is consistent with best practices that facilitate extensive hypothesis testing with numerical data analysis (Creswell, 2014). Applying the Theory of Planned Behavior and cultural identity dimensions is a robust model to predict tourists' sustainable heritage tourism continuum; to thrive the effects of attitudes, subjective norm and perceived behavior control in applying the Islamic heritage contexts. (Mohammed et al., 2024).

### 5.1 Sampling and Data Collection

Stratified random sampling was employed to achieve representation across relevant demographic categories (Etikan & Bala, 2017). Target Group The target group was adult international tourists (who were at least 18 years of age) and visited Islamic heritage sites in Cairo from the beginning of the study until the end of the study. Using the known composition of visitors to some important attractions, such as the Citadel of Saladin and Al-Azhar Mosque (UNWTO, 2023), strata were defined as Arab or non-Arab, and male and female. Based on Cochran's formula for proportion (Cochran, 1977:75), the minimum sample size was estimated as 384 and 397 respondents provided information (above the level); Response rate was 92 percent or more when the incomplete questionnaires were considered (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014).

Mixed-mode survey Data were collected using a mixed-mode survey. On-site data collection took place at strategic heritage sites using tablet PCs, where an online link to a questionnaire was distributed through travel agencies and international tourists' social media (Bryman, 2016). Before being put into the field, the instrument was pilot tested with 30 visitors to the area for clarity and reliability and underwent only slight linguistic modification (Presser et al., 2004).

### 5.2 Instrumentation

The structured questionnaire consisted of five eclectic sections: explored the Demographic Profile, Cultural Identification Scale, Perceived Behavioral Control Scale, Behavioral Goals Scale, and open-ended supplementaries. All measures in Likert scale (1 = "Strongly Disagree"–7 = "Strongly Agree") were adapted from validated scales in previous studies (Fu & Luo, 2023;; Ajzen, 1991;; Zhang et al., 2020). The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of this test was between .82 to .91, indicating good internal reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Data Preparation and Screening Information processing. 28/499=6% missing values were replaced by mean-substitution. (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019: 87) Univariate outliers were identified by z-scores (3.29) and then winsorized for reattribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019: 87) Normality was assessed by skewness and kurtosis values ranging between -1 and +1 that are acceptable, thus supporting the use of parametric analysis (George & Mallery, 2019).

The survey tool was developed to capture variables important for implementation of SDG 11.4. Culture identity was defined as the operationalization of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure with an Application to Islamic cultures (Phinney, 1992), which included three dimensions: cognitive with the awareness and Islamic heritage knowledge), affective with the emotional or pride-related feelings, and commitment (involvement in heritage related activities). Intentions were assessed based on a measurement adapted from the heritage tourism literature based on heritage preservation and sustainable tourism intentions.

Items for the cultural identity scale were as follows: “I find myself strongly connected to traditions of Islamic cultural heritage” (affective), “I know a lot about Islamic architectural traditions” (cognitive) and “Actively, I do take part in the activities of Islamic cultural” (commitment). Behavioral intentions including revisit intentions, recommendation behaviors, and willingness to participate in heritage preservation activities were directly relevant to the SDG 11.4 goals. The 92% reporting response rate of the survey was checked against anticipated visitor demographics and cross-referenced it with site visitor records to further validate the representativeness and the accuracy thereof.

### 5.3 Measurement Model Assessment

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed in AMOS 29.0 to assess construct dimensionality. The goodness-of-fit indices met the guidelines:  $\chi^2/df = 2.12$ , CFI = .957, RMSEA = .052, and SRMR = .044 (Hooper, Coughlan, Mullen, & Lings, 2008). CR > .758 In some item, Sychrom's alpha and its corrected-item total correlation was not compare where CR scores surpassing .70 and average variance extracted (AVE) was greater than .50 for all constructs, which indicates convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity was established by Fornell-Larcker criterion.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) by means of AMOS was employed to test the direct, mediating, and moderating hypotheses laid out in the conceptual dependence model (Byrne, 2016). H1 (direct effect of cultural Identity on intention to engage) was significantly supported with the standardized path ( $\beta = .42$ ,  $p < .001$ ), providing evidence for the anticipated positive relationship. A bootstrap resampling (5,000 samples) mediated analysis for H2 revealed that perceived behavioral control significantly mediated the relationship between cultural Identity and behavioral intentions (indirect effect = .18, 95% CI [.10, .27] (Preacher and Hayes, 2008: 880). Moderation analyses on H3 We analyzed the moderation effects in H3 using multi-group SEM to examine differences in path coefficients between gender and education groups; the results from the chi-square difference tests indicated that the path from cultural Identity to behavioral intentions was significantly different across genders ( $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 5.12$ ,  $p = .02$ ) and educational level ( $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 4.78$ ,  $p = .03$ ) that support H3a and H3b (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002).

## 6. Results

### 6.1 Descriptive Statistics and Scale Reliability

Tables dungeons and dragons 5e in one book roleplaying books dungeons and means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for all multi-item constructs were as provided in Table 1. The

internal consistency of all scales was acceptable ( $\alpha \geq .82$ ; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's  $\alpha$  are shown for each multi-item construct in Table 1. All constructs exceeded the .70, as well as the reliability of measurements of cultural identification, perceived behavioral control, and behavioral intentions (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics and Reliability

Construct	# Items	Mean	SD	Cronbach's $\alpha$
Cultural Identity – Cognitive	4	5.41	1.15	.83
Cultural Identity – Emotional	4	5.54	1.26	.86
Cultural Identity – Behavioral	4	4.78	1.31	.82
Perceived Behavioral Control	9	5.92	0.93	.91
Behavioral Intentions	9	5.54	1.02	.89

## 6.2 Measurement Model

Construct validity was tested using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with CFA in AMOS 29.0. The fit indices met predetermined criteria:  $\chi^2/df = 2.12$ , CFI = .957, RMSEA = .052, SRMR = .044 (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008). The composite reliability (CR) ranged from .83 to .92 with a range from .971 to .00, with AVE from .55 to .68, which indicates evidence of convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity was also evidenced as the average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct was greater than its squared correlation with the others sub-constructs.

Results for the CFA indicated that the measurement model adequately fit the data. This  $\chi^2/df$  ratio of 2.12 indicates satisfactory general fit between the model and the observed data; CFI = .957 above the .95 but RMSEA = .052 and SRMR = .044 both fall below the .08 score (Hooper et al., 2008). Composite internal consistency reliabilities ranged from .83 to .92, and all AVE was greater than .50 indicating convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity was confirmed by higher AVE for each construct than their corresponding squared correlations with other constructs.

## 6.3 Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

The structural model was tested using covariance-based structural equation modeling (SEM) in AMOS 29.0. The comprehensive model comprised the direct connection from Cultural Identity to Behavioral Intentions (H1), the mediation pathway through Perceived Behavioral Control (H2, H2a, H2b), and the moderation of the Cultural Identity→Behavioral Intentions relationship by Gender and Education level (H3, H3a, H3b). Fit indices for the structural model indicated satisfactory to excellent fit:  $\chi^2(312) = 702.00$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 2.25$ , Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .949, Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI) = .941, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = .058 (90% CI [.053, .063]), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) = .049. These values meet or above standard thresholds (CFI/TLI > .90; RMSEA/SRMR ≤ .08), suggesting that the hypothesized relationships appropriately reflect the observed data (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008).



### 6.3.1 H1 Direct Effect of Cultural Identity on Behavioral Intention

H1 indicated the direct positive impact of culture identification on the Behavioral Intention towards Islamic culture in Egypt. The standardized path coefficient of CI on BI was  $\beta = .42$  ( $SE = .08$ ,  $p < .001$ ), corroborating H1. This strong impact implies that tourists with high levels of cognitive, emotional and behavioural dimensions of Cultural Identity (e.g. proud of Islamic heritage and actively supporting its preservation), are more likely to have intentions to re-visit, recommend and engage in heritage activities. In practical terms, for each one-unit increase in Cultural Identity, there is a .42 to Behavioral Intentions on the latent level; further reflecting the influential power of identity-based bonds (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Zhang et al., 2020).

### 6.3.2 Hypotheses H2, H2a, H2b: Mediation by Perceived Behavioral Control

H2 (and then H2a, H2b) supports the idea that perceived behavioural control mediates the relationship between PBC and sbe-H sex-stereotyping. H2 Perceived Behavioral Control moderates the relationship between Cultural Identity and Behavioral Intentions. Two sub-hypotheses developed the mediation: H2a suggested that Cultural Identity positively affects Perceived Behavioral Control, and H2b suggested that Perceived Behavior Control positively affects Behavioral Intentions.

H2a (Cultural Identity  $\rightarrow$  Perceived Behavioral Control): The  $\beta$  coefficient between Cultural Identity and Perceived Behavioral Control was  $\beta = .54$  ( $SE = .07$ ,  $p < .001$ ), which indicates that tourists with high Islamic heritage identity are more able to aggregate and realize transcendental motivations by feeling more competent in organizing and making visits, presumably because of higher self-confidence, resource availabilities and perceived freedom (Ajzen, 1991).

– H2b (Perceived Behavioral Control  $\rightarrow$  Behavioral Intentions): The path coefficient from Perceived Behavioral Control to Behavioral Intentions was  $\beta = .34$  ( $SE = .06$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that people who perceived the lower barriers and the higher self-efficacy for heritage visits do possess higher intention to revisit, recommend, and engage in (Wu & Teng, 2011).

A bootstrap mediation analysis (5,000 resamples) showed an indirect effect of  $\beta = .18$  (95% CI [.10, .27],  $p < .001$ ). Because the direct effect of Cultural Identity on Behavioral Intentions continued to be statistically significant ( $\beta = .24$ ,  $p < .01$ ) after the inclusion of the mediator; Perceived Behavioral Control leads to partial mediation in favor of H2 and the sub-hypotheses H2a and H2b (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). This indicates that Cultural Identity directly influences Behavioral Intentions, and indirectly through enhancing tourists' perceptions of control.

### 6.3.3 Third Hypotheses (H3, H3a, H3b): Gender and Education as Moderation Effects

H3 proposed that demographic variables such as Gender and Education level would moderate the Cultural Identity $\rightarrow$ Behavioral Intentions relationship. H3a and H3b were tested using multi-group SEM:

H3a (Moderating effect of gender): The model was built independently for female ( $n = 220$ ) and male ( $n = 173$ ) tourists. The forcing of the two equality constraints on the path from Cultural Identity  $\rightarrow$  Behavioral Intentions led to a significant chi-square difference ( $\Delta\chi^2_1 = 5.12$ ,  $p = .02$ ) demonstrated gender-specificity of the path magnitude. The standardized coefficient for females was  $\beta_{\text{female}} = .48$  ( $p < .001$ ), while for men it was  $\beta_{\text{male}} = .35$  ( $p < .01$ ). As such, the positive effect of CI on BIs is significantly greater for female tourists, thereby, confirming H3a. Such a result is consistent with social role models, and gender schema research, as women tend to feel more emotion towards ancestral events (Moon, 2021).

– H3b (Education  $\times$  Moderator): The better versus worse completion group was split based on greatest level of education: below or equal to bachelor's completed ( $n = 203$ ) versus completed postgraduate education (master's/doctorate;  $n = 194$ ). Setting the path equal across these groups resulted in  $\Delta\chi^2_1 = 4.78$  ( $p = .03$ ), indicating that Education was a significant moderator. For postgraduate travelers,  $\beta_{\text{postgrad}} = .50$  ( $p < .001$ ); for bachelor's or lower,  $\beta_{\text{bachelor}} = .38$  ( $p < .01$ ). As a result, the effect of Cultural Identity on Behavioral intentions is stronger for the highly educated, which is in line with cognitive resource theory that predicts that they raise the level of cultural literacy so that identity-based motivation will be increased (Liu & Cheng, 2016). Table 2 shows unstandardized (B), standardized ( $\beta$ ) coefficients and significance of all structural paths.

**Table 2.** Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Path	B	$\beta$	SE	p	Support
H1	Cultural Identity $\rightarrow$ Behavioral Intentions	0.57	.42	.08	<.001	Yes
H2a	Cultural Identity $\rightarrow$ Perceived Control	0.63	.54	.07	<.001	Yes
H2b	Perceived Control $\rightarrow$ Behavioral Intentions	0.34	.34	.06	<.001	Yes
H2 (indirect)	Identity $\rightarrow$ Control $\rightarrow$ Intentions (mediated)	—	.18	—	<.001	Yes
H3a	Gender moderates Identity $\rightarrow$ Intentions	—	—	—	.02	Yes
H3b	Education moderates Identity $\rightarrow$ Intentions	—	—	—	.03	Yes

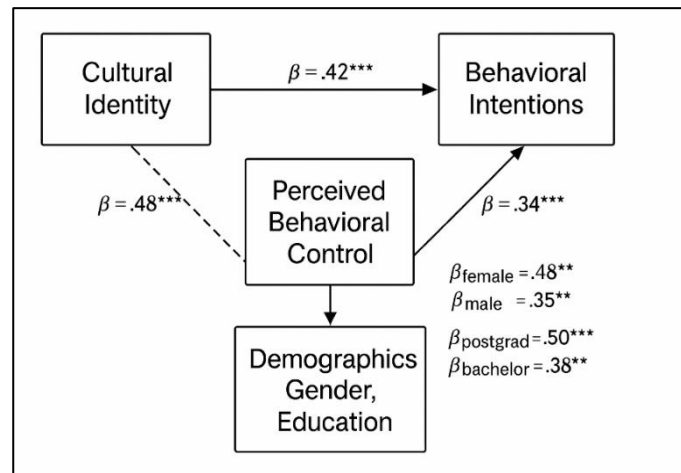
— = Not applicable.

## 6.4 Model Explanation and Implications

Taken together, there were significant total direct, indirect, and moderated effects of Use motif on Behavioral Intentions ( $R^2 = .52$ ). The largest exogenous predictor proved to be Cultural Identity, both directly ( $\beta = .42$ ) and mediated indirectly by Perceived Behavioral Control ( $\beta_{\text{indirect}} = .18$ ). Also, the Gender and Education interaction in the moderation analysis also indicates more powerful support that women and the educated visitors receive from the cultural identity effect when making the intentions to connect with Islamic history.

Altogether, this structural model supports a nuanced link: cultural Identity not only directly promotes HH tourism goals, but it also enhances control beliefs that drive one's pursuit of such goals. Additionally, demographic context shapes the strength of identity cues, so that destination managers need to adapt communication and engagement strategies (e.g.,

emphasising identity-affirming messages for women and highly educated audiences) to optimise behaviour outcomes.



\*Note: \*\*\* $p < .001$ ; \* $p < .01$ .

**Figure 3.** Standardized path estimates

Figure 3 illustrates the standardised path coefficients derived from the structural equation modelling. The thickness of each line in the graph corresponds to the relationship strength: with regards to behavioral intentions, Identity is strong predictor ( $\beta = .42$ ) through the mediating role of PBC directly and indirectly through PBC ( $\beta = .54$  to control;  $\beta = .34$  from control to intents). The figure also demonstrates the increased welfare in female and the highly educated tourists, suggesting the substantial moderation effects of gender and education.

## 6.5 Additional Analyses

The Pearson correlations (see Table 3) confirmed strong interrelations between all domains; cultural Identity was significantly positively related to perceived behavioral control ( $r = .54$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and behavioural intentions ( $r = .48$ ,  $p < .001$ ). No multicollinearity issues were detected (all VIFs  $< 2.0$ ).

**Table 3.** Inter-Construct Correlations

Construct	1	2	3
1. Cultural Identity (overall)	—		
2. Perceived Behavioral Control	.54**	—	
3. Behavioral Intentions	.48**	.62**	—

$p < .01$ .

Effects were even more pronounced in female tourists ( $\beta = .48$  vs.  $\beta = .35$  for males) show a pattern observed in previous work in cultural psychology where women tend to have higher emotional engagement in cultural heritage experiences (Moon, 2021). This result is consistent with social role theory, which posits that women are socialized to value relations and community, rendering them more responsive to cultural identity activation in heritage contexts.

The moderating effect of education ( $\beta = .50$  for postgraduates in comparison to  $\beta = .38$  for undergraduates) suggests that a greater availability of cognitive resources (due to higher educational level) increases the salience of cultural Identity–behavior effects. Cultural literacy, critical thinking, and aesthetic cultivation resulting from education would help the tourists establish a personal connection with the Islamic cultural heritage (Liu & Cheng, 2016). This indicates that heritage destinations could have to formulate different engagement strategies based on the level of knowledge of and ability to process culture.

## 7. Discussion

This study examined the influence of cultural Identity on intention to Islamic heritage tourism in Cairo among international tourists with perceived behavior control as a mediating effect and gender and education as moderation. The findings offer strong evidence in support of all the hypotheses proposed and further develop knowledge about the identity basis of sustainable heritage engagement.

First, cultural identification had a strong direct influence on behavioral intentions ( $\beta = .42$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that the more cognitive, emotional, and behavioral involvement they have in Islamic heritage, the more likely are they to return, recommend, and engage with related preservation activities. This finding is consistent with social identity theory which asserts that in-group attachment promotes identity-confirming activities (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), also the finding is consistent with Zhang et al. s (2020) heritable consumption framework.

Second, perceived behavioral control also strengthens this relationship (indirect effect  $\beta = .18$ , 95% CI [.10, .27],  $p < .001$ ), supporting inclusion of TPB in heritage tourism models (Ajzen, 1991). Islamic tourists who strongly believed in Islamic effects were more able, in terms of resources and self-efficacy, in visiting the heritage site than they were when not, thus enhancing their intentions (Wu & Teng, 2011). The partial mediation suggestion alternative paths—i.e., affective or normative—that can be examined in future studies. Perceived behavioral control has a direct influence in the relationship between cultural Identity and sustainable tourist behavior, and thus, the need to overcome logistical barriers in heritage tourism in the interest of fostering visitor participation and conservation support is reasserted. (Abdelghani et al., 2025b)

Third, in multi-group analyses the Identity–intentions association was considerably stronger in female tourists ( $\beta_{\text{female}} = .48$  vs.  $\beta_{\text{male}} = .35$ ;  $\Delta\chi^2 = 5.12$ ,  $p = .02$ ) compared with tourists who were undergraduate-educated ( $\beta_{\text{postgrad}} = .50$  vs.  $\beta_{\text{bachelor}} = .38$ ;  $\Delta\chi^2 = 4.78$ ,  $p = .03$ ). Female tourists' greater affective susceptibility to cultural cues (Moon, 2021) also likely enhances identity outcomes, while tertiary education increases cognitive reactions to heritage (Liu & Cheng, 2016: 76), enhancing translation of identification into action.

Together, the results highlight the complex significance of cultural Identity in heritage tourism. They show that identification not only serves as a precursor of behavioral intention but also serves as a cue of perceived ease of involvement. Further, the demographic characteristics demonstrate the necessity for treatment in each segment. The high level of variability reported in intentions ( $R^2 = .52$ ) is a testimony to the explanatory power of the model and its ability to guide policy and management.

Integration of the digital transformation and marketing systems driven by AI is able to enhance the competitiveness of the destination, and the visitors' experiences were personalized and relevant in attracting culturally oriented, religiously motivated tourists towards IHL sites. (Zaki et al., 2025). Lastly, the emphasis on Cairo's Islamic past for a cultural specificity, alongside the model's theoretical origins, suggests that the model could be applied to other contexts, e.g., other faith-based or culture-focused tourism contexts. However, prudence to generalize from foreign visitors and beyond the societal boundaries of Egypt is needed. To test this, future research could examine the cross- tourism context resilience by using the model with domestic tourists or in other tourism regions.

Although these results show strong associations, it must be noted that in the present model, 48% variability in the intention to behave is unexplained. These findings imply that other than cultural identity, perceived control, and demographics may also affect heritage tourism intentions. Unrelated potential variables not investigated in this study may include destination-specific factors (accessibility, service quality, authenticity perceptions), individual differences (prior heritage knowledge, travel experience, religious belief), and contextual influences (social media exposure, peer recommendations, seasonal considerations). These complementarity mechanisms warrant further examination in order to build a fuller model of heritage tourism behavior.

## **8. Theoretical and Practical Implications**

### **8.1 Theoretical Implications**

This research contributes to heritage tourism theory by combining social identity theory (SIT) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to explain the process by which overall identification with culture impacts tourist intentions (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Ajzen, 1991). First, it suggests that cultural Identity involves cognitive, affective, and motivational components, which together predict heritage participation and develop Fu and Luo's (2023) empirical identity measure. Second, the partial mediation performed by perceived behavioral control serves to enhance the applications of TPB to the context of tourism – Identity not only affects attitudes, but also partially affects control: it could be argued that a relationship between Identity and efficacy is present. Third, the involvement of gender and education as moderators better informs understanding of border conditions in the connections between Identity and behavior, consistent with calls for demographic nuance in tourist models (Dedeoğlu, Küçükergin, & Küçükergin, 2018). Through the examination of these moderation effects, this study suggests that women and highly educated tourists have higher identity-driven ambitions, which contribute to the segmentation theory in the heritage domain.

Also, the variance in intentions explained by the constant is high (52%), which shows the robustness of the integrated model, providing a strong base for follow-up research. The results also hint that potential model extensions could include affective and normative mediators (heritage site emotion connection, or the community's norm), to gain further indirect effect. Give that the test of SEM has been found to work, this proves the potential of using more advanced multivariate methods to testing complex tourism ideas, then encourages researchers to use SEM in such empirical tests.

## 8.2 Practical Implications

For Egyptian Islamic heritage tourism destination managers and marketers, we therefore recommend that the strong Identity–intention link posits that promotional strategies should emphasize factors that enhance tourists' cultural Identity. Credentials promoting realness, spiritual relevance and stories of shared history could enhance cognitive and affective components of identification, which would lead to increased revisit as well as recommend intentions (Alhawty, 2021). Also, increasing perceived behavioural control—by providing clear information to visitors, bilingual signs, speeding up ticketing—would positively increase the intention by reducing the barriers (Ajzen, 1991).

Given these demographic disparities, targeted interventions are recommended. Marketing materials aimed at female groups might emphasize immersive community-building experiences that harness women's emotional connection to history (Moon, 2021). Similarly, tours or interpretive programmes developed for intellectual tourists—such as interpretive lectures or interactive digital media—can assume higher levels of education to promote identity reinforcement and attitudes control (Liu & Cheng, 2016).

AI and anonymity on social media could allow tourism managers to customize marketing messages towards demographic segments, particularly enabling the emotional attachment of female tourists and the interpretative needs of highly educated visitors regarding Islamic heritage tourism. (Ahmed et al., 2025b).

International travel agencies and cultural organizations and their collaboration can enhance identity-motivated individuals' access, educational authorities and partnerships with them can develop heritage-education programmes tailored and correlated to postgraduate tourists' patterns of cognitive actions. Furthermore, including digital interventions (e.g., virtual tours, augmented reality apps) also could enhance identity salience and perceived ease of participation as well as target mediation and moderation processes unveiled from this investigation.

## 9. Limitations and Future Research

This study also has limitations that must be carefully considered for interpretation and further research. First, the cross-sectional nature does not allow for causal inferences. Longitudinal or experimental designs may interrogate changes in identity and control perception over time or as a function of particular treatments (Creswell, 2014).

Secondly, the sample was heavily populated by international tourists in Cairo, raising questions about the generalisability of these findings to domestic tourists or other heritage contexts. Future research could further examine the model in other populations (i.e., indigenous residents and other tourist populations in different Islamic heritage sites) to assess its cross-cultural generalizability, identify moderated relationships, and reveal contextual moderators (UNWTO, 2023).

Third, the investigation targeted perceived behavior control and did not include any other TPB constructs: attitudes and subjective norms that may have a part to play in identity effects.



If these variables are included it may be possible to develop a more comprehensive TPB-based heritage tourism model.

Fourth, although demographic moderators of gender and education were examined, other individual differences (e.g., age, cultural distance, or prior heritage knowledge) might also moderate relationships between Identity and intention. These could be explored, and how they interact, in further research to better segment audiences (Phinney, 1990).

The current studies in heritage tourism are mostly of a cross-sectional nature; longitudinal research is much needed to truly comprehend changing cultural identity dynamics and digital mediations on sustainable tourist practices within the scope of Islamic heritage sites. (Mohammed et al., 2024).

The cross-sectional nature of the study makes it impossible to generate causal inferences about the development of cultural Identity and its impact on behavior over time. Further longitudinal work on the transformation of tourists' cultural Identity and its connection to visitor heritage engagement patterns would also help in illuminating such processes. Furthermore, by developing appropriate experiments manipulating the salience of Identity, clearer causal links between the activation of cultural Identity and behavioral results can be put to the test (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, et al., 2003).

## 10. Conclusion

this study demonstrates the instrumental role played by cultural Identity in increasing international tourists' intentions to join Islamic heritage tourism in Cairo. By combining social identity theory with TPB, the paper builds the basis to show that identity dimensions have direct and indirect effects on BIs via PBC and are moderated by gender and education. The model had strong explanatory power ( $R^2 = .52$ ) emphasizes its applied value for heritage management and marketing.

Theoretical contributions are a revised identity-TPB model, empirical evidence for mediated control, and identification of demographic boundary conditions. Implications are also practical and relevant to destination partners in identity-based campaigns, increasing visitor empowerment, and adapting strategies to key demographic segments. Limitations (i.e. cross-sectional sample design, limited contextual generalizability) help to qualify but also problematize the extension of these results, to the benefit of a research agenda focused on research that is longitudinal, cross-cultural, and methodologically diverse. A broader framework incorporating cultural Identity, behavioral economics, and digital innovation is needed for the sustainable development of the Islamic heritage tourism, using Mamluk heritage sites as epicenters of socio-economic resistance and cultural diplomacy. (Mohammed et al., 2024).

The findings of this study suggest that knowledge of the relationship between cultural Identity and behavioral intention serves as a solid basis to developing sustainable heritage tourism strategies congruent with international development goals. The results indicate that destinations may improve visitor engagement and heritage preservation through identification and exploitation of tourists' cultural bond. The union of psychological theory and sustainability goals provides a route to heritage tourism which values cultural authenticity but also provides

economic and conservation dividends. It is hoped that funding might support other projects that extend this framework for cross-cultural comparison, and that they might use the approach to explore the contribution digital technologies can make to the formation of cultural Identity in heritage tourism experiences.

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## الملخص بالعربية

### نداء القاهرة: استكشاف دور الهوية الثقافية والنوايا السلوكية في تعزيز سياحة التراث الإسلامي في مصر

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## الملخص

تبحث هذه الدراسة في كيفية تأثير الهوية الثقافية على النوايا السلوكية للسياح تجاه سياحة التراث الإسلامي في القاهرة، متضمنةً التحكم السلوكي المُتصور كوسيط، والعوامل الديموغرافية (الجنس، التعليم) كعوامل مُنظمة. بالاعتماد على نظرية الهوية الاجتماعية ونظرية السلوك المُخطَّط (TPB)، كشف مسح كمي شمل 397 سائحًا أن الهوية الثقافية تُعزِّز النوايا السلوكية بشكل مباشر ( $\beta = .42$ ،  $p < .001$ )، بما في ذلك خطط إعادة الزيارة والتوصية. يُؤثِّر التحكم السلوكي المُتصور جزئيًا على هذه العلاقة ( $\beta = .18$ )، مما يُشير إلى أن الهوية تُعزِّز ثقة السياح في التفاعل مع المواقع التراثية. يُخفف الجنس والتعليم من حدة التأثيرات بشكل ملحوظ: تُظهر الإناث ( $\beta = 0.48$ ) مقابل الذكور ( $\beta = 0.35$ ) وطلاب الدراسات العليا ( $\beta = 0.50$ ) مقابل طلاب البكالوريوس ( $\beta = 0.38$ ) نوايا أقوى مدفوعة بالهوية. يُفسر النموذج 52% من تباين النوايا السلوكية. تُؤكد النتائج على الحاجة إلى تسويق مُركز على الهوية، وتعزيز تمكين الزوار، واستراتيجيات مُصممة خصيصًا للفئات الديموغرافية لتعزيز السياحة التراثية الإسلامية المستدامة. كما تُوضح الدراسة العلاقة بين الهوية الثقافية، والنوايا السلوكية، والسياحة التراثية الإسلامية، وأهداف التنمية المستدامة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الهوية الثقافية، النوايا السلوكية، السياحة التراثية الإسلامية، التحكم السلوكي المُتصور، السياحة المستدامة.