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#### Research Paper

## Influence of Religiosity and Destination Image on Tourist Loyalty Through Satisfaction: A Case of Halal Tourism in the Special Region of Yogyakarta

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#### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of religiosity and destination image on the Satisfaction and Loyalty of Muslim tourists at halal tourist destinations in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY). The research population includes all tourists who have visited halal destinations in DIY, and sampling is conducted using convenience sampling, with a selected sample of 247 respondents. Data were collected via an online questionnaire and analysed using a mediation approach to test the direct and indirect effects among variables, which were subsequently tested using Smart PLS. The results showed that religiosity and destination image had a positive and significant effect on the Satisfaction and Loyalty of Muslim tourists. Tourists with high levels of religiosity felt more satisfied and were more loyal when their travel experiences aligned with Islamic values. Destination image that reflects hospitality, cleanliness, and the availability of halal facilities strengthens tourists' positive perceptions and trust. In addition, Satisfaction was found to mediate the relationship between religiosity and destination image on loyalty, indicating that spiritually meaningful experiences can foster emotional attachment and commitment to return.

**Keywords:** *Destination Image; Satisfaction; Loyalty; Religiosity; Halal Tourism.*

*Declaration of Conflict of Interest:* The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest regarding the research, authorship, and publication of this article.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The increased adoption of halal practices across various industries confirms a global shift towards meeting the needs of Muslim tourists, especially in the tourism sector, which increasingly demands services aligned with sharia principles (Gautam et al., 2024; Qureshi et al., 2025). This trend is also driven by the increasing search for spiritual and cultural experiences as part of travel, which not only creates personal value for tourists but also contributes to strengthening the local economy through the development of religious destinations (Ambrož & Ovsenik, 2011; Guriță & Scortescu, 2023). In the context of halal tourism, tourist loyalty is a strategic indicator of destination sustainability, reflecting emotional attachment and the intention to revisit, thereby enhancing a destination's competitiveness (Kotler & Keller, 2021; Dapena-Baron et al., 2020).

Religiosity and destination image have been identified as important factors in shaping tourist loyalty, although previous research has shown empirical inconsistencies. Religiosity influences tourists' selectivity in choosing destinations that align with their spiritual values (Weiss & Forstmann, 2024; Hassani & Moghavvemi, 2020), while a positive destination image can strengthen perceptions of quality, safety, and the spiritual value of the destination, ultimately increasing the intention to revisit (Tavitiyaman et al., 2021; Manyangara et al., 2023). Inconsistencies in previous literature suggest that religiosity can increase tourist loyalty (Zulvianti et al., 2023; Mustikawati et al., 2022). However, this contradicts the findings of Dinh et al. (2022), who found that neither has a significant influence. These results indicate the need for a more comprehensive analysis of the mechanisms linking these variables.

Tourist satisfaction emerges as a crucial mediating variable in explaining how religiosity and destination image indirectly shape Loyalty (Wahyoedi et al., 2021; Chi & Qu, 2008). Satisfaction reflects the fulfillment of tourists' expectations, both spiritual and functional, thereby strengthening their emotional bond with the destination. However, research exploring the possibility of a reverse causal relationship that the image of an Islamic destination can increase tourists' religiosity through spiritual experiences remains very limited. This approach expands the theoretical construct by positioning religiosity not only as a fixed antecedent but also as a variable that can be shaped through exposure to religious values in the context of halal tourism. This perspective opens up new avenues for understanding the psychological dynamics of halal tourists.

At the national level, Indonesia ranks highest, driven by the strength of its halal infrastructure, destination diversification, and government policy support (Mahardhani et al., 2024; Widjaja et al., 2020). However, Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) achievements in this regard still lag behind those of other provinces, such as NTB and Aceh, indicating that integrating halal values into destination development is not yet optimal despite the province's enormous cultural and historical potential. The dominance of tourism focused on non-Islamic cultural sites, such as Hindu-Buddhist temples, creates a gap between the needs of Muslim tourists and the characteristics of available destinations.

In light of these conceptual and empirical gaps, this study was designed to investigate in greater depth the roles of religiosity and destination image in influencing the loyalty of halal tourists in DIY, with Satisfaction as a mediating mechanism that bridges this relationship. In practical terms, the results of this study are expected to strengthen halal tourism marketing strategies, enrich destination development policies, and increase the competitiveness of DIY in the national and global halal tourism market.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R)

This study adopts the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) theory introduced by Mehrabian and Russell in 1974 (Kapoor et al., 2022), which has been widely applied to explain how environmental

stimuli influence individual behavioral responses through internal psychological processes (Tawaf & Tagg, 2012). Although the S-O-R framework is considered robust in explaining behavior across various contexts, including technology adoption and tourism, prior studies report inconsistent findings regarding the relationships among stimulus, organism, and response (Pandita et al., 2021). However, these inconsistencies are often under-theorized, particularly in explaining how contextual and individual-level factors shape the mechanism through which stimuli are processed and translated into behavioral outcomes.

A critical debate in the literature concerns the conceptualization of the “stimulus.” Stimulus refers to external factors that influence an individual’s psychological state (Eroglu et al., 2001). While some studies focus on functional attributes such as service quality or technological features, others emphasize symbolic and value-driven factors, such as religiosity and destination image. This divergence suggests that stimuli are not universally interpreted but instead are filtered through individuals’ socio-cultural backgrounds and personal value systems. In the context of halal tourism, religiosity represents more than an external factor; it functions as an internalized belief system that shapes perceptions and emotional responses toward tourism offerings. Similarly, destination image is subject to subjective interpretation, leading to variations in how individuals cognitively and affectively evaluate a destination. These differences help explain the inconsistencies found in prior empirical studies.

The “organism” component, defined as the internal processes that mediate the relationship between stimulus and response (Fu et al., 2021), also presents conceptual ambiguity. In many studies, organism is operationalized as satisfaction, yet satisfaction itself has been interpreted differently across the literature sometimes as an effective response, and other times as a cognitive evaluation. This duality may contribute to mixed empirical results, where satisfaction does not consistently mediate the relationship between external stimuli and behavioral outcomes. In this study, tourist satisfaction is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct that captures both emotional reactions and cognitive evaluations arising from exposure to religiosity and destination image, thereby providing a more comprehensive representation of the organism construct.

Furthermore, the “response” component, which reflects the final behavioral outcome, has been widely associated with loyalty. Response refers to the behavior that emerges after individuals process stimuli through internal mechanisms, which can be positive or negative depending on the evaluation process. However, the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty remains debated. While some studies suggest that satisfaction directly leads to loyalty, others find that this relationship is conditional and influenced by additional factors such as personal values, situational constraints, and alternative choices. In the context of halal tourism, loyalty may not solely depend on satisfaction but also on the degree to which tourism experiences align with individuals’ religious beliefs and expectations.



**Figure 1.** SOR Model  
**Source:** Authors own elaboration (2025)

By addressing these theoretical debates, this study extends the S-O-R model (Figure 1) beyond a linear stimulus–response framework and positions it as a context-dependent process influenced by both external and internal factors. Specifically, religiosity and destination image are treated as key stimuli that shape tourist satisfaction as the organism, which in turn influences tourist loyalty as the response. This approach provides a more nuanced explanation of previously observed inconsistencies

and contributes to the literature by integrating value-based and perceptual dimensions within the S-O-R framework in the context of halal tourism (Abror et al., 2019; Al-Ansi & Han, 2019), please see Figure 2 for the conceptual framework of this study.

## *2.2. Hypothesis Formulation*

### ***The Influence of Religiosity on Tourist Loyalty***

Religiosity reflects the internalization of religious beliefs and practices that influence how individuals assess and carry out their daily activities, including in the context of tourism (Zulvianti et al., 2023). In the context of halal tourism, tourists with high levels of religiosity tend to choose destinations that align with their spiritual values, so that their travel preferences are not only recreational but also an expression of religious observance (Tavitiyaman et al., 2021; Preko et al., 2020). When their religious values are accommodated, their emotional attachment to the destination becomes stronger, increasing the likelihood of repeat visits and recommendations. Empirical evidence shows that religiosity has a significant effect on Loyalty (Mustikawati et al., 2022; Wahyoedi et al., 2021).

**H1:** Religiosity has a significant positive effect on tourist loyalty.

### ***The Influence of Religiosity on Tourist Satisfaction***

Religiosity plays a foundational role in shaping tourists' perceptions of the compatibility between destination values and their religious teachings (Zulvianti et al., 2023). When destinations provide worship facilities, halal food, and activities that support spiritual needs, tourists with high levels of religiosity feel a sense of value alignment, which drives increased Satisfaction (Yuliviona et al., 2019). The literature shows that the fulfilment of spiritual needs is an important determinant of halal tourist satisfaction (Preko et al., 2020).

**H2:** Religiosity has a significant positive effect on tourist satisfaction.

### ***The Influence of Destination Image on Tourist Loyalty***

Destination image is a tourist's comprehensive perception of a place, reflecting cognitive and emotional impressions of the destination's services and environment (Ramseook-Munhurrun et al., 2015). In the context of halal tourism, an image that emphasizes alignment with Islamic values is a key factor in strengthening tourist attachment, thereby encouraging repeat visits and recommendations (Padrón-Ávila et al., 2022). Empirical evidence confirms that destination image significantly influences Loyalty (Zulvianti et al., 2023; Stavrianea & Kamenidou, 2022).

**H3:** Destination image has a significant positive effect on tourist loyalty.

### ***The Influence of Destination Image on Tourist Satisfaction***

Destination image is an important predictor of Satisfaction because tourists' initial perceptions serve as a standard for evaluating their travel experiences (Wang et al., 2023). When perceptions of facilities, the environment, and destination value alignment align with expectations, satisfaction levels increase significantly. Previous studies consistently show that a positive destination image results in a more satisfying experience (Zulvianti et al., 2023; Padrón-Ávila et al., 2022).

**H4:** Destination image has a significant positive effect on tourist satisfaction.

### ***The Influence of Destination Image on Tourist Religiosity***

In halal tourism, the image of a destination is not only related to aesthetic and functional aspects but also to the religious values it represents (Eitzenberger & Thimm, 2024; Yaakop et al., 2016). Destinations that clearly express religious identity can deepen tourists' spiritual reflection and foster the internalisation of religious values during travel (Agarwal et al., 2021). Experiences rich in religious symbols, facilities, and environments have been shown to increase tourists' religiosity (Amalia & Gunawan, 2025).

**H5:** Destination image has a significant positive effect on tourist religiosity.

### ***The Influence of Satisfaction on Tourist Loyalty***

Tourist satisfaction reflects an affective evaluation of service quality and the alignment of experience with expectations (Oliver, 2014). In the context of halal tourism, Satisfaction increases when destinations meet religious needs, such as providing worship facilities and halal food (Abror et al., 2019). High levels of Satisfaction strengthen tourists' emotional bonding and consistently increase loyalty, as evidenced in various studies (Zulvianti et al., 2023; Rahayu & Candra, 2023; Mustikawati et al., 2022).

**H6:** Satisfaction has a significant positive effect on tourist loyalty.

### ***The Influence of Religiosity on Loyalty Mediated by Satisfaction***

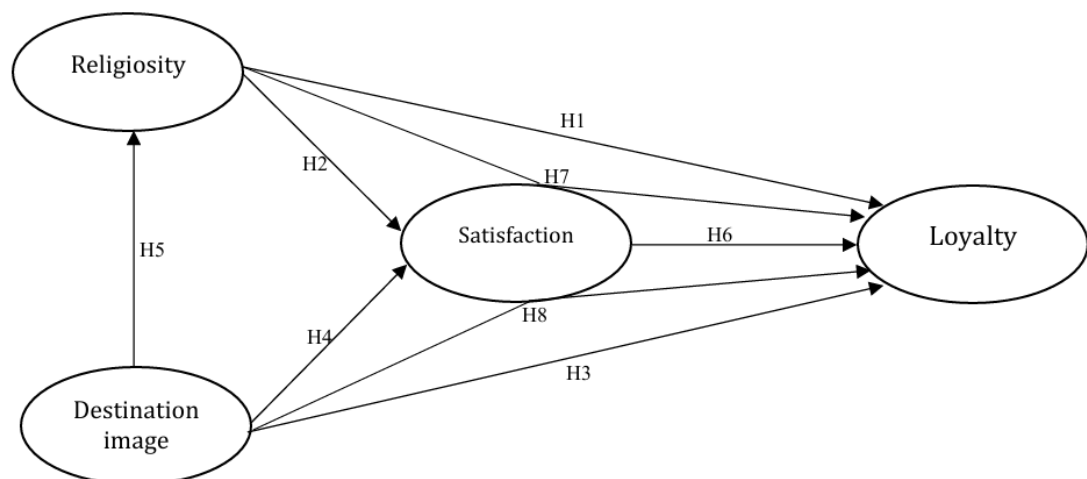
Religiosity is the basis for tourists' preferences in choosing halal destinations, but its influence on loyalty can be strengthened through satisfying experiences (Dinh et al., 2022). When spiritual needs are met, Satisfaction increases and strengthens attachment to the destination (Al-Ansi & Han, 2019). Empirical research confirms that Satisfaction acts as a mediator in the relationship between religiosity and Loyalty (Mustikawati et al., 2022; Wahyoedi et al., 2021).

**H7:** Satisfaction mediates the influence of religiosity on tourist loyalty.

### ***The Effect of Destination Image on Loyalty Mediated by Satisfaction***

The image of a destination influences tourists' initial expectations, and if the experience meets those expectations and satisfaction is created (Chi & Qu, 2008). In halal tourism, a strong destination image regarding sharia compliance contributes to the formation of positive experiences, thereby increasing satisfaction and ultimately encouraging Loyalty (Manyangara et al., 2023; Stavrianea & Kamenidou, 2022; Ramseok-Munhurrun et al., 2015). See figure 2 for the conceptual framework of this study.

**H8:** Satisfaction mediates the effect of destination image on tourist loyalty.



**Figure 2.** Conceptual Framework Model

**Adapted from:** Abror et al. (2019) and Al-Ansi and Han (2019).

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

This study is a quantitative, causal study that tests the relationship between two or more variables. The population in this study comprises all individuals who are the subject of the study and have characteristics relevant to the study's focus (Arbianti, 2024). The sample consists of individuals with

direct experience in halal tourism, selected using a convenience sampling technique. This approach is considered appropriate given the absence of a comprehensive sampling frame and the dispersed nature of the target population, making probabilistic sampling difficult to implement. Data was collected online through Google Forms distributed via social media, tourism communities, and travel forums.

The sample size was determined by referring to Williams et al. (2009) guidelines, which set the minimum at 10 times the number of research indicators. A total of 18 indicators were used to measure four primary constructs, namely Religiosity (5 indicators), Destination Image (5 indicators), Tourist Satisfaction (3 indicators), and Tourist Loyalty (5 indicators) (See Table 1), so that the minimum number of samples required was 180 respondents. This study successfully collected 247 respondents, a number that not only meets but also exceeds the recommended minimum limit. Using a larger sample size increases the accuracy of model estimation and strengthens the generalizability of research findings.

**Table 1.** Definition and Measurement of Research Variables

Variable	Operational Definition	Item	Indicator	Source
Religiosity	The level of an individual's commitment and belief in Islamic teachings, including the importance of religion in life, belief in Allah, the Prophet Muhammad SAW, and the practice of prayer.	RE1	Religion is important in life.	Abror et al. (2019); Zulvianti et al., (2023).
		RE2	Islam helps to live a better life.	
		RE3	Prayer provides support	
		RE4	Prophet Muhammad SAW as a role model.	
		RE5	Assistance from Allah SWT	
Destination Image	Tourists' perceptions of various aspects of tourist destinations, including the tourist environment, historical attractions, infrastructure quality, accessibility, and the value provided by the destination.	CD1	Tourism environment	Chi & Qu (2008); Ramseook-Munhurrun et al., (2015).
		CD2	Historical attractions	
		CD3	Infrastructure	
		CD4	Accessibility	
		CD5	Value	
Tourist Satisfaction	The level of tourist satisfaction with the facilities provided, the halal nature of services, and the conformity of conduct with Islamic principles during visits to halal tourist destinations.	KP1	Satisfied with facilities	Abror et al. (2019); Oliver, (2014).
		KP2	Satisfied with halal	
		KP3	Satisfied with Islamic morals	
Tourist Loyalty	Tourists' commitment to revisit the destination, making it their top choice, remaining loyal despite many other destination options, and sharing their experiences and recommending the destination to others.	L01	Repeat visits	Padrón-Ávila et al. (2022); Mustikawati et al., (2022).
		L02	Top choice	
		L03	Loyal despite many other destination options	
		L04	Sharing positive experiences on social media after visiting	
		L05	Recommending to others	

The data used in this study are primary data obtained directly from respondents through an online questionnaire (Saefudin et al., 2024). Primary data were chosen because they provide a more accurate, up-to-date, and contextually relevant picture, especially when evaluating tourists' perceptions of religiosity, destination image, Satisfaction, and Loyalty in halal tourism (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The research instrument used a questionnaire developed based on a modified five-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." The questionnaire was divided into two main

sections: respondent demographic characteristics and questions related to the research construct. The instrument was designed to systematically and objectively capture respondents' perceptions.

Before the structural analysis, the instruments were tested using an outer model in Smart PLS to assess their validity and reliability. Convergent validity was assessed using factor loadings  $\geq 0.70$ , indicating that the indicators adequately reflected the constructs (Hair et al., 2017). Construct reliability was measured using composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha, with a threshold of  $\geq 0.70$ . Discriminant validity was tested using an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of  $\geq 0.50$  and the Fornell-Larcker criteria to ensure that each construct had good discriminatory power compared to other constructs. This test ensured that all indicators met the required measurement quality.

Data analysis was conducted using an inner-model approach to evaluate the relationships among latent constructs. The testing was conducted using several model fit indicators, including the R-square ( $R^2$ ) value to measure the ability of exogenous constructs to explain endogenous constructs, with categories of weak (0.19), moderate (0.33), and strong (0.67) (Hair et al., 2017). Additionally, the model's predictive relevance was assessed using  $Q^2$ , which reflects its predictive ability; values  $> 0.35$  are considered strong. Furthermore, hypothesis testing was conducted by examining P-values  $\leq 0.05$  to accept the proposed hypotheses. This procedure enabled researchers to assess whether empirical data supported the relationships among the variables in the structural model.

## 4. RESULT

### 4.1. Respondent Characteristics

**Table 2.** Respondent Description (N=247)

Variable	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	92	37.2
	Women	155	62.8
Age	<20 years	83	33.6
	20-30 years	47	19.0
	31-40 years	82	33.2
	>40 years old	35	14.2
Education	High School/Vocational School	80	32.4
	Diploma	39	15.8
	Bachelor	93	37.7
	Master's/Doctorate	35	14.2
Occupation	Student/University Student	55	22.3
	Civil Servant	40	16.2
	Private Sector Employee	41	16.6
	Self-employed	111	44.9
Visits	1 time	151	61.1
	2-3 times	51	20.6
	4-5 times	37	15.0
	>5 times	8	3.2
<b>Total</b>		<b>247</b>	<b>100.0</b>

This study was conducted in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) by distributing an online questionnaire using Google Forms to tourists who had visited halal tourist destinations. A total of 247 respondents met the research criteria. Table 2 showed that most respondents were female (62.8%), suggesting that halal tourism in DIY tends to attract more female tourists. This finding may also indicate a higher tendency among female tourists to develop revisit intentions and loyalty, as they are generally more attentive to aspects such as comfort, safety, and alignment with religious values, which are central

to halal tourism experiences. These factors can strengthen emotional attachment and increase the likelihood of repeat visits. In terms of age distribution, respondents were dominated by those aged <20 years (33.6%) and 31–40 years (33.2%), followed by those aged 20–30 years (19%) and >40 years (14.2%). This pattern indicates that halal tourism in DIY is in high demand among young and early adult tourists seeking religious, educational, and cultural experiences. In terms of education, most respondents were bachelor’s degree graduates (37.7%), followed by high school/vocational school graduates (32.4%), Diploma graduates (15.8%), and Master's/Doctoral degree graduates (14.2%), indicating that halal tourists in DIY have a relatively high level of literacy and are therefore more selective in assessing the quality of destinations.

By job category, the largest group was self-employed (44.9%), followed by students (22.3%), private-sector employees (16.6%), and civil servants (16.2%). These findings indicate that halal tourism in DIY attracts productive tourists with flexible time and motivation to seek travel experiences aligned with their spiritual values. The frequency of visits shows that most respondents are new visitors: 61.1% are first timers. This condition underscores the importance of improving the destination's image and tourist satisfaction as strategic factors for strengthening loyalty and encouraging repeat visits.

#### 4.2. Outer Model Evaluation

Evaluation of the outer model to ensure that each indicator can represent latent constructs validly and reliably. The three main aspects analysed are convergent validity, composite reliability, and discriminant validity. The test results in Table 3 showed that all indicators meet the required criteria. The factor loadings are above 0.63, with the highest at 0.810 for the religiosity indicator (RE3), indicating the consistency of the indicators' contributions to the measured construct.

**Table 3.** Instrument Test Results

Variable	Item	Factor Loadings	CR	ρc	AVE	Results
Religiosity	RE1	0.636	0.752	0.835	0.505	Valid & Reliable
	RE2	0.729				
	RE3	0.810				
	RE4	0.635				
	RE5	0.729				
Destination Image	CD1	0.687	0.769	0.844	0.520	Valid & Reliable
	CD2	0.707				
	CD3	0.784				
	CD4	0.703				
	CD5	0.721				
Satisfaction	KP1	0.784	0.661	0.815	0.595	Valid & Reliable
	KP2	0.778				
	KP3	0.751				
Loyalty	LO1	0.645	0.776	0.849	0.531	Valid & Reliable
	LO2	0.669				
	LO3	0.809				
	LO4	0.727				
	LO5	0.782				

In terms of reliability, Cronbach's Alpha values range from 0.661 to 0.776, while Composite Reliability values ranged from 0.815 to 0.849. Both measures exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating that all constructs in the study had strong internal consistency. In addition, the AVE values

ranging from 0.505 to 0.595 indicate that each construct adequately explains its indicators and meets the criteria for convergent validity.

Discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell–Larcker Criterion, and the results showed that the square root of AVE ( $\sqrt{AVE}$ ) values for all constructs are Religiosity (0.711), Destination Image (0.721), Satisfaction (0.771), and Loyalty (0.729) (See table 4) were higher than the correlation of each construct with other constructs. These findings confirm that each latent variable has conceptual uniqueness and does not overlap in meaning with other variables in the model. The results of the outer model evaluation confirm that the indicators used in this study have met all validity and reliability criteria. Thus, all constructs are deemed feasible for further analysis in the structural model testing stage.

**Table 4.** Fornell-Larcker Test Results

	Destination Image	Satisfaction	Loyalty	Religiosity
Destination Image	0.721			
Satisfaction	0.621	0.771		
Loyalty	0.700	0.738	0.729	
Religiosity	0.552	0.547	0.559	0.711

#### 4.3. Inner Model Evaluation

Inner-model evaluation was conducted to assess the suitability of the structural model using empirical data, based on the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) and predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ). The results of the analysis in Table 5 show that the  $R^2$  values for religiosity (0.304), Satisfaction (0.446), and loyalty (0.649) are in the moderate range, indicating adequate explanatory power for the model. Specifically, the  $R^2$  value of 0.649 for the Loyalty construct indicates that Religiosity, Destination Image, and Satisfaction explain 64.9% of the variation in tourist loyalty.

**Table 5.** Inner Model Test Results

Model	$R^2$	$Q^2$
Religiosity	0.304 (Moderate)	0.150 (Moderate)
Satisfaction	0.446 (Moderate)	0.255 (Moderate)
Loyalty	0.649 (Moderate)	0.337 (Moderate)

The  $Q^2$  values were 0.150 for religiosity, 0.255 for Satisfaction, and 0.337 for loyalty, all of which were positive and fell into the moderate category. These findings confirm that the model has sufficient predictive relevance and can realistically predict the dependent variables based on the constructs studied. The combination of  $R^2$  and  $Q^2$  values indicates that the structural model is stable and moderate, with solid predictive power, making it feasible to proceed to hypothesis testing within the PLS analysis framework.

#### 4.4. Hypothesis Test Results

After the research model meets the criteria for evaluating the outer and inner models, the next step is to test the hypotheses using SmartPLS path analysis. This test assesses the strength and direction of the relationships among latent variables in the structural model. The analysis results showed in Table 6 indicate that all hypotheses (H1–H8) have positive path coefficients with significance values  $\leq 0.05$ , so all hypotheses are accepted. The findings indicate that religiosity has a significant positive effect on loyalty ( $\beta = 0.114$ ;  $p = 0.037$ ) and Satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.294$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), thereby supporting H1 and H2.

Destination Image was also found to have a significant positive effect on loyalty ( $\beta = 0.354$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), Satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.459$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), and religiosity ( $\beta = 0.552$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), supporting H3, H4, and H5.

**Table 6.** Hypothesis Test Results

	$\beta$	T Stat	P Values	Results
Religiosity -> Loyalty	0.114	2.087	0.037	H1 accepted
Religiosity -> Satisfaction	0.294	4.949	0.000	H2 accepted
Destination Image -> Loyalty	0.354	5.388	0.000	H3 accepted
Destination Image -> Satisfaction	0.459	8.233	0.000	H4 accepted
Destination Image -> Religiosity	0.552	14.552	0.000	H5 accepted
Satisfaction -> Loyalty	0.456	7.954	0.000	H6 accepted
Religiosity -> Satisfaction -> Loyalty	0.134	4.077	0.000	H7 accepted
Destination Image -> Satisfaction -> Loyalty	0.209	5.840	0.000	H8 accepted

In addition, Satisfaction has a significant positive effect on loyalty ( $\beta = 0.456$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), supporting H6. The mediation results show that Satisfaction significantly mediates the effects of Religiosity on Loyalty ( $\beta = 0.134$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ) and of Destination Image on Loyalty ( $\beta = 0.209$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), thus H7 and H8 are also accepted. These results confirm that the structural model has strong empirical support and describes consistent, significant relationships among the variables of Religiosity, Destination Image, Satisfaction, and Loyalty in the context of halal tourism in DIY.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that religiosity has a significant positive effect on tourist loyalty, which can be interpreted through the S-O-R framework, where religiosity functions as a value-based stimulus shaping internal evaluations and behavioral responses. These results are consistent with prior studies (Mustikawati et al., 2022; Wahyoedi et al., 2021; Suhartanto & Dean, 2025), which identify religiosity as a key determinant of Muslim tourist loyalty. However, some studies report weaker or insignificant effects of religiosity, particularly in non-halal or more secular tourism contexts. This discrepancy suggests that the role of religiosity is highly context-dependent, becoming more salient in destinations like DIY where Islamic values are embedded in tourism services.

In addition, religiosity significantly influences tourist satisfaction, indicating that satisfaction in halal tourism extends beyond functional aspects to include spiritual fulfillment. This finding supports Gautam et al. (2024) and Dinh et al. (2022), who argue that religiosity enhances positive perceptions and a sense of security. Nevertheless, contrasting findings in prior research suggest that satisfaction is sometimes driven more by service quality than by religious alignment. Such inconsistencies may arise from differences in how satisfaction is conceptualized, as studies that neglect the spiritual dimension may underestimate the influence of religiosity.

Furthermore, destination image has a significant effect on both loyalty and satisfaction, reinforcing its role as a key stimulus in shaping tourist behavior. These findings are in line with Stavrianea and Kamenidou (2022), and Hariani et al. (2026) which highlight the importance of destination image in influencing satisfaction and loyalty. However, unlike conventional tourism studies that focus primarily on visual and functional attributes, this study suggests that destination image in halal tourism also incorporates cultural and spiritual compatibility. This broader conceptualization may explain why stronger effects are observed compared to previous studies from Ramseook-Munhurrun et al. (2015).

Interestingly, this study also finds that destination image significantly influences religiosity, supporting arguments by Šebova et al. (2025), Chang (2026), and Çıki and Tanrıverdi (2025) that tourism experiences can enhance spiritual awareness. This finding contrasts with studies that treat religiosity as a stable personal trait, suggesting instead that religiosity can be contextually reinforced through destination experiences. This may explain inconsistencies in prior literature that overlook the dynamic interaction between environment and individual values.

Moreover, tourist satisfaction significantly influences loyalty, supporting previous findings Zulvianti et al. (2023), Rahayu and Candra (2023), and Fajriyati et al. (2022). However, considering that a large proportion of respondents are first-time visitors, the observed loyalty may reflect attitudinal loyalty (e.g., intention to revisit and recommend) rather than actual repeat behavior. This provides a plausible explanation for inconsistent findings in prior studies where satisfaction does not always translate into behavioral loyalty.

Finally, the mediating role of satisfaction in the relationships between religiosity, destination image, and loyalty confirms its importance as a psychological mechanism linking stimulus and response. These findings are consistent with Mustikawati et al. (2022), and Ramseok-Munhurrin et al. (2015), which emphasize the mediating role of satisfaction. However, the strength of this mediation may vary depending on whether satisfaction is conceptualized as purely cognitive or as a combination of emotional and spiritual experiences, as demonstrated in this study.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that religiosity, destination image, and Satisfaction play a central role in shaping the Loyalty of Muslim tourists to halal tourist destinations in DIY. These three constructs form an integrated tourism experience framework that includes not only functional and emotional dimensions but also spiritual dimensions, which are key characteristics of Muslim tourist behaviour. The results of this study provide a theoretical contribution by strengthening the tourist behaviour model in the context of halal tourism, as well as a practical contribution to stakeholders in formulating strategies to develop competitive and sustainable halal destinations. Taking these findings into account, this study encourages strengthening sharia-based service quality, improving a consistent destination image, and providing facilities that foster deeper tourist satisfaction and loyalty.

Although this study contributes significantly to the development of halal tourism literature, several limitations warrant consideration for future research. First, the study's limited scope to the DIY region limits the generalizability of its findings, so expanding it to other regions or conducting cross-country comparisons is highly recommended. Second, a cross-sectional design does not allow tracing changes in tourist behavior over time; therefore, longitudinal studies are needed to understand the dynamics of preferences, motivations, and loyalty in greater depth. In addition, the limited focus on variables related to religiosity, destination image, and Satisfaction does not fully capture the complexity of the factors that shape tourist loyalty. Further research could include additional variables, such as service quality, trust, perceived value, and travel experiences, to develop a more comprehensive model.

Furthermore, the use of survey methods can lead to respondent-perception bias, especially for variables with psychological characteristics such as religiosity. Therefore, a mixed-methods approach or qualitative analysis can obtain more in-depth, holistic insights. In addition, the sample composition, which Muslim tourists dominate, provides an opportunity for future studies to compare Muslim and non-Muslim tourists and examine differences in perceptions of halal destinations. Considering these limitations, future research is expected to enrich theoretical and practical understanding of tourist

behaviour in the context of halal tourism and to develop models that are more adaptable to the dynamics of tourist needs and developments in the global tourism market.

### **AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS (CRediT)**

**Hana Wira Pratiwi:** Responsible for conceptualization, data collection, data analysis, and drafting the manuscript. She also contributed to literature review and interpretation of the results.

**Anas Hidayat:** Contributed to research supervision, conceptual refinement, and critical revision of the manuscript. He also provided guidance on theoretical framework and methodological approach. Both authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest regarding the research, authorship, and publication of this article.

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