



**Journal of Association of Arab Universities  
for Tourism and Hospitality (JAAUTH)**

journal homepage: <http://jaauth.journals.ekb.eg/>



## **Cultural Heritage Authenticity: Effects on Place Attachment and Revisit Intention Through the Mediating Role of Tourist Experience**

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### **ARTICLE INFO**

### **Abstract**

#### **Keywords:**

Authenticity; Tourist experience; Place attachment; Revisit intention; Egyptian Cultural heritage.

**(JAAUTH)  
Vol.24, No.1,  
(2023),  
pp.328 -352.**

Authenticity is a central aspect and prominent feature of heritage tourism. Both practitioners and researchers are interested in the authenticity of tourism experiences when it comes to heritage tourism planning, marketing and management. The paper aims to explore the intervening role of tourist experience in the link between cultural heritage authenticity and place attachment and revisit intention, in the context of Egyptian cultural heritage sites. An integrative model was developed to explore the importance of cultural heritage authenticity and its influence on place attachment and revisit intention, through the mediating role of tourist experience. Using Smart PLS 4, data collected from 389 international tourists who visited Egypt were analysed. The findings of the study highlighted that tourist experience fully mediates the relationship between cultural heritage authenticity and both place attachment and revisit intention. The results also identified the positive direct effect of cultural heritage authenticity on tourist experience. The positive direct effects of tourist experience on place attachment and revisit intention were also significant. Findings hold important implications for both the research community and destination management and marketing organizations and heritage sites. Practical implications and potential future research are also discussed.

### **1. Introduction**

Heritage tourism has been acknowledged as one of the ubiquitous forms of the tourism activity and is considered among the tourism industry's biggest and most rapidly expanding sectors (Timothy & Nyaupane, 2009). It is based on travelling mainly for learning about cultural and heritage assets of destinations (Timothy, 2011), thus depending upon their material and immaterial past as a core tourism resource (Timothy & Nyaupane, 2009) that has a promising role in alleviating poverty and pushing economic development (UNWTO, 2005). At the core of this form of tourism lies heritage, which is “our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations” (UNESCO, 2022). Heritage in its many forms draws its significance from the values, meanings, and historic

events, places, and symbols of the past. In heritage tourism, tourists can experience the past through visiting and engaging with resources that embody its stories, meanings and values in an authentic way (Hargrove, 2002), as authenticity plays a strong role in interpreting and presenting the heritage asset (Li et al., 2016) and implicitly manifests its meaning, expressing “creativity, authorship, and identity” (Jokilehto, 2019: 69). Such unique travel experiences are sought by large numbers of people who want to enjoy education, entertainment, and authenticity (Garrod & Fyall, 2001).

Authenticity is accordingly a central aspect and prominent feature of heritage tourism (Lee et al., 2016). Both practitioners and researchers are interested in the authenticity of tourism experiences when it comes to heritage tourism planning, marketing and management (Buchmann et al., 2010). Heritage tourists are largely motivated by the authenticity of heritage resources to engage in such authentic experiences (Zhou et al., 2022; Park et al., 2019; Chen & Chen, 2010). They normally place emphasis on the genuineness of their experiences, making sure that this is the exact object or the true place which witnessed the past historic incidents (MacCannell, 2000). The quest for authenticity is even regarded as one of the principal goals of heritage tourism (Park et al., 2019) and a strong reaction to the inauthenticity that dominates in modern society (Wang, 2000). MacCannell (1973) even regarded modern tourists' search for authenticity as a sort of pilgrimage, comparing it to people's attraction to the sacred in primitive cultures. They are motivated, he argues, by the inauthenticity and isolation that characterize modernity.

Although defining the concept is still uneasy and problematic with no consensus among scholars (Wood, 2020; Li et al., 2016), the definitions of authenticity traditionally centred on such meanings as being true, genuine, or real (Waitt, 2000). Cohen (1988), for example, understands authenticity in a framework of true/false perception, whereas Waitt (2000) views it through feelings of being historically linked to the past. As for Steiner and Reisinger (2006), being authentic includes being original and unquestionable. The concept, which first appeared in settings of museum collections in Europe with respect to acquiring objects from foreign cultures (Cohen, 1988), reflects a distinction between what is original or pure and what is a copy or impure according to an imbedded quality judgement (Olsen, 2002). Being an authentic object is thought to refer to a specific point in the past, and so authenticity is assessed according to the degree to which the object's structure keeps unchanged from that specific point (Pocock, 2006).

Since its introduction into tourism social sciences through MacCannell's (1973) pioneering work, authenticity has become a research agenda drawing the attention of many scholars and producing a growing body of literature. Such attention has been paid to investigating both authentic objects and authentic experiences of heritage (Wood, 2020). Researching authenticity has led to the distinction between three forms of it: objective authenticity (MacCannell, 1973), constructive authenticity (Cohen, 1988), and existential authenticity (Wang, 1999). While the first two forms are based on tourism objects, the third is based on tourism subjects. MacCannell viewed authenticity as a palpable value that already characterises an object whereas others (Mura, 2015; Xie & Wall, 2002; Moscardo & Pearce, 1999; Cohen, 1988) regarded it instead as an assessment or perception individually constructed towards the object and is thus changing and contextual.

The current study adopts the objective perspective based on the historicalness and originality of heritage resources, considering authenticity as an attribute inherent into such resources and a quality existing external to the viewer (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010). The vital role of authenticity has long been acknowledged though considered still unstable (Wall & Xie, 2005). It has grown as a matter of interest with respect to managing heritage tourism

destinations and tourist behaviour (Zhou et al., 2015). Both researchers and practitioners are interested in the authenticity of attractions, sites, and experiences when it comes to the planning, marketing, and managing of heritage tourism (Buchmann et al., 2010). As demonstrated by Wang (2000), one of the three issues mainly focused by sociologists with regard to authenticity in tourism is the consequences of the quest for authenticity.

Tourist Experience hasn't got much attention as a general notion in the literature on the subject in recent years, especially against the backdrop of heritage and cultural tourism. The existing literature does not sufficiently address the experience of heritage tourists or its structure. Furthermore, as Chen and Rahman (2018) pointed out, little is known about the factors that might affect the tourist experience in the context of heritage tourism. This underlines the importance of conducting more research to gain a deeper understanding of heritage tourists' experiences and to increase knowledge of the tourist experience in a heritage tourism context (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021).

Hence, important questions arise, namely: to what extent does cultural heritage authenticity affect tourist experience, place attachment, and revisit intention? And how can tourist experience intervene in such a relationship? Drawing on the previous studies, which have tackled the impact of authenticity and tourist experience, and to address these gaps in the literature, the present research attempts to answer these two questions by developing and empirically examining an integrated model of the influence of cultural heritage authenticity on place attachment and revisit intention. In addition, the study tests the mediating effect of tourist experience in such interrelationships. It aims to investigate tourist experience as a mediator in boosting behavioural intentions because of the experiential aspect of heritage tourism (Richards, 2018). The current study is interested in the authenticity of Egyptian cultural heritage and its consequences with regard to tourists' reaction and behaviour. Accordingly, it is reasonable to shed light on the Egyptian destination as a unique setting for cultural heritage tourism and for applying the current study.

## **2. Egyptian Cultural Heritage**

The current study was implemented in Egypt, one of the most well-known cultural heritage destinations of the world. A nation with a deep-rooted civilisation that goes back in history to many thousands of years, Egypt is a unique country that is rich with layers of cultural heritage resources, which were left by the consecutive periods of the Egyptians' long history. Of particular importance is the Pharaonic period, which has fascinated many people from different parts of the globe (Ikram, 2011). The place of the only remaining of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world has been attracting tourists from all over the world to see the Great Pyramids of Giza and the vast amount of other monuments scattered on almost the whole area of the country, from north to south and from east to west.

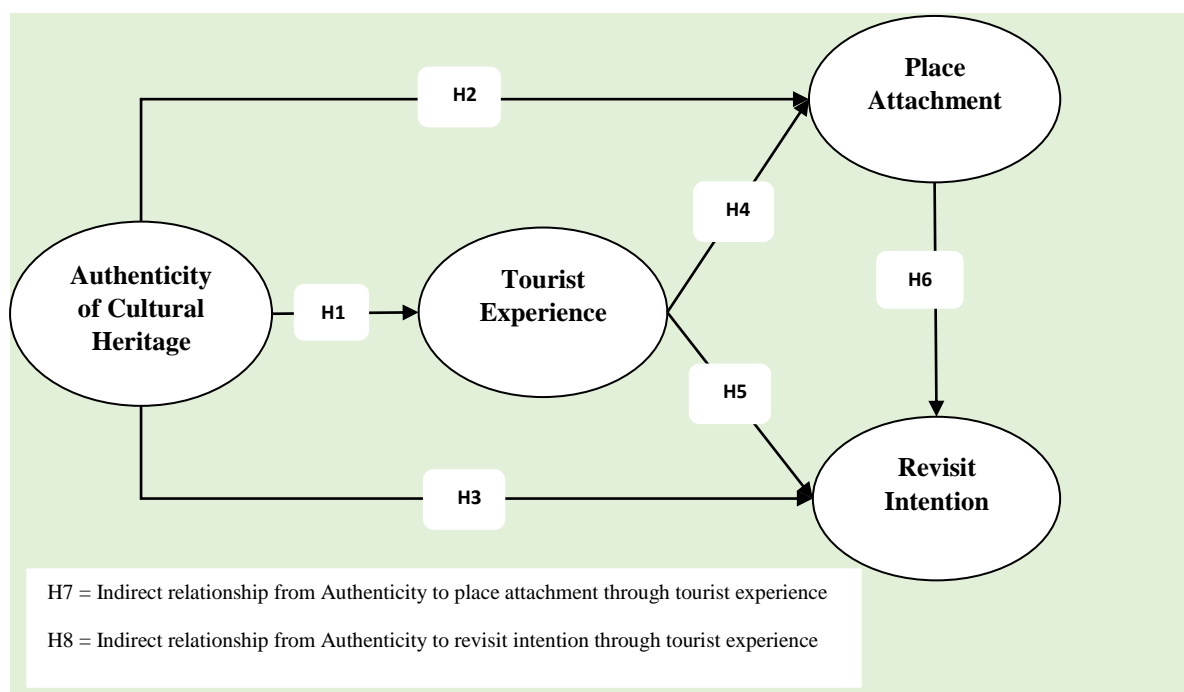
Actually, numerous examples of Egyptian cultural heritage objects are existing in different parts of the world, represented in objects that enrich museum collections and even decorate the major squares (Ikram, 2011). However, huge numbers of tourists have been travelling to Egypt to engage in an authentic experience of the Egyptian cultural heritage. Authenticity plays a prominent role in this influx of tourists. The experience of visiting authentic places, where the ancient Egyptians lived and established their renowned civilisation, and engaging with genuine objects, which were tools and witnesses of such civilisation, can be a landmark in visitors' lives, transferring them many thousand years back in time. They may be so fascinated and filled with wonder that they ask themselves whether this is really, for example, the throne upon which king Tutankhamun used to sit, or the true tomb where queen Nefertari was buried, or even an original pot, in which an ancient Egyptian family had their meals

thousands of years ago. This is much likely to happen when experiencing examples of Egypt's cultural heritage in an authentic experience on its land.

### 3. Theoretical background and hypotheses development

#### 3.1. Authenticity of cultural heritage and tourist experience

Experience is a person's internal condition that results of their encounter with something which they engage in or go through. The tourist experience is hence such condition stimulated during a trip or in a holiday atmosphere. It is actually a core attribute of tourism, which has made available for many modern people enjoying refreshing and memorable experiences away from the stress and routine of modern life (Cohen, 2000). The tourist experience has been much tackled in the tourism literature since Cohen's (1988) pioneering work, in which he classified tourists in terms of the degree of seeking authenticity into 'existential', 'experiential', and 'recreational' tourists. However, heritage tourists' experiences have not been sufficiently investigated, and they require further investigation to have a better understanding of them since improving them is crucial to have a competitive advantage in the large tourism market (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021).



**Fig.1. Theoretical framework and hypotheses**

Heritage tourism is viewed as a sort of experiential consumption (Richards, 2018; Garrod & Fyall, 2001) and handling the tourist experience in heritage tourism context usually comes across the pertinent issue of authenticity that leads to an experience which is genuine and authentic (Yeoman et al., 2007; MacCannell, 2000). Authenticity is frequently connected to tourist objects, attractions, and experiences. Tourists are seeking what is genuine and authentic as a reaction to the everyday life that is packed with bogus and artificial things (Rickly-Boyd, 2012), thus enhancing this trend as a fundamental feature of modernity culture (Mura, 2015). Experiencing heritage and having authentic experience has thus become one of the top motivations to travel (Lu et al., 2015; Frisvoll, 2013). Authenticity is thought to correlate with the tourist experience (Zatori et al., 2018). Some empirical studies referred to a positive relationship between authenticity and tourist experience evaluated in the post-consumption phase (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021; Coudounaris & Sthapit, 2017; Ramkissoon

& Uysal, 2010). Engaging with an authentic object or setting can facilitate an experience of direct link to and true feeling of the past (Wood, 2020). Heritage assets can additionally signalise the tourist experience because they can act as expressive emblems that summarise a specific place or destination (Pocock, 2006) such as the Giza pyramids that perfectly symbolise Egypt. It is also contended that authenticity is an effective factor of a memorable tourism experience (Kesgin et al., 2021; Domínguez-Quintero et al., 2020) and essential component of a meaningful experience, especially when impressively presenting the heritage resource's physical form and connections to culturally and historically important matters (Farrelly et al., 2019). Storytelling of authentic accounts and themes connected to such resources can enhance tourist experience (Mossberg, 2007).

Heritage tourism experience's quality is believed to be enhanced by authenticity (Lu et al., 2015; Mura, 2015), and it is therefore considered to be an influential antecedent of tourist experience and satisfaction (Chen & Chen, 2010; Ramkissoon & Uysal, 2010). Many studies investigated the relationship between authenticity and tourist satisfaction, which is argued to be a good indicator of the experience. Chhabra et al. (2003) examined the role of authenticity, even as just perceived by tourists, as a measure of product quality and as an effective factor of tourist satisfaction. In this vein, authenticity is believed by many tourists to make their experience culturally and educationally valid. Moreover, Park et al. (2019) concluded that authenticity can significantly contribute to and affect heritage tourists' satisfaction. It is likewise thought to be influencing tourists' perceived value and general valuation of the experience (Chen & Chen, 2010). Based on the above-discussed literature, the following hypothesis is therefore proposed:

***H1. Authenticity of cultural heritage has a positive effect on tourist experience.***

### ***3.2. Authenticity of cultural heritage and place attachment***

The concept of place attachment is used to define a relationship of particular emotional connection or identification with a given place that represents a favourable consequence of the interaction between persons and places (Lewicka, 2010; Eisenhauer et al., 2000). During such interaction process, people develop a sort of attachment towards these places in different degrees of strength, though it may be in an unconscious way (Giuliani, 2003). The cognitive appraisal theory explicates such process by suggesting that persons first evaluate the relevance and aptness of the environment to create a personal meaning and then develop attachment emotions. Accordingly, tourists may grow attached to a destination that provides a satisfying experience, meets their personal aims, or creates meanings relevant to them (Zhou et al., 2022). Attention to place attachment in the tourism context has been increasing, thus leading to a significant body of literature (Allan, 2016). This represents a part of the reaction to the fast-paced changes of globalization and homogenization of cultures as well as the pressing environmental problems (Lewicka, 2010; Scannell & Gifford, 2010).

Much of the literature regarded place attachment as comprising two dimensions: place dependence and place identity (Lin & Lockwood, 2014). Such differentiation views the former as expressing a person's functional attachment to a place (Gu & Ryan, 2008), while the latter is representing emotional attachment (Lewicka, 2011). Authenticity is argued to be a significant antecedent of place attachment with a high correlation between them (Park et al., 2019; Jiang et al., 2017). Experiencing authentic heritage resources, the authenticity-generated satisfaction may lead to tourists' place attachment (Belhassen et al., 2008). From another side, authentic heritage resources' historical associations and connections to the past give them an influential power through transferring visitors to the relevant context (DeLyser, 1999), showing them a material certification of ideas and memories, and making them

capable of 'touching the past' (UNESCO, 1994 in Farrelly et al., 2019: 3). Such tangibility creates a meaningful, expressive, and emotionally influential environment that can arguably result in place attachment. This effect can be further augmented by redolent storytelling of relevant stories to touch imaginings and emotions (Ross et al., 2017; Chronis, 2005). Moreover, heritage resources can disseminate the past's righteous thoughts and attributes (Bruner, 1994), which many people long for in today's unsatisfying life, and therefore increases the potentiality of place attachment. Supported by the above-discussed literature, the following hypothesis is therefore proposed:

*H2. Authenticity of cultural heritage has a positive effect on place attachment.*

### **3.3. Authenticity of cultural heritage and revisit intention**

The concept of revisit intention refers to a person's willingness and gameness to make a repeat visit to a given destination (Prayag, 2009). It is regarded a significant form of behavioural intentions, which reflect a person's perceptions and expectations about what they expect to do concerning a specific matter (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021). Revisit intention has been much studied as a key aspect of tourist loyalty (Meleddu et al., 2015) since action or behavioural loyalty is practically difficult to measure (Yang & Peterson, 2004). Destination loyalty is often embodied in tourists' willingness to revisit a destination beside their readiness to recommend it to others (Chen & Tsai, 2007), and getting tourists to revisit heritage tourism destinations is vital for achieving their sustainable development (Ali et al., 2016).

One of the revisit intention's antecedents that are thought to develop tourists' willingness to revisit a destination is authenticity. As demonstrated by Zhou et al. (2022), little attention has been given to the effect of authenticity on revisit intention in heritage tourism contexts. Consequently, revisit intention has seldom been studied with respect to its connection to authenticity (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010). The little body of research on this point has alluded to some relatedness between the two concepts. According to Cognitive Appraisal Theory, Zhou et al. (2022) investigated the relationship between authenticity and revisit intention with the mediating role of memorable tourism experiences and place attachment. They concluded that authenticity has a direct and indirect influence on revisit intention. Significant indirect effects through memorable tourism experiences were also pointed out by Rasoolimanesh et al.'s (2021) work. In their important study Kolar and Zabkar (2010) studied authenticity as a mediating concept between cultural motivation and loyalty in cultural heritage tourism contexts. They verified the relatedness between authenticity and tourist loyalty, and concluded that different types of authenticity, namely objective, constructive, and existential authenticity, influence loyalty.

Despite such suggestions of the connection between authenticity and revisit intention, the relationship between both is not consistent. In contrast with Kolar and Zabkar's (2010) conclusions, some studies (e.g., Zhou et al., 2013) argued that only objective and constructive authenticity have effect on revisit intention whereas existential authenticity does not. In another study, where the relationship was examined in heritage tourism context through the mediating role of tourist satisfaction, Park et al. (2019) stated that constructive and existential authenticity significantly affect revisit intention via satisfaction whereas objective authenticity does not. Authenticity was also studied by Shen et al. (2014) as a key mediating construct between attitude and loyalty, and they indicated an important effect of existential authenticity on tourist loyalty to world cultural heritage sites. Therefore, the extant knowledge on the relationship between authenticity and revisit intention remains insufficient and further research is needed to make it clearer. In line with the above discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H3. Authenticity of cultural heritage has a positive effect on revisit intention.**

### **3.4. Tourist experience and place attachment**

The connection between tourism experience and place attachment was suggested in a number of previous studies. Different authors have pointed out that the two concepts are directly and indirectly related. Such relationship between experience in a given place and attachment to that place has strong roots in the literature of environmental psychology and other environment-related disciplines (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001). In the tourism literature, there are some studies, as indicates Loureiro (2014), which reported a direct correlation between tourism experience and destination attachment. Place attachment can result of a thorough experience that comprises emotional, cognitive, and psychological incentives and enables self-expression and shared awareness (Tsai, 2012).

Buonincontri et al. (2017) developed a conceptual framework for tourism experiences at cultural heritage sites that suggests that heritage experience, comprising both cognitive and affective facets, can have an effect on visitors' place attachment. An evidence of that connection was found by Williams et al. (1992) in their study of attachment to some US wilderness destinations. Allan (2016) also argued for such relationship in his study applied to a desert tourism destination, where he highlighted the need for further research in different settings and contexts. The study of Suntikul and Jachna (2016) also demonstrated significant correlations in varying degrees between place attachment's dimensions, i.e., place identity and place dependence, and the experience and its perceived value. Attachment to a destination is not limited to the physical features of the place, or what is termed as physical attachment, but it extends to the place's social aspects that is termed as social attachment (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001).

It is thought that the experience leads first to physical attachment to the setting and it is gradually followed by attachment to its social features (Eisenhauer et al., 2000). Consequently, as suggests Loureiro (2014), such accretion of layers of favourable emotions followed by good memories possibly will enhance the attachment to that place more than others. Of particular importance in the tourism experience literature is the 'memorable tourism experience' MTE. A particular attention has been paid to such tourism experience since Pizam (2010) called for the necessity of creating memorable experiences founded not on the quality of facilities or services, but on the quality of the experience. MTE is defined as an experience that is remembered and recalled in a positive way after it has happened (Kim et al., 2012), and it has thus been strongly related to place attachment and future behavioural intentions.

Knowing how positive feelings form in tourists' selves is useful to build on for creating memorable tourism experiences (Seyfi et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2018) that can facilitate place attachment since people tend to remember positive experiences more easily than negative ones (Kim et al., 2012). Destination attachment is regarded as a prominent outcome variable of MTE (Vada et al., 2019). As evidenced by Tsai (2016), such positive experiences help tourists form favourable unforgettable memories, which reinforce their attachment to the destination's attractions. The relationship between the economy experience and both place attachment and behavioural intentions through emotions and memories was empirically investigated by Loureiro (2014), who concluded that positive emotions and memory play a mediating role in the indirect effect of the economy experience on place attachment. Based on the above-discussed literature, the following hypothesis is therefore proposed:

**H4. Tourist experience has a positive effect on place attachment.**

### **3.5. Tourist experience and revisit intention**

Tourist experience has grown an essential point of interest in the industry of cultural heritage tourism, particularly in its marketing, because it is the main foundation of tourists' satisfaction and the subsequent favourable outcomes (Chen & Chen, 2010a), and a strong antecedent of tourists' behavioural intentions (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Tourists' perceptions of the experience are significantly influential with regard to destinations. They are positively connected to loyalty to heritage destinations (Poria et al., 2003), particularly their revisit intention, as it is believed that satisfied tourists are likely to return to the same destination in the future (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000). Many research studies pointed out that tourist loyalty, including revisit intention, could be a prominent outcome of a tourist experience that achieves such impacts on the part of the tourist as satisfaction, positive emotions, and memories (Loureiro, 2014; Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013).

Engaging in satisfying experiences has a strong effect on tourists' intentions to return to the related destination (Lee & Hsu, 2013). Likewise, Park et al. (2019) concluded that a satisfying experience of authenticity in a heritage tourism context has a significant effect on tourists' revisit intention. Quality of the experience is viewed to directly affect and is even regarded as the best or most effective antecedent of tourists' behavioural intentions (Chang et al., 2014; Petrick, 2004). Some scholars (Wu & Li, 2017) argue that tourists are expected to have strong intentions to revisit the same cultural heritage attraction if they positively perceive the quality of their experiences. The experiential quality, they further elucidate, positively affects tourists' revisit intention through experiential satisfaction. In a similar vein, a quality experience in heritage tourism context has been concluded to indirectly influence tourists' behavioural intentions through the mediating effects of perceived value and satisfaction (Chen & Chen, 2010a).

Many studies explained the influence of positive experiences on the likelihood of repeating visits to given destinations through the mediating effect of produced positive emotions and memories (Tsai, 2016; Loureiro, 2014; Ramkissoon et al., 2013; Martin, 2010). Based on the aforementioned, an improved understanding of the relationship between the tourist experience at heritage destinations and revisit intention is required to make best use of it. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is therefore proposed:

***H5. Tourist experience has a positive effect on revisit intention***

### **3.6. Place attachment and revisit intention**

As pointed out by Yuksel et al. (2010), limited research has been directed to investigating the effect of emotional bonds and meanings visitors associate with the places they visit on their behavioural intentions including their intention to return to such places. The connection between place attachment and the intention to revisit a destination has been considered by some studies of the tourism literature. In a study applied to a skiing resort destination, Alexandris et al. (2006) found that place attachment is a significant predictor of tourist loyalty mainly represented in revisiting the destination. The level and nature of attachment to a destination were concluded to have a positive effect on tourists' loyalty intentions towards that destination, which are embodied in its revisit intentions.

In addition to this direct effect, place attachment was also found to indirectly influence loyalty intentions through tourists' satisfaction with the experience (Yuksel et al., 2010). The feeling of attachment, resulting of various forms of heritage destination consumptions, is contended to positively influence destination loyalty (Chen et al., 2016). A holistic tourist experience, which comprises features enhancing different aspects of the tourist's personality,



can be a good foundation fostering place attachment that is in turn able to be a strong motivator of revisiting the destination (Tsai, 2012). Place attachment was regarded as a favourable attitude underlying repeat visitation and the core antecedent of real tourist loyalty (George & George, 2004). According to George and George (2004), the emotional bond of attachment to a particular destination resulting of satisfactory tourism experiences might lead to repeat visitations and a kind of patronisation of that destination. In this framework, they studied place attachment as mediating the effect of past visits on revisit intention. In a similar vein, place attachment was found to affect tourists' intention to revisit heritage tourism destinations while mediating the relationship between authenticity and revisit intention (Zhou et al., 2022). As a result, a visitor attached to a destination is more likely to revisit it and place attachment hence appears as a significant element in predicting revisit intention. Consequently, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H6.** *Place attachment has a positive effect on revisit intention*

### **3.7. The mediating role of tourist experience between authenticity and both place attachment and revisit intention**

Tourist experience probably can play a mediating role in the relationship between authenticity on one hand and place attachment or revisit intention on the other. As contends MacCannell (1973), the authenticity of tourist experience and its activities leads tourists, who are contemporarily in search of authenticity, to developing bonds of connection with and positive emotional reactions towards tourist destinations. According to Wang et al. (2022), tourists' involvement in a real or genuine experience can strongly enhance the attractiveness of the destination and its tourist product. They investigated the perception of authenticity by tourists in their experience of a rural tourism destination and how it influences their evaluation of the experience and the consequent outcomes.

They found that authentic experience, together with involvement, has a significantly positive effect on place attachment. In addition, a positive effect of authentic experience on attachment to cultural tourism destinations was evidenced by Lin and Hsu's (2022) study. There is some evidence for a mediating role played by tourist experience in the relationship between destination-related authenticity and the intention to revisit the destination. Engaging in a tourism experience that is perceived as real and authentic can induce local rural-cultural tourists to repeat their visits to rural settings rich with historical and architectural heritage (Royo-Vela, 2009). In their study applied to a heritage city in Iran, Rasoolimanesh et al. (2021) found an evidence for significant indirect effects of cultural heritage authenticity on tourists' revisit intention through memorable tourism experiences.

A similar mediating role of memorable tourism experiences, together with place attachment, was concluded in this relationship by Zhou et al.'s (2022) study of a Chinese world heritage site. The influence of authenticity perceived by tourists on behavioural intentions, including the intention to revisit, is hence predictable through the effect of experience quality, which mediates such relationship (Li et al., 2016). Based on the above-discussed literature, the following hypotheses are therefore proposed:

**H7.** *Tourist experience mediates the link between authenticity of cultural heritage and place attachment*

**H8.** *Tourist experience mediates the link between authenticity of cultural heritage and revisit intention.*

#### 4. Methodology

##### 4.1 Sample and data collection

Egypt records 46% increase in number of tourists in 2022. It received 11.7 million tourists in 2022, up from eight million in 2021, marking a 46.2 percent increase (Ahram Online, 2023). The study sample consisted of international tourists coming to Egypt, especially those interested in cultural and heritage tourism. Three research assistants collected data face-to-face with international tourists at the tourist places in Egypt. Before distributing the questionnaire, tourists were first asked about their previous visits to Egyptian heritage sites and the number of times they visited. The questionnaire was distributed to tourists who visited the Egyptian cultural heritage sites at least once. A purposive sampling procedure identified potential respondents. Only international tourists who interested in cultural and heritage tourism were invited to participate in the study. Similar to previous studies (e.g., Hui et al., 2007), to eliminate the common method bias, the questionnaire was distributed at different tourist destinations in Egypt and at different times throughout the day (e.g., morning, afternoon and evening). The data collection took place between November 2022 and February 2023. In total, 432 copies were collected, of which 389 were usable with a response rate 90% and 43 were deemed invalid.

Overall, as can be seen from Table 1, the majority of respondents (37.7%) was in the age category 31-40 years old, followed by more than 50 years old (32.8%). As for their gender, a significantly higher proportion of males were recorded (56.1%) and held a doctorate degree (38.9%) and the majority of them are married (74.9%). In terms of nationalities, the main groups were Europe (48.4%) most of them are from England, Germany and Italy; followed by Africa and Middle East (29%) most of them are from Arabs. The sample had a high proportion of 2-5 times visitors to Egypt (53.2%), followed by on times (33.7%). The respondents travelled with a family (36.6%), friends (24.4%), alone (17.2%), or couple (12%).

Finally, a post-hoc test applying Harman's one-factor was used to look for common method bias. In this, the first factor didn't provide the critical 50%. As a result, no significant signs of common method bias were found (Chin et al., 2012).

Table 1

Sample's characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency (n = 389)	%	Characteristics	Frequency (n = 369)	%
<b>Number of visits</b>			<b>Age</b>		
<i>One time</i>	131	33.7	<i>Less than 18 years</i>	6	1.5
<i>2-5 times</i>	207	53.2	<i>18-30 Years</i>	22	5.9
<i>More than 5 times</i>	51	13.1	<i>31- 40 Years</i>	147	37.7
<b>Gender</b>			<i>41- 50 Years</i>	128	32.8
<i>Male</i>	218	56.1	<i>More than 50 Years</i>	86	22.1
<i>Female</i>	171	43.9	<b>Educational level</b>		
<b>Nationality</b>			<i>Bachelor's degree</i>	122	31.3
<i>Africa &amp; Middle East</i>	113	29	<i>Diploma</i>	9	2.3
<i>Europe</i>	188	48.4	<i>Master's Degree</i>	104	26.8
<i>Asia</i>	47	12	<i>Doctorate Degree</i>	151	38.9
<i>America</i>	28	7.2	<i>Others</i>	3	0.7
<i>Others</i>	13	3.4			

<b>Marital status</b>			<b>Travel group</b>		
<i>Single</i>	75	19.3	<i>Family</i>	142	36.6
<i>Married</i>	291	74.9	<i>Friends</i>	95	24.4
<i>Widowed</i>	9	2.3	<i>Work group</i>	38	9.8
<i>Divorced</i>	5	1.2	<i>Couple</i>	47	12
<i>Separated</i>	9	2.3	<i>Alone</i>	67	17.2

#### 4.2 Measures

The questionnaire for this study was developed on the basis of previous studies. The instruments for the measurement of authenticity were assessed with a seven-item scale developed from Genc and Genc (2023). Whereas place attachment (5 items) was extracted from Prayag and Ryan (2012). Measures for tourist experience (4 items) were adapted from Allan (2016) and items for revisit intention (3 items) were from Rasoolimanesh et al. (2021). All of these items were assessed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”.

### 5. Results

To test the hypotheses, the study used SmartPLS 4 (v. 4.0.9.5) to apply a regression-based partial least squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). For three main reasons, PLS-SEM is the recommended approach. First, when the analysis is concerned with testing a theoretical framework (Hair et al., 2019). The present paper is an initial attempt to investigate the role of authenticity of cultural heritage in Egypt. The paper further develops this theoretical concept by linking Authenticity of cultural heritage to tourist experience, place attachment, and revisit intention, hence involving theory development. Second, PLS-SEM is the preferred prediction method (Evermann & Tate, 2016). By evaluating the whole variance of the observed indicators rather than only the correlations between the indicators, the variance-based PLS-SEM approach, in contrast to covariance-based SEM, primarily focuses on explaining the variance in the dependent variable (Sarstedt et al., 2016). Therefore, PLS-SEM is a causal-predictive approach to SEM that stresses prediction in estimating statistical models whose structures are intended to provide causal explanations (Sarstedt et al., 2017). Third, without imposing distributional assumptions on the data, the PLS approach is particularly well suited for complicated models with several constructs, indicator variables, and structural paths (Hair et al., 2019). Four structures, each containing a number of items, are included in the suggested integrative model. Because of its complexity, PLS-SEM is more appropriate in this situation.

The PLS-SEM does not make any assumptions about normality and comprises the evaluation of two independent models, namely the outer (also known as the measurement model) and the inner (also known as the structural model). Briefly, the former emphasizes the connections among the constructs and their indicators, whereas the latter concentrates on the links between the constructs (Jarvis et al., 2003). the following section evaluates these two models.

#### 5.1 Measurement Model

In order to examine and verify the reliability and validity of all constructs, a measurement model must first be evaluated. The outer loadings of the associated items for each construct should be greater than 0.7, the composite reliability (CR), and the average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct should be greater than 0.7, and 0.5, respectively, to assess the reliability and convergent validity of constructs (Hair et al., 2019). All constructs used in this study have good reliability and convergent validity, as shown in Table 2.

Two conservative approaches -the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio- have been used to establish discriminant validity. The square root of AVE of each construct should be greater than the correlation with any other constructs to demonstrate discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, whereas the HTMT value for each construct should be lower than either 0.85 or 0.9 (Ali et al., 2018). Tables 3 and 4 show the acceptable discriminant validity for all constructs in this study.

Table 2

Convergent validity (Composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha, AVE)

Constructs	Items	Factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha (CA)	Composite reliability (CR)	AVE
<b>Authenticity (AU)</b>	AU1	0.715	<b>0.900</b>	<b>0.921</b>	<b>0.627</b>
	AU2	0.822			
	AU3	0.766			
	AU4	0.701			
	AU5	0.801			
	AU6	0.908			
	AU7	0.812			
<b>Tourist Experience (EXP)</b>	EXP1	0.726	<b>0.830</b>	<b>0.888</b>	<b>0.665</b>
	EXP2	0.875			
	EXP3	0.836			
	EXP4	0.818			
<b>Place Attachment (PA)</b>	PA1	0.776	<b>0.863</b>	<b>0.903</b>	<b>0.652</b>
	PA2	0.715			
	PA3	0.922			
	PA4	0.893			
	PA5	0.706			
<b>Revisit Intention (REV)</b>	REV1	0.822	<b>0.753</b>	<b>0.859</b>	<b>0.670</b>
	REV2	0.772			
	REV3	0.860			

Note: See Appendix 1 for the full name of items.

Table 3:Discriminant Validity using Fornell-Larcker criterion (Squared roots of AVE)

Constructs	AU	EXP	PA	REV
<b>AU</b>	<b>0.792</b>			
<b>EXP</b>	0.768	<b>0.815</b>		
<b>PA</b>	0.529	0.656	<b>0.808</b>	
<b>REV</b>	0.643	0.746	0.539	<b>0.819</b>

Boldface values show the square roots of AVE

Note: AU = Authenticity, EXP = Tourist Experience, PA = Place Attachment, REV = Revisit Intention

Table 4: Discriminant Validity using Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio

Constructs	AU	EXP	PA	REV
AU				
EXP	0.829			
PA	0.585	0.766		
REV	0.762	0.802	0.668	

Note: AU = Authenticity, EXP = Tourist Experience, PA = Place Attachment, REV = Revisit Intention

### 5.2 Structural Model

All of the study's constructs were found to be valid and reliable after the measurement model was evaluated. As a result, the study moves on to the structural model's investigation. The path coefficients ( $\beta$ ) and p-values of the research model are presented in Table 5 and Fig. 2.

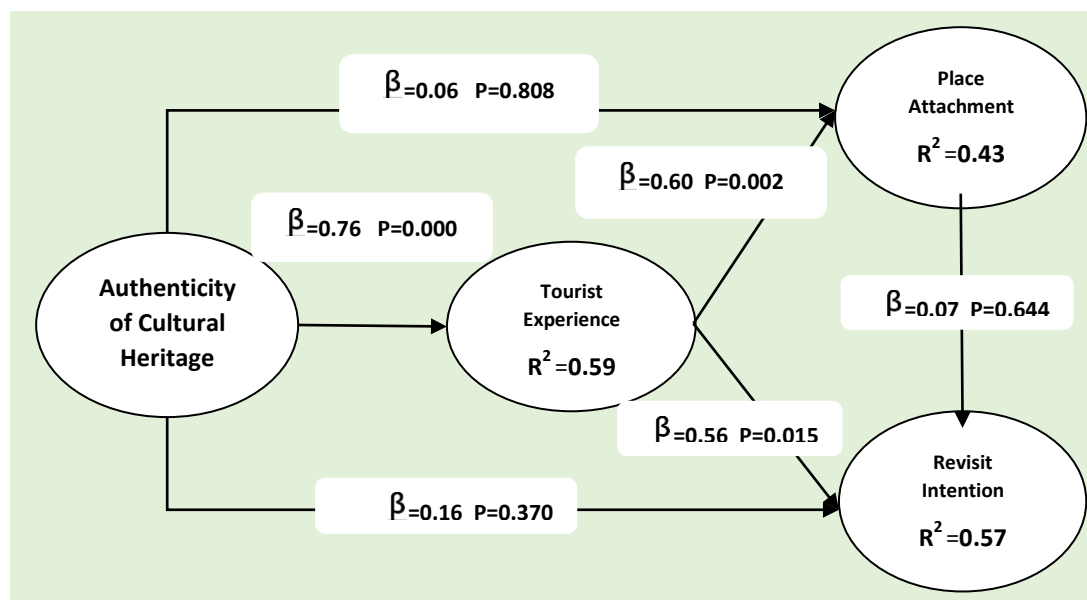


Fig. 2. Path coefficient and p value

The results show the positive and strong effects of authenticity of cultural heritage on tourist experience ( $\beta = 0.768$ , p-value  $< 0.000$ ). Additionally, the results demonstrate the significant and positive effects of tourist experience on place attachment ( $\beta = 0.608$ , p-value  $< 0.002$ ), and revisit intention ( $\beta = 0.567$ , p-value  $< 0.015$ ). As a result, H1, H4, and H5 are accepted. In contrast, authenticity of cultural heritage had no significant influence on place attachment ( $\beta = 0.062$ , p-value  $< 0.808$ ) and revisit intention ( $\beta = 0.166$ , p-value  $< 0.370$ ). As well as, place attachment had no significant influence on revisit intention ( $\beta = 0.079$ , p-value  $< 0.644$ ). Hence, H2, H3, and H6 are rejected. Finally, it can be concluded that the authenticity of culture heritage explained 59% of the tourist experience. Moreover, the tourist experience explained 43% of the place attachment and 57% of revisit intention.

A mediation analysis was applied to uncover the mediating role of the tourist experience in the link between authenticity of cultural heritage and place attachment and revisit intention (see table 6). We used a bootstrapping method for investigating the indirect effect of prospective factors (Carey, 2004), as 5000-resample bootstrapping was used to assess these indirect effects. The result has revealed that tourist experience fully mediates the link

between authenticity and place attachment ( $\beta = 0.467$ , p-value  $< 0.011$ ). The result has revealed that tourist experience fully mediates the link between authenticity of cultural heritage and revisit intention ( $\beta = 0.370$ , p-value  $< 0.002$ ). Finally, Table 7 summarizes the hypothesis testing in this study.

Table 5

Path coefficient (Results of direct effects)

Path	$\beta$	SD	t	P values
<b>H1. AU -&gt; EXP</b>	0.768	0.120	6.408	0.000
<b>H2. AU -&gt; PA</b>	0.062	0.255	0.243	0.808
<b>H3. AU -&gt; REV</b>	0.166	0.185	0.897	0.370
<b>H4. EXP -&gt; PA</b>	0.608	0.192	3.168	0.002
<b>H.5 EXP -&gt; REV</b>	0.567	0.232	2.443	0.015
<b>H6. PA -&gt; REV</b>	0.079	0.171	0.462	0.644

Note: AU = Authenticity, EXP = Tourist Experience, PA = Place Attachment, REV = Revisit Intention

Table 6: Indirect effects results

Paths	Direct effect	Significance	Indirect effect via tourist experience	Significance	Confidence intervals		Outcome
		P value		P value	2.5%	97.5%	
<b>Authenticity on place attachment</b>	0.062	<b>0.808</b>	0.467	<b>0.011</b>	0.17	0.907	<b>Full Mediation at 5%</b>
<b>Authenticity on revisit intention</b>	0.166	<b>0.370</b>	0.478	<b>0.002</b>	0.15	0.762	<b>Full Mediation at 5%</b>

Table 7

Summary of hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Test
H1. Authenticity of cultural heritage has a positive effect on tourist experience.	Accepted
H2. Authenticity of cultural heritage has a positive effect on place attachment.	Rejected
H3. Authenticity of cultural heritage has a positive effect on revisit intention	Rejected
H4. Tourist experience has a positive effect on place attachment	Accepted
H5. Tourist experience has a positive effect on revisit intention	Accepted
H6. Place attachment has a positive effect on revisit intention	Rejected
H7. Tourist experience mediates the link between authenticity of cultural heritage and place attachment	Accepted
H8. Tourist experience mediates the link between authenticity of cultural heritage and revisit intention	Accepted

## 6. Discussion and conclusion

The aim of this study is to examine the influence of cultural heritage authenticity on place attachment and revisit intention, through the intervening role of tourist experience. This study chose Egypt as the research site, due to Egypt's rich cultural heritage that extends back thousands of years, to explore how consumers of cultural heritage authenticity are eventually attached to the destination. Taking tourist experience as the logical starting point, the current study developed and tested an integrative model to examine the connections between authenticity, tourist experience, place attachment, and revisit intention and the mediating effect of tourist experience on the relationship between authenticity of cultural heritage and place attachment, as well as revisit intention. To fulfil the research objectives, a quantitative approach was used in this study, with a questionnaire used to collect data from tourists who visited Egypt, especially those interested in cultural and heritage tourism (N=389). Overall, the findings support the proposed model and indicate that the positive influence of the authenticity of cultural heritage on tourist experience and the full indirect effect of the tourist experience in the relationship between authenticity of cultural heritage and place attachment and revisit intention. The following sub-sections discuss these results in further details.

The results indicated that the authenticity of cultural heritage influences on tourist experience. These findings are in line with Zhou et al. (2022) and Domínguez-Quintero et al. (2020), where they confirmed the positive effect of authenticity on memorable tourism experience. Authenticity has the greatest impact on the tourist experience, according to Antón et al. (2019) and Ramkissoon & Uysal (2010), showing that tourists can have better, higher-quality experiences when they visit an authentic heritage site. This means that tourists will react favourably on the tourism experience when they sense a high level of authenticity, which finally results in great memorability. Therefore, managers must create and deliver an authentic experience to satisfy the expectations and demands of tourists and guarantee that tourists receive memorable tourism experience.

Nevertheless, the results clarified that cultural heritage authenticity was found to hold no significant influence on place attachment. This is not in line with Jiang et al. (2017) and Park et al. (2019) findings, which suggested a significant link between authenticity and place attachment. In fact, the authors argued that authenticity emphasizes the sense of place during a tourism experience. Particularly, tourists get a stronger sense of place attachment while visiting heritage tourism places that offer a high level of authenticity. This discrepancy can be explained by the variety of types of tourism offered by the Egyptian tourist destination, including leisure, sports, religious, cultural, environmental tourism, etc., and the tourists' association with the Egyptian tourist destination may not be due to the authenticity of its heritage sites, but to another reason such as beaches, environment, religious places...etc., which make them attached to the Egyptian tourist destination.

As well, the results revealed that authenticity of cultural heritage was found to hold no significant influence on revisit intention. These findings are in line with Rasoolimanesh et al. (2021), where they confirmed that no significant relationship between the authenticity and revisit intention. In contrast, these findings are not in line with Kolar & Zabkar (2010) and Yi et al. (2017) findings, which suggested a significant link between authenticity and place attachment. In fact, the authors argued that if tourists thought heritage sites were authentic, they were more likely to return and that affects future tourist behaviour by raising the likelihood that they will return or promote it to others. Particularly, tourists were more inclined to return to the destination when they felt there was a high degree of authenticity.

In addition, according to the results, there is a positive effect of tourist experience on place attachment. This result agrees with Zhou et al. (2022) and Vada et al. (2019). They argued that tourist experience is a vital antecedent variable for place attachment. When a tourist goes through a positive tourist experience in a destination, he is associated with positive feelings and memories of that destination, which makes him relate to it and represents a strong motive for him to return to it in the future.

Furthermore, the findings found a significant positive effect of tourist experience on revisit intention, which is consistent with the findings of Rasoolimanesh et al. (2021). They highlighted that tourist experiences affect tourists' recommendations and whether they return. Chandralal & Valenzuela (2013) argued that if a destination is visited again, past tourist experiences are seen to be a key determinant. However, this result differs from the study of Zhou et al. (2022), which highlighted the absence of a relationship between tourist experience and revisit intention.

The findings indicated no relationship between place attachment and revisit intention. This is not in line with Zhou et al. (2022), Reitsamer and Brunner-Sperdin (2021), and Prayag and Ryan (2012) findings, which suggested a significant link between place attachment and revisit intention. In fact, the authors argued that the more tourists attached to a destination, the higher willing to return to visit it. This discrepancy can be explained by the type of tourist, his age group and his interests, in addition to the intensity of competition between tourist destinations that offer different tourism products, which affects the relationship between the tourist's attachment to a particular place and the possibility of repeating a visit to this place or not.

Finally, this study also demonstrated the importance of tourist experience for the relationships between authenticity of cultural heritage and place attachment and revisit intention. The findings revealed that the tourist experience is a significant fully mediator in the link between the authenticity of cultural heritage and place attachment as well as revisit intention. These findings are in line with Rasoolimanesh et al. (2021) and Zhou et al. (2022), where they revealed that memorable tourist experience mediates the relationship between authenticity of cultural heritage and revisit intention.

### **6.1. Theoretical Implications**

Overall, this study focuses on the authenticity of cultural heritage and contributes to the extant literature on the relationship between tourist experience, place attachment and behavioural intentions in the backdrop of heritage and culture tourism. Also, the present study's conceptual framework expanded the current knowledge in tourism and heritage literature, along with existing studies in the Psychology and behaviour areas. Moreover, the present study might help in fully understanding the consequences of authenticity of cultural heritage and tourist experience in tourism contexts. In addition, the inconclusive findings thus far regarding the various influences of the authenticity of cultural heritage on place attachment and revisit intention could be explained by the intervening role of tourist experience such a process. In this vein, we have showed that tourist experience does mediate the link between authenticity of cultural heritage and place attachment and revisit intention. In other words, the positive influence of authenticity of culture heritage could be subject to increase the attachment of the place and return to visit it. Hence, further research is also called for to clarify this role. This study illustrated that tourist experience could be a mediator for the effects of authenticity of culture heritage on place attachment and revisit intention in a heritage and culture tourism context. This also provides for a better understanding of the context-based focus of the tourist experience by focusing on a less studied heritage and



culture tourism context. By testing the mediation role of tourist experience in a heritage and culture tourism context, this research has advanced the heritage and culture tourism experience literature and raise significant questions for future research, particularly with respect to the potential influencers of tourist experience. Equally important, it is regarded as the first attempt to develop and analyse a comprehensive structural model incorporating authenticity of cultural heritage, tourist experience, place attachment, and revisit intention within the heritage tourism sites in one of the Middle Eastern countries, Egypt.

## **6.2. Practical Implications**

Practically, the findings hold important implications to destination management organizations and marketing managers in Egypt. Authenticity of cultural heritage were found to be good predictor to tourist experience, which would in turn through its mediation role will enhance both the place attachment and revisit intention. Therefore, Destination management and marketing managers are urged to adopt the quality of tourist experience to drive the reputation of their heritage destination.

The results indicate that although the majority of tourist areas in Egypt enjoy authenticity, tourists may not attach with these sites and may not revisit them again. This indicates that destination management managers must focus not only on the authenticity, heritage and history of tourist sites, but also on improving the quality of the tourist experience and making it a unique, distinctive and memorable experience, which is reflected in the tourist's association with these heritage sites and return to visit it again. In other words, destination managers should consistently make investments in trustworthy marketing messaging since it serves as a crucial foundation for creating a strong attachment with tourists and cultural sites (Reitsamer and Brunner Sperdin, 2021). Destination marketing managers should make an organized marketing campaign to promote the Egyptian tourist product through Cooperation with specialized companies in e-marketing to market the Egyptian cultural heritage tourism (Al-Azab, 2019).

As the results showed, to improve revisit intention and place attachment of heritage and cultural tourists, the tourist experience has critical direct effect and fully mediating role for the effect of authenticity of cultural heritage. As Pine and Gilmore (1998) stated, the most fulfilling experiences create a "sweet spot" in tourists, influence their decision-making and behaviour moving forward, and are frequently the most trustworthy source of information regarding revisit intention and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) messaging. This is important, as some of those responsible for marketing and managing tourist destinations have given priority to marketing tourism products, and neglected the needs and experiences of tourists (Zhang et al., 2018). As a result, they may fail to selectively design and present those experiences that can be evoked as tourists talk about their travel, thus negatively affecting the intent to revisit (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021). From a marketing perspective, it is also believed that retaining a current customer cost much less than obtaining a new one, and so many destinations depend on retaining repeat visitors that has a much lower cost than attracting new ones (Tsai, 2016). Understanding the motivators of tourists' willingness to make repeat visits is moreover essential to improve the management of heritage destinations and their resources.

In order to entice visitors to return, local authorities of historical tourism locations should preserve the authenticity of both tangible (such as the buildings) and intangible (such as local legends and stories) features (Zhou et al., 2022). They should also provide activities that give visitors a sense of authenticity. Tourism-related activities should also assist visitors learn

about the local culture that enable them to interact with residents in a genuine, friendly, and natural way.

The research advances our knowledge of visitor psychology. Last but not least, the findings will offer useful solutions to questions about how to effectively market a destination by emphasizing its authenticity while utilizing the tourist experience.

### 6.3. Limitations and future research

It is important to acknowledge the following limitations, which provide avenues for future research. First, given the discrepancies between our findings and previous studies, we urge for further qualitative research to shed light such discrepancies and reveal the influence of the authenticity of the Egyptian cultural heritage. Second, participants in this study were given questionnaires to complete on-site visited. Future research should concentrate on the post-trip behaviour, ideally within a larger research framework. Third, regarding the tourist experience as a mediator in this study. Further study is needed to examine the mediating and moderating roles of other variables (e.g., place attachment, Word of mouth, destination image, perceived value, and culture) in the link between authenticity of cultural heritage and revisit intention. Fourth, this study focuses on tourists in a heritage sites. Future studies are suggested to investigate the influencing factors on revisit intention and place attachment in other tourism contexts. Finally, because only positive tourist experiences were investigated in this study, negative tourist experience characteristics were not taken into account. Even negative experiences can result in unique and lasting experiences (Kim et al., 2021). Therefore, a thorough investigation addressing both good and negative aspects of tourist experiences is recommended for further study.

### Appendix 1.

Construct	Mean	SD	Loadings
<b>Authenticity of Cultural Heritage</b>			
The overall architecture and exhibits reflect actual buildings of the past (AU1)	4.27	.867	0.715
The overall settings as well as architecture and impression of the buildings inspired me (AU2)	4.15	.989	0.822
I liked the way the sites blend with the attractive landscape/ scenery/ historical ensemble/ town, which offers many other interesting places for sightseeing (AU3)	4.12	.980	0.766
Your visit(s) provided a thorough insight into cultural heritage sites' historical eras (AU4)	4.32	.820	0.701
I could feel the genuineness and authenticity through the experiences in the Egyptian destination (AU5)	4.07	.932	0.801
I felt the history, legends and cultural characteristics (personalities) of the heritage sites (AU6)	4.02	.908	0.908
I enjoyed the unique traditions and spiritual experiences (AU7)	4.29	.873	0.812
<b>Tourist Experience</b>			
The Egyptian cultural heritage sites experience has made me more knowledgeable (EXP1)	4.29	.716	0.726
Just being here (within Egypt's heritage sites) was unique and very pleasant (EXP2)	4.20	.872	0.874
I really enjoyed watching what others (Ancient Egyptians) were doing (EXP3)	4.34	.938	0.836
I felt like I was living in a different time or place (EXP4)	4.17	.863	0.818

Place Attachment			
The Egyptian cultural heritage sites are a very special destination to me (PA1)	4.17	.972	0.774
I strongly identify with the Egyptian destination (PA2)	4.37	.698	0.719
Holidaying in the Egyptian cultural heritage sites means a lot to me (PA3)	4.12	.872	0.921
I am very attached to this holiday destination (PA4)	4.07	.877	0.894
The Egyptian cultural heritage sites represent the best place for what I like to do on holidays (PA5)	4.07	.755	0.705
Revisit Intention			
I will revisit the Egyptian cultural heritage sites in the future (REV1)	4.27	.837	0.809
If given the opportunity, I will return to these heritage sites or similar ones in Egypt (REV2)	4.29	.929	0.780
The likelihood of my return to these heritage sites for another heritage travel/ experience is high (REV3)	4.41	.706	0.866

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## أصالة التراث الثقافي: التأثير على التعلق بالمكان ونية إعادة الزيارة من خلال الدور الوسيط للتجربة السياحية

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المعلومات المقالة	الملخص
<b>الكلمات المفتاحية</b> الأصالة؛ التجربة السياحية؛ التعلق بالمكان؛ نية إعادة الزيارة؛ التراث الثقافي المصري.	تعد الأصالة جانبًا مركزيًا وميزة بارزة في السياحة التراثية. يهتم كل من الممارسين والباحثين بأصالة التجارب السياحية عندما يتعلق الأمر بتخطيط السياحة التراثية وتسويقها وإدارتها. تهدف الورقة إلى استكشاف الدور المتداخل للتجربة السياحية في الربط بين أصالة التراث الثقافي والتعلق بالمكان ونية إعادة الزيارة في سياق مواقع التراث الثقافي المصري. تم تطوير نموذج تكاملي لاستكشاف أهمية أصالة التراث الثقافي وتأثيره على التعلق بالمكان ونية إعادة الزيارة من خلال الدور الوسيط للتجربة السياحية. باستخدام Smart PLS 4 ، تم تحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها من ٣٨٩ سائحًا دوليًا زاروا مصر. أبرزت نتائج الدراسة أن التجربة السياحية تتوسط بشكل كامل العلاقة بين أصالة التراث الثقافي وكل من التعلق بالمكان ونية إعادة النظر. كما حددت النتائج الأثر الإيجابي المباشر لأصالة التراث الثقافي على التجربة السياحية. أظهرت النتائج كذلك الآثار الإيجابية المباشرة للتجربة السياحية على التعلق بالمكان ونية إعادة الزيارة. النتائج لها آثار مهمة على كل من مجتمع البحث وإدارة الوجهة ومؤسسات التسويق ومواقع التراث. كما تمت مناقشة الآثار العملية والبحوث المستقبلية المحتملة.

**(JAAUTH)**  
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