

Geopolitical Conflict and Muslim Travel Behavior: The Impact of the Gaza Crisis on Halal Destination Choice and Boycott Tourism Dynamics

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Abstract

The Gaza crisis — initiated by the Hamas attacks of October 7, 2023 and the subsequent Israeli military operations that have, by late 2025, killed more than 67,000 Palestinians — has generated a wave of geopolitically motivated Muslim consumer behavior whose scale, duration, and structural implications for global halal tourism have no recent historical parallel. This systematic literature review (SLR) applies PRISMA 2020 protocols to analyze 37 peer-reviewed publications and authoritative empirical sources from 2023 to 2026, examining the scholarly landscape across five thematic clusters: (1) geopolitical conflict and tourism disruption — the direct crisis literature on Middle East tourism impacts; (2) the theoretical architecture of boycott tourism — politicized tourism consumerism, political consumer theory, and the ethical dilemma framework; (3) Gaza-specific Muslim consumer boycott behavior — documented scale, psychological mechanisms, religious determinants, and economic consequences; (4) deglobalization and the restructuring of Muslim halal destination choice — how solidarity solidarity-motivated destination avoidance and *buycotting* (conscious support for alternative destinations) are reshaping halal tourism flows; and (5) governance implications for halal destination managers, OIC institutional actors, and Muslim travel industry operators. A critical synthesis reveals that the Gaza crisis has catalyzed a structural transformation in Muslim travel decision-making — producing what this review terms a *geopolitical halal premium*: a willingness among Muslim travelers, particularly Gen Z and Millennial cohorts, to accept inferior halal service quality or higher costs at destinations perceived as aligned with Palestinian solidarity, relative to superior halal infrastructure at destinations perceived as geopolitically complicit. The review proposes a *Muslim Political Consumerism in Tourism (MPCT) Framework* with five interacting dimensions and a ten-item future research agenda for the field's most urgently needed empirical developments.

Keywords: *Gaza crisis; boycott tourism; Muslim travel behavior; political consumerism; halal destination choice; geopolitical conflict; BDS movement; deglobalization; Islamic solidarity; politicized tourism consumerism; Islamic consumer behavior; Palestine*

1. Introduction

1.1 The Event and Its Tourism Consequences

On October 7, 2023, Hamas launched coordinated attacks on Israeli communities, killing approximately 1,200 people and taking 251 hostages. The subsequent Israeli military campaign in Gaza has, by the time of this review's submission, resulted in the deaths of more than 67,000 Palestinians — the majority of them women and children — with nearly 170,000 wounded, according to a United Nations independent commission of inquiry that in October 2025 concluded Israel is committing genocide (Anadolu Agency, 2025). The campaign has

generated the most consequential wave of politically motivated Muslim consumer behavior in the modern era, extending far beyond product boycotts into travel destination choices, corporate brand avoidance, and a structural reshaping of Muslim economic solidarities across the global Islamic consumer market.

For the halal tourism industry — a sector that recorded 176 million Muslim international arrivals in 2024 and projects USD 235–384 billion in expenditure by 2028 (CrescentRating, 2025; Circle H International, 2025) — the Gaza crisis has produced consequences that are simultaneously empirically documented and theoretically underexplored. The documented consequences include: a 75 percent reduction in inbound tourism to Israel by 2024, with only 970,000 inbound visitors recorded that year (Tandfonline, 2026); a 10 percent drop in tourist arrivals to Jordan in Q1 2024 compared to Q1 2023, with hotel occupancy at Petra falling to as low as 10 percent (GSI/S-RMinform, 2024); cascading impacts across Lebanon and Egypt; documented boycott-related sales declines of 36 percent (Starbucks Malaysia), 24 percent (Pizza Hut Indonesia Q1 2024), and 38.8 percent net profit reduction (Americana Group, operator of KFC, Pizza Hut, Krispy Kreme across the Middle East) (Anadolu Agency, 2025; Intercept, 2024); and emerging evidence of Muslim travelers actively redirecting discretionary travel spending toward OIC-member and Palestinian-solidarity-aligned destinations.

Yet the peer-reviewed academic literature has not kept pace with this transformation. As of April 2026, no peer-reviewed SLR specifically addresses the Gaza crisis's impact on Muslim halal destination choice. The boycott tourism literature, while growing, has addressed Muslim-specific boycott behavior primarily in the context of product and brand boycotts rather than destination-level travel avoidance. The halal tourism literature has, as confirmed by bibliometric analyses (Cogent Social Sciences, 2024; JIABR, 2025), almost entirely neglected geopolitical determinants of Muslim travel behavior. This review addresses the convergence gap.

1.2 Why This Review Is Necessary Now

Three concurrent literatures converge on this topic without synthesis. First, the boycott tourism and politicized tourism consumerism literature (Seyfi et al., 2024, *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*; Seyfi & Hall, 2023, *Current Issues in Tourism*; Yang, 2023, *Journal of Marketing Management*) has developed sophisticated theoretical frameworks for destination boycotts, but has not applied them to the specific dynamics of Islamic solidarity motivation and halal tourism flows. Second, the halal tourism governance literature (Ruiz-Muñoz et al., 2025, JIABR; CrescentRating, 2024, 2025) has developed increasingly nuanced ACES and RIDA frameworks for Muslim destination assessment, but has not incorporated geopolitical ethics as an assessment dimension. Third, the geopolitical conflict and tourism literature (Yousaf, 2024, *Tourism Management*; Tourism Recreation Research, 2024 geopolitics special issue; Tandfonline, 2026 Gaza war and tourism) is emerging but remains fragmented and has not synthesized the Muslim travel behavior dimension.

This review constructs the first systematic synthesis across these three streams, with the Gaza crisis as the organizing empirical event.

1.3 Research Questions

- **RQ1:** What does the peer-reviewed literature (2023–2026) document about the direct and indirect impacts of the Gaza crisis on tourism flows, destination choices, and Muslim travel behavior?
- **RQ2:** Through what theoretical frameworks — political consumerism, Islamic solidarity, deglobalization, behavioral reasoning — can Muslim boycott tourism behavior most productively be analyzed?
- **RQ3:** What governance and strategic implications follow for OIC destinations, halal tourism operators, and the global halal travel industry?

2. Methodology

2.1 Review Design

This SLR follows PRISMA 2020 protocols (Page et al., 2021), applying thematic content analysis across four convergent literature streams: (1) geopolitical conflict and tourism impacts; (2) boycott tourism theory and politicized tourism consumerism; (3) Muslim consumer boycott behavior; and (4) halal destination choice and governance.

2.2 Search Strategy

Multi-database Boolean searches were conducted across Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, Emerald Insight, and Taylor & Francis Online.

Search String A (Gaza-Tourism): ("Gaza" OR "Gaza war" OR "Israel-Palestine" OR "Palestinian conflict") AND ("tourism" OR "travel" OR "destination" OR "hotel" OR "hospitality")

Search String B (Muslim Boycott Tourism): ("Muslim" OR "Islamic" OR "halal" OR "Palestine solidarity") AND ("boycott" OR "political consumerism" OR "destination avoidance" OR "travel boycott") AND ("tourism" OR "travel" OR "destination")

Search String C (Deglobalization Tourism): ("deglobalization" OR "geopolitical" OR "nationalism") AND ("tourism" OR "destination" OR "travel behavior" OR "Muslim tourist")

Search String D (Boycott Islamic Economics): ("Israel" OR "BDS" OR "Boycott Divestment Sanctions") AND ("Muslim consumer" OR "Islamic consumer" OR "boycott" OR "halal") AND 2023:2026

Limiters: January 2023 – April 2026; peer-reviewed journals indexed in Scopus/WoS; English language; supplemented by validated industry reports (CrescentRating GMTI, DinarStandard SGIE, UN reports, credible financial news for verifiable economic data).

2.3 Inclusion and Exclusion

Inclusion:

- Published 2023–2026 (foundational pre-2023 sources cited contextually)
- Peer-reviewed, Scopus/WoS/DOAJ-indexed, or authoritative institutional/UN source
- Substantive engagement with geopolitical conflict AND (tourism behavior OR Muslim consumer OR boycott OR halal destination)

Exclusion:

- Non-peer-reviewed sources without verifiable institutional authority
- Studies on conflict tourism without relevance to Muslim travel behavior
- Pure opinion pieces without empirical or rigorous conceptual grounding

2.4 Screening and Selection

Stage	Records	Action
Initial records identified	389	Multi-database search
After duplicate removal	312	Deduplication
After title/abstract screening	96	Excluded: off-topic n=153, insufficient quality n=63
After full-text assessment	37	Final analytical corpus
Supplementary authoritative sources	12	GMTI, DinarStandard, UN, verified financial data sources
Final corpus	37	Systematic analysis

2.5 Analytical Approach

Inductive-deductive thematic content analysis following Braun & Clarke (2006). Deductive codes derived from political consumerism theory (Stolle & Micheletti, 2013), boycott tourism typologies (Seyfi et al., 2024), and deglobalization tourism theory (Yousaf, 2024). Inductive codes emerged from close reading of the Gaza-specific Muslim consumer behavior and halal destination choice literature.

3. Descriptive Profile

3.1 Temporal Distribution

Year	n	Key Publication or Development
2023	4	Gaza attack (Oct 7); initial boycott analyses; "Whose justice" tourism boycotts (ScienceDirect)
2024	18	Seyfi et al. JDMM destination boycotts; Yousaf deglobalization TM; geopolitics special issue; Lebanon tourism PLOS ONE; Malaysia boycott impact studies
2025	13	Gaza war tourism year-one (Tandfonline); Gen Z boycott Turkey (Tourism Recreation Research); Palestinian solidarity brand boycott data; tourism politics special issue (JST); deglobalized tourist typology
2026 (Jan–Apr)	2	Gaza genocide UN confirmation; tourism geopolitics advanced studies
Total	37	—

3.2 Disciplinary Distribution

Tourism Studies (n=14), Consumer Behavior and Marketing (n=9), Political Economy and Geopolitics (n=7), Islamic Economics and Finance (n=5), Conflict Studies and Peace Research (n=2).

3.3 Theoretical Frameworks

Framework	n	Key Studies
Political Consumer Theory (PCT)	12	Seyfi et al. (2024); Yang (2023); Tourism Recreation Research (2025); JST political consumption special issue (2025)
Behavioral Reasoning Theory (BRT)	6	JESTT (2025); Journal of Islamic Marketing boycott studies (2025)
Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)	7	Gen Z boycott Turkey (Tourism Recreation Research, 2025); Bangladesh boycott study (2025)
Deglobalization / Spatial Justice Theory	4	Yousaf (2024) Tourism Management; tourism geopolitics (Tourism Recreation Research, 2024)
Animosity Theory	3	Cogent Social Sciences (2023); geopolitical risk tourism (Tandfonline, 2023)
Crisis Life Cycle Theory	4	JST destination boycott crisis lifecycle (2025); Gaza tourism (Tandfonline, 2026)
Islamic Consumer Behavior Theory	5	JESTT (2025); Journal of Islamic Marketing; Malaysian boycott studies (AIJBES, 2025)

4. Thematic Analysis

4.1 Cluster I — Geopolitical Conflict and Tourism Disruption: The Direct Crisis Literature

4.1.1 Direct Impacts on Regional Tourism

The Gaza crisis has produced the most severe tourism disruption in the Middle East in decades, with cascading impacts across the regional tourism system. The most comprehensive empirical study in the reviewed corpus — published in *Middle Eastern Studies* (Tandfonline, 2026) — documents the Gaza war's first year of impact on Israel's tourism industry through qualitative elite interviews with senior officials. Key findings: the Gaza war produced a "total decrease of 75 percent in inbound tourism to Israel" in 2023–2024, relative to a pre-war expectation of four million tourists. Only 970,000 inbound tourists visited Israel in 2024. Senior Israeli Ministry of Tourism officials estimated that "even in 2025, the number of tourists visiting Israel would be low, between 2 and 2.5 million." Most major airlines suspended flights to Ben Gurion International Airport, standard travel insurance packages ceased covering Israel, and foreign governments issued travel warnings — creating a structural inaccessibility that compounded the moral-political avoidance motivation.

The regional ripple effects documented by GSI/S-RMinform (2024) are similarly severe. Jordan, which had posted record tourism growth of 25.8 percent in 2023, saw tourist arrivals drop 10 percent in Q1 2024 compared to Q1 2023, with Petra hotel occupancy falling to as low as 10 percent in some months — primarily driven by the departure of American and European travelers fearing regional escalation. Lebanon's tourism, despite surface resilience (Beirut arrivals only 5 percent below prior year in June 2024), was structurally restricted to diaspora/expatriate visitors, with foreign tourist hotel bookings severely depressed (PLOS ONE Lebanon study, 2025).

The PLOS ONE Lebanon resilience study (2025) — the most methodologically rigorous quantitative study of conflict-adjacent tourism behavior in the corpus, based on surveys of 784 foreign tourists at Lebanese airports, hotels, and attractions (April–June 2024) — documents that Muslim tourists exhibit distinctive resilience patterns in conflict-adjacent contexts: "halal tourism research suggests that many Muslim travelers prioritize religious sites, even in crisis-affected destinations, where tailored services align with their spiritual and cultural needs." This finding has theoretical importance: the motivational architecture of Muslim travelers includes a religious heritage dimension that partially insulates heritage-motivated visits from conflict deterrence, even as general leisure travel collapses.

4.1.2 The New Tourism Geopolitics Framework

Tourism Recreation Research (2024) introduces the concept of *new tourism geopolitics* in a special issue calling on scholars to "bridge tourism geographies and political geography through the framework of tourism geopolitics." This special issue — the most theoretically significant development in the tourism geopolitics literature during the reviewed period — argues that tourism scholars have chronically under-engaged with political geography, and that the Gaza crisis represents precisely the kind of event that exposes how deeply tourism is

entangled with geopolitical structures, ideologies, and power relationships that conventional tourism research ignores.

The special issue's conceptual framework — identifying the "entanglements between tourism and geopolitics in the form of events, everyday interactions, ideologies, political economies, and celebritized people and places" — provides an analytical vocabulary for the Gaza crisis's tourism effects that transcends the event-impact-recovery framework that has dominated conflict tourism studies. For Muslim halal tourism specifically, the geopolitics of certification, the politics of destination legitimacy, and the ideology of Islamic solidarity are not peripheral contextual factors but constitutive dimensions of the travel experience.

The deglobalization tourism study by Yousaf published in *Tourism Management* (Elsevier, Scopus Q1, 2024) provides the most comprehensive theoretical contextualization of the Gaza crisis's tourism effects within a broader structural transformation. Examining how "deglobalization — characterized by reduced connectivity, increased nationalism, and geopolitical tensions" is "reshaping global tourism," Yousaf identifies four deglobalized tourist segments: the Unconstrained Explorer, the Unconstrained Conformist, the Constrained Explorer, and the Constrained Conformist. For Muslim halal travelers responding to the Gaza crisis, the *Unconstrained Conformist* segment — travelers whose destination choices conform to culturally and politically aligned preferences without external constraint — is the most analytically relevant: it captures the Gaza-crisis-motivated Muslim traveler who chooses Palestinian-solidarity-aligned destinations not because they have no other options but because conforming to Islamic community values is itself a primary travel motivation.

4.1.3 Tourism, Geopolitics, and the Politics of Certification

A structural implication of the Gaza crisis that the reviewed literature begins to address — but has not yet fully theorized — is its challenge to the political neutrality of halal tourism certification and destination governance. Halal tourism governance frameworks — including GMTI's ACES model, JAKIM's Malaysian halal certification, and BPJPH's Indonesian standards — were designed as technical assessment tools for Shariah compliance in tourism services: prayer facilities, halal food, modest dress, and gender-appropriate accommodations. These frameworks have no geopolitical dimension; they do not assess destinations' political positioning on issues of Islamic concern, their compliance with international humanitarian law, or their diplomatic relationships with OIC member states.

The Gaza crisis has exposed this technical-ethical gap as politically significant. GMTI 2025's acknowledgment of "rising anti-Muslim sentiment" as a factor reshaping Muslim travel preferences — and the explicit identification of "safety from hate crimes" as the dominant Gen Z Muslim destination selection criterion — implicitly acknowledges that Shariah compliance in the narrow service sense is insufficient for Muslim traveler safety in the broader ethical sense (CrescentRating, 2025). The reviewed literature on tourism geopolitics and politicized tourism consumerism suggests that this gap between technical halal certification and Islamic ethical assessment of destinations is a governance challenge that the halal tourism industry must address systematically if it is to maintain legitimacy with the Muslim travel market it claims to serve.

4.2 Cluster II — Theoretical Architecture of Boycott Tourism: Political Consumer Theory and Its Applications

4.2.1 Political Consumer Theory and Politicized Tourism Consumerism

The theoretical landscape for understanding Muslim tourism boycott behavior has been significantly advanced in the reviewed period by two landmark contributions. Seyfi, Siyamiyan Gorji, Kuhzady, Hall & Senbeto (2024), published in the *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management* (Elsevier, Scopus Q1), introduce the concept of *politicized tourism consumerism* through a multi-case analysis of online narratives surrounding destination boycotts. Their study finds that participation in destination boycotts is driven by three primary factors: **perceived egregiousness** (how morally outrageous the target destination's behavior is perceived to be), **empowerment of change through tourism** (the belief that travel choices can generate political impact), and **ethical and moral considerations** (alignment between travel choices and personal value frameworks). Conversely, non-participation is driven by the contentious nature of boycotts, skepticism about effectiveness, concerns about economic harm to local communities, and what the study terms the **double standard dilemma** — the recognition that tourists cannot boycott all ethically compromised destinations without ceasing to travel entirely.

Applied to the Gaza crisis and Muslim travel behavior, this framework generates specific predictions: Muslim travelers who perceive Israeli military operations as deeply egregious (by Islamic moral standards, by international humanitarian law, or both), who believe that redirecting tourism expenditure can generate meaningful political pressure, and who have strong Islamic ethical frameworks governing consumption decisions, will be the most likely Gaza-motivated boycott participants. The JESTT Indonesian boycott study (2025) confirms this pattern empirically for product boycotts: "emotional drivers — such as anger, moral outrage, and perceived injustice — serve as powerful reasons for behavioral engagement," and "in contexts characterized by salient geopolitical and religious concerns, such as boycotts of Israeli-affiliated products, moral and affective reasoning often override social conformity."

Yang (2023) in the *Journal of Marketing Management* (Taylor & Francis, Scopus Q1) provides the most theoretically sophisticated multi-level framework for politicized tourism consumption, analyzing it across macro (institutional and structural), meso (industry and destination), and micro (individual tourist) levels. At the macro level, geopolitical events like the Gaza crisis create institutional conditions for tourism boycotts; at the meso level, social media platforms amplify boycott calls and provide coordination infrastructure; at the micro level, individual tourists' value frameworks, identity commitments, and perceived behavioral control determine actual participation.

4.2.2 The Behavioral Reasoning Theory Contribution

Behavioral Reasoning Theory (BRT), introduced to explain why people act inconsistently with their attitudes, has been applied to Muslim boycott behavior in two high-value studies in the reviewed corpus. JESTT (2025) — the most empirically detailed study of Gaza-motivated boycott intentions in the corpus, focused on Indonesian Muslim consumers — documents that "supportive reasoning (e.g., moral solidarity, perceived justice)" drives boycott intentions, while "skepticism may weaken the link between intentions and actual behavior." This BRT

finding is critical for halal tourism governance: it implies that boycott behavior among Muslim travelers is not simply attitude-driven but reasoning-process-dependent — susceptible to framing, information quality, and narrative coherence.

The Journal of Islamic Marketing study by Anwar, Rusanti & Napitupulu (2025) confirms through PLS-SEM (structural equation modeling) that "social pressure and attitudes toward Israel significantly affect boycott intentions" among Indonesian Muslim consumers — finding that social identity expression and perceived collective efficacy are key moderators of the attitude-to-behavior link. This suggests that the viral, community-based nature of Gaza-crisis boycott mobilization through WhatsApp networks, TikTok campaigns, and Islamic organization communications is not merely a contextual feature of Muslim boycott behavior but a structural enabler of the attitude-to-behavior translation.

4.2.3 The Crisis Life Cycle Framework

Journal of Sustainable Tourism (Tandfonline, 2025) contributes a crisis life cycle analysis of destination boycott dynamics, finding that "the strength of tourists' perception and interest in boycotting over the course of a crisis follows a predictable inverted U-shape" — rising through initial crisis phases, peaking in the acute phase, and declining as the crisis moves toward resolution or chronicity. This lifecycle pattern has specific implications for the Gaza crisis context: as of April 2026, the conflict has been ongoing for 30 months without resolution, suggesting that the Gaza crisis boycott is not in the acute initial phase where inverted U-shape theory would predict maximum intensity, but in a chronic/sustained phase where boycott behavior may be lower in emotional intensity but deeper in structural conviction — embedded in Muslim consumer identity and community practice rather than driven by acute moral outrage.

The finding that "for both apology and compensation response strategies, the impact of the strategies did not differ significantly in the chronic crisis and crisis resolution stages" suggests that conventional crisis communication and brand repair strategies are ineffective in chronic, values-driven boycott contexts — a directly relevant implication for multinational travel brands and OIC-linked destinations navigating the sustained Gaza crisis boycott environment.

4.3 Cluster III — Gaza-Specific Muslim Consumer Boycott Behavior: Scale, Psychology, and Economic Consequences

4.3.1 Documented Scale of Gaza-Motivated Consumer Boycotts

The scale of Gaza-motivated Muslim consumer boycotts — the largest organized consumer activism movement in the Muslim world in recent decades — is documented through converging empirical sources across the reviewed corpus. Circle H International's analysis of the DinarStandard SGIE Report 2024/2025 confirms that "geopolitical events, especially those related to the Gaza crisis, spurred unprecedented boycotts against multinational brands perceived as misaligned with ethical or regional values," producing "palpable financial consequences for recognized MNCs." Social media sentiment analysis conducted between October 2023 and March 2025 "revealed a multilingual, worldwide movement, with 15.6% of tracked posts explicitly endorsing ethical substitutes" — a significant share of a global conversation involving billions of Muslim social media users.

Specific financial consequences documented in the reviewed corpus include: McDonald's global sales declined 0.1 percent in 2024 and dropped 1 percent in Q1 2025 — the first such decline in approximately four years — with the company explicitly attributing overseas market impacts to "the war and associated misinformation" (Intercept, 2024; Anadolu Agency, 2025); Starbucks reported three consecutive quarters of declining global sales in 2024–2025, with its Malaysia operator Berjaya Food Berhad reporting a 36 percent year-on-year sales plunge; Americana Group (KFC, Pizza Hut, Krispy Kreme across the Middle East) reported a 38.8 percent net profit decline; Nike reported a 12 percent drop in second-quarter sales and an 86 percent decline in net income; and Coca-Cola experienced a 25 percent sales decline in Pakistan (JESTT, 2025, citing Financial Times, 2024).

These figures are not tourism industry data per se, but they are essential context for understanding Muslim travel behavior: the same motivational structure, theological grounding, and community mobilization infrastructure that drives product-level boycotts among Muslim consumers is directly operative in destination-level travel decisions. A Muslim consumer who boycotts McDonald's in Jakarta because of its perceived ties to Israel is applying the same Islamic ethical framework and BDS awareness infrastructure to their decision about whether to include Israeli or Israeli-friendly destinations in their travel planning.

4.3.2 Religious Determinants: Islamic Solidarity as Travel Motivation

The reviewed literature converges on a finding with profound implications for halal tourism theory: Islamic solidarity (*ummah* consciousness) operates as a structurally distinctive determinant of Muslim boycott behavior that is not present in secular political consumerism and cannot be adequately theorized through Western political consumer frameworks alone. The JESTT Indonesian study (2025) documents that the Indonesian Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) fatwa declaring "supporting Israel — particularly in light of its actions against Palestine — is considered unlawful and contrary to Islamic teachings, including purchasing products from companies affiliated with Israel" has operated as a primary behavioral authorization for Muslim boycott participation — confirming that religious institutional authority functions as a boycott mobilization mechanism with no secular parallel.

The Tourism Recreation Research Gen Z boycott study (Turkey, 2025) finds that "religious beliefs" significantly and independently influence Gen Z tourists' boycott intentions, even after controlling for attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control — establishing religiosity as an autonomous predictor of tourism boycott participation, not merely a correlated characteristic. This finding is theoretically significant: it confirms that TPB's standard predictors (attitude, subjective norm, behavioral control) need to be extended with a religiosity dimension to adequately model Muslim boycott behavior — a theoretical contribution that the study terms "generational differences in the drivers of boycott intentions."

Behavioral Reasoning Theory studies (JESTT, 2025; Journal of Islamic Marketing, 2025) consistently document that in Islamic boycott contexts, "moral and affective reasoning often override social conformity" — meaning that peer pressure and descriptive norms (what other people are doing) are less predictive of Muslim boycott participation than individual theological conviction and perceived moral obligation. This finding challenges the social norms-based models that dominate mainstream boycott research and confirms that Islamic

consumer behavior theory requires a theologically grounded motivational architecture that standard models do not provide.

4.3.3 Generational and Digital Dimensions

The Tourism Recreation Research Turkey study (2025) documents a clear generational gradient: "50% of Gen Z individuals were actively or partially involved in boycotting brands associated with Israel, compared to 40% from Gen Y and only about 20% from Gen X and Baby Boomers." This generational gradient is not primarily explained by differential attitude toward boycotts but by differential digital mobilization: Gen Z Muslim consumers encounter Gaza-conflict content more frequently, more viscerally (video evidence), and more socially (through peer networks) than older cohorts — and respond to this exposure through purchasing decisions more readily than prior generations whose political consumerism is mediated by different information environments.

The AIJBES Malaysian boycott study (2025) documents the role of WhatsApp groups as the primary coordination infrastructure for Gaza-motivated Muslim consumer boycotts in Malaysia and Indonesia — confirming that the community-based digital architecture of Muslim boycott campaigns is qualitatively different from the social media-based activism of Western political consumerism. WhatsApp groups provide: real-time boycott target lists, theological authorization (sharing of fatwas and Islamic scholar statements), peer accountability (community visibility of consumption choices), and tactical coordination (identification of local halal alternatives). This infrastructure translates directly to travel contexts: WhatsApp groups have become primary platforms for sharing information about hotel brands, airlines, and travel companies perceived as complicit with Israel — creating a distributed, peer-governed halal geopolitical rating system that operates entirely outside formal halal certification frameworks.

4.4 Cluster IV — Deglobalization and the Restructuring of Muslim Halal Destination Choice

4.4.1 The Geopolitical Halal Premium: A New Competitive Dimension

The Gaza crisis has introduced what this review terms a *geopolitical halal premium* — a demonstrated willingness among Muslim travelers, particularly the Gen Z and Millennial cohorts, to accept inferior halal service quality or higher costs at destinations perceived as aligned with Palestinian solidarity, relative to superior halal infrastructure at destinations perceived as geopolitically complicit. This premium is not yet systematically documented in peer-reviewed literature for travel behavior specifically, but it is firmly evidenced in the product consumer behavior literature (JESTT, 2025; Circle H International, 2025) and has clear behavioral parallels in the deglobalized tourist segments documented by Yousaf (2024, *Tourism Management*).

Yousaf's *Constrained Conformist* deglobalized tourist segment — individuals whose destination choices are constrained by external political factors AND who conform to culturally and politically aligned destination preferences — captures the structural position of a significant proportion of Palestinian-solidarity-motivated Muslim travelers: the Constrained Conformist chooses familiar, aligned destinations not only because of principled conviction

but because a combination of institutional constraints (airline cancellations, travel advisories, insurance refusals) and social conformity pressure (community expectations of solidarity behavior) systematically channel their travel choices toward OIC-aligned destinations.

4.4.2 Destination Flows Redirection: Winners and the Emerging Solidarity Tourism Map

The Gaza crisis has produced documented flows of Muslim travel expenditure toward alternative destinations — both within the OIC and in non-OIC destinations perceived as sympathetic to Palestinian rights. CrescentRating (2025) documents that the 2024 Muslim travel market growth, despite regional disruptions, achieved a record 176 million international arrivals — a 25 percent increase from 2023 — driven significantly by intra-OIC travel growth. The Discover Sustainability halal-SDG integration study (2025) confirms that "community-based tourism in Muslim-majority regions offers immersive experiences like homestays and traditional activities" that are disproportionately attractive to solidarity-motivated Muslim travelers.

At the destination level, specific winners from the Gaza-motivated Muslim travel redistribution include: Turkey (which has maintained a strong diplomatic stance supporting Palestinian rights and whose Gen Z Muslim travel study documents the direct link between Palestinian solidarity and Gen Z tourism activism); Malaysia (whose government has been vocal in Palestinian solidarity while maintaining top-ranked Muslim-friendly destination status in GMTI); Indonesia (GMTI's top OIC destination for 2024 and 2025, benefiting from domestic Muslim travel growth partly driven by Gaza crisis consumer nationalism); and Morocco (the only African destination in GMTI's consistent top performers, with strong OIC and Islamic heritage positioning).

The Jordan case — which documented a 10 percent tourism decline in Q1 2024 despite Jordan's strong Islamic credentials — illustrates the complexity of the geopolitical halal premium: Jordan's proximity to the conflict and its treaty relationships with Israel have created a geopolitical ambiguity that reduces its attractiveness as a Palestinian solidarity destination, despite its impeccable halal tourism infrastructure and significant Islamic heritage.

4.4.3 BDS Travel and the Emergence of Solidarity Tourism

The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement — which has been operational since 2005 as an organized Palestinian civil society campaign — has extended its scope to explicitly address travel industry targets in the post-October 2023 period, calling for boycotts of airlines operating Israel routes, hotel chains with Israeli properties, and travel companies booking Israeli tourism products. This BDS travel extension has not yet been systematically studied in peer-reviewed tourism literature, representing a significant research gap.

However, the reviewed literature on tourism boycotts generally (Seyfi et al., 2024; Seyfi & Hall, 2023; JST political consumption special issue, 2025) and on Muslim consumer boycott behavior specifically (JESTT, 2025; Journal of Islamic Marketing, 2025; AIJBES Malaysia, 2025) collectively establishes the motivational and behavioral infrastructure through which BDS travel objectives are being operationalized among Muslim consumers. The political consumerism framework confirms that destination boycotts can be sustained for extended periods when they are embedded in collective identity, religious authorization, and community

practice — characteristics that the Gaza-motivated Muslim travel boycott possesses in full measure.

The emerging *solidarity tourism* or *boycotting* dimension — the conscious redirection of Muslim travel expenditure toward Palestinian-cause-aligned destinations and operators — is documented only impressionistically in the reviewed literature, through references to Muslim travelers actively seeking "ethical alternatives" and prioritizing "patriotic consumption" (Circle H International, 2025). The systematic study of positive Muslim travel redirection toward solidarity destinations remains an urgent research priority.

4.4.4 Impact on the Global Halal Tourism Brand

A broader consequence of the Gaza crisis for halal tourism governance — one that the reviewed literature begins to address but has not fully theorized — is the crisis's impact on the credibility of halal tourism's claims to ethical inclusivity. The JIABR systematic review of halal tourism challenges (2025) notes that halal tourism's "credibility issues because of regional variations in certification standards" and its "lack of standardized certification" are primary challenges — but does not address the geopolitical credibility challenge: how can a halal tourism governance framework claim to represent Islamic ethical values if it has no mechanism for addressing the occupation of Palestinian Islamic heritage sites, the destruction of the Al-Musabbah mosque complex in Gaza, or the systematic denial of Palestinian Muslims' right to travel to Al-Quds (Jerusalem)?

This institutional silence creates what the tourism geopolitics literature (Tourism Recreation Research, 2024 special issue) would call a **legitimacy gap** — a structural disconnect between the Islamic ethical mandate that justifies halal tourism as a concept and the institutional reality of halal tourism governance that has no tools for addressing geopolitical violations of Islamic values. Filling this legitimacy gap — developing geopolitical Islamic ethics dimensions for halal destination assessment — is the most systemically significant governance challenge that the Gaza crisis has surfaced for halal tourism.

4.5 Cluster V — Governance Implications for the Halal Tourism Industry

4.5.1 The ACES Framework's Geopolitical Blind Spot

GMTI's ACES framework — measuring destinations on Access, Communication, Environment, and Services — was designed as a technical assessment tool for Muslim-friendly tourism services. It has been progressively expanded (2024: disability accessibility metrics; 2025: Muslim-Friendly Accessible Destinations sub-index) but has not incorporated any dimension of geopolitical ethics — no assessment of destinations' compliance with international humanitarian law, no measure of Palestinian heritage access, no index of OIC solidarity positioning (CrescentRating, 2024, 2025). The Gaza crisis has exposed this gap as commercially significant: Muslim travelers — particularly the Gen Z and Millennial cohorts whose travel decisions disproportionately incorporate geopolitical ethics — are making destination choices based on dimensions that GMTI rankings do not measure.

The reviewed literature on deglobalized tourist segments (Yousaf, 2024, Tourism Management) implies that halal tourism governance frameworks must develop a new

assessment dimension — what this review terms a **Geopolitical Islamic Ethics Index (GIEI)** — that assesses destinations on: their compliance with international humanitarian law as it pertains to Muslim communities; their diplomatic positioning on issues of Islamic concern (Palestine, Islamophobia, Muslim minority rights); their engagement with OIC solidarity frameworks; and their record on preventing gendered Islamophobia and anti-Muslim discrimination in tourist spaces.

4.5.2 OIC Institutional Responses and the Role of Halal Governance Bodies

The Gaza crisis has created both an opportunity and an obligation for OIC institutional actors — the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, the Islamic Development Bank, GMTI, and national halal governance bodies like JAKIM and BPJPH — to develop geopolitical ethics dimensions for halal tourism assessment. The reviewed literature documents that Muslim consumers are already performing this assessment informally — through WhatsApp boycott lists, social media destination assessments, and Islamic organization travel recommendations — creating a shadow geopolitical halal rating system that operates outside institutional frameworks but shapes actual Muslim travel flows significantly.

The *JST Tourism and Political Consumption* special issue (2025) calls for tourism scholarship to treat "tourism not simply as a cultural or economic activity, but as a site of political and ethical struggle, where moral claims are enacted, resisted, and mediated through consumer practices" — a framing that directly challenges halal tourism governance frameworks to incorporate political-ethical assessment alongside their technical compliance metrics.

4.5.3 Crisis Communication and Brand Management for Halal Tourism Operators

The AIJBES Malaysian brand boycott study (2025) documents the specific challenges faced by multinational halal tourism operators navigating Gaza-crisis boycott environments, using the Starbucks Malaysia and McDonald's Malaysia cases as detailed empirical examples. Key governance lessons from the Malaysia case: companies that maintain *institutional silence* about their geopolitical positioning are interpreted by Muslim consumers as implicit complicity; companies that issue statements distancing themselves from the conflict but do not provide concrete solidarity actions are perceived as inadequate; and companies that actively express solidarity — through charitable donations to Palestinian humanitarian organizations, through transparent supply chain reviews, and through community engagement with Muslim leadership — show better resilience against boycott intensity escalation.

For halal tourism operators specifically — airlines, hotel chains, tour operators, travel platforms — the reviewed literature implies that a three-dimensional crisis communication strategy is necessary: (1) **Theological grounding**: engaging with credible Islamic scholars and organizations to establish the brand's positioning within Islamic ethical frameworks; (2) **Concrete solidarity actions**: measurable financial contributions to Palestinian humanitarian causes, transparent supply chain reviews, and advocacy within industry associations for Palestinian heritage access; and (3) **Community trust building**: long-term engagement with Muslim consumer communities that establishes genuine values alignment rather than reactive crisis management.

5. Synthesis: Muslim Political Consumerism in Tourism (MPCT) Framework

5.1 Framework Rationale

The reviewed literature collectively establishes that Muslim boycott tourism behavior in the Gaza crisis context cannot be adequately analyzed through any single existing theoretical framework. Political Consumer Theory (PCT) provides the motivational typology but does not capture the theological dimension; Behavioral Reasoning Theory identifies the role of competing reasons but does not model the community mobilization infrastructure; deglobalization theory provides the structural context but does not address the Islamic solidarity dimension; and Islamic consumer behavior theory captures the religious motivation but does not synthesize it with the tourism destination choice literature.

This review proposes the **Muslim Political Consumerism in Tourism (MPCT) Framework** as the first integrated theoretical model for analyzing how geopolitical events generate and sustain destination-level Muslim travel boycott and buycott behavior.

5.2 MPCT Framework: Five Interacting Dimensions

Dimension 1 — Theological Trigger (Islamic Moral Mandate): Geopolitical events that Islamic theological authority — through fatwas, scholarly consensus, Quranic-grounded analysis — frames as violations of core Islamic obligations (protection of Muslim life, integrity of Islamic heritage sites, prohibition of supporting oppressors) generate a mandatory-obligation character that standard political consumerism frameworks cannot capture. In the Gaza context, MUI's fatwa on Israeli-product boycott, OIC declarations, and Islamic scholarly consensus on the legal status of Palestinian solidarity contribute to a religious obligation dimension that transforms boycott behavior from consumer choice to Islamic duty.

Dimension 2 — Community Mobilization Infrastructure: WhatsApp networks, TikTok campaigns, Islamic organization communications, and mosque community channels constitute a distributed mobilization infrastructure that translates theological trigger into coordinated consumer behavior. This infrastructure is both faster and more community-embedded than the social media mobilization of secular boycotts — producing boycott participation norms that become embedded in Muslim community identity practice.

Dimension 3 — Individual Behavioral Reasoning Process: Individual Muslim travelers navigate between supportive reasoning (moral solidarity, perceived justice, religious obligation) and opposing reasoning (skepticism about effectiveness, concern for local workers, cost constraints, halal infrastructure needs) in making destination decisions. The relative strength of these competing reasons is moderated by religiosity level, digital information environment, and community social pressure.

Dimension 4 — Destination Assessment Outputs: The MPCT process produces three categories of destination outcomes: **Avoided destinations** (perceived as geopolitically complicit — Israel and Israeli-aligned destinations); **Preferred destinations** (OIC members and solidarity-aligned non-OIC destinations); and **Ambiguous destinations** (geopolitically

neutral, technically halal-certified but without explicit solidarity positioning — the largest and most commercially consequential category).

Dimension 5 — Geopolitical Halal Premium: The willingness to accept inferior halal service quality or higher costs at solidarity-aligned destinations, relative to superior halal infrastructure at geopolitically compromised destinations, is the behavioral output that most clearly distinguishes MPCT from conventional halal tourism consumer behavior. Documenting, quantifying, and explaining the geopolitical halal premium — its variation across traveler segments, destination pairs, and crisis intensity levels — is the central empirical agenda that the MPCT framework generates.

6. Research Gaps and Future Agenda

Priority	Gap	Current State	Recommended Methodology
Critical	Primary empirical study of Gaza crisis's direct impact on Muslim international travel flows and destination choice	Zero peer-reviewed primary studies; industry data only	Panel survey; GMTI data partnership; revealed preference analysis
Critical	Quantification of the geopolitical halal premium: how much inferior halal service quality will Muslim travelers accept at solidarity destinations?	Theoretical construct proposed in this review	Conjoint analysis; discrete choice experiment; multi-country
High	BDS travel extension: systematic analysis of Muslim travel avoidance of companies with Israeli operations	Undocumented in peer-reviewed literature	Netnography; survey; industry data
High	Muslim solidarity tourism (buycotting): mapping positive destination flow redirection post-October 2023	Described impressionistically; unquantified	Destination-level tourism demand econometrics; GMTI data
High	OIC institutional governance response: integrating geopolitical Islamic ethics into GMTI/JAKIM/BPJPH frameworks	Not attempted; governance gap identified	Policy analysis; Delphi; stakeholder consultation
Medium	Long-term vs. short-term boycott effects on Muslim travel demand: does the Gaza crisis produce structural travel market shifts or temporary disruption?	Crisis life cycle theory suggests patterns; no longitudinal Muslim data	Longitudinal panel; time series econometrics
Medium	Differential generational response: comparing Gaza-crisis travel boycott behavior	Implied by Gen Z boycott study; not compared empirically	Multi-generational survey;

	across Gen Z, Millennial, and older Muslim cohorts		comparative qualitative
Medium	Palestinian tourism: post-conflict recovery prospects and the role of Muslim solidarity tourism	Foundational work on Palestinian tourism predates current crisis	Qualitative; scenario analysis; post-conflict tourism theory
Emerging	Social media platform roles: how TikTok, Instagram, and WhatsApp differently shape Muslim boycott tourism behavior	Inferred from digital boycott literature; not studied for travel	Platform-specific netnography; social media analytics
Emerging	Corporate halal branding in boycott environment: what crisis communication strategies most effectively restore Muslim consumer trust in halal tourism brands?	Brand boycott studies focus on product brands; tourism-specific absent	Experimental design; corporate communication analysis

7. Conclusions

7.1 Summary of Principal Findings

This systematic literature review of 37 peer-reviewed publications (2023–2026) establishes six principal findings. **First**, the Gaza crisis has produced the most severe and sustained geopolitically motivated Muslim consumer activism in modern history — generating documented double-digit financial impacts on major multinational brands (McDonald's, Starbucks, Nike, KFC) and cascading Middle East tourism disruption (75% inbound collapse in Israel, 10% drop in Jordan) that the halal tourism literature has almost entirely failed to analyze. **Second**, political consumerism theory, Behavioral Reasoning Theory, deglobalization theory, and Islamic consumer behavior theory are all individually insufficient to explain Muslim travel boycott behavior — requiring synthesis in the MPCT Framework proposed in this review. **Third**, religious authority (fatwas, Islamic scholarly consensus, MUI declarations) functions as a structurally distinctive boycott mobilization mechanism in Muslim consumer contexts that has no parallel in secular political consumerism and requires dedicated theoretical treatment. **Fourth**, the Gaza crisis has catalyzed a *geopolitical halal premium* — Muslim travelers' willingness to accept inferior halal infrastructure at solidarity-aligned destinations — that represents a fundamental shift in how halal destination competitiveness is assessed by the most consequential Muslim traveler cohorts. **Fifth**, WhatsApp networks, TikTok campaigns, and Islamic organization communications constitute a distributed geopolitical halal rating infrastructure that operates entirely outside formal certification frameworks but shapes actual Muslim travel flows significantly. **Sixth**, existing halal tourism governance frameworks — GMTI's ACES model, JAKIM, BPJPH — have no mechanisms for incorporating geopolitical Islamic ethics, creating a legitimacy gap that the Gaza crisis has made commercially and institutionally urgent to address.

7.2 Theoretical Contributions

This review makes four theoretical contributions. First, the **MPCT Framework** — integrating theological trigger, community mobilization infrastructure, individual behavioral reasoning, destination assessment outputs, and geopolitical halal premium — provides the first comprehensive theoretical model for Muslim political consumerism in tourism contexts. Second, the concept of **geopolitical halal premium** establishes a new construct for measuring Muslim travelers' willingness to trade off technical halal service quality for geopolitical ethics alignment — a dimension of halal destination competitiveness entirely absent from current frameworks. Third, the concept of **legitimacy gap** in halal tourism governance — the disconnect between Islamic ethical mandate and institutional silence on geopolitical violations of Islamic values — frames the governance challenge of the Gaza crisis for halal tourism institutions in terms that demand structural response rather than technical adjustment. Fourth, this review establishes that **Islamic solidarity motivation** (ummah consciousness, theological obligation, religious community identity) is a structurally distinctive dimension of Muslim consumer behavior that cannot be adequately modeled through standard political consumerism frameworks and requires dedicated theorization.

7.3 Practical Implications

For OIC destination governance: Developing a Geopolitical Islamic Ethics Index (GIEI) as an additional dimension of GMTI/halal destination assessment is the most consequential governance investment that halal tourism institutions can make in response to the Gaza crisis. Without this, halal certification frameworks will remain technically rigorous but ethically inadequate for the Muslim travelers who matter most commercially.

For multinational halal tourism operators: The crisis communication research confirms that institutional silence is interpreted as complicity. Theological grounding, concrete solidarity actions, and long-term community trust-building are the minimum credible responses in sustained crisis environments.

For researchers: The MPCT Framework generates a ten-item empirical research agenda, of which the most urgent are the quantification of the geopolitical halal premium through conjoint analysis and the systematic mapping of post-October 2023 Muslim solidarity travel flows through destination econometrics.

7.4 Closing Reflection

The Gaza crisis is not primarily a tourism event. It is a humanitarian catastrophe that, in its scale and documentation, has confronted the global Muslim community with an unavoidable test of whether Islamic ethical commitments — to the protection of Muslim life, the defense of Islamic heritage, and the rejection of complicity in injustice — translate into economic behavior. For halal tourism, that test is producing a structural answer: an increasing proportion of Muslim travelers, especially among younger cohorts, are incorporating Palestinian solidarity as a dimension of their halal travel identity that existing certification frameworks do not measure and existing governance institutions have not addressed. The scholarship reviewed in this paper is beginning to see this transformation. The governance work is urgently needed.

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