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# Exploring Strategies to Market SMEs Activities: The Role of Personality Traits and Travel Motivations towards Tourist Activities

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Keywords: tourist behaviour; personality trait; tourist motivation; visitor activity; SMEs



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*Article*

# Exploring Strategies to Market SMEs Activities: The Role of Personality Traits and Travel Motivations towards Tourist Activities

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**Abstract:** Traditionally, professionals in the tourism sector have been encouraged to segment their market based on socio-demographic variables. However, the multifaceted nature of tourist activity calls for consideration of psychological factors to effectively shape marketing strategies. This study aims to provide insights for tourism industry practitioners by investigating the roles of tourists' personalities and travel motivations in shaping their activities, and commitment to sustainability in Cumbria, home to UNESCO World Heritage Sites like The Lake District National Park, and Hadrian's Wall. Data was collected using quantitative methods to identify correlations between personality traits, travel motivations, and tourist activities. Additionally, a qualitative focus group with SME representatives from Cumbria provided insights into their understanding of the model. The findings provide significant insights into how the relationship between personality traits, travel motivations and tourist activities benefit tourism SMEs. By comprehending tourist behaviour, SMEs can tailor their offerings to appeal to the right audience, mitigating the adverse effects of overtourism, and therefore do more than allude to the concept of sustainability. Using these insights, SMEs could make informed decisions and create more effective marketing strategies, fostering sustainable practices that benefit both their customers and the long-term viability of their businesses and the destination.

**Keywords:** tourist behaviour; personality trait; tourist motivation; visitor activity; SMEs

## 1. Introduction

The tourism industry is dominated by small and medium-sized tourism enterprises (SMEs) [1]. Attention and support are required to address the limitations and challenges to maintain their competitiveness and survival within such a dynamic industry [2]. Denga and Rakshit [3] added that since consumer preferences are constantly changing, these businesses should find strategies to deliver services that satisfy their clients, whilst still also being profitable.

The tradition has been to segment their market based on socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, and education [4]. However, the multifaceted nature of tourist activity [5], calls for consideration of psychological factors in the characterization of consumers [6], influencing tourism marketing strategies. Identifying these factors represents a challenge. Previous research proposed tourist typologies based on psychological factors, with Plog's [7] allocentric-psychocentric model and Cohen's [8] organized mass tourist being widely applied in tourism studies. Others established links between personality traits and tourist preferences [9,10].

Consequently, the trait perspective has gained acceptance, and it is commonly used as a research approach to understand current and future consumer behaviour [9,10]. Bäckström et al. [11] explain that traits are inherent dispositions of an individual determining their behaviour and responses, thereby influencing their cognition and motivation. In tourism, personality traits have shown associations with tourists' decision-making behaviour [12] and shaping individual's purchase intentions [13].

Marketers aim to create meaning within destination brands [14] by crafting a perceived destination personality that aligns with the personalities of tourists. Mittal et al. [15] confirm that personality traits exert a significant impact on the decision-making process, and selection of a travel destination. This influence extends to the domain of destination choice [16], destination satisfaction [17], as well as travel intention [18].

Despite previous research on the relationship of personality traits and behaviours [19], travel intention [20], tourism information search [21], and correlation between personality traits and travel motivations [22], there is a dearth of studies that investigate the combined influence of personality traits and travel motivations on activities within a destination. This study, therefore, investigates the relationship between personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities. To achieve this, the study adopts a mix method approach (Quan-Qual), (1) examining the relationship between personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities and (2) exploring industry strategies to market the appropriate activities. By studying the interconnected components, it provides a holistic understanding of the subject, and relationship between tourists and the industry.

The outcome of this study anticipates both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it adds towards the body of literature explaining the relationship between personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities. At a practical level, it provides a framework for tourist profiling and informs long-term strategic marketing decisions for destination-based tourism practitioners, empowering SMEs with insights into consumer behaviour. While the tourism industry often prioritizes short-term economic sustainability and the needs of visitors, achieving a balance between economic, environmental, and socio-cultural sustainability is crucial for sustainable destination development, and it requires coordinated efforts from tourism industry players [23]. Therefore, by attracting visitors aligned with the destination's offerings, SMEs can cultivate a more inclusive and resilient tourism ecosystem, driving economic prosperity and social well-being in the community [24].

## 2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

### 2.1. *Understanding Tourist Behaviour for SME Success*

Understanding consumer behaviour is crucial in devising marketing strategies for developing, promoting, and selling tourism products and services, as noted by Santos et al. [25]. Similarly, Volchek et al. [26] and Gertner and Freire [27] emphasize the importance of grasping tourists' behaviours and motivations for creating successful and sustainable branding strategies and enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty. The impact of tourists' motivations on their behaviour has been noted by Šagovnović and Kovačić [28] and Gertner and Freire [27], while Taecharungroj and Mathayomchan [29] and Ying et al. [30] have emphasized the critical role of motivation in shaping consumers' purchasing decisions.

Tourist behaviour refers to the sum of both visible activities and cognitive processes resulting from social interaction, which can be categorized into three types: visiting attractions (e.g., museums, galleries), entertainment (e.g., concerts, cultural events), and physical activity (e.g., sports, recreation) [10]. In their study, Hwang et al. [31] brought to the fore the influence of visitor activities on experiences, satisfaction, and overall happiness of tourists in specific destinations. Correspondingly, Vujičić et al. [32] assert that activities must be a critical focus in the planning, decision-making, and management of tourism products and services, to ensure the long-term sustainability of the destination. Furthermore, Bogason et al. [33] claim that SMEs can also help address seasonality issues by focusing on quality over quantity and exploring innovative solutions, such as new sales channels or collaborative offerings. Moreover, Kutlu [34] highlighted that creating a personality typology for tourism destinations can be advantageous for SMEs, allowing them to adopt a personality-oriented marketing approach. SMEs must balance customers' evolving preferences with profitability [3], and personality traits could be employed to develop more efficient messaging targeted at specific segments [34]. Similarly, Kraus et al. [35] stress the need for SMEs to enhance the value of existing customers and invest in innovative measures as key elements of their marketing strategies, with Gherghina et al. [36], highlighting that these strategies could create a competitive edge for SMEs.

Additionally, recognizing the importance of demarketing aimed at deflecting interest [37,38] to the wrong types of visitors is crucial. By strategically targeting marketing efforts towards customer segments that align with the destination's offerings and values, SMEs can ensure that resources are utilized efficiently, and that the destination experience remains authentic. This approach not only helps to mitigate potential negative impacts associated with attracting incompatible visitors but also promotes sustainability by fostering a more harmonious relationship between tourism activities and the local environment and community.

Therefore, determining tourists' personalities and motivations could explain travel behaviour, travel product choices, and advertising appeals, and used as marketing tools for SMEs.

## 2.2. Tourist Personality

The trait approach is a significant theoretical framework within the field of personality research and the broader field of psychology [39]. Bäckström et al. [11] argue that the trait approach, as a subfield of personality theory, is essential because it identifies specific characteristics that can serve as behavioural indicators. The Five Factor Model, or the Big Five, developed by Goldberg [40], is the most comprehensive taxonomy of personality traits and has gained recognition in both academic and industrial circles [41]. The Big Five personality traits can predict crucial life events, even after several decades, such as education, relationships, life satisfaction and professional growth [42]. Therefore, this theory was selected to develop the conceptual framework for predicting visitor behaviour.

Trait theory posits that individual personalities are composed of broad dispositions and focuses on individual differences [43]. Degnet et al. [44] outline that each individual's personality is formed by the interaction and combination of these Big Five traits: (1) Open-mindedness (inclination towards intellectual stimulation and diversity); (2) Conscientiousness (compliance with established norms and rules); (3) Extraversion (the need for social interaction); (4) Agreeableness (desire for harmonious relationships with others); (5) Neuroticism (the level of emotional stability, described using terms such as fearful, anxious, and insecure).

In tourism, the Five Factor Model plays a crucial role in predicting tourists' behaviours within various contexts, including adventure travel [45], and eco-tourism [12,44]. Alves et al. [9] and Kovačić et al. [10] suggest that tourist personality has a significant influence on activity choices. Moreover, Cavusoglu and Avcikurt [46] revealed that tourists with higher levels of extraversion and agreeableness significantly prioritize the pull factors of a destination, such as its facilities, natural beauty, climate, safety, accessibility, and atmosphere.

Alves et al. [9] and Kovačić et al. [10] suggest personality traits are better predictors of activity preferences than socio-demographic variables, and tourist personality affects activities at destinations. Hence, the identification of visitors' personality traits holds potential benefits for SMEs in formulating effective strategies and improving the overall tourist experience at the destination linked to the unique needs and desires of their visitors.

## 2.3. Tourist Motivation

Motivation, as a psychological and physiological state, is crucial for understanding travel behaviour and decision-making [47]. The definition of travel motivation proposed by Pereira, Grupta and Hussain [48] centres on the tourist's perception that a particular destination will satisfy their internal desires and provide them with a specific experience. Researchers such as Plog [7], Dann [49], and Cohen [8] linked tourist typologies with behaviour and destination choices.

Plog's [7] development of a tool for directly measuring tourist personality, was a widely recognized psychographic measurement model in the industry. The tool uses scale as a continuum, with allocentrism and psychocentrism at opposite ends [50]. According to Plog, [7] allocentric tourists are characterized by their level of novelty-seeking behaviour and independence, while psychocentric tourists tend to prefer familiar environments, exhibit uncertainty avoidance, and conform to social norms.

This approach to understanding travel motivation led to the development of the Travel Career Pattern (TCP) theory by Pearce and Lee [51], which provides a more nuanced understanding by



considering individuals' travel experience. The TCP framework comprises the following motivational factors: novelty (different and fun experiences), escape/relax (get away from the daily routine and stress), relationship strengthening (interact with family and friends), autonomy (desire to be independent), seeking nature (scenery appreciation), self-development (personal growth), stimulation (adventuresome experiences), relationship security (respectful company and personal safety), self-actualization (fresh perspective on life and understanding more about oneself), isolation (away from crowds), nostalgia (reflecting on memories), romance (engaging in romantic partnerships), and recognition (today's selfie) [51]. Peace and Lee [51] identify escape, novelty, and relationships as key motivations shaping travel choices. MacInnes, Ong, and Dolnicar [52] extended TCP's application to diverse groups, including study abroad students [53] and culturally diverse tourists [54].

Morrison et al. [55] identified that travel motivations are destination specific, however travel motivations, such as novelty and escape, are emerging in tourism research, suggesting their applicability [56–61]. Damijanić [62] affirms, it is crucial for SMEs within the destination to comprehend tourist motivations, create and market tourism products and services that cater to the diverse needs and wants of travellers. Moreover, Wen and Huang [63] emphasize the correlation between travel motivations and destination satisfaction, intention to revisit, and willingness to recommend.

#### *2.4. Conceptual Model and Hypothesis Development*

Literature indicates that both personality traits and travel motivations can have an impact on visitor activity preferences, although the relationship between these factors can be complex [28,64,65]. For instance, Alves et al. [9] found that personality dimensions, such as Neuroticism and Openness to Experience, could predict travel-related preferences and concerns, while Çelik and Dedeoğlu [64] found that Conscientiousness was linked to motivation for relaxation. Similarly, Yurcu et al. [65] found that Conscientiousness had a significant impact on tourism students' leisure motivation.

Research also established connections between personality traits and visitor activity preferences [10,66]. For example, Alves et al. [9] found that the five personality dimensions linked to preferences for tourist attractions, with more Open individuals preferring activities such as visiting museums and viewing landscapes, while Extraverts were negatively associated with these activities. Rafiq et al. [67] found that Extraverts are more likely to express ecotourism intentions than Neurotic tourists, and Kesenheimer and Greitemeyer [68] confirm that highly Extroverted tourists spend more money at ecotourism sites to minimise their environmental impacts. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis 1 (H1):** Personality traits affect visitor engagement in activities.

Previous research also showed links between travel motivation and engagement in specific activities, such as sports [69,70], leisure [71], wellness activities [62], and festivals and events [72]. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis 2 (H2):** Travel motivations affect visitor engagement in activities.

There remains a gap in research examining the combined effects of personality traits and travel motivations on tourist behaviour. To address this gap, this study aims to investigate the relationship between personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities (see Figure 1). By integrating these contextual perspectives, the study can better capture the complexities of tourist behaviour and provide more comprehensive insights into how personality traits and motivational factors shape tourist experiences.

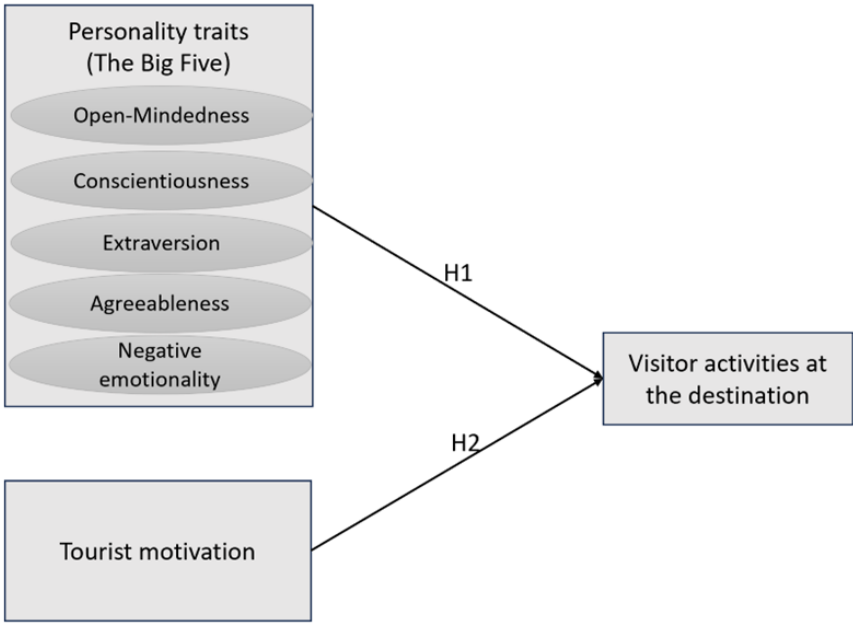


Figure 1. Research model.

3. Methods

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities. To achieve the aim, a mixed method sequential approach is employed (quan-qual), examining (1) the relationship between personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities and (2) understanding industry strategies and to market appropriate activities. Mixed approaches provide rich and exhaustive coverage of the relevant topic [31]. The quantitative approach examines the relationship between personality traits with travel motivations and activities from a larger population of visitors, whereas the qualitative approach provides a better in-depth knowledge from the SME industry representatives, honouring the voices of the participants [73].

Samples for both phases were collected in Cumbria U.K., a prominent tourist destination known for its picturesque coastal areas, rugged terrain, and UNESCO World Heritage Sites, such as The Lake District National Park and Hadrian's Wall. With approximately 47 million visitors each year, the tourism industry is valued at £2.4 billion, to the local economy [74]. The Office of National Statistics confirms that most active enterprises in Cumbria are micro businesses, accounting for 84.7%, followed by small businesses at 13%, and medium-sized businesses at 2.1%, which together constitute 99.8% of total active enterprises [75]. Cumbria is, therefore seen as a good example of a popular tourist destination majorly build upon SMEs. SMEs in Cumbria often reflect local culture and contribute to preserving heritage and natural resources. Their success is crucial for sustainable tourism, which relies on conserving Cumbria's landscapes and cultural heritage. Therefore, Cumbria's reliance on SMEs not only boosts its economy but it also sets an example for sustainable tourism development.

3.1. Phase 1

A survey was designed to achieve the first objective of examining the relationship between personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities. Random sampling was used in a pilot study of visitors in Cumbria over 18 years old, between June (2022) and August (2022). The pilot study led to modifications to the final version of the survey. Scales were selected from the literature to measure personality traits (OCEAN Model - Open-Mindedness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Negative Emotionality), using a shortened version of the Big Five Inventory proposed by Soto and John [76] (Appendix A). Travel motivation items (Appendix A), and activity preferences (Appendix A) were developed through literature review. Each construct was measured using multi-

item measurement scales. Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

3.2. Phase 2

To achieve the second objective of understanding industry strategies to market the appropriate activities, a qualitative focus group approach was used. This was guided by a list of open-ended questions gaining in-depth understanding of the subject. The purpose enabled industry practitioners to develop in-depth understanding of the model, and to challenge beliefs held by individual stakeholders. Additionally, the focus group discussion aimed to foster collaboration among stakeholders, in the strategic planning process of the destination, and allowing for the exchange of diverse perspectives [77]. A purposeful sampling method was used, where participants were chosen based on their expertise in the tourism industry. The inclusion criteria required participants to hold senior-level management positions in the industry. The focus group consisted of 9 participants, which, according to Stewart [78], provided an appropriate number of participants to ensure that all individuals had the opportunity to actively participate in the discussion.

4. Results

4.1. Phase 1

Data was analysed using factor analysis and linear regression. The linear regression identifies activities for SMEs, and the relationship between these activities with visitors’ personality traits and travel motivations.

4.1.1. Sample Demographics

The 330 valid questionnaires were added to the SPSS24, with females comprising the majority at 59.1%. The prevalent age groups of the respondents are in Group 2: 30-39yrs, representing 22.7%. The highest percentage of travellers were British citizens (80.9%). Details of the sample’s demographic are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondents’ demographic profile.

Demographic profile		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	135	40.9
	Female	195	59.1
	Total	330	100.0
Age	18-29	74	22.4
	30-39	75	22.7
	40-49	65	19.7
	50-59	57	17.3
	60+	59	17.9
	Total	330	100.0
Nationality	IN India	5	1.5
	GB United Kingdom	267	80.9
	US United States	6	1.8
	Others	52	15.8
	Total	330	100.0
Work status	Employed	226	68.5
	Self-employed	26	7.9
	Student	26	7.9
	Retired	42	12.7



Education	Unemployed	6	1.8
	I prefer not to say	4	1.2
	Total	330	100.0
	High School	31	9.4
	College	77	23.3
	Undergraduate Degree	104	31.5
	Master's Degree	56	17.0
	Postgraduate and above	47	14.2
	I prefer not to say	15	4.5
	Total	330	100.0

4.1.2. Factor Analysis

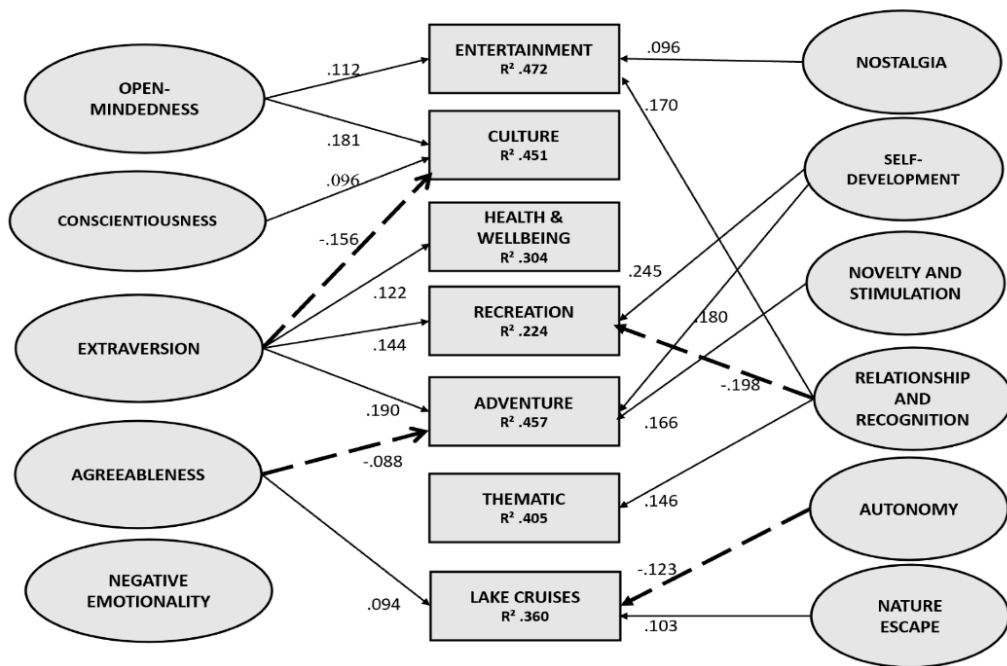
The validity of the personality traits measured by Confirmatory Factor Analysis, with KMO value at .770 and Bartlett’s Sphericity is Sig. at .000 indicating the suitability of the data for factor analysis [79] (see appendix B).

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) identified key dimensions of travel motivations and visitor activities. KMO values at 0.812 and 0.782 respectively, with Bartlett’s test significant at .000, indicating data suitability for EFA [79]. 3 items were not loading (‘Physically rest and relax’; ‘Have romantic relationships’, and ‘Do things with my partner/family/friends’), hence they were removed from the initial scale (see appendix C). EFA revealed six travel motivation factors (Self-development, Relationship and recognition, Escape, Nostalgia, Autonomy, and Novelty and stimulation), accounting for 63.24% of the variance in travel motivations. For visitor activities EFA revealed seven constructs: cultural activities, adventure, entertainment, health and wellbeing, lake cruises, recreation, and thematic activities, explaining 69.27% of the variance in visitor activities. 2 items (‘Observe natural habitats (birds/animal/wildlife)’ and ‘Taste local products’) were not loading, hence they were removed (see appendix D).

4.1.3. Measurement Model Assessment

After formulation of valid and reliable constructs, standard multiple regression was used [79] to assess the ability of personality traits and travel motivations to predict activities taken by visitors. Preliminary investigations were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, multicollinearity, linearity, and homoscedasticity. The tolerance value for each independent variable is below .8, and the variance inflation factor (VIF) values below 2.0, which is below the accepted 10 [79].

The results from the linear regression, along with the coefficients for each activity category undertaken by visitors in Cumbria, are summarized in the Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2.** Analytical results. Note. All the coefficients have p values < 0.05.

The model includes standardized beta coefficients, which assess the relative impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable [79]. Open-Mindedness, ( $\beta=.181$ ,  $p=.000$ ) indicates positive relationship with culture ( $\beta=.181$ ,  $p=.000$ ) and entertainment ( $\beta=.112$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Visitors with higher levels of Open-Mindedness exhibit a stronger inclination towards engaging in cultural activities followed by entertainment. Conscientiousness revealed positive relationship with cultural activities ( $\beta=.096$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Extraversion revealed positive relation with adventure ( $\beta=.190$ ,  $p=.000$ ), recreation ( $\beta=.144$ ,  $p=.000$ ), and health and wellbeing ( $\beta=.122$ ,  $p=.000$ ), but also a negative relationship towards culture ( $\beta=-.156$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Interestingly, data showed that when the level of extraversion increases, there is a decrease in interest towards cultural activities. Agreeableness reveals positive relationship with lake cruises ( $\beta=.094$ ,  $p=.000$ ), and negative relationship with adventure activities ( $\beta=-.088$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Negative emotionality did not reveal significance against any of the found activities (see appendix E).

The relationship between tourism motivation towards activities was also examined. Data revealed positive relationship between nostalgia and entertainment ( $\beta=.096$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Self-development positively affects recreation ( $\beta=.245$ ,  $p=.000$ ) and adventure ( $\beta=.180$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Novelty and stimulation only revealed positive relationship towards adventure ( $\beta=.166$ ,  $p=.000$ ), whilst relationship and recognition revealed positive relationship towards entertainment ( $\beta=.170$ ,  $p=.000$ ) and thematic activities ( $\beta=.146$ ,  $p=.000$ ), but negative relationship towards recreation ( $\beta=-.198$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Autonomy only revealed negative relationship with lake cruises ( $\beta=-.123$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Finally, nature escape revealed positive relationship with lake cruises.

4.2. Phase 2

To achieve the second objective of understanding industry strategies to market the appropriate activities focus group discussion was conducted with representatives of SMEs in the tourism industry, moderated by the researcher. All the participants confirmed that they, or their organizations had the concept of sustainability within their strategic planning, product development and management of tourism. The participants' roles and representative SME sectors are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Participants' profile.

Code	Role	SME sector
P1	Consultant	Tourism and hospitality businesses
P2	Marketing Manager	Accommodation – boutique hotel
P3	Manager	Accommodation - luxury hotel & self-catering
P4	Sales Marketing Manager	Accommodation - hotel
P5	Consultant	Tourism and hospitality businesses
P6	Revenue Manager	Accommodation and outdoor visitor attraction- campsite, cottages, and gardens
P7	Swim Club Manager	Activity provider
P8	Cruise Company Manager	Tour operator
P9	Museum Manager and Curator	Indoor visitor attraction

The discussion followed a presentation of results from the first phase of the study to provide industry practitioners a deeper understanding of the model. First findings revealed that most industry practitioners in Cumbria segment their market when they arrive at their area, based on *“what they do when they are with us, not who they are when coming”* (P6). For example, hoteliers adopt market segmentation strategies based on traditional factors such as the purpose of the visit (leisure, business, or spa), and the type of accommodation reserved (family rooms or pet-friendly rooms). Similarly, tourist attraction businesses segment customers based on the reasons for the visit and the type of tickets bought, such as general admission or event-specific tickets.

Second findings revealed a positive approach towards adopting personality-based marketing and creating promotional content aligned with their customers' personalities *“This can only be positive and make the person feel that when they arrive, it will be safe, comfortable, and enjoyable”* (P2). Practitioners highlighted the efficiency of this approach *“Given our limited resources, anything that can be straightforward, simplified, and compact for us to implement is better”* (P9), as it allows them to target the right individuals and not on people who have no intention of visiting or spending money.

Finally, despite the enthusiasm towards personality-based segmentation the practitioners had certain concerns, including the associated costs and time commitment required for conducting the research, and scepticism over the possible changes in personality traits and motivations over time. *“Personality traits might change... Life events change personality”* (P6), *“They might visit for one reason when they had family and then it changes, it changes the dynamics of that visit. I think it would be evolving.”* (P7) so, highlighting the importance of factors such as seasonality, family dynamics, and the influence of dominant personalities within travel groups.

However, despite the dynamic nature of visitor characteristics, all tourism practitioners involved emphasized the importance of sending the right message *“But I’m not going to change what I offer because this is who I am, I’m in the Lake District. So yeah, this is my offering, I attract 1, 2 or 3, so I send the right message through the website, through an app, to address the characteristics of each of the variable”* (P1); *“This also has opportunities on how these activities make somebody feel [...] You know how wellbeing makes people feel and you know that could be linked back to those personality traits”* (P6). However, by comprehending personality traits and travel motivations, industry professionals agree that they could tailor their offerings in a manner that aligns with their visitors' personalities, attracting the right customers, building loyalty, and enhancing stakeholder collaboration.

## 5. Discussion

This study addresses the significance of personality within the tourism sector, exploring two distinct viewpoints. Firstly, it examines the impact of personality traits and travel motivations on visitor behaviour, particularly in relation to activity selection. Secondly, it highlights the relevance of this perspective for tourism industry professionals seeking to integrate this approach into their marketing strategies. Results demonstrate correlations between personality dimensions and travel motivations with specific tourist activities at the destination.

### 5.1. Entertainment

Entertainment is predicted by the personality trait of Open-Mindedness supporting previous findings [9,44] and travel motivations of nostalgia and relationship supporting literature [72,80]. Aligned with the characteristic of Open-Mindedness, it is suggested marketers prioritize the enhancement of aesthetic attributes and creative elements to elevate entertainment quality. Kim, Kim, and Petrick [82] also highlight nostalgia's effectiveness as a persuasive strategy in attracting new visitors, while Choo, Joo, and Woosnam [83] underscore its significant role in enhancing revisit intentions, contributing to the success of sporting events.

### 5.2. Culture

Cultural activities (e.g., visiting museums, archaeological sites, galleries), are aligned with the personality traits Open-Mindedness [84] and Conscientiousness [10], while Extraversion negatively predicts it [10]. In Cumbria, cultural tourism opportunities, such as historical sites, museums, and art galleries, cater to the intellectual and aesthetic requirements of individuals with high Openness in contrast with Alves et al.'s [9] research which showed that these sites were favoured by Agreeable individuals. Matzler et al. [85] also found that Conscientious people are inclined towards local culture, with Yoo & Gretzel [86] suggesting that logical, function-focused marketing is more effective for them.

### 5.3. Health and Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing activities are predicted by individuals high in Extraversion. The study's results align with prior research [9]. Additionally, Alves et al. [9] found that individuals with high levels of Extraversion place a greater emphasis on their self-image, this explains their interest in spa treatments and wellness activities. Furthermore, Damijanić [62] identified that the pursuit of rewards was a crucial motivator for wellness tourists, suggesting that reward schemes are appropriate for this segment.

### 5.4. Recreation

Recreational activities are predicted by personality trait Extraversion [87], and tourist motivation of self-development [88]. Extroverts, known for their high levels of energy [89], engage in various recreational activities such as mountaineering, hiking, long walks, and running. Similarly, the study by Happ et al. [90] highlights the role of sport-related expectations such as competition, exhibitionism, sociability, and pushing one's limits as drivers of long-distance hikers' motivation. In congruence with the current study, Tomik et al. [70] affirm that hikers are driven by personal gratification. Interestingly, findings revealed negative relationship between recreation activities and the tourist motivation of relationship and recognition contrary to previous research by Blackwell et al. [91].

### 5.5. Adventure

Adventure activities like sailing, gliding, climbing attract personality traits of Extraversion supporting previous literature [89,92,93], whilst Agreeable personality traits seem to reject these activities agreeing with previous studies [94]. Those who score high in Agreeableness may exhibit lower participation levels in adventure activities due to their heightened risk aversion and concerns for potential consequences [95]. Findings revealed that travel motivations of self-development and novelty and stimulation positively influence participation in adventure activities [96]. Tourists' primary motivation for participating in outdoor activities revolves around elements such as excitement, challenge, and personal fulfilment [69,70]. Individuals with high Extraversion are predicted to participate in adventure activities, motivated by novelty and self-development. This observation is supported by Alves et al. [9] and Vargas et al. [97] who discovered that individuals with a pronounced preference for high-adrenaline activities exhibit elevated levels of Extraversion.

### 5.6. Thematic Activities

Thematic activities (horse riding, archery, masterclasses) do not reveal a direct association with any specific personality trait. This outcome disagrees with previous literature from Alves et al. [9]. The gap of links between personality traits and activities could be due to the heterogenous nature of these activities, and there may not be a single personality trait that is linked with all of them. Travel motivation of relationship and recognition positively affects thematic activities which is found as a unique contribution.

### 5.7. Lake Cruises

Finally, lake cruises attract personality traits high in Agreeableness [9,10] motivated by the need to escape [98]. Di Fabio and Kenny [19] revealed that Agreeable travellers are attracted to the natural beauty of a destination and have a greater connection to nature. This is consistent with the desire to escape from daily routines and appreciate nature, highlighted in the findings of Cavusoglu and Avcikurt [46]. The findings revealed negative relationship between autonomy and lake cruises. This could be explained since individuals with high autonomy motivations tend to avoid lake cruises due to their preference for control over their leisure time and activities [99].

Lastly, the absence of any association between tourist activity and the personality trait of Negative Emotionality is consistent with prior research by Kovačić et al. [10] suggesting that individuals' emotional stability is unrelated to their activity preferences. The low mean score for Negative Emotionality among respondents may account for the lack of a significant correlation, possibly due to individuals with high Negative Emotionality refraining from participating in the survey.

Nonetheless, the study's findings could be advantageous for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as they provide insights into the personality traits and travel motivations of their customers. By aligning their promotional content and activities with their customers' personalities, SMEs agree that they could enhance the guest experience, boost customer loyalty, and optimize resource utilization. Although there may be some challenges associated with implementing a personality-based approach, such as costs and time commitments, tourism experts believe that it is vital to convey the right message and focus on the emotions evoked.

## 6. Conclusions

Concluding, this study aimed to investigate the relationship between personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities. To achieve the aim, the study adopted a mix method approach (Quan-Qual), (1) examining the relationship between personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities and (2) exploring industry strategies to market the appropriate activities. The quantitative approach gathered data from a sample of tourists and found correlations between personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities. The qualitative approach provided further insights into the understanding of the model by tourism industry practitioners, representing small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in a focus group.

The present study provides valuable insights for SMEs to develop effective marketing strategies and make informed decisions, benefiting their customers and businesses. By recognizing the personality dimensions and travel motivations that are associated with various tourism activities, tourism marketers could create tailored campaigns that resonate with their target audience, enhance the visitor's overall experience, promote stakeholder collaboration, and build customer loyalty. Additionally, SMEs can benefit from demarketing efforts targeted at avoiding attracting the wrong customers. By understanding which customer segments may not align with the destination's offerings or values, SMEs can strategically limit promotional efforts towards these groups. Demarketing to the wrong customers not only conserves resources but also ensures that marketing efforts are directed towards individuals who are more likely to appreciate and contribute positively to the destination's sustainable development goals. This approach helps maintain the authenticity and integrity of the destination experience while minimizing potential negative impacts on the local community and environment.



6.1. Theoretical Contributions

Despite previous research on the relationship of personality traits and behaviours [19], travel intention [20], tourism information search [21], and correlation between personality traits and travel motivations [10], and visitor activities [9] there is a dearth of studies that investigate the combined influence of personality traits and travel motivations on visitor activities within a destination. This study fills this gap by revealing the implications of personality traits and travel motivations towards visitors’ activities at a destination.

Unlike previous studies that adopted a quantitative approach [9,10], this study employs a comprehensive mixed methods approach that integrates qualitative and quantitative techniques. This methodological choice strengthens the robustness and depth of the research, thereby amplifying its scholarly contributions.

6.2. Managerial Implications

From a managerial perspective, the conceptual framework could be regarded as a valuable tool for the implementation of a personality-based sustainable marketing strategy. This knowledge can then be leveraged to create customized offerings that are tailored to meet the unique needs and preferences of their target market, while enhancing stakeholder collaboration. This personalized approach to marketing can have a significant impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty, both of which are key drivers of sustainable business growth.

This research focused on a sample from the Cumbria district in England, U.K. It is recommended that the methodological approach be used in other destinations, as it holds the potential of revealing different relationships based on those destinations.

6.3. Limitations and Future Research

The study has potential limitations. Firstly, it is limited to the region of Cumbria and certain travel motivations and activities were not considered (e.g., nightlife, clubbing, theme parks), limiting generalization. Future studies in other destinations should include all relevant travel motives and activities. Secondly, most participants were domestic travellers, and this may have influenced the results. Future studies should aim for equal numbers of visitors from diverse cultural backgrounds. Finally, the use of a shortened questionnaire to measure personality may have reduced the reliability of some subscales. Future research could use the original version of the personality inventory and conduct facet-level analysis for improved reliability.

**Author Contributions:** Delia Gabriela Moisa: Data curation, Writing – Original draft preparation, Software, Analysis, Validation. Demos Parapanos: Conceptualization, Methodology, Visualization, Supervision. Tim Heap: Conceptualization, Supervision, Writing – Reviewing and Editing. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire Items

Construct	Item	Source
Personality traits	I am someone who	Soto, C. J. & John, O. P. (2017)
Extraversion	Tends to be quiet.	
	Is outgoing, sociable.	

	Is dominant, acts as a leader. Prefers to have others take charge. Is full of energy. Is less active than other people. Is compassionate, has a soft heart.  Can be cold and uncaring.	
Agreeableness	Is sometimes rude to others Is respectful, treats others with respect. Assumes the best about people Tends to find fault with others Tends to be disorganized. Keeps things neat and tidy.	Soto, C. J. & John, O. P. (2017)
Conscientiousness	Has difficulty getting started on tasks. Is persistent, works until the task is finished. Is reliable, can always be counted on. Can be somewhat careless. Is fascinated by art, music, or literature. Has few artistic interests.	Soto, C. J. & John, O. P. (2017)
Open-Mindedness	Has little interest in abstract ideas Is complex, a deep thinker. Is original, comes up with new ideas. Has little creativity. Worries a lot.	Soto, C. J. & John, O. P. (2017)
Negative Emotionality	Is relaxed, handles stress well. Tends to feel depressed, blue. Feels secure, comfortable with self. Is emotionally stable, not easily upset. Is temperamental, gets emotional easily.	Soto, C. J. & John, O. P. (2017)
Travel motivations	I travel to Cumbria to...	
Novelty and stimulation	Explore the unknown/ Do something new Experience thrills or excitement	Sung, Y.K., Chang, K.C. & Sung, Y. F. (2016); Maghrifani, D., Liu, F. & Sneddon,

<b>Escape</b>	Seek fun and enjoyment	J. (2022); Pearce, P. & Lee, U. (2005); Wong et al., (2013)
	Physically rest and relax	Jeong, Y.; Zielinski, S.; Chang, J.-S.; Kim, S.-i. (2018); Maghrifani, D., Liu, F. & Sneddon, J. (2022); Pearce, P. & Lee, U. (2005); Wong et al., (2013); Capar, G., Pala, T. & Toksöz, D. (2022);
	Escape from the daily routine	
	Be away from the crowds of people	
<b>Relationship</b>	Do things with my partner/family/friends	Jeong, Y.; Zielinski, S.; Chang, J.-S.; Kim, S.-i. (2018); Hsu, C.H.C., Cai, L., A., and Li, M. (2010); Maghrifani, D., Liu, F. & Sneddon, J. (2022); Pearce, P. & Lee, U. (2005); Sung, Y.K., Chang, K.C. & Sung, Y. F. (2016)
	Meet new people who enjoy the same things as I do	
	Connect with friends or relatives living in other locations	
	Have romantic relationships	
<b>Recognition</b>	Share skills with others/ showing what I can do	Pearce, P. & Lee, U. (2005); Sung, Y.K., Chang, K.C. & Sung, Y. F. (2016)
	Visit a destination that would impress others	
<b>Nature</b>	Admire and be close to nature	Jeong, Y.; Zielinski, S.; Chang, J.-S.; Kim, S.-I. (2018); Oktadiana, H., Pearce, P. L., Pusiran, A. K. and Agarwal, M. (2017); Pearce, P. & Lee, U. (2005)
	Get a better appreciation of nature	
<b>Autonomy</b>	Be independent	Oktadiana, H., Pearce, P. L., Pusiran, A. K. & Agarwal, M. (2017); Pearce, P. & Lee, U. (2005)
	Do things my own way	
<b>Self-development</b>	Develop my skills and abilities	Capar, G., Pala, T., Toksöz, D. (2022); Oktadiana, H., Pearce, P. L., Pusiran, A. K. and Agarwal, M. (2017); Pearce, P. & Lee, U. (2005)
	Experience a new culture and meet new people	
	Gain a sense of accomplishment	
<b>Self-actualization</b>	Understand more about myself	Capar, G., Pala, T., Toksöz, D. (2022); Oktadiana, H., Pearce, P. L., Pusiran, A. K. and Agarwal, M. (2017); Pearce, P. & Lee, U. (2005)
	Get outside of my comfort zone	
<b>Nostalgia</b>	Think about good times I have had in the past	Oktadiana, H., Pearce, P. L., Pusiran, A. K. and Agarwal, M. (2017); Pearce, P. & Lee, U. (2005)
	Reflect on past memories	
<b>Visitor activities</b>	While in Cumbria, I...	
<b>Adventure</b>	Do adventure activities on water (e.g., sailing, canoeing, diving, jet skiing)	Alves, P., Saraiva, P., Carneiro, J., Campos, P., Martins, H., Novais, P., Marreiros, G. (2022)
	Do adventure activities in the air (e.g., parachute jump, gliding)	
	Do adventure activities on the land (rock climbing/ abseiling/ off road)	

Recreation	Practice hiking / mountaineering/ long walks in nature	Alves, P., Saraiva, P., Carneiro, J., Campos, P., Martins, H., Novais, P., Marreiros, G. (2022);
	Observe natural habitats (birds/animal/wildlife)	
	Practice wild swimming/ forest bathing	
Entertainment	Attend a festival/ concert	Alves, P., Saraiva, P., Carneiro, J., Campos, P., Martins, H., Novais, P., Marreiros, G. (2022)
	Attend cultural activities / artistic performance	
	Attend other special events (e.g., wedding, birthday party)	
History & Heritage	Visit archaeological sites / ruins	Alves, P., Saraiva, P., Carneiro, J., Campos, P., Martins, H., Novais, P., Marreiros, G. (2022)
	Visit monuments (e.g. castles, churches, historic houses), parks and gardens	
Museums & Art	Visit museums	Alves, P., Saraiva, P., Carneiro, J., Campos, P., Martins, H., Novais, P., Marreiros, G. (2020); Kovačić, S., Jovanović T., Vujičić, M.,Morrison, A. & Kennell, J. (2022)
	Visit exhibitions/ art galleries	
Sports	Participate in sporting competitions (e.g., trail running, cycling competition)	Alves, P., Saraiva, P., Carneiro, J., Campos, P., Martins, H., Novais, P., Marreiros, G. (2022); Kovačić, S., Jovanović T., Vujičić, M.,Morrison, A. & Kennell, J. (2022)
	Exercise (e.g. walking, running, cycling)	
	Engage in thematic sports (e.g., horse riding, archery)	
Gastronomy	Participate in a food and beverage masterclass	Alves, P., Saraiva, P., Carneiro, J., Campos, P., Martins, H., Novais, P., Marreiros, G. (2022); Kovačić, S., Jovanović T., Vujičić, M.,Morrison, A. & Kennell, J. (2022)
	Taste local products	
Boat tours	Take boat trips to explore the destination	Alves, P., Saraiva, P., Carneiro, J., Campos, P., Martins, H., Novais, P., Marreiros, G. (2022)
	Take boat trips for the historical value of the route	
Health & Well-being	Go to a SPA / beauty centre	Alves, P., Saraiva, P., Carneiro, J., Campos, P., Martins, H., Novais, P., Marreiros, G. (2022)
	Undergo health and wellness treatments	

Appendix B: Personality Traits: Constructs and Items

Factor	Measuring item	Factor loading	Cumulative interpretation variance (%)	Cronbach's $\alpha$
Negative Emotionality	I am someone who is emotionally stable, not easily upset.	.843	12.192	0.863
	I am someone who worries a lot.	.805		
	I am someone who is relaxed, handles stress well.	.747		
	I am someone who tends to feel depressed, blue.	.721		

Conscientiousness	I am someone who is temperamental, gets emotional easily.	.709	11.173	0.801
	I am someone who feels secure, comfortable with self.	.675		
	I am someone who tends to be disorganized.	.768		
	I am someone who keeps things neat and tidy.	.738		
	I am someone who is persistent, works until the task is finished.	.720		
	I am someone who can be somewhat careless.	.669		
	I am someone who has difficulty getting started on tasks.	.639		
	I am someone who is reliable, can always be counted on.	.594		
	I am someone who can be cold and uncaring.	.731		
	I am someone who tends to find fault with others.	.662		
Agreeableness	I am someone who assumes the best about people.	.658	9.826	0.753
	I am someone who is compassionate, has a soft heart.	.649		
	I am someone who is sometimes rude to others.	.637		
	I am someone who is respectful, treats others with respect.	.607		
	I am someone who is dominant, acts as a leader.	.724		
	I am someone who is outgoing, sociable.	.720		
Extraversion	I am someone who tends to be quiet.	.708	9.158	0.737
	I am someone who is full of energy.	.641		
	I am someone who prefers to have others take charge.	.581		
	I am someone who is less active than other people.	.395		
	I am someone who has little interest in abstract ideas.	.682		
	I am someone who has little creativity.	.670		
Open-mindedness	I am someone who is original, comes up with new ideas.	.662	8.869	0.720
	I am someone who is fascinated by art, music, or literature.	.660		
	I am someone who is complex, a deep thinker.	.612		



I am someone who has few artistic  
interests. .564

Note: Confirmatory Factor Analysis extraction method: Principal Component; Rotation method:  
Varimax.

Appendix C: Travel Motivation: Constructs and Items

Factor	Item	Factor loading	Cronbach's α
Self-development	I travel to Cumbria		
	to gain a sense of accomplishment.	.724	
	to understand more about myself.	.659	.836
	to get outside of my comfort zone.	.655	
Relationship and recognition	to develop my skills and abilities.	.583	
	to share skills with others/ showing what I can do.	.693	
	to meet new people who enjoy the same things as I do.	.663	
	to experience a new culture and meet new people.	.595	.724
Escape	to connect with friends or relatives living in other locations.	.487	
	as it is a destination that would impress others.	.457	
	to get a better appreciation of nature.	.840	
	to admire and be close to nature.	.779	.701
Nostalgia	to escape from the daily routine.	.441	
	to be away from the crowds of people.	.438	
	to think about good times I have had in the past.	.958	.936
	to reflect on past memories.	.839	
Autonomy	to be independent.	.795	.867
	to do things my own way.	.778	
Novelty and stimulation	to seek fun and enjoyment.	.720	.743
	to explore the unknown/ do something new.	.558	
	to experience thrills or excitement.	.547	

Note: Exploratory Factor Analysis: Extraction method: Principal Axis Factoring, Rotation method:  
Varimax.

Appendix D: Visitor Activities: Constructs and Items

Factor	Item	Factor loading	Cronbach's α
Local culture	While in Cumbria, I choose to...		
	visit archaeological sites/ruins.	.782	
	visit monuments (e.g., castles, churches, historic houses) parks, and gardens.	.780	.867
	visit museums.	.747	
Adventure	visit exhibitions/ art galleries.	.617	
	do adventure activities on water (e.g., sailing, canoeing, diving, jet skiing).	.732	.742
	do adventure activities in the air (e.g., parachute jump, gliding).	.648	

	do adventure activities on the land (rock climbing/ abseiling/ off road).	.611	
	practice wild swimming/ forest bathing.	.542	
	participate in sporting competitions (e.g., trail running, cycling competition).	.414	
	attend festivals/concerts.	.709	
Entertainment	attend cultural activities/ artistic performances.	.703	.768
	attend other special events (e.g., wedding, birthday party).	.446	
Health & wellbeing	go to a SPA/ beauty centre.	.865	.915
	undergo health and wellness treatments.	.849	
Lake cruises	take boat trips to explore the destination.	.898	.801
	take boat trips for the historical value of the route.	.593	
Recreation	practice hiking / mountaineering/ long walks in nature.	.892	.704
	exercise (e.g., walking, running, cycling).	.590	
Thematic activities	participate in food and beverage masterclasses.	.681	.721
	engage in thematic sports (e.g., horse riding, archery).	.541	

Note: Exploratory Factor Analysis: Extraction method: Principal Axis Factoring, Rotation method: Varimax.

Appendix E: Beta Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Dependent variable: Culture					
	EXTRAVERSION	-0.240	0.078	-0.156	-3.054	0.002
	CONSCIENTIOUSNESS	0.136	0.065	0.096	2.105	0.036
	OPEN-MINDEDNESS	0.259	0.064	0.181	4.016	0.000
2	Dependent variable: Adventure					
	EXTRAVERSION	0.271	0.072	0.190	3.773	0.000
	AGREEABLENESS	-0.139	0.072	-0.088	-1.936	0.054
	Self-development	0.175	0.058	0.180	3.039	0.003
3	Novelty and stimulation	0.200	0.065	0.166	3.086	0.002
	Dependent variable: Recreation					
	EXTRAVERSION	0.151	0.069	0.133	2.176	0.030
	Self-Development	0.180	0.054	0.234	3.313	0.001
4	Relationship	-0.214	0.060	-0.235	-3.570	0.000
	Dependent variable: Entertainment					
	OPEN-MINDEDNESS	0.153	0.061	0.112	2.500	0.013
	Relationship & recognition	0.201	0.065	0.170	3.111	0.002
5	Nostalgia	0.077	0.036	0.096	2.118	0.035
	Dependent variable: Health & wellbeing					
	EXTRAVERSION	0.213	0.101	0.122	2.112	0.035
	Dependent variable: Lake cruise					
	AGREEABLENESS	0.175	0.092	0.094	1.901	0.058

	Escape	0.194	0.102	0.103	1.909	0.057
	Autonomy	-0.128	0.056	-0.123	-2.273	0.024
	Dependent variable: Recreation					
6	EXTRAVERSION	0.160	0.068	0.144	2.365	0.019
	Self-development	0.186	0.053	0.245	3.494	0.001
	Relationship & recognition	-0.178	0.059	-0.198	-2.999	0.003
7	Dependent variable: Thematic activities					
	Relationship & recognition	0.146	0.065	0.132	2.257	0.025

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