

Moisa, Delia ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-9365-7893> , Parapanos, Demos ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8720-3334> and Heap, Tim (2024) Exploring strategies to market SMEs' activities: the role of personality traits and travel motivations in tourist activities. *Tourism and Hospitality*, 5 (4). pp. 1042-1064.

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Article

Exploring Strategies to Market SMEs' Activities: The Role of Personality Traits and Travel Motivations in 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 their commitment to sustainability in Cumbria, home to UNESCO World Heritage Sites like the Lake District National Park and Hadrian's Wall. Data were 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 relationships between personality traits, travel motivations, and tourist activities can benefit tourism SMEs. By comprehending tourists' 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



Citation: Moisa, D.G.; Parapanos, D.; Heap, T. Exploring Strategies to Market SMEs' Activities: The Role of Personality Traits and Travel Motivations in Tourist Activities. *Tour. Hosp.* **2024**, *5*, 1042–1064. <https://doi.org/10.3390/tourhosp5040059>

Academic Editor: Lewis Ting
On Cheung

Received: 30 September 2024
Revised: 25 October 2024
Accepted: 28 October 2024
Published: 30 October 2024



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1. Introduction

The tourism industry is dominated by small and medium-sized 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 the market based on socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, and education [4]. However, the multifaceted nature of tourist activity [5] calls for the consideration of psychological factors in the characterisation 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] organised mass tourist model being widely applied in tourism studies. Others have 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] explained 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 individuals' 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] confirmed that personality traits exert a significant impact on the decision-making process and the selection of a travel destination. This influence extends to the domain of destination choice [16], destination satisfaction [17], and travel intention [18].

Despite previous research on the relationship between personality traits and behaviours [19], travel intention [20], tourism information searches [21], and the correlation between personality traits and travel motivations [22], there is a dearth of studies investigating the combined influence of personality traits and travel motivations on activities within a destination. Therefore, this study investigates the relationships of personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities. This study's theoretical contribution lies in combining the investigation of personality traits and travel motivation with respect to tourists' activities in a destination, adopting a novel approach. To achieve this, this study adopts a mixed-methods approach (Quan/Qual), (1) examining the relationships of 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 of the relationship between tourists and the industry.

The outcome of this study anticipates both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it adds to the body of literature explaining the relationships of 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 prioritises 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 wellbeing in the community [24].

This manuscript adopts a structured approach, which includes a literature review that explores relevant theoretical frameworks, a dedicated section for developing the conceptual model and hypotheses, a methodology section detailing the quantitative and qualitative methods used, a results section that showcases the findings, a discussion that situates these results within the existing literature, and a conclusion that highlights theoretical and managerial implications, acknowledges limitations, and offers recommendations for future research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Understanding Tourist Behaviour for SMEs' 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] emphasised 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 emphasised 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 categorised 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, Huang et al. [31] brought to the fore the influence of visitor activities on the experiences, satisfaction, and overall happiness of

tourists in specific destinations. Correspondingly, Vujičić et al. [32] asserted that activities must be a critical focus in the planning, decision-making, and management of tourism products and services, so as to ensure the long-term sustainability of the destination. Furthermore, Bogason et al. [33] claimed 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] stressed 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, recognising the importance of demarketing aimed at deflecting interest [37,38] from 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 their resources are utilised 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 they could be 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] outlined how 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), and (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 tourists' personality has a significant influence on their activity choices. Moreover, Cavusoglu and Avcikurt [46] revealed that tourists with higher levels of extraversion and agreeableness significantly prioritise 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] suggested that personality traits are better predictors of activity preferences than socio-demographic variables, and that tourists' personality affects their 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, Gupta, 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] have linked tourist typologies with behaviour and destination choices.

Plog's [7] development of a tool for directly measuring tourists' personality represented a widely recognised 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 characterised 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/relaxation (getting away from the daily routine and stress), relationship strengthening (interactions 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-actualisation (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]. Pearce and Lee [51] identified escape, novelty, and relationships as key motivations shaping travel choices. MacInnes, Ong, and Dolnicar [52] extended the TCP model's application to diverse groups, including students studying abroad [53] and culturally diverse tourists [54].

Morrison et al. [55] found 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] affirmed that it is crucial for SMEs within the destination to comprehend tourists' motivations in order to create and market tourism products and services that cater to the diverse needs and wants of travellers. Moreover, Wen and Huang [63] emphasised the correlation between travel motivations and destination satisfaction, intention to revisit, and willingness to recommend.

3. Conceptual Model and Hypothesis Development

The 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 has also established connections between personality traits and visitor activity preferences [10,66]. For example, Alves et al. [9] found that the five personality dimensions were 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 were more likely to express ecotourism intentions than neurotic tourists, and Kesenheimer and Greitemeyer [68] confirmed that highly extraverted tourists spend more money at eco-

tourism sites to minimise their environmental impacts. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

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

Research indicates that travel motivations significantly influence the types of activities that tourists select to engage in, with multiple studies establishing connections between specific motivations and activity preferences [69–72]. For example, Mishra et al. [69] and Tomik et al. [70] explored the travel motives that drive participation in active sports tourism, while Kara and Mkwizu [71] investigated travel motivations among leisure tourists. Additionally, Damijanić [69] focused on travel motivations within the wellness tourism sector, and Yan and Halpenny [72] examined the role of motivation in event participation. Scholars such as Taecharungroj and Mathayomchan [29] and Ying et al. [30] have highlighted the essential role of motivation in shaping consumers' purchasing decisions and overall travel behaviour. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 2 (H2). *Travel motivations affect visitors' 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 relationships of personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities (see Figure 1). By integrating these contextual perspectives, this study can better capture the complexities of tourist behaviour and provide more comprehensive insights into how personality traits and motivational factors shape tourist experiences.

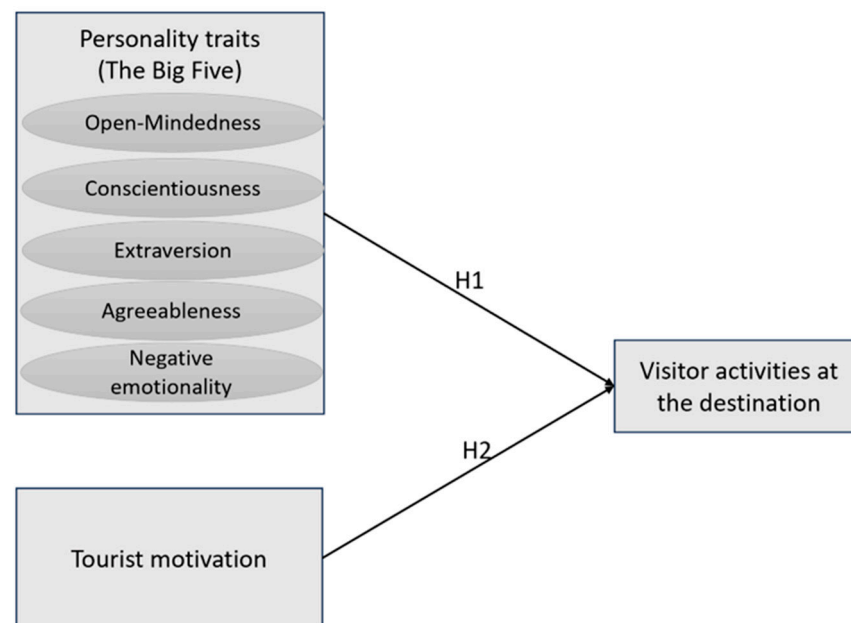


Figure 1. Research model.

4. Methods

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationships of personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities. To achieve this aim, a mixed-methods sequential approach was employed (Quan/Qual), examining (1) the relationships of personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities, and (2) understanding industry strategies to market appropriate activities. Mixed approaches provide rich and exhaustive coverage of the relevant topic [31]. The quantitative approach examines the relationships of 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 GBP 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 mainly built 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 also sets an example for sustainable tourism development.

4.1. Phase 1

A survey was designed to achieve the first objective of examining the relationships of personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities. Random sampling was used in a pilot study of visitors to Cumbria over 18 years old, between June (2022) and August (2022). Tourists who were either visiting or had visited the destination within the past couple of months were selected to ensure that the data reflected recent and relevant travel experiences. The survey was distributed both online and offline to reach a broad range of participants. For online distribution, social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram were used to recruit respondents, targeting relevant travel groups and communities. The data collection process was conducted through the Jisc platform, which provided a secure and efficient means of managing the survey responses.

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 the literature review. Each construct was measured using multi-item measurement scales. The respondents were asked to indicate their agreement on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

4.2. 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 to provide in-depth understanding of the subject. This enabled industry practitioners to develop an 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, as well as allowing for the exchange of diverse perspectives [77]. A purposeful sampling method was used, where the participants were chosen based on their expertise in the tourism industry. The inclusion criteria required the participants to hold senior-level management positions in the industry. The participants were selected for their active roles in diverse tourism-related sectors such as accommodation management, activity provision, and tourism consultancy, ensuring that the qualitative data gathered from focus group discussions would be credible and contextually relevant due to their substantial sector-specific expertise. Participants were identified through professional networking, and potential candidates were contacted via email to invite them to take part in the study. Each invitee was also briefed on the project, including its objectives and the nature of their potential contribution, to ensure their informed and meaningful participation. 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.

5. Results

5.1. Phase 1

Data were analysed using factor analysis and linear regression. The linear regression identified activities for SMEs, as well as the relationships of these activities with visitors' personality traits and travel motivations.

5.1.1. Sample Demographics

The 330 valid questionnaires were added to the SPSS24, with females comprising the majority at 59.1%. The predominant age group of the respondents was Group 2: 30–39 yrs, representing 22.7%. The majority of the travellers were British citizens (80.9%). Details of the sample's demographics 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
	Unemployed	6	1.8
	I prefer not to say	4	1.2
	Total	330	100.0
Education	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	

5.1.2. Factor Analysis

The validity of the personality traits measured by confirmatory factor analysis, with the KMO value at 0.770 and Bartlett's sphericity is Sig. at 0.000, 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. The KMO values were 0.812 and 0.782 with Bartlett's test significant at 0.000, indicating data suitability for EFA [79]. Three 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. Two items (“Observe natural habitats (birds/animal/wildlife)” and “Taste local products”) were not loading; hence, they were removed (see Appendix D).

5.1.3. Measurement Model Assessment

After the 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 undertaken 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 was below 0.8, and the variance inflation factor (VIF) values were 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 summarised in the figure below (see Figure 2).

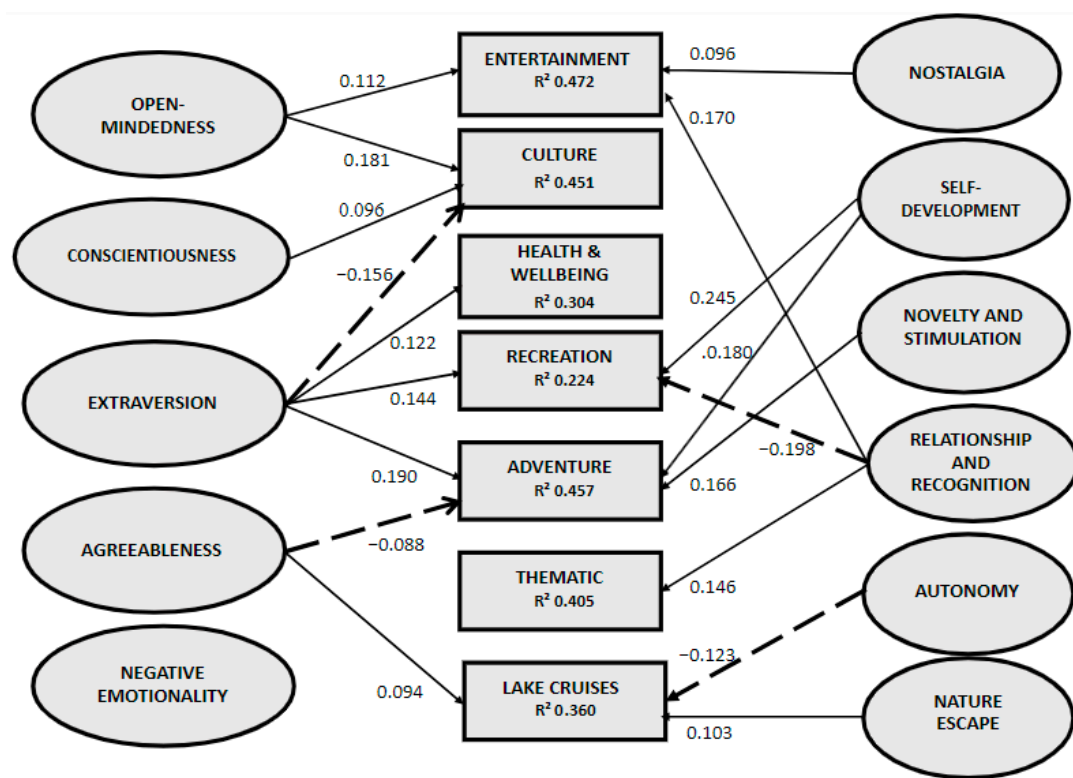


Figure 2. Analytical results. Note: All of the coefficients have p-values < 0.05.

The model includes standardised beta coefficients, which assess the relative impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable [79]. Open-mindedness, ($\beta = 0.181, p = 0.000$) indicates a positive relationship with culture ($\beta = 0.181, p = 0.000$) and entertainment ($\beta = 0.112, p = 0.000$). Visitors with higher levels of open-mindedness exhibit a stronger inclination towards engaging in cultural activities, followed by entertainment. Conscientiousness revealed a positive relationship with cultural activities ($\beta = 0.096, p = 0.000$). Extraversion revealed a positive relationship with adventure ($\beta = 0.190, p = 0.000$), recreation ($\beta = 0.144, p = 0.000$), and health and wellbeing ($\beta = 0.122, p = 0.000$), but also a negative relationship with culture ($\beta = -0.156, p = 0.000$). Interestingly, the data showed that when the level of extraversion increases, there is a decrease in interest towards cultural activities. Agreeableness revealed a positive relationship with lake cruises ($\beta = 0.094, p = 0.000$), while negative emotionality revealed a positive relationship with lake cruises ($\beta = 0.094, p = 0.000$).

$p = 0.000$) and a negative relationship with adventure activities ($\beta = -0.088, p = 0.000$). Negative emotionality did not reveal significance with respect to any of the considered activities (see Appendix E).

The relationship between tourism motivation and activities was also examined. The data revealed a positive relationship between nostalgia and entertainment ($\beta = 0.096, p = 0.000$). Self-development positively affects recreation ($\beta = 0.245, p = 0.000$) and adventure ($\beta = 0.180, p = 0.000$). Novelty and stimulation only revealed positive relationships with adventure ($\beta = 0.166, p = 0.000$), whilst relationships and recognition revealed positive relationships with entertainment ($\beta = 0.170, p = 0.000$) and thematic activities ($\beta = 0.146, p = 0.000$) but negative relationships with recreation ($\beta = -0.198, p = 0.000$). Autonomy only revealed a negative relationship with lake cruises ($\beta = -0.123, p = 0.000$). Finally, nature escape revealed a positive relationship with lake cruises.

5.2. Phase 2

To achieve the second objective of understanding industry strategies to market the appropriate activities, a focus group discussion was conducted with representatives of SMEs in the tourism industry, moderated by the researchers. All of the participants confirmed that they, or their organisations, 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 and self-catering
P4	Sales marketing manager	Accommodation—hotel
P5	Consultant	Tourism and hospitality businesses
P6	Revenue manager	Accommodation and outdoor visitor attractions—campsites, 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. By applying thematic analysis, the 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, our 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 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 the time commitment

required for conducting the research, along with 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) Thus, they highlighted 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 emphasised 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, the industry professionals agreed 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.

6. 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. The results demonstrate correlations of personality dimensions and travel motivations with specific tourist activities at the destination.

6.1. Entertainment

Entertainment is predicted by the personality trait of open-mindedness, supporting previous findings [9,44], and travel motivations of nostalgia and relationships, supporting the literature [72,80]. Alves et al. [9] also found a positive correlation between participation in entertainment activities and traits such as openness to new experiences, intellectual stimulation, and diversity, key characteristics of open-minded individuals [44]. Similarly, Yan and Halpenny [72] showed that tourists motivated by knowledge tend to attend art and culture festivals, while those driven by relationship building often participate in events like farmers’ markets and religious festivals. Moreover, to capitalize on travellers’ preference for experiential purchases over material ones [80], marketers should enhance aesthetic attributes and creative elements, as these factors significantly improve the quality of entertainment. This aligns with the findings of Almeida and Garrod [81], who identified event-related quality, such as aesthetic appeal, as more influential than socio-demographic or motivational factors in shaping visitor satisfaction. Additionally, nostalgia is a significant factor in travel motivation, as highlighted by Kim, Kim, and Petrick [82], who noted its effectiveness in attracting new visitors. Choo, Joo, and Woosnam [83] further emphasised that nostalgia increases the likelihood of revisit intentions, especially for sporting events, thereby contributing to their overall success.

6.2. Culture

Cultural activities (e.g., visiting museums, archaeological sites, or galleries) are aligned with the personality traits open-mindedness [84] and conscientiousness [10], while extraversion negatively predicts it [10]. Individuals who are open-minded, characterised by their curiosity, appreciation for beauty, and desire for intellectual stimulation, are naturally attracted to cultural experiences [84]. This is consistent with Kovačić et al.’s [10] findings, which identified knowledge-seeking and the desire for first-hand experiences as key motivators for those high in openness. In Cumbria, cultural tourism opportunities cater to the intellectual and aesthetic preferences of individuals with high levels of open-

mindfulness, contrasting with Alves et al.'s [9] research, which suggests that these sites are more often favoured by agreeable individuals. Likewise, Matzler et al. [85] noted that conscientious individuals are inclined to engage with local culture, history, and heritage, valuing structure, detail, and factual information. Yoo and Gretzel [86] recommended that logical, function-focused marketing strategies are most effective for this audience, as they prefer tourism products and services that highlight practical and informative content. In contrast, extraverted individuals tend to prioritise excitement, spontaneity, and social interaction, leading to a reduced interest in cultural activities in Cumbria. Kovačić et al. [10] further supported this inverse relationship, indicating that extraverts are more likely to seek socially engaging and stimulating experiences rather than cultural pursuits.

6.3. Health and Wellbeing

Individuals high in extraversion are expected to actively participate in health and wellbeing activities, consistent with previous research indicating a strong link between this personality trait and a focus on health [9]. Specifically, Alves et al. [9] found that extraverts often prioritise their self-image, which accounts for their significant interest in spa treatments and wellness activities. Additionally, Damijanić [62] highlighted the importance of reward-seeking as a key motivator for wellness tourists, suggesting that this segment may respond positively to incentive programs that encourage participation in health-focused activities. These findings suggest that marketers can effectively appeal to extraverts by promoting experiences that enhance self-image and offer rewards, ultimately aligning with their intrinsic motivations for health and wellbeing.

6.4. Recreation

Recreational activities are predicted by the personality trait extraversion [87], and by the tourist motivation of self-development [88]. Extraverts, known for their high levels of energy [89], engage in various recreational activities such as mountaineering, hiking, long walks, and running. Faullant et al. [87] further suggest that more extraverted individuals derive greater pleasure from intense experiences, highlighting the link between extraversion and active leisure participation. Similarly, Happ et al. [90] identified sport-related expectations, such as competition, exhibitionism, sociability, and pushing one's limits, as key motivators for long-distance hikers. However, contrary to Blackwell et al.'s [91] earlier findings that extraverts often display friendly behaviour to foster social connections, the current study found a negative correlation between relationships as a travel motivation and participation in recreational activities. This suggests that while extraverts enjoy social settings, their focus on self-development and personal challenges may detract from their interest in building relationships during these pursuits. Aligning with Li, Ryan, and Bin's [88] research, hikers are primarily motivated by health considerations and the pursuit of challenges and achievements, underscoring a self-centred motivational aspect consistent with the present study's findings. Similarly, Tomik et al. [70] affirmed that hikers are driven by personal gratification, emphasising the intrinsic rewards of their activities. Overall, recreational activities serve not only as sources of enjoyment but also as a means to enhance self-development. Marketers of recreational activities should highlight the personal growth and self-improvement aspects of their offerings, showcasing how participation can lead to greater fulfilment.

6.5. Adventure

Adventure activities like sailing, gliding, and climbing attract personality traits of extraversion, supporting the previous literature [89,92,93], whilst agreeable personality traits seem to reject these activities, in agreement 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 the travel motivations of self-development, novelty, and stimulation positively influence participation in adventure activities [96]. Tourists' primary motivation for participating in outdoor activities revolves around elements such as excitement, chal-

allenge, 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 the findings of 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. To effectively reach adventurous consumers, marketers should tailor their strategies to highlight the excitement and personal growth associated with adventure activities, showcasing unique experiences that align with their desire for novelty and challenge.

6.6. Thematic Activities

Thematic activities (horse riding, archery, masterclasses) do not reveal a direct association with any specific personality trait. This lack of a clear connection may stem from the heterogeneous nature of thematic activities, indicating that no single personality trait encompasses all of these experiences. Different thematic activities could attract individuals with varying personality traits; for example, Alves et al. [9] found that individuals high in agreeableness are more inclined to visit theme and animal parks, as they tend to enjoy activities involving social interaction and collaboration. Similarly, gastronomy experiences are often favoured by those scoring high in both agreeableness and extraversion, suggesting a connection between culinary pursuits and cheerful, sociable dispositions [9]. Additionally, the travel motivations of relationship building and recognition positively influence participation in thematic activities, which is a unique contribution of this study. This suggests that social motivations play a significant role in engaging individuals in these activities, as participants seek opportunities to connect with others and share memorable experiences. By understanding the interplay between travel motivations and thematic activity participation, marketers can better tailor their offerings to meet the desires of potential participants, fostering environments that enhance social interaction and community engagement.

6.7. 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] found 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, as highlighted in the findings of Cavusoglu and Avcikurt [46]. Additionally, Hsu and Li [98] found that cruisers are primarily motivated by the need to escape, seeking environments that allow them to unwind and rejuvenate. Supporting this perspective, Alves et al. [9] noted that individuals with high agreeableness scores preferred boat tours, indicating a tendency to enjoy shared experiences in tranquil settings. However, the study also revealed a negative relationship between autonomy and participation in lake cruises. Individuals who prioritise autonomy as a travel motivation may avoid lake cruises due to their preference for control over their leisure time and activities [99]. This desire for independence can lead them to seek more flexible or self-directed experiences, which contrast with the structured nature of organised cruises. This insight can help marketers to design experiences that highlight communal and nature-based aspects to attract agreeable travellers while considering autonomy-oriented travellers' preferences for more personalised or flexible options.

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, this 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 agreed that they could enhance the guest experience, boost customer loyalty, and optimise resource utilisation. 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.

7. Conclusions

In conclusion, this study aimed to investigate the relationships of personality traits and travel motivations with visitor activities. To achieve that aim, this study adopted a mixed-methods approach (Quan/Qual), (1) examining the relationships of 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 of 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 recognising 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 visitors' overall experience, promote stakeholder collaboration, and build customer loyalty. Additionally, SMEs could 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 minimising potential negative impacts on the local community and environment.

7.1. Theoretical Contributions

Despite previous research on the relationships between personality traits and behaviours [19], travel intention [20], tourism information search [21], the correlation between personality traits and travel motivations [10], and visitor activities [9], there is a dearth of studies investigating 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 for visitors' activities at a destination.

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

7.2. Managerial Implications

From a managerial perspective, the conceptual framework presented in this study serves as a valuable tool for implementing a personality-based sustainable marketing strategy. This knowledge can be utilised to create customised offerings that address the unique needs and preferences of target markets while enhancing collaboration among stakeholders. Such a personalised marketing approach is likely to significantly impact customer satisfaction and loyalty, which are essential drivers of sustainable business growth. By incorporating the Big Five personality traits, this study provides a deeper understanding of tourists' decision-making processes that go beyond basic preferences. For instance, recognising that tourists with high levels of openness are inclined to seek cultural immersion through activities such as visiting museums and art galleries, as well as participating in local festivals and artistic

performances, not only elucidates their travel choices but also guides businesses in aligning experiences with these preferences. Additionally, this study advocates for a strong emphasis on sustainability, promoting eco-conscious infrastructure and stakeholder collaboration to preserve Cumbria's natural and cultural assets in the long term.

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

7.3. Limitations and Future Research

This study has potential limitations. Firstly, it was limited to the region of Cumbria, and certain travel motivations and activities were not considered (e.g., nightlife, clubbing, theme parks), limiting the generalisability of our findings. Future studies in other destinations should include all relevant travel motives and activities. Secondly, most of the 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: D.G.M.: Data Curation, Writing—Original Draft Preparation, Software, Analysis, Validation. D.P.: Conceptualisation, Methodology, Visualisation, Supervision. T.H.: Conceptualisation, Supervision, Writing—Review and Editing. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, and approved by the University of Cumbria Research Ethics Panel for two separate protocols: protocol code 21/54 (survey), and protocol code 22/15 (focus groups).

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in this study.

Data Availability Statement: Data will be made available by the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Appendix A. Questionnaire Items

Construct	Item	Source
Personality traits	I am someone who	[76]
	Tends to be quiet.	
Extraversion	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.	
Agreeableness	Is compassionate, has a soft heart.	
	Can be cold and uncaring.	
	Is sometimes rude to others	
	Is respectful, treats others with respect.	
	Assumes the best about people	
	Tends to find fault with others	

Construct	Item	Source
Conscientiousness	Tends to be disorganized.	[76]
	Keeps things neat and tidy.	
	Has difficulty getting started on tasks.	
	Is persistent, works until the task is finished.	
	Is reliable, can always be counted on.	
Open-mindedness	Can be somewhat careless.	[76]
	Is fascinated by art, music, or literature.	
	Has few artistic interests.	
	Has little interest in abstract ideas	
	Is complex, a deep thinker.	
Negative emotionality	Is original, comes up with new ideas.	[76]
	Has little creativity.	
	Worries a lot.	
	Is relaxed, handles stress well.	
	Tends to feel depressed, blue.	
Travel motivations	Feels secure, comfortable with self.	[76]
	Is emotionally stable, not easily upset.	
	Is temperamental, gets emotional easily.	
	I travel to Cumbria to...	
	Explore the unknown/Do something new	
Novelty and stimulation	Experience thrills or excitement	[51,57,60,61]
	Seek fun and enjoyment	
Escape	Physically rest and relax	[51,56,57,59–61,98]
	Escape from the daily routine	
	Be away from the crowds of people	
Relationship	Do things with my partner/family/friends	[51,56,57,59–61,98]
	Meet new people who enjoy the same things as I do	
	Connect with friends or relatives living in other locations	
Recognition	Have romantic relationships	[51,60]
	Share skills with others/showing what I can do	
Nature	Visit a destination that would impress others	[51,54,59]
	Admire and be close to nature	
Autonomy	Get a better appreciation of nature	[51,54]
	Be independent	
Self-development	Do things my own way	[51,54,56]
	Develop my skills and abilities	
Self-actualisation	Experience a new culture and meet new people	[51,54,56]
	Gain a sense of accomplishment	
Self-actualisation	Understand more about myself	[51,54,56]
	Get outside of my comfort zone	

Construct	Item	Source
Nostalgia	Think about good times I have had in the past	[51,54,56]
	Reflect on past memories	
Visitor activities	While in Cumbria, I...	
Adventure	Do adventure activities on water (e.g., sailing, canoeing, diving, jet skiing)	[9]
	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	[9]
	Observe natural habitats (birds/animal/wildlife)	
	Practice wild swimming/forest bathing	
Entertainment	Attend a festival/concert	[9]
	Attend cultural activities/artistic performance	
	Attend other special events (e.g., wedding, birthday party)	
History and heritage	Visit archaeological sites/ruins	[9]
	Visit monuments (e.g., castles, churches, historic houses), parks and gardens	
Museums and art	Visit museums	[9,10]
	Visit exhibitions/art galleries	
Sports	Participate in sporting competitions (e.g., trail running, cycling competition)	[9,10]
	Exercise (e.g., walking, running, cycling)	
	Engage in thematic sports (e.g., horse riding, archery)	
Gastronomy	Participate in a food and beverage masterclass	[9,10]
	Taste local products	
Boat tours	Take boat trips to explore the destination	[9]
	Take boat trips for the historical value of the route	
Health and Wellbeing	Go to a SPA/beauty centre	[9]
	Undergo health and wellness treatments	

Appendix B. Personality Traits: Constructs and Items

Factor	Measuring Item	Factor Loading	Cumulative Interpretation Variance (%)	Cronbach's α
Negative emotionality	I am someone who is emotionally stable, not easily upset.	0.843	12.192	0.863
	I am someone who worries a lot.	0.805		
	I am someone who is relaxed, handles stress well.	0.747		
	I am someone who tends to feel depressed, blue.	0.721		
	I am someone who is temperamental, gets emotional easily.	0.709		
	I am someone who feels secure, comfortable with self.	0.675		

Factor	Measuring Item	Factor Loading	Cumulative Interpretation Variance (%)	Cronbach's α
Conscientiousness	I am someone who tends to be disorganized.	0.768	11.173	0.801
	I am someone who keeps things neat and tidy.	0.738		
	I am someone who is persistent, works until the task is finished.	0.720		
	I am someone who can be somewhat careless.	0.669		
	I am someone who has difficulty getting started on tasks.	0.639		
	I am someone who is reliable, can always be counted on.	0.594		
Agreeableness	I am someone who can be cold and uncaring.	0.731	9.826	0.753
	I am someone who tends to find fault with others.	0.662		
	I am someone who assumes the best about people.	0.658		
	I am someone who is compassionate, has a soft heart.	0.649		
	I am someone who is sometimes rude to others.	0.637		
	I am someone who is respectful, treats others with respect.	0.607		
Extraversion	I am someone who is dominant, acts as a leader.	0.724	9.158	0.737
	I am someone who is outgoing, sociable.	0.720		
	I am someone who tends to be quiet.	0.708		
	I am someone who is full of energy.	0.641		
	I am someone who prefers to have others take charge.	0.581		
	I am someone who is less active than other people.	0.395		
Open-mindedness	I am someone who has little interest in abstract ideas.	0.682	8.869	0.720
	I am someone who has little creativity.	0.670		
	I am someone who is original, comes up with new ideas.	0.662		
	I am someone who is fascinated by art, music, or literature.	0.660		
	I am someone who is complex, a deep thinker.	0.612		
	I am someone who has few artistic interests.	0.564		

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
	I travel to Cumbria		
Self-development	to gain a sense of accomplishment.	0.724	0.836
	to understand more about myself.	0.659	
	to get outside of my comfort zone.	0.655	
	to develop my skills and abilities.	0.583	
Relationship and recognition	to share skills with others/showing what I can do.	0.693	0.724
	to meet new people who enjoy the same things as I do.	0.663	
	to experience a new culture and meet new people.	0.595	
	to connect with friends or relatives living in other locations.	0.487	
	as it is a destination that would impress others.	0.457	
Escape	to get a better appreciation of nature.	0.840	0.701
	to admire and be close to nature.	0.779	
	to escape from the daily routine.	0.441	
	to be away from the crowds of people.	0.438	
Nostalgia	to think about good times I have had in the past.	0.958	0.936
	to reflect on past memories.	0.839	
Autonomy	to be independent.	0.795	0.867
	to do things my own way.	0.778	
Novelty and stimulation	to seek fun and enjoyment.	0.720	0.743
	to explore the unknown/do something new.	0.558	
	to experience thrills or excitement.	0.547	

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
	While in Cumbria, I choose to. . .		
Local culture	visit archaeological sites/ruins.	0.782	0.867
	visit monuments (e.g., castles, churches, historic houses) parks, and gardens.	0.780	
	visit museums.	0.747	
	visit exhibitions/art galleries.	0.617	
Adventure	do adventure activities on water (e.g., sailing, canoeing, diving, jet skiing).	0.732	0.742
	do adventure activities in the air (e.g., parachute jump, gliding).	0.648	
	do adventure activities on the land (rock climbing/abseiling/off road).	0.611	
	practice wild swimming/forest bathing.	0.542	
	participate in sporting competitions (e.g., trail running, cycling competition).	0.414	

Factor	Item	Factor Loading	Cronbach's α
Entertainment	attend festivals/concerts.	0.709	0.768
	attend cultural activities/artistic performances.	0.703	
	attend other special events (e.g., wedding, birthday party).	0.446	
Health and wellbeing	go to a SPA/beauty centre.	0.865	0.915
	undergo health and wellness treatments.	0.849	
Lake cruises	take boat trips to explore the destination.	0.898	0.801
	take boat trips for the historical value of the route.	0.593	
Recreation	practice hiking/mountaineering/long walks in nature.	0.892	0.704
	exercise (e.g., walking, running, cycling).	0.590	
Thematic activities	participate in food and beverage masterclasses.	0.681	0.721
	engage in thematic sports (e.g., horse riding, archery).	0.541	

Note: Exploratory factor analysis: extraction method, principal axis factoring; rotation method, varimax.

Appendix E. Beta Coefficients

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
Dependent variable: Culture						
1	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
Dependent variable: Adventure						
2	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
	Novelty and stimulation	0.200	0.065	0.166	3.086	0.002
Dependent variable: Recreation						
3	Extraversion	0.151	0.069	0.133	2.176	0.030
	Self-Development	0.180	0.054	0.234	3.313	0.001
	Relationship	-0.214	0.060	-0.235	-3.570	0.000
Dependent variable: Entertainment						
4	Open-mindedness	0.153	0.061	0.112	2.500	0.013
	Relationship and recognition	0.201	0.065	0.170	3.111	0.002
	Nostalgia	0.077	0.036	0.096	2.118	0.035
Dependent variable: Health and wellbeing						
5	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

	Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	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 and recognition	−0.178	0.059	−0.198	−2.999	0.003
7	Dependent variable: Thematic activities					
	Relationship and recognition	0.146	0.065	0.132	2.257	0.025

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