

Diversity in Motion: Exploring LGBTQ+ Tourism Preferences

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Abstract

This study investigates tourism preferences across gender identities and sexual orientations within Spain's LGBTQ+ community ($n = 546$). Guided by an intersectional theoretical framework, the research challenges traditional segmentation models in LGBTQ+ tourism that prioritise sexual orientation while neglecting the influence of gender identity. Drawing from debates in queer theory and gendered leisure studies, it positions tourism as a space where identity is expressed, negotiated, and often constrained by social norms. Data were collected through an online survey and analysed using the Rao-Scott corrected chi-square test and Cramér's V to examine associations between gender/sexual identity and ten tourism types. Findings reveal that cisgender men and trans women are overrepresented in nightlife tourism, while trans individuals show lower participation in traditional tourism, suggesting potential barriers to inclusion. Lesbian women display a preference for culturally conventional tourism, and gay men are overrepresented in LGBTQ+ tourism. Non-binary participants exhibit diverse patterns, engaging more frequently in nature-based and art-related tourism. These results offer empirical support for a more nuanced, identity-aware understanding of LGBTQ+ tourism behaviour. They further highlight the imperative to incorporate gender-diverse perspectives into destination marketing, product development, and service design. By foregrounding the complexity of LGBTQ+ identities, the study contributes to advancing inclusive tourism scholarship and practice and sets a precedent for future research that engages more deeply with underrepresented identities in the tourism sector.

Key Words: LGBTQ+ tourism, gender identity, sexual orientation, types of tourism

JEL Classification: Z32, Z13, J16

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1. Introduction

LGBTQ+ tourism has emerged as a high-value segment within the global tourism industry, recognized for its strong purchasing power and above-average travel expenditure (Madinga et al., 2023). The market, valued at USD 331.14 billion in 2024, is projected to grow to USD 552.96 billion by 2031, with a 7.6% annual growth rate (Coherent Market Insights, 2024). LGBTQ+ travellers account for 7–10% of the industry, contributing an estimated USD 1 billion in the U.S. alone (Community Marketing & Insights, 2023).

Beyond a market opportunity, this sector fulfils the need for safe and inclusive spaces, allowing travellers to engage freely (Lewis et al., 2023). LGBTQ+ tourists prioritise identity validation, inclusivity,

and access to dedicated spaces that affirm their experiences (Prayag et al., 2023). Recent work has begun to explore the intersection of sexual orientation, travel activities, and well-being (Prayag et al., 2024), yet few studies analyse how both gender identity and sexual orientation jointly influence tourism preferences (Ong et al., 2022). This study addresses this gap by analysing how both gender identity and sexual orientation influence tourism preferences, an approach still underexplored in the literature.

While the literature has increasingly acknowledged the economic relevance of LGBTQ+ tourism, it has often approached the community as a cohesive market segment, relying on broad identity categories and largely focusing on cisgender gay men and lesbians (Pritchard et al., 2000; Ong et al., 2022). This tendency has led to an oversimplified understanding of tourist preferences, neglecting the diversity of experiences within the LGBTQ+ population, particularly those of trans and non-binary individuals (Algueró Boronat et al., 2024c). Moreover, many segmentation models continue to treat sexual orientation and gender identity as interchangeable or secondary variables, overlooking the potential differences in how each dimension shapes travel behaviour. Grounded in an intersectional framework (De Schepper, 2022), this study responds to these gaps by examining the distinct influence of gender identity and sexual orientation, treated as separate but interrelated factors.

The differentiation of tourism types is essential for understanding how travel experiences are structured and how different tourist profiles behave (Tureac & Turtureanu, 2010; Dunhea et al., 2024; Alyahya, 2024). Identifying these categories allows for consumption patterns within the sector, facilitating more effective management and promotional strategies. In the case of LGBTQ+ tourism, this segmentation is even more critical, as it helps acknowledge the diversity within these communities and avoids generalized approaches that fail to reflect the complexity of their preferences and needs (Pritchard et al., 2000).

Spain constitutes a particularly suitable context for investigating the tourism preferences of the LGBTQ+ community due to its strong legal protections, high levels of social acceptance, and the visibility of its diverse population (Flores, 2021). It was one of the first countries to legalise same-sex marriage in 2005 (Platero, 2007), and it consistently ranks among the most LGBTQ+-friendly nations globally according to the Global Acceptance Index (Flores, 2021). This sociopolitical environment facilitates greater freedom for individuals to express their sexual and gender identities, allowing tourism choices among LGBTQ+ people to reflect personal preferences rather than structural constraints. This unique combination of factors renders Spain an empirically rich context for exploring how tourism choices are shaped by gender and sexual identity.

LGBTQ+ tourism studies have primarily focused on gay men and lesbians, associating them with sex tourism and nature tourism, respectively (Clift & Forrest, 1999; Pritchard et al., 2000). Other identities and orientations remain underrepresented, reinforcing stereotypes and limiting a comprehensive understanding of LGBTQ+ travel patterns (Ong et al., 2022). This research challenges traditional segmentation models, recognizing that previous literature has positioned LGBTQ+ tourism as both heterogeneous (Hattingh & Spencer, 2020) and, at times, homogeneous (Algueró-Boronat et al., 2024a).

The main objective of this study is to analyse whether specific tourism typologies are associated with different subgroups within the LGBTQ+ community. By examining travel preferences across gender identities and sexual orientations, this research aims to uncover overlooked patterns and broaden the understanding of diversity in LGBTQ+ tourism behaviour.

2. Literature review

The academic literature offers no consensus on whether LGBTQ+ tourists constitute a homogeneous or heterogeneous group. While some studies emphasise internal diversity across identities (Vorobjovas-Pinta & Hardy, 2016; Szabó & Sümeghy, 2023), others focus narrowly on specific subgroups, such as associating gay men with sex tourism or lesbians with nature-based travel (Clift &

Forrest, 1999; Hughes, 2006). Other identities remain underexplored, particularly non-cisgender travellers, who may avoid certain tourism types due to perceived exclusion (Algueró-Boronat et al., 2024c). Whether these dynamics extend to other forms of tourism is still underresearched. This study addresses this gap by examining whether gender identity and sexual orientation influence tourism preferences, and to what extent prior categorisations are empirically supported or reductive. Although research in LGBTQ+ tourism has progressed in applying identity-based segmentation, few studies explicitly compare the influence of gender identity and sexual orientation as separate variables. Some recent work has begun to incorporate both dimensions (e.g. Algueró-Boronat et al., 2024a), though often through aggregated categories or with a focus on a single axis of identity. Most prior studies still prioritise sexual orientation or conflate the two variables (Ong et al., 2022; Hughes, 2006), which limits our understanding of how each factor independently shapes tourism preferences. This study addresses that gap by analysing gender identity and sexual orientation as distinct categorical predictors, with the aim of uncovering their respective associations with various types of tourism.

To support this approach, we draw on intersectionality as a theoretical framework that enables a more nuanced understanding of how multiple identity dimensions interact in shaping travel behaviour. Rather than viewing sexual orientation and gender identity as isolated variables, intersectionality provides a lens through which their interplay can be meaningfully interpreted, revealing both overlapping privileges and vulnerabilities (Mooney, 2018). This conceptual lens is increasingly employed in LGBTQ+ tourism studies to uncover the limitations of traditional segmentation models that overlook internal diversity (de Schepper, 2022). By incorporating intersectionality, we aim not only to interrogate whether travel preferences vary across identity subgroups, but also to question the adequacy of prevailing categorisations in reflecting lived experiences within the LGBTQ+ community. In this sense, the present study is theoretically anchored in the view that identity is relational and situated, and that tourism behaviour must be understood through the complex entanglement of self-identification, perceived inclusion, and social recognition.

3. Methods

The study on LGBTQ+ tourists in Spain was conducted through an online questionnaire targeting the Spanish population. The survey was distributed via social media and LGBTQ+ associations, ensuring broad and diverse participation. No incentives were provided, and participation was entirely voluntary.

The research received ethical approval from the University's Ethics Committee (CEISH/73/2023), ensuring compliance with privacy and confidentiality standards. Data analysis was carried out in RStudio using the Rao-Scott adjusted chi-square test for independence and Cramér's V to assess effect sizes between categorical variables. Table 1 presents a detailed overview of the participants' demographic characteristics.

All identities and sexual orientations, including heterosexual non-cisgender individuals, should be examined to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the LGBTQ+ community's diversity (Algueró-Boronat et al., 2024b). Neglecting any group limits a full grasp of the varied realities within these communities (Ong et al., 2022).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the participants

Category	%	Category	%
Gender		Sexual Orientation	
Cis Man	27.29	Lesbian	25.14
Cis Woman	45.79	Gay	27.93

Trans Man	5.68	Bisexual	33.89
Trans Woman	4.40	Heterosexual non-cisgender	3.72
Non-binary	16.85	Other: Demisexuality, autosexuality, monosexuality, aegosexuality, polysexuality, and asexuality	9.31
Tourism Type			
Art and Design Tourism	19,41		
History Enthusiast Tourism	35,90		
Intimate and Romantic Tourism	8,79		
LGBTQ+ Tourism	21,98		
Local Immersion Tourism	33,70		
Music Tourism	14,47		
Nature Explorer	36,63		
Nightlife Tourism	21,06		
Show and Performance Tourism	14,47		
Traditional Tourism	58,97		

Source: Authors' own work.

To ensure analytical clarity, gender identity and sexual orientation were treated as two separate categorical variables in the analysis. Although individual participants could belong to overlapping identity categories (e.g., non-binary and bisexual), no composite or intersecting groups were created. This approach allows for the identification of independent associations while preserving the interpretability of each dimension.

3.1. Statistical Analysis Approach

The profile of each identity and orientation group was based on the percentage that each travel type represents within that group. In order to determine whether there are statistically significant differences between identities and orientations in the preference of different travel types, a chi-square test was applied. Given the multiple-response format, we applied the first-order Rao-Scott correction to adjust chi-square statistics for design effects and response non-independence (Rao & Scott, 1981; Decady & Thomas, 2000; Lavassani & Movahedi, 2009). Effect sizes were calculated using Cramér's V, with values above 0.20 indicating moderate associations. To identify which groups contributed most to significant results, we computed squared standardised residuals from the classical chi-square test (Agresti, 2013). Analyses were conducted using the survey package in RStudio.

4. Results

To examine the influence of gender identity and sexual orientation on tourism preferences, we analysed participation across different travel categories. Table 2 presents tourism preferences by gender identity, and Table 5 by sexual orientation. Statistical significance was assessed using the Rao-Scott adjusted chi-square test. Results are shown in Tables 3 (gender identity) and 6 (sexual orientation), including test statistics, degrees of freedom, and p-values. Tables 4 and 7 report each group's contribution to the significant differences, comparing observed and expected frequencies.

4.1. Gender identity analysis

The results indicate a significant association between traditional tourism, historical tourism, and local immersion among LGBTQ+ individuals, highlighting a shared interest in authentic and cultural experiences (Table 2). Regarding gender identity, cisgender men are overrepresented in LGBTQ+ tourism, show-related activities, local immersion, history enthusiasm, nature and nightlife. However, contrary to previous assumptions, their interest in sexual tourism appears less pronounced. Similarly, cisgender women tend to favour traditional and local tourism, demonstrating a marked preference for nature-based experiences. Trans men engage less in traditional tourism compared to other groups but show greater interest in historical tourism and cultural performances. Trans women generally avoid traditional tourism, opting instead for nightlife-oriented experiences. In contrast, non-binary individuals display a more varied tourism profile, with heightened interest in nature tourism and active participation in art and design-related activities.

Table 2. Trip types by gender identity

	Art and Design	History Enthusiast	Intimate/Romantic	LGBTQ+ Tourism	Local Immersion	Music	Nature Explorer	Nightlife	Show and Performance	Traditional Tourism
Cis Man	23,49%	43,62%	10,07%	38,26%	38,93%	20,13%	38,26%	32,21%	20,81%	63,09%
Cis Woman	16,80%	31,20%	6,80%	15,60%	35,20%	11,20%	39,20%	15,60%	10,00%	66,80%
Trans Man	16,13%	41,94%	16,13%	6,45%	19,35%	9,68%	22,58%	12,90%	25,81%	25,81%
Trans Woman	4,17%	25,00%	0,00%	20,83%	16,67%	8,33%	4,17%	41,67%	12,50%	29,17%
Non-binary	25,00%	36,96%	11,96%	18,48%	30,43%	17,39%	40,22%	15,22%	13,04%	50,00%

Source: Authors' own work.

Table 3 presents the results of the Rao-Scott tests examining the relationship between gender identity and tourism preferences. While five tourism types show statistically significant associations ($p < 0.05$), only three, LGBTQ+ tourism, traditional tourism, and nightlife tourism, exhibit moderate effect sizes (Cramér's $V > 0.20$), indicating meaningful differences across gender identities.

Table 3. Test of independence results: gender identity

Trip types	Rao-Scott Chi-square test	Cramer's V effect size
LGBTQ+ Tourism	$\chi^2 = 33.99$, $df = 4$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000^*$	0.2495++
Traditional Tourism	$\chi^2 = 33.34$, $df = 4$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000^*$	0.2471++
Nightlife Tourism	$\chi^2 = 24.89$, $df = 4$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000^*$	0.2135++
Nature Explorer	$\chi^2 = 14.92$, $df = 4$, $p\text{-value} = 0.005^*$	0.1653
Show and Performance Tourism	$\chi^2 = 12.31$, $df = 4$, $p\text{-value} = 0.015^*$	0.1502
Art & Design	$\chi^2 = 9.46$, $df = 4$, $p\text{-value} = 0.063$	0.1316
Local immersion	$\chi^2 = 8.48$, $df = 4$, $p\text{-value} = 0.076$	0.1247
History Enthusiast	$\chi^2 = 8.04$, $df = 4$, $p\text{-value} = 0.091$	0.1213
Music	$\chi^2 = 7.96$, $df = 4$, $p\text{-value} = 0.093$	0.1208
Intimate or romantic travel	$\chi^2 = 7.08$, $df = 4$, $p\text{-value} = 0.129$	0.1139

* < 0.05

Source: Authors' own work

Table 4. Group contributions by gender identity

LGBTQ+ Tourism			
	Contributions to Rao-Scott test		Cramer's V effect size
	0	1	
Cis Man	5.06*	17.96*	0.2495++
Cis Woman	1.30	4.63*	

Trans Man	0.95	3.40	
Trans Woman	0.00	0.01	
Non-binary	0.14	0.51	
Traditional Tourism			
	Contributions to Rao-Scott test		Cramér's V effect size
	0	1	
Cis Man	0.61	0.43	0.2471++
Cis Woman	3.73	2.59	
Trans Man	8.31*	5,78*	
Trans Woman	5.19*	3.61	
Non-binary	1.81	1.25	
Nightlife Tourism			
	Contributions to Rao-Scott test		Cramér's V effect size
	0	1	
Cis Man	2.34	8.79*	0.2135++
Cis Woman	0.94	3.54	
Trans Man	0.26	0.98	
Trans Woman	1.29	4.83*	
Non-binary	0.39	1.49	

Cramer's V: +++= strong effect size; ++ = moderate effect size

Contributions to Rao-Scott test: * > 3.814

Source: Authors' own work.

Table 4 details which gender identities contribute most to the significant differences found in LGBTQ+, traditional, and nightlife tourism. Cis men and trans women are overrepresented in nightlife tourism. Cisgender men show a stronger preference for LGBTQ+ tourism compared to other gender identities. In contrast, both trans men and trans women are underrepresented in traditional tourism. These deviations help explain the moderate associations identified in the previous test (Cramér's $V > 0.20$).

4.2. Sexual orientation analysis

In comparison to gender identity, differences by sexual orientation are less pronounced (Table 5). However, distinct patterns emerge. Lesbian and bisexual individuals show a marked preference for nature-based tourism and traditional tourism. Similarly, gay men, like cisgender men, are more likely to engage in LGBTQ+ tourism, including shows, nightlife, traditional tourism and musical events. Heterosexual individuals who are not cisgender also express interest in nature tourism and history, but tend to favour traditional tourism and local immersion. Individuals identifying with a broader spectrum of sexual orientations tend to prefer history-focused and art and design-related tourism.

Table 5. Trip types by sexual orientation

	Art and Design	History Enthusiast	Intimate/Romantic	LGBTQ+ Tourism	Local Immersion	Music	Nature Explorer	Nightlife	Show and Performance	Traditional Tourism
Lesbian	6,67%	20,00%	7,41%	17,78%	34,81%	8,89%	45,19%	14,07%	5,93%	57,78%
Gay	24,67%	44,67%	10,67%	38,67%	38,00%	21,33%	33,33%	31,33%	24,00%	64,67%
Bisexual	23,08%	33,52%	10,44%	16,48%	27,47%	15,93%	34,62%	23,08%	15,93%	57,69%
Heterosexual non-cisgender	15,00%	45,00%	5,00%	15,00%	50,00%	20,00%	55,00%	20,00%	20,00%	85,00%
Other	30,00%	64,00%	4,00%	10,00%	40,00%	4,00%	30,00%	6,00%	4,00%	50,00%

Source: Authors' own work.

Table 6 presents the results of the Rao-Scott tests examining the relationship between sexual orientation and tourism preferences. Although five tourism types show statistically significant associations ($p < 0.05$), only four, history enthusiast tourism, LGBTQ+ tourism, art and design tourism, and show and performance tourism, present moderate effect sizes (Cramér's $V > 0.20$), indicating meaningful differences across sexual orientation groups.

Table 6. Test of independence results: sexual orientation

Trip types	Rao-Scott Chi-square test	Cramer's V effect size
History Enthusiast Tourism	$\chi^2 = 37.75$, df = 4, p-value = 0.000*	0.2629++
LGBTQ+ Tourism	$\chi^2 = 35.43$, df = 4, p-value = 0.000*	0.2547++
Art and Design Tourism	$\chi^2 = 28.75$, df = 4, p-value = 0.000*	0.2295++
Show and Performance Tourism	$\chi^2 = 23.73$, df = 4, p-value = 0.000*	0.2085++
Nightlife Tourism	$\chi^2 = 21.67$, df = 4, p-value = 0.000*	0.1992
Nature explorer Tourism	$\chi^2 = 5.37$, df = 4, p-value = 0.252	0.1069
Intimate or romantic Tourism	$\chi^2 = 4.06$, df = 4, p-value = 0.398	0.0862
Traditional Tourism	$\chi^2 = 3.88$, df = 4, p-value = 0.424	0.0843
Local immersion	$\chi^2 = 4.06$, df = 4, p-value = 0.398	0.0992

* < 0.05

Cramer's V: +++ = strong effect size; ++ = moderate effect size

Source: Authors' own work.

Table 7 highlights which orientation groups contribute most to these differences. Lesbians are overrepresented in art and design, history, and show and performance tourism. Gay men show higher participation in LGBTQ+ and show-related tourism. In contrast, bisexual and heterosexual non-cisgender individuals do not significantly deviate from expected proportions across any tourism type. Individuals in the "Other" category stand out in art and design and history tourism.

Table 7. Group contributions by sexual orientation

History Enthusiast Tourism			
	Contributions to Rao-Scott test		Cramér's V effect size
	0	1	
Lesbian	5.32*	9.50*	0.2629++
Gay	1.80	3.21	
Bisexual	0.426	0.29	
Heterosexual non-cisgender	0.11	0.506	
Other	6.16*	11.00*	
LGBTQ+ Tourism			
	Contributions to Rao-Scott test		Cramér's V effect size
	0	1	
Lesbian	0.30	1.08	0.2547++
Gay	5.35*	19.01*	
Bisexual	0.70	2.50	
Heterosexual non-cisgender	0.50	1.78	
Other	0.91	3.26	

Art and Design Tourism			
	Contributions to Rao-Scott test		Cramér's V effect size
	0	1	
Lesbian	3.10	11.97*	0.2295++
Gay	0.75	2.89	
Bisexual	0.24	0.92	
Heterosexual non-cisgender	0.38	1.47	
Other	1.11	4.27*	
Show and Performance Tourism			
	Contributions to Rao-Scott test		Cramér's V effect size
	0	1	
Lesbian	1.15	6.81*	0.2085++
Gay	1.59	9.41*	
Bisexual	0.04	0.27	
Heterosexual non-cisgender	0.00	0.01	
Other	0.64	3.78	

Cramer's V: +++ = strong effect size; ++ = moderate effect size

Contributions to Rao-Scott test: * > 3.814

Source: Authors' own work.

5. Discussion and conclusions

This study provides empirical evidence that gender identity exerts greater influence than sexual orientation in shaping tourism preferences within LGBTQ+ communities. While the literature has traditionally prioritised sexual orientation as the main segmentation criterion (Hughes, 2006; Monterrubio et al., 2021), our findings reveal more defined and statistically significant patterns across gender identities. These results support a more intersectional and identity-aware understanding of LGBTQ+ tourism (Hattingh & Spencer, 2020).

Cisgender men exhibit a distinct profile oriented toward LGBTQ+ tourism, with a strong presence in nightlife and performance-related activities, consistent with previous research on gay male leisure spaces (Waite & Markwell, 2006; Pritchard et al., 2000). However, contrary to earlier studies highlighting the relevance of sex tourism (Clift & Forrest, 1999; Hughes, 2006), our data suggest a shift away from such patterns, potentially linked to changing cultural norms and stigma awareness.

Cisgender women align with prior literature in their marked preference for nature-based and traditional tourism, often associated with well-being and authenticity (Pritchard et al., 2000). In contrast, transgender individuals exhibit distinct behaviours: trans men favour cultural activities and avoid traditional tourism, while trans women are more present in nightlife-related tourism, likely reflecting the historic role of nightlife as a space of expression and community for trans populations.

Non-binary participants display more diverse tourism preferences, with greater involvement in nature, art, and cultural experiences. Similarly, individuals identifying outside mainstream sexual categories, "Other", tend to favour artistic and historical tourism, underscoring the need to move beyond binary frameworks.

The results challenge the dominant framing of LGBTQ+ tourism around cisgender gay men (Puar, 2002; Ong et al., 2022) and reveal the limited inclusivity of current offerings. A more nuanced segmentation that considers the intersection of gender identity and sexual orientation is essential to reflect the actual diversity of LGBTQ+ tourists and to design truly inclusive tourism strategies. These insights not only reframe academic approaches to LGBTQ+ tourism, but may also serve as a foundation for informing future tourism policies and inclusive service design, especially in contexts aiming to address the needs of underrepresented identities.

6. Implications

6.1. Theoretical implications

This study advances LGBTQ+ tourism research by demonstrating that gender identity, more than sexual orientation, explains variation in travel preferences. It confirms prior claims about the heterogeneity of LGBTQ+ tourists (Hattingh & Spencer, 2020) and challenges segmentation models focused exclusively on gay male travellers (Puar, 2002; Hughes, 2006). By including trans and non-binary identities, it contributes to closing a critical gap in queer tourism literature (Monterrubio et al., 2021). Furthermore, this study contributes to intersectional approaches in gender and leisure research by empirically demonstrating how gender identity operates as a more salient predictor of tourism behaviour than sexual orientation. As recent literature has suggested (Mooney, 2018; de Schepper, 2022), leisure spaces can reinforce or subvert normative identity structures, making them critical sites for analysing lived experiences of inclusion, visibility, or marginalisation. Our findings align with this view, showing that gendered identities, especially those of trans and non-binary individuals, are central to understanding tourism preferences. This theoretical perspective strengthens the study's contribution to queer tourism literature and supports the integration of intersectionality into broader tourism and leisure discourses.

6.2. Managerial implications

The findings highlight the need for more inclusive and differentiated tourism marketing strategies. Destinations and businesses must go beyond one-size-fits-all approaches and develop offerings that reflect the diverse motivations of LGBTQ+ subgroups, particularly trans and non-binary travellers, whose preferences remain underrepresented in mainstream tourism products. LGBTQ+ tourists cannot feel fully comfortable engaging in tourism experiences where they do not feel represented or included. It is therefore essential that all tourism spaces become genuinely welcoming for all members of the LGBTQ+ community. This is particularly urgent given the continued predominance of cisgender gay men in LGBTQ+ contexts, while other identities, such as lesbian, bisexual, trans, non-binary, and queer individuals, remain underrepresented or marginalised.

Some real-world practices have begun to reflect this intersectional perspective. For instance, research on urban mobility and leisure among trans and gender-diverse populations in Istanbul demonstrates how inclusive service design, including staff training and clear signalling of safety, can significantly improve perceived accessibility and belonging (Shakibaei & Vorobjovas-Pinta, 2021). These findings align with our results, illustrating that identity-sensitive approaches can meaningfully impact participation and satisfaction among marginalised LGBTQ+ subgroups. Industry-driven initiatives are also increasingly embracing this direction. Booking.com's *Travel Proud* programme offers free training and certification for hospitality providers to support inclusive guest experiences, with over 100,000 certified properties worldwide (Booking.com, 2023). Similarly, the IGLTA Foundation has released a comprehensive guide for LGBTQ+ inclusive communication in tourism, offering practical recommendations on inclusive language, safe space recognition, and staff practices (IGLTA Foundation, 2023). While promising, these initiatives must go beyond symbolic inclusion to address structural barriers and ensure accessibility for all identities within the LGBTQ+ spectrum. By integrating such practices into destination branding, service delivery, and internal training, tourism managers can foster more equitable, sustainable, and identity-aware tourism environments. Our findings reinforce the urgency of adopting managerial strategies that are informed by the lived experiences and diversity of LGBTQ+ travellers.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the use of self-reported, cross-sectional survey data collected online may introduce sampling bias and limit the generalisability of the findings beyond the Spanish LGBTQ+ population. The reliance on a voluntary sample recruited via

social media and LGBTQ+ organisations may have excluded less connected or less visible individuals within the community. Moreover, the quantitative design, while robust for identifying associations, does not capture the lived experiences or contextual nuances behind tourism choices. Second, although this research contributes to the field by disaggregating gender identity and sexual orientation, it does not fully explore other intersecting dimensions such as race, class, age, or (dis)ability. These factors likely shape tourism experiences in important ways and should be integrated into future intersectional analyses.

Future studies would benefit from using longitudinal or mixed-methods approaches to capture changes over time and to deepen understanding of marginalised subgroups, particularly trans, non-binary, and queer individuals beyond dominant identity categories. Additionally, research should assess the inclusivity of tourism environments from the travellers' own perspectives, paying attention to how social recognition, safety, and comfort are experienced across diverse identities.

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