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Environmental Identity, Social Openness and Economic Support for Sustainable Festivals: The Mediating Role of Attitudes Toward Sustainable Practices

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ABSTRACT

As sustainability pressures intensify across the global event and tourism industries, this study examines how environmental identity and social openness shape visitors' willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals and whether attitudes toward specific sustainability practices mediate these relationships. Data were collected through an online survey among Hungarian festival visitors, resulting in a final sample of 350 respondents. The proposed relationships were tested using covariance-based structural equation modelling (CB-SEM) and bootstrap mediation analysis. The findings show that environmental identity is the strongest direct predictor of willingness to pay more, while social openness has a smaller but significant direct effect. Attitudes toward green energy use and waste management exert the strongest positive effects on willingness to pay more. Mediation analysis further indicates that environmental identity translates into economic support through favourable attitudes toward green energy use, waste management, and, to a lesser extent, active sustainable participation. No significant mediation effects are found for social openness. These results suggest that support for sustainable festivals follows distinct psychological pathways: environmental identity operates through value-consistent evaluations of visible sustainability practices, whereas social openness primarily contributes through direct experiential and social orientation. The study extends sustainability and event tourism research by showing that visible, organizer-led sustainability practices can convert environmental self-identity into economic support while offering practical guidance for festival managers seeking to communicate sustainability and justify price premiums.

1 | Introduction

Festivals and large-scale events operate within a tourism system that generates substantial environmental and socio-economic impacts worldwide. Globally, travel and tourism are responsible for approximately 7%–8% of total greenhouse gas emissions, highlighting the sector's environmental significance (Lenzen

et al. 2018; WTTC 2025). Within the European Union, tourism is both a major economic driver and a priority area for green transition policies aimed at reducing environmental impacts and improving resource efficiency (European Commission 2021). Public attitudes are also shifting toward sustainability. More than 80% of EU citizens report willingness to adopt more sustainable travel behaviors, and roughly one-third are willing to pay more for

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environmentally responsible tourism services (European Commission 2021). In June 2023, the Destination Europe Summit reported that 50% of international tourists would be willing to spend more on a touristic service that is sustainable (Lory 2023). Together, these trends underscore the importance of understanding the drivers of visitor support for sustainability in festival contexts.

Recent sustainability research increasingly emphasizes that credible environmental performance depends on the alignment between strategy, organizational culture, marketing communication, and stakeholder engagement. Studies on integrated green strategy show that environmental performance is strengthened when sustainability is embedded across organizational functions rather than treated as an isolated operational activity (Ahmed et al. 2026). Similarly, research on green marketing assessment highlights the importance of credible, measurable, and stakeholder-oriented sustainability practices in reducing the gap between sustainability communication and actual environmental responsibility (Anwar, Ahmed, Streimikiene, Ahmed, and Streimikis 2025). Multi-level approaches to corporate environmental responsibility further suggest that sustainable outcomes are shaped by the interaction of psychological, cultural, and strategic drivers (Anwar, Ahmed, Streimikiene, and Streimikis 2025). Although these studies are mainly situated in organizational and green marketing contexts, they are relevant for sustainable festivals because festivals also need to translate internal sustainability practices into externally credible visitor experiences.

From a psychological perspective, environmental identity plays a central role in shaping pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors (Hugaerts and Könecke 2024). Individuals who perceive environmental responsibility as part of their self-concept are more likely to engage in environmentally responsible actions and support sustainability initiatives, particularly when such initiatives reinforce their personal values and identity consistency (van der Werff et al. 2013). In tourism settings, this value consistency enhances perceived authenticity, satisfaction, and behavioral support (Laing and Mair 2015). Complementing this environmental dimension, social openness, which is the willingness to engage with diverse people, cultures, and values, influences how visitors interact with experiential tourism environments (Michalek et al. 2019). Festivals are inherently social and participatory settings; socially open individuals tend to engage more actively, demonstrate greater receptiveness to socially responsible practices, and contribute to cooperative sustainability efforts aligned with social sustainability principles (Uslu and Tosun 2023).

Visitors' attitudes toward specific sustainability practices constitute a key mechanism linking psychological traits to behavioral outcomes (Boudet 2019). Measures such as waste management systems, renewable energy use, and participatory sustainability activities require visitor cooperation and shape perceptions of environmental responsibility (Cavallin Toscani et al. 2024). Positive attitudes toward these practices improve event evaluation and strengthen behavioral and economic support (Juvan and Dolnicar 2016). One of the most critical indicators of such support is visitors' willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals, which reflects both economic commitment and symbolic value expression aligned with personal values (Wei et al. 2018).

The motivation for this study lies in the growing need to understand not only whether visitors support sustainable events, but also why they are willing to provide economic support for them. Sustainable festivals increasingly rely on visitors' acceptance of price premiums, behavioural cooperation, and trust in the credibility of sustainability initiatives. However, existing research has often treated sustainability attitudes in relatively general terms, without sufficiently distinguishing between specific practices such as waste management, green energy use, and active visitor participation. This distinction is important because not all sustainability practices are equally visible, credible, or effort-demanding for visitors.

Addressing these gaps, this study examines how visitors' environmental identity and social openness influence their willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals. It further investigates whether attitudes toward key sustainability practices such as waste management, green energy use, and active sustainable participation mediate these relationships, thereby providing a more nuanced understanding of visitor support for sustainable festival development. By focusing on an experiential event context, the study contributes to understanding how sustainability values translate into behavioral and economic support within socially immersive environments. Accordingly, the study addresses the following research question: How do environmental identity and social openness influence visitors' willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals, and to what extent are these relationships mediated by attitudes toward specific sustainability practices?

To achieve these objectives, a quantitative survey was conducted among Hungarian festival visitors using validated measurement scales. After data cleaning, 350 responses were retained for analysis. Constructs were operationalized using validated Likert-scale instruments, and relationships among environmental identity, social openness, attitudes toward sustainability practices, and willingness to pay more were tested using covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM). Confirmatory factor analysis verified measurement reliability and validity, while mediation effects were assessed using bootstrap procedures. The analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 30 and IBM SPSS AMOS Graphics 30.

This study offers three specific contributions. First, it extends environmental identity theory into the context of sustainable festivals by examining how environmental self-concept translates into willingness to pay more. Second, it introduces social openness as a complementary social-psychological orientation, allowing the study to distinguish between environmental value-based and social-experiential pathways of sustainability support. Third, it disaggregates attitudes toward sustainable practices into waste management, green energy use, and active sustainable participation, thereby identifying which types of practices are most effective in converting psychological orientations into economic support. The originality of this approach lies in treating attitudes toward sustainable practices not merely as general antecedents of willingness to pay more, but as practice-specific mediating mechanisms through which environmental self-identity may be converted into economic support for sustainable festivals. These contributions respond to calls for more practice-specific, theory-driven, and behaviourally relevant research on sustainability in tourism and event contexts.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 presents the literature review and theoretical background. Section 3 describes the research methodology and hypotheses. Section 4 reports the results. Section 5 discusses the findings, Section 6 presents the theoretical and practical implications, Section 7 outlines the limitations and future research directions, and Section 8 concludes the paper.

2 | Literature Review

2.1 | Theoretical Foundation: Value Consistency, Environmental Identity and Social Openness

This study adopts a deductive approach grounded in environmental identity theory and the value congruence perspective. Environmental identity theory suggests that individuals who perceive environmental responsibility as part of their self-concept are more likely to support behaviours and services that reinforce this identity (van der Werff et al. 2013; Clayton 2003; Clayton and Opatow 2003). In tourism and festival contexts, this is particularly relevant because participation is not only a consumption decision but also a symbolic and experiential act through which visitors can express personal values (Durán-Román et al. 2021; Alonso-Vazquez et al. 2019; Wong et al. 2015). From a value congruence perspective, visitors are expected to evaluate sustainable festivals more positively when the event's environmental practices are perceived as consistent with their own values and self-image (Li et al. 2023; Edwards and Cable 2009). This logic explains why attitudes toward visible sustainability practices, such as waste management and green energy use, may translate environmental identity into willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals. Previous research similarly shows that environmentally conscious tourists and consumers are more likely to support sustainable tourism services and pay price premiums when these offerings align with their personal environmental values (Agag et al. 2020; Doran et al. 2016; Juvan and Dolnicar 2016).

Social openness provides a complementary theoretical pathway. While environmental identity is directly connected to ecological self-definition, social openness reflects visitors' willingness to engage with diverse people, local communities, cultures, and participatory experiences. This orientation is particularly relevant in festivals, which are inherently social, collective, and experience-based settings (Wood and Kinnunen 2020; Laing and Mair 2015). In sustainable development research, the social dimension emphasizes inclusion, stakeholder engagement, community participation, and responsible interaction (Fiandrino et al. 2022; Dempsey et al. 2011). Accordingly, socially open visitors may be more receptive to festivals that communicate social responsibility, local embeddedness, and inclusive participation (Agyeiwaah and Zhao 2024; Irimiás et al. 2024; Uslu and Tosun 2023). However, because social openness is less directly tied to environmental self-concept than environmental identity, its effect on willingness to pay more may operate more through direct experiential and social valuation than through attitudes toward specific environmental practices. This distinction provides the theoretical rationale for examining environmental identity and social openness as two related but different psychological antecedents of economic support for sustainable festivals.

2.2 | Visitors' Environmental Identity in Festival Tourism

Environmental identity refers to the degree to which an individual perceives themselves as someone who adopts environmentally-friendly practices during their recreational activities (Alonso-Vazquez et al. 2019). The way in which people feel connected to nature influences their environmental self-identification and, within that, how they identify with the issues and problems affecting their environment (Balundé et al. 2019). Environmental identity, according to Clayton (2003), is a vital component of self-concept formation, representing a connection to the natural environment based on history, emotion, and perceived similarity. This connection influences how individuals perceive and engage with the world, emphasizing the environment's importance in shaping personal identity (Hugaerts and Könecke 2024).

In the tourism context, environmental identity plays an important role in shaping tourists' preferences, attitudes, and decision-making processes. Tourism involves a range of individual behavioral choices, including destination selection, activity participation, and consumption decisions, all of which can have environmental consequences (Dolnicar et al. 2008). Tourists with stronger environmental identity are more likely to prefer environmentally responsible destinations, support sustainable tourism services, and engage in environmentally friendly behaviors during their travel experiences (Xie et al. 2024). These individuals also tend to assign greater importance to sustainability initiatives and perceive them as enhancing the overall value and authenticity of their tourism experience.

Environmental identity also contributes to value congruence between tourists and tourism providers (Li et al. 2023). Value consistency theory suggests that when individuals perceive alignment between their personal values and the practices of an organization, they are more likely to develop positive attitudes, trust, and emotional attachment (Ramsoondar et al. 2025; Edwards and Cable 2009). In sustainable tourism contexts, this alignment strengthens tourists' satisfaction and behavioral intentions, including loyalty and support for sustainability initiatives (Shoukat and Ramkissoon 2022). When sustainability initiatives reflect tourists' environmental identity, these initiatives reinforce their self-concept, leading to stronger psychological engagement and positive behavioral responses (Wang and Wang 2025).

This relationship is particularly relevant in festival tourism, where events represent experiential and symbolic consumption contexts. Festivals provide opportunities for identity expression, allowing attendees to reinforce and communicate their values through participation and consumption choices (Durán-Román et al. 2021). Environmentally responsible festival practices, such as waste management, renewable energy use, and environmentally friendly services, can enhance perceived value among individuals with strong environmental identity (Wong et al. 2015). These individuals are more likely to engage in environmentally responsible behaviors during festivals and support sustainability initiatives implemented by event organizers (Agag et al. 2020).

Furthermore, environmental identity influences tourists' economic decision-making. Individuals are more likely to financially support sustainable tourism services and events when these align with their personal environmental values (Doran et al. 2016). Willingness to pay more for environmentally responsible tourism offerings can serve as a form of value expression, reinforcing individuals' environmental identity and commitment to sustainability.

2.3 | The Relevance of Social Openness in Festival Tourism

Social openness refers to an individual's willingness to engage with new people, cultures, values, and experiences, which represents an important psychological characteristic influencing tourism behavior (Mair and Whitford 2013). Individuals who are more open to new experiences tend to seek novelty, engage more actively with their surroundings, and demonstrate greater adaptability in unfamiliar environments (Gocłowska et al. 2018). This openness enhances their ability to form meaningful connections with places, people, values, and experiences, contributing to more immersive and satisfying service outcomes (Hudson et al. 2019). From an ESG or a UN SDG perspective, social openness aligns with the social dimension, which focuses on stakeholder engagement, social inclusion, and responsible participation in organizational and community activities (Fiandrino et al. 2022).

Social openness is especially relevant in the context of festivals, which are inherently social and participatory events (Laing and Mair 2015). Festivals create shared social environments where collective participation, social interaction, and shared emotional experiences are central to the overall experience (Irimías et al. 2024; Wood and Kinnunen 2020). Research has shown that social interaction and the opportunity to engage with others are among the primary motivations for festival attendance (Maeng et al. 2016). Sustainability initiatives implemented at festivals, such as waste management programs, environmentally friendly services, or participatory sustainability activities, often require active cooperation and behavioral engagement from attendees (Barr et al. 2010). Individuals who are more open to new ideas and experiences are more likely to accept and engage with such initiatives (Juvan and Dolnicar 2016). This openness facilitates behavioral adaptation and increases the effectiveness of sustainability practices implemented by event organizers.

2.4 | Visitors' Attitudes Toward Sustainable Practices in Festivals

Sustainable practices have become a central element of festival management due to the environmental impacts associated with large-scale events, including waste generation, energy consumption, and carbon emissions (Cavallin Toscani et al. 2024). Beyond the implementation of sustainability measures, visitors' attitudes toward these practices play a critical role in determining their effectiveness and overall success (Dolnicar and Demeter 2023). Attitudes toward sustainable practices reflect the extent to which visitors perceive environmentally responsible actions as important and valuable within the festival context (Alonso-Vazquez et al. 2019). Positive attitudes toward sustainability can enhance

visitors' evaluation of the event and increase their support for environmentally responsible initiatives (Raffay-Danyi and Formadi 2022; Laing and Mair 2015).

One of the most important dimensions of sustainable practices in festivals is waste management (Dodds et al. 2022). Festivals generate substantial amounts of waste, particularly from food packaging, plastic containers, and disposable materials (Rafiee et al. 2018). Visitors' attitudes toward the importance of waste reduction, recycling, and responsible waste disposal play a crucial role in supporting sustainability outcomes (Jia et al. 2021). When visitors perceive waste management as important, they are more likely to engage in responsible behaviors and evaluate the festival more positively (Juvan and Dolnicar 2016). Furthermore, positive attitudes toward waste management practices can enhance perceived environmental responsibility and contribute to a more favorable overall festival experience (Dodds et al. 2022; Csapody et al. 2021).

The importance attributed to green energy use represents another key dimension of sustainable practices in festivals. The use of renewable energy sources, such as solar or biodiesel power, can significantly reduce the environmental impact of festivals (Suryanarayana 2025). Visitors' attitudes toward the importance of environmentally friendly energy use influence how they perceive the festival's sustainability efforts (Song et al. 2012). When visitors consider green energy use to be important, they are more likely to evaluate sustainability initiatives positively and perceive the festival as environmentally responsible (Collins et al. 2025). These positive perceptions can strengthen the overall image of the event and enhance visitor satisfaction.

From a visitor perspective, sustainable practices do not only reduce environmental impacts but also function as evaluative signals through which attendees judge the credibility of the festival's sustainability claims. This is consistent with recent green marketing research, which argues that sustainability claims are more persuasive when they are supported by concrete, assessable, and practice-based criteria rather than general environmental messaging (Anwar, Ahmed, Streimikiene, Ahmed, and Streimikis 2025). In festival contexts, this implies that visible practices such as waste-management systems, renewable energy use, and opportunities for active sustainable participation can strengthen visitors' perceived credibility of sustainability initiatives and increase their willingness to support them economically. Moreover, research on customer engagement and sustainable consumption suggests that consumers respond more positively when sustainability is embedded in interactive and participatory experiences (Anwar, Ahmed, Streimikiene, Strielkowski, and Streimikis 2025). This logic is particularly relevant for festivals, where visitors co-create the event experience through participation, interaction, and behavioural cooperation.

Active participation in sustainability-related practices is also an essential component of sustainable festivals. Visitors' attitudes toward the importance of engaging in environmentally responsible behaviors, such as participating in recycling, reducing waste, or supporting sustainability initiatives, promoting local values and connecting to locals can influence their level of engagement and cooperation (Dodds et al. 2022). When visitors perceive active participation as important, they are more likely to engage in

environmentally responsible actions and support sustainability initiatives. This participatory approach enhances both the effectiveness of sustainability practices and visitors' overall experience (Juvan and Dolnicar 2016).

Visitors' attitudes toward sustainable practices are closely linked to their individual psychological characteristics, particularly environmental identity and social openness. Individuals with stronger environmental identity are more likely to perceive sustainability practices, such as waste management and green energy use, as important because these practices align with their personal values and self-concept (van der Werff et al. 2013). Similarly, socially open individuals tend to be more receptive to new ideas and socially responsible practices or participations, making them more likely to value and support sustainability initiatives in festivals (Lindh et al. 2015). These psychological characteristics can therefore strengthen positive attitudes toward sustainable practices.

Importantly, positive attitudes toward sustainable practices can also influence visitors' behavioral and economic intentions (Liu et al. 2019). When visitors perceive sustainability practices as important and valuable, they are more likely to evaluate the festival positively and demonstrate stronger support for environmentally responsible events (Zander and Feucht 2017). This includes an increased willingness to financially support sustainable festivals as sustainability practices enhance perceived value and align with visitors' personal values (Boudet 2019). Therefore, visitors' attitudes toward sustainable practices represent a key factor linking environmental identity and social openness with willingness to pay more for sustainable festival experiences.

2.5 | Willingness to Pay More for Sustainability in Festivals

Willingness to pay more refers to the extent to which consumers are willing to incur additional costs to support products or services that align with their values, including environmental sustainability (Wei et al. 2018). In tourism and event contexts, willingness to pay more for sustainable offerings represents an important indicator of visitors' support for environmentally responsible practices and their commitment to sustainable development (Juvan and Dolnicar 2016). As festivals increasingly adopt sustainability initiatives, understanding visitors' willingness to pay a price premium for sustainable festivals has become essential for ensuring the long-term viability and effectiveness of such practices (Mair and Laing 2012). It has also shown that sustainability initiatives can positively influence visitors' willingness to pay more for tourism experiences. When visitors perceive sustainable practices as meaningful and valuable, they are more likely to financially support environmentally responsible tourism providers (Kang et al. 2012).

Environmental identity and social openness represent important psychological determinants of willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals. Individuals with a strong environmental identity are more likely to support environmentally responsible practices because such behaviors are consistent with their self-concept and personal values (van der Werff et al. 2013). Previous research has shown that environmentally conscious

individuals are more willing to pay a premium for environmentally friendly tourism services and experiences (Juvan and Dolnicar 2016). Supporting sustainable festivals allows these individuals to express and reinforce their environmental identity, making willingness to pay more both an economic and symbolic behavior. Similarly, social openness can influence willingness to pay more by increasing visitors' receptiveness to sustainability initiatives and their engagement with the festival experience (Agyeiwaah and Zhao 2024). Individuals who are more open to new experiences and socially responsible practices are more likely to recognize the value of sustainability initiatives and support them (Barr et al. 2010).

When visitors perceive sustainability practices as important and beneficial, they are more likely to support such initiatives through their behavioral and economic decisions (Juvan and Dolnicar 2016). Positive attitudes toward sustainability enhance visitors' evaluation of the festival and strengthen their intention to support environmentally responsible events (Wei et al. 2018). In this context, sustainability practices not only reduce environmental impact but also contribute to creating additional value for visitors, which can justify higher prices. When visitors perceive sustainable practices as important and aligned with their personal values, they are more likely to support sustainable festivals financially. Therefore, willingness to pay more represents a critical outcome variable linking psychological characteristics and sustainability attitudes with behavioral support for sustainable festival development.

3 | Research Methods

3.1 | Research Design and Hypotheses Development

Our research investigated how visitors' environmental identity and social openness influence the willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals. We also incorporated specific sustainability tools that, based on the literature review, may play a mediating role in whether someone is willing to pay more for a ticket to a particular sustainable festival. While previous studies have shown that sustainability values influence tourism behavior, less attention has been paid to the mechanisms through which such values translate into economic support for sustainability initiatives in experiential environments such as festivals. Environmental identity reflects a value-based orientation that may motivate visitors to support sustainability practices consistent with their personal environmental values. In contrast, social openness reflects a broader orientation toward diversity, interaction and shared experiences, which may influence support for sustainability initiatives through experiential engagement rather than through evaluations of specific environmental practices. Distinguishing between these psychological pathways is particularly relevant in festival contexts, where sustainability is communicated through visible practices and collective participation.

In our research model, we investigated direct relationships and built hypotheses on these (Table 1). The key dependent variable in the model is willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals. Environmental identity and social openness are the independent

TABLE 1 | Additional hypotheses by independent and mediator variables.

Independent variables	Mediator variables	Hypothesis	Hypothesis statement
Environmental identity	Waste management practices	H ₃	Environmental identity of a visitor increases the willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals through the positive attitude toward waste management practices.
	Green energy practices	H ₄	Environmental identity of a visitor increases the willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals through the positive attitude toward green energy use practices.
	Active sustainable participation practices	H ₅	Environmental identity of a visitor increases the willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals through the positive attitude toward active sustainable participation practices.
Social openness	Waste management practices	H ₆	Social openness of a visitor increases the willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals through the positive attitude toward waste management practices.
	Green energy practices	H ₇	Social openness of a visitor increases the willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals through the positive attitude toward green energy use practices.
	Active sustainable participation practices	H ₈	Social openness of a visitor increases the willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals through the positive attitude toward active sustainable participation practices.

variables. Based on the literature review, we found that if individuals have a positive attitude toward environmental practices and are open to social issues, they are willing to pay more for a service with these values (Hugaerts and Könecke 2024; Agag et al. 2020). Consumer behavior is significantly influenced by environmental values, suggesting that those with a stronger environmental identity are more likely to support sustainable initiatives financially (Dodds et al. 2016). This means environmentally conscious consumers are willing to invest more in activities and events that align with their values, enhancing their overall experience (Wong et al. 2015). It is reasonable to assume a direct connection between environmental identity and willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals.

H1. *Environmental identity of a visitor increases the willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals.*

In addition the individuals who are socially open are more likely to participate in community activities and support initiatives that promote social good (Lindh et al. 2015). Meaning that social openness can drive consumers to pay more for festivals that prioritize social sustainability (Griskevicius et al. 2010). Based on this, a direct effect can be assumed between social openness and willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals.

H2. *Social openness of a visitor increases the Willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals.*

In the research model, we also investigated attitudes toward specific sustainability practices importance with that the festival organizers use to increase the event's environmental and social sustainability: waste management practices, green energy practices, and active participation in socially sustainable practices. Based on the literature, we found that individuals who also have a positive attitude toward environmental or social

practices are more likely to consider the presence of these factors to be more important for a sustainable festival (Liu et al. 2019; Wong et al. 2015; Andersson and Lundberg 2013). By using green energy, festivals can reduce their carbon footprint and minimize their impact on the environment (Dodds et al. 2020). Effective waste management and the use of green energy significantly enhance the perceived sustainability of events, thereby increasing their attractiveness to environmentally conscious consumers (Mair and Laing 2012). Moreover, engaging attendees through workshops, interactive exhibits and volunteer opportunities in sustainable practices can enhance the visitors' overall festival experience and reinforce their willingness to support and pay more for sustainable festivals (Dickson and Arcodia 2010). The three areas listed above have positive correlation with environmental identity and social openness, and can increase their positive impact on willingness to pay more for sustainable festival. Consequently, the model is testing both indirect effects of environmental identity and social openness on willingness to pay more mediated through the specific sustainability practices. Finally, the following hypotheses were built on mediation, indirect relationships (Table 1).

3.2 | Measures and Research Instruments

Table A1 summarizes the statements used to construct the latent variables. In addition to the name of the statement, we have also indicated the abbreviated name used in the research, the names of the first-order constructs, and the statement sources. In total, we used 27 statements for modelling in the research. For the final structural equation modelling (SEM) we used only standardized items of the given Likert scales.

The Environmental Identity Scale was created first by Clayton (2003). The basic scale contains 24 items. It measures

individuals' attitudes toward environmental sustainability from a more cognitive and emotional perspective. Since then, the scale has been translated and validated in several languages (Prévo et al. 2016; Olivos and Aragonés 2011), and shorter versions have been published, the 14-item version (Ariccio and Mosca 2023; Clayton et al. 2021) and the 11-item revised version used in our study (Prévo et al. 2016). On a Likert scale from 1 to 7, we measured the extent to which a given statement is true for individuals, where 1 = not at all typical of me and 7 = totally typical of me.

The Social Openness scale measures attitudes toward social sustainability in our model, i.e., the acceptance of social diversity and individual openness to learning about local values and local communities (Dempsey et al. 2011). We measured the factor with three items, which were measured on a Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 = not at all typical of me/strongly disagree and 5 = totally typical of me/totally agree.

The Willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals factor measures whether consumers would be willing to pay more for a festival that is sustainable from both an environmental and a social perspective. We used two statements based on Agag et al. (2020), who already measured whether consumers would be willing to pay more for a green festival on a Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 = not at all typical of me/strongly disagree and 5 = totally typical of me/totally agree.

For the factor dealing with Waste management, we measured the visitors' attitudes on waste generation at the festival (with five statements). For the Green energy use factor, we measured consumer attitudes toward festival organizers' activities to reduce the environmental impact of the energy used (with three statements). For Active sustainable participation, we measured the individual attitude for the importance of active involvement of festival-goers in environmental and social sustainability (with three statements). We used these three factors based on Wong et al.'s (2015), Andersson and Lundberg (2013) and Liu et al. (2019) scales and ideas on Likert scales from 1 to 5, where 1 = not at all typical of me/strongly disagree and 5 = totally typical of me/totally agree. Overall, we utilized six factors for the final model.

Although some constructs were measured with relatively short scales, this decision was based on two considerations. First, the items were adapted from previously validated scales and reflected the conceptual scope of the constructs used in the present model. Second, shorter scales are commonly applied in survey-based tourism and event studies when they reduce respondent fatigue and maintain measurement focus. The two-item willingness-to-pay construct captured respondents' economic support for sustainable festivals, while the three-item social openness construct captured openness toward social diversity, local values, and community engagement. Reliability and validity diagnostics were used to assess whether these short measures performed adequately in the empirical model.

3.3 | Data Collection and Sampling Procedure

In the quantitative research, we interviewed 376 people in spring 2025 using an online questionnaire with validated statements, resulting in a final sample of 350 respondents after data cleaning

and filtering. The questionnaire was distributed and completed using Qualtrics software, employing a representative sampling method based on festival visitors' demographic background in Hungary according to the results of the Census of Hungary 2022. To improve the demographic adequacy of the sample, quotas were applied based on the available demographic distribution of Hungarian festival visitors and the 2022 Hungarian Census. The quota variables included gender, age group, and type of residence. The study focused on Hungarian festivals; thus, the population was defined as Hungarian festival visitors who had attended festivals in each year from 2022 (after the Covid-19 shutdown). Participants were recruited through email invitations with the CAWI (computer-assisted web interviewing) method, which helped to capture a representative demographic of Hungarian festival visitors. The sample size was justified based on the requirements for conducting covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM), which necessitates a sufficiently large sample to ensure reliable and valid results. These methods were selected for their robustness in analyzing complex relationships and latent constructs, making them suitable for our research objectives. Although the sampling procedure was designed to approximate the demographic structure of Hungarian festival visitors, the findings should be interpreted as representative of the surveyed Hungarian festival-visitor population rather than of all European or international festival attendees.

3.4 | Data Analysis Strategy

Data analysis was conducted in several steps. First, IBM SPSS Statistics 30 was used for data cleaning, descriptive statistics and preliminary diagnostics. Second, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted in IBM SPSS AMOS Graphics 30 using maximum likelihood estimation to assess the measurement model. Third, covariance-based structural equation modelling (CB-SEM) was used to test the hypothesised relationships among environmental identity, social openness, attitudes toward sustainable practices and willingness to pay more. CB-SEM was considered appropriate because the study followed a deductive theory-testing logic, used reflective latent constructs and aimed to evaluate the overall fit of the proposed model. This choice is consistent with methodological recommendations distinguishing CB-SEM from PLS-SEM; while PLS-SEM is often preferred for prediction-oriented and variance-explaining purposes, CB-SEM is more suitable when the objective is theory testing, confirmation of a theoretically specified model and assessment of global model fit (Ahmed et al. 2024; Hair et al. 2019).

First, for constructing the factor structure confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used with a maximum likelihood weighting technique. All critical values were appropriate for the first-order CFA constructs (Table 2) (Hair et al. 2019). Discriminant validity in the CFA analysis was also measured. The measurement model was assessed using standardized factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT). Convergent validity was evaluated based on factor loadings and AVE values, while discriminant validity was assessed using both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT ratios. The structural model was evaluated using standardized path coefficients, explained

TABLE 2 | Values of fit indicators for the two levels of CFA and SEM constructs.

Indices	Recommended criteria values	CFA construction	SEM construction
χ^2/df	< 3	1.770	1.922
CFI	> 0.90	0.902	0.914
TLI	> 0.90	0.907	0.915
RMSEA	< 0.08	0.067	0.074
SRMR	< 0.08	0.064	0.069

Abbreviations: CFI, comparative fit index; RMSEA, root mean square error of approximation; SRMR, standardized root mean square residual; TLI, Tucker–Lewis index; χ^2/df , Chi-square divided by degrees of freedom.

variance, model fit indices and bootstrap mediation analysis. Model fit was assessed using χ^2/df , CFI, TLI, RMSEA and SRMR.

Since all constructs were measured using a single self-reported questionnaire, common method bias was assessed using a CFA-based Harman's single-factor test in AMOS. All measurement items were loaded onto one common latent factor. The one-factor model showed poor fit to the data: χ^2/df = [6.102], CFI = [0.516], TLI = [0.474], RMSEA = [0.145]. These results indicate that the measurement items were not adequately represented by a single common factor; therefore, common method bias was unlikely to be a serious concern. Second, a common latent factor was added to the CFA model, with all measurement items loading on this factor in addition to their theoretically assigned constructs. The inclusion of the common latent factor did not materially change the standardized estimates, as all differences remained below 0.20. These results suggest that common method bias was unlikely to represent a serious threat to the validity of the findings.

4 | Results

4.1 | Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

The average age for the final sample ($N = 350$) was 31.7 years, with a standard deviation of 13.3 years; 51.8% of respondents were female, 48.2% were male. The majority, 56.9%, were from the capital city, 9.4% were from other cities, 19.6% were registered in a county seat, and 14.1% were in a town/village (Table 3).

4.2 | Hypothesis Testing

All standardized factor loadings exceeded the recommended minimum threshold of 0.50 and were statistically significant at $p < 0.001$ (Awang et al. 2015). The measurement model showed acceptable reliability and convergent validity, as CR values exceeded 0.60 and AVE values reached or exceeded 0.50 (Table A2). Discriminant validity was first assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. As shown in Table A3, the square root of the AVE for each construct was higher than its correlations with the other constructs (Ahmed et al. 2024; Hair et al. 2019). Discriminant validity was further examined using HTMT ratios.

TABLE 3 | Demographic characteristics of the sample.

Demographic variables	Types	Frequency	Distribution (%)
Gender	Male	169	48.2
	Female	181	51.8
Age groups	18–39 years old	249	71.2
	40–59 years old	86	24.7
	60 or older	15	4.1
Residence	Capital	199	56.9
	County seat	69	19.6
	Other city	33	9.4
	Town/Village	49	14.1

Note: Total $N = 350$ respondents.

As shown in Table A4, all HTMT values were below 0.90, except for the relationship between green energy use and active sustainable participation, which remained below the more liberal 0.95 threshold. Therefore, the constructs were retained as theoretically distinct but closely related dimensions of sustainable festival practices.

4.3 | Structural Model Results

We were able to accept most of our hypotheses and sub-hypotheses based on the measured direct effects in SEM (Figure 1). The standardized path coefficients indicate that most of the hypothesized direct relationships were supported (Table 4). Environmental identity was able to significantly increase the willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals (0.336, $p < 0.001$) of the respondents. The same can be said for social openness, where the direct effect causing the increase is also significant, but to a lesser extent, on willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals (0.151, $p < 0.001$). In terms of consumer attitudes toward sustainability practices, we also measured significant positive effects on the willingness to pay more for a sustainable festival. The strongest influence on willingness was the positive attitude toward green energy practices (0.537, $p < 0.001$), followed by waste management practices (0.474, $p < 0.001$) and finally active sustainable participation practices (0.265, $p < 0.001$). The total explanatory power for the dependent variable is very high, with an adjusted R -squared value of 0.900.

Further direct effects are also stronger on environmental identity on visitors' attitudes toward sustainable practices. The strongest effect was on positive attitudes toward green energy practices (0.442, $p < 0.001$), but the effect on waste management practices was not significantly less (0.427, $p < 0.001$). It had a smaller effect on the attitudes toward active sustainable participation practices (0.378, $p < 0.001$). Social openness has the strongest significant effect on attitudes toward active sustainable participation practices (0.131, $p < 0.001$) and less significant effect on the attitudes toward waste management practices (0.098, $p < 0.05$) and green energy practices (0.079, $p < 0.05$) in sustainable festivals. In the case of factors measuring individual exercises, the explanatory power is moderate, with R -squared values between 0.201 and 0.229.

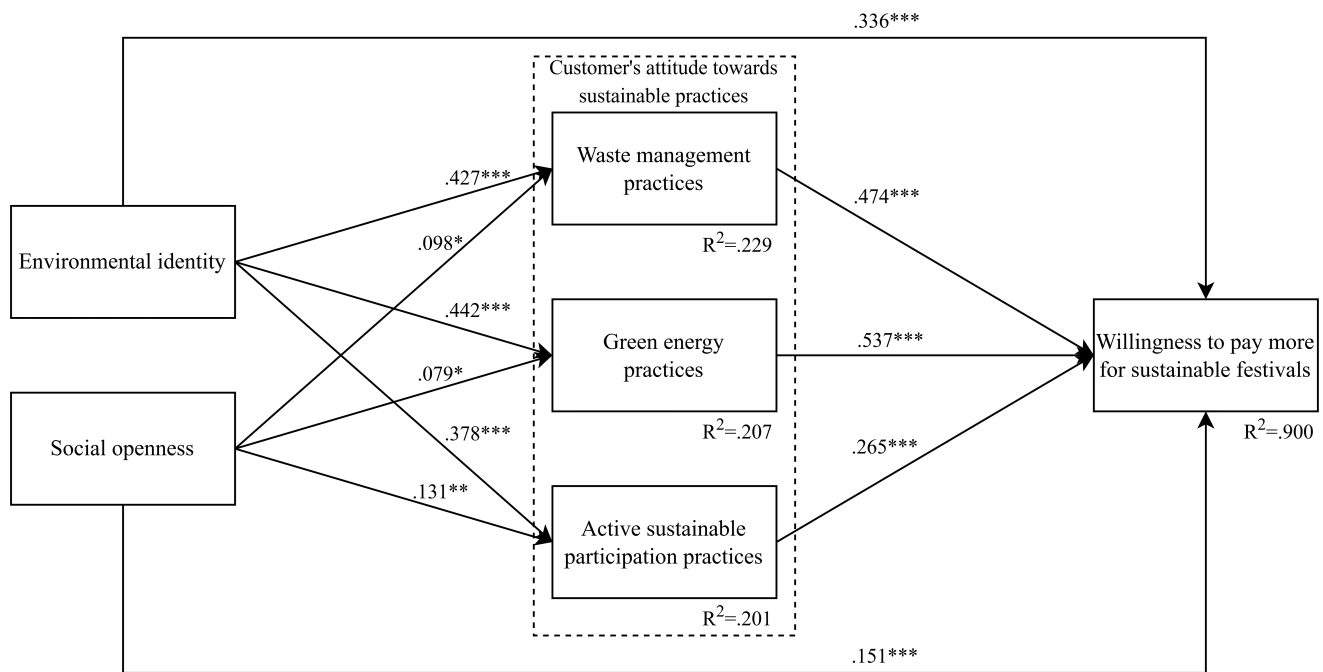


FIGURE 1 | Results of SEM for festivals *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$. Standardized regression coefficient values are presented. The bootstrap procedure generated 2000 sub-samples.

TABLE 4 | Structural model results with standardised total direct effect values.

Connections	Standardised total direct regression coefficient value	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²	S.E.	C.R.
EID → Willingness to pay more	0.336	< 0.001	0.900	0.041	8.201
Social openness → Willingness to pay more	0.151	< 0.001	0.900	0.047	3.214
EID → Waste management	0.427	< 0.001	0.229	0.031	15.235
EID → Green energy	0.442	< 0.001	0.207	0.033	13.399
EID → Active sustainable participation	0.378	< 0.001	0.201	0.037	10.222
Social openness → Waste management	0.098	< 0.05	0.229	0.047	2.094
Social openness → Green energy	0.079	< 0.05	0.207	0.036	2.051
Social openness → Active sustainable participation	0.131	< 0.001	0.201	0.058	2.266
Waste management → Willingness to pay more	0.474	< 0.001	0.900	0.030	15.806
Green energy → Willingness to pay more	0.537	< 0.001	0.900	0.026	17.654
Active sustainable participation → Willingness to pay more	0.265	< 0.001	0.900	0.044	6.027

Finally, we also checked the indirect effects for the mediation analysis (Table 5) with a bootstrap procedure and generated 2000 sub-samples. We found significant mediations in festivals for environmental identity relationships. For the social openness factor, we could not find any mediation effect. Attitudes toward green energy practices and waste management practices have the same mediative effect with significant indirect standardized regression coefficient values (0.213 and 0.192, $p < 0.001$ in both cases). Through attitudes toward active sustainable participation practices, we found partial mediation with a smaller but statistically significant indirect effect (0.060, $p < 0.05$).

5 | Discussion

This study examined how visitors' environmental identity and social openness influence willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals, and whether attitudes toward specific sustainability practices mediate these relationships. The findings provide strong empirical support for the central role of psychological characteristics and sustainability perceptions in shaping visitor support for sustainable festival development. Hypotheses H1 and H2 were supported, as both environmental identity and social openness had significant positive effects on willingness to pay

TABLE 5 | Mediation results with direct and indirect effects measured.

Connections	Direct standardized regression coefficient value	Indirect standardized regression coefficient value	Mediation
EID→Waste→Willingness	0.343***	0.192***	Partially mediated
EID→Energy→Willingness	0.346***	0.213***	Partially mediated
EID→Participation→Willingness	0.370***	0.060*	Partially mediated
Social→Waste→Willingness	0.151***	0.056 (ns)	No effect
Social→Energy→Willingness	0.151***	0.022 (ns)	No effect
Social→Participation→Willingness	0.150***	0.013 (ns)	No effect

Note: ns, not significant. The bootstrap procedure generated 2000 sub-samples. EID = Environmental identity, Social = Social openness, Waste = Attitudes toward waste management practices, Energy = Attitudes toward green energy practices, Participation = Attitudes toward active sustainable participation practices, Willingness = Willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals.

* $p < 0.05$.

** $p < 0.01$.

*** $p < 0.001$.

more for sustainable festivals. We also supported hypotheses H3, H4, and H5 because there are significant mediated effects on willingness to pay more from environmental identity through the customers' positive attitudes on waste management practices, green energy practices, and active sustainable practices. Hypotheses H6, H7, and H8 were not supported, as no significant indirect effects were found for social openness through attitudes toward sustainable practices.

The results confirm that environmental identity significantly increases willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals. This finding reinforces identity theory, which suggests that individuals act in ways consistent with their self-concept to maintain identity coherence (Clayton and Opatow 2003; van der Werff et al. 2013). Supporting sustainable festivals allows visitors to express and reinforce their environmental values, transforming economic support into symbolic identity expression. This aligns with prior tourism research showing that environmentally conscious tourists demonstrate stronger support for sustainable services and are willing to pay premium prices when offerings align with their values (Juvan and Dolnicar 2016; Doran et al. 2016). In festival contexts, where participation represents symbolic and experiential consumption, sustainability initiatives appear to function as value-signaling mechanisms that strengthen perceived authenticity and personal meaning (Durán-Román et al. 2021).

Social openness also positively influenced willingness to pay more, although the effect size was smaller than that of environmental identity. This finding supports prior research indicating that socially open individuals are more receptive to socially responsible initiatives and participatory experiences (Mair and Whitford 2013; Uslu and Tosun 2023). Festivals are inherently social environments, and openness facilitates engagement with shared experiences, cooperative behaviors, and community-oriented values. However, the weaker direct effect suggests that social openness may primarily enhance experiential engagement rather than directly motivate financial support. This nuance extends prior work by suggesting that while openness supports sustainability acceptance, identity-based motivations may be more decisive in shaping economic commitment.

Consistent with prior studies, attitudes toward sustainability practices strongly influenced willingness to pay more (Juvan and

Dolnicar 2016; Boudet 2019). Among the practices examined, green energy use exerted the strongest effect, followed by waste management and active sustainable participation. This hierarchy suggests that visible, high-impact environmental measures may serve as salient signals of environmental responsibility, strengthening perceived value and trust. Previous research has shown that renewable energy initiatives enhance environmental image and visitor satisfaction (Song et al. 2012), while effective waste management improves perceived responsibility and event evaluation (Dodds et al. 2022). The comparatively smaller effect of active participation may reflect varying levels of visitor willingness to engage in effortful behaviors, despite recognizing their importance. This means that participation-based measures like active sustainable participation entail higher effort costs for attendees, although perceived as important, they may translate less strongly into price-premium acceptance than organizer-delivered sustainability practices like green energy usage or waste management practices in a festival.

The mediation analysis revealed that environmental identity indirectly influences willingness to pay more through attitudes toward sustainability practices, particularly green energy use and waste management. This finding supports value consistency, which posits that alignment between personal values and organizational practices strengthens positive attitudes and behavioral support (Edwards and Cable 2009; Li et al. 2023). Sustainability practices appear to translate identity-driven values into concrete behavioral support when visitors perceive them as meaningful and credible. In contrast, no mediation effects were found for social openness. While socially open visitors demonstrated greater acceptance of sustainability practices, this did not translate into indirect financial support. This suggests that social openness may facilitate behavioral cooperation and experiential engagement rather than value-based economic commitment. This distinction contributes to sustainability behavior literature by differentiating identity-driven motivations from social experiential drivers.

The findings also indicate that sustainability practices should not be treated as homogeneous signals of environmental responsibility. In festival settings, highly visible organizer-led initiatives such as renewable energy use and structured waste management systems appear to play a stronger role in legitimizing price

premiums than participation-based sustainability practices. This suggests that visitors may be more willing to financially support sustainability when it is delivered through concrete and observable infrastructural solutions rather than through initiatives that require additional effort from attendees.

6 | Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings of this study demonstrate that the environmental dimension is central to understanding visitors' perceptions of sustainable festival practices and their willingness to pay more for events that demonstrate environmental responsibility. Environmental identity emerged as the strongest psychological driver of willingness to pay more, while visible environmental practices, particularly green energy use and waste management, exerted the strongest direct effects on price-premium acceptance. Festivals therefore represent micro-level platforms where sustainability values, behavioral engagement and economic support can interact in ways that reinforce broader sustainability transitions in tourism and leisure systems. These results reinforce prior research showing that environmentally responsible practices enhance perceived value, trust, and authenticity in tourism experiences (van der Werff et al. 2013; Juvan and Dolnicar 2016; Dodds et al. 2022). When festivals visibly demonstrate environmental practices, they signal credibility and value consistency, strengthening visitors' emotional engagement and willingness to financially support sustainability initiatives. This finding extends environmental identity theory into experiential event contexts, demonstrating that sustainability practices can function as visible value signals that transform environmental concern into economic support.

From a managerial perspective, the findings suggest that environmental sustainability should be treated not merely as an operational responsibility but as a core value proposition. Investments in renewable energy solutions, waste reduction systems, reusable service infrastructure and transparent environmental reporting can strengthen visitor trust and justify premium pricing. Communicating measurable environmental practices (e.g., waste diverted, emissions reduced) enhances perceived authenticity and aligns with growing consumer demand for credible sustainability claims (Song et al. 2012; Boudet 2019). In this sense, environmental practices function as both impact-reduction tools and strategic brand assets.

From a managerial perspective, the findings are consistent with recent research on integrated green strategy and green marketing. Sustainability should not be treated as a peripheral communication message, but as an integrated strategic system that connects event design, supplier management, visitor engagement, marketing communication and organizational culture (Ahmed et al. 2026). For festival organizers, this means that green energy, waste-management systems and participatory sustainability initiatives should be embedded into the overall event concept and communicated through credible, measurable and visitor-relevant indicators. This is also aligned with sustainability assessment research in green marketing, which emphasizes the importance of transparent criteria and practice-based evidence in strengthening stakeholder trust (Anwar, Ahmed, Streimikiene, Ahmed, and Streimikis 2025). Therefore, festivals that wish to justify price premiums should not merely state that they are sustainable, but

demonstrate sustainability through visible practices, quantified outcomes and opportunities for visitor participation.

While the environmental dimension plays a dominant role, the results also highlight the relevance of the social dimension in shaping willingness to pay more. Social openness directly influenced WTP, indicating that visitors who value social interaction, inclusivity, and cultural exchange are more likely to support sustainability-oriented events. Festivals are inherently social spaces where shared experiences and collective participation shape perceived value (Laing and Mair 2015; Wood and Kinunen 2020). Prior research shows that social interaction and community engagement enhance memorability, satisfaction, and emotional attachment to events, while socially responsible initiatives strengthen perceived legitimacy and stakeholder trust (Zhan et al. 2023). Therefore, sustainability strategies that incorporate social inclusion, local culture, and community participation can reinforce visitor support and broaden the perceived value of sustainability.

For event organizers and marketers, integrating the social dimension means designing festivals as inclusive and participatory environments. Initiatives such as collaboration with local communities, showcasing local culture and products, supporting local suppliers and creating opportunities for visitor-resident interaction can enhance perceived authenticity and social value. Participatory sustainability programs, including volunteer activities, community projects, and educational workshops, can strengthen social connection and reinforce pro-social norms, which are known to influence sustainable behavior (Barr et al. 2010; Juvan and Dolnicar 2016). Communicating these social contributions can strengthen brand differentiation and appeal to socially conscious audiences. Engaging artists, performers, and influencers in communicating sustainability messages can further reinforce social norms and encourage collective behavioral change.

At a destination level, the findings underscore the importance of collaboration among destination management organizations (DMOs), local governments, community groups, and event organizers. Festivals function as platforms for stakeholder engagement and place-based value creation, contributing to social cohesion, local identity, and destination branding (Getz and Page 2016). Strengthening stakeholder relationships enhances legitimacy, resource sharing, and long-term sustainability outcomes. DMOs can support sustainable festivals through coordinated sustainability standards, joint communication strategies, and capacity-building initiatives that align environmental goals with community development priorities. The evolution of events points toward community-based and regenerative models, where festivals serve as catalysts for social cohesion, cultural preservation, and local resilience. Sustainable events of the future are likely to emphasize co-creation with residents, local sourcing, circular resource use, and inclusive participation, aligning with broader sustainability frameworks and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

7 | Limitations, and Further Research Opportunities

Despite its contributions, this study has limitations that provide opportunities for future research. First, the sample was limited to Hungarian festival visitors, which may constrain

generalizability across cultural contexts. Future research should conduct cross-cultural comparisons to examine how cultural values influence sustainability support. Second, the study relied on self-reported attitudes and intentions, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Future studies could incorporate behavioral observations or experimental designs to validate actual willingness to pay and sustainable behaviors. Third, while the model explained a high proportion of variance in willingness to pay, additional psychological variables such as environmental concern, moral norms, place attachment, or perceived behavioral control may further refine explanatory power. Fourth, the cross-sectional design limits causal inference. Longitudinal research could explore how sustainability attitudes and identity evolve over repeated festival participation. Fifth, common method bias diagnostics did not indicate a serious threat; the cross-sectional and self-reported nature of the data remains a limitation. Future studies could combine survey data with behavioural observations, experimental designs, or longitudinal data to further validate visitors' actual willingness to pay and sustainability-related behaviours. Another limitation concerns the use of short scales for social openness and willingness to pay more. Although the constructs showed acceptable reliability and validity, future research could replicate the model with more extensive multi-item scales to capture these concepts in greater depth. Finally, future research should examine additional sustainability dimensions, including carbon offsetting, local sourcing, and social equity initiatives, as well as the role of communication transparency and green trust in strengthening visitor support.

8 | Conclusion

This study examined how environmental identity and social openness influence visitors' willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals and whether attitudes toward specific sustainability practices mediate these relationships. The findings show that environmental identity is the strongest psychological driver of economic support and that its effect is partly transmitted through favourable attitudes toward green energy use, waste management, and active sustainable participation. Social openness also increases willingness to pay more, but its effect is primarily direct rather than mediated through attitudes toward specific sustainability practices.

These results suggest that sustainable festival support is not driven by a single psychological mechanism. Environmental identity operates through value-consistent evaluations of visible sustainability practices, whereas social openness reflects a broader experiential and social orientation. The study therefore shows that sustainable festivals can become micro-level arenas where personal environmental values, social experience, and economic support for sustainability transitions intersect. For festival organizers, the findings highlight the importance of investing in credible, visible, and well-communicated sustainability practices, especially green energy and waste-management systems. More broadly, the study contributes to sustainable development research by demonstrating how visitor psychology can support both the legitimacy and economic viability of sustainability transitions in event and tourism contexts.

Author Contributions

László Kökény: conceptualization, methodology, software, data curation, supervision, resources, project administration, formal analysis, validation, visualization, writing – review and editing, writing – original draft, investigation, funding acquisition. **Melinda Jászberényi:** conceptualization, investigation, validation, supervision, project administration, writing – review and editing, writing – original draft, funding acquisition. **Gilda Hernández-Maskivker:** methodology, investigation, validation, supervision, visualization, writing – review and editing, writing – original draft. **Levente Kökény:** conceptualization, investigation, funding acquisition, writing – original draft, writing – review and editing, visualization, validation, methodology, formal analysis, supervision, data curation.

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Ethics Statement

We confirm all the subjects have provided appropriate informed consent and details on how this was obtained are detailed in the manuscript. We attached the translated approval of the Research Ethics Committee of our organizational unit and its appendix.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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Appendix A

TABLE A1 | Statement titles and factor structure.

First-order constructions	Statements	Short names for statements	Sources
Environmental Identity	I like to spend time outdoors in natural settings (such as woods, mountains, rivers, fields, local parks, lake or beach, or a leafy yard or garden).	EID_1	Prévot et al. (2016); Clayton et al. (2021)
	I think of myself as a part of nature, not separate from it.	EID_2	
	If I had enough resources such as time or money, I would spend some of them to protect the natural environment.	EID_3	
	When I am upset or stressed, I can feel better by spending some time outdoors surrounded by nature.	EID_4	
	I feel that I have a lot in common with wild animals.	EID_5	
	Behaving responsibly toward nature—living a sustainable lifestyle—is important to who I am.	EID_6	
	Learning about the natural world should be part of everyone’s upbringing.	EID_7	
	If I could choose, I would prefer to live where I can have a view of the natural environment, such as trees or fields.	EID_8	
	An important part of my life would be missing if I was not able to get outside and enjoy nature from time to time.	EID_9	
	I think elements of the natural world are more beautiful than any work of art.	EID_10	
	I feel refreshed when I spend time in nature.	EID_11	
Social openness	I feel socially opened to cultural diversity in a festival	Social_1	Dempsey et al. (2011); Taecharungroj et al. (2018); Larimian et al. (2020)
	I am opened to know the locals’ values in a festival	Social_2	
	I feel myself open to meet new social equity values in a festival.	Social_3	
Willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals	I am willing to pay more for socially sustainable festival	Willingness_1	Wei et al. (2018); Agag et al. (2020)
	I would pay more for festivals that are made using environmentally friendly tools.	Willingness_2	
Attitudes toward waste management practices at the festival	It is important that the festival has a returnable, reusable cup	Waste_1	Andersson and Lundberg (2013); Wong et al. (2015); Liu et al. (2019)
	It is important to be able to separate waste at the festival	Waste_2	
	It is important that cutlery and plates made of biodegradable materials are available at the festival.	Waste_3	
	It is also important to have paper straws at festivals.	Waste_4	
	It is important that festivals have a programme booklet made from recycled paper.	Waste_5	
Attitudes toward green energy practices at the festival	It is important to have composting at the festival.	Energy_1	Andersson and Lundberg (2013); Wong et al. (2015); Liu et al. (2019)
	It is important to use grey water (e.g., hand washing water for toilet flushing) at the festival.	Energy_2	
	It is important that renewable energy sources (e.g., solar panels) are used at the festival.	Energy_3	
Attitudes toward active sustainable participation practices at the festival	It is important that public transport at the festival is well organized.	Participation_1	Andersson and Lundberg (2013); Wong et al. (2015); Liu et al. (2019)
	It is important to have awareness-raising programmes on environmental issues at festivals.	Participation_2	
	It is important to have voluntary actions (garbage collection, tree planting) at the festival.	Participation_3	

TABLE A2 | Measurement model assessment.

First-order constructions	Short names for statements	Means	Standard deviations	Factor weights	AVE	CR	Cronbach-alpha
Environmental Identity	EID_1	4.57	1.57	0.642	0.513	0.920	0.898
	EID_2	4.62	1.67	0.684			
	EID_3	4.68	1.70	0.689			
	EID_4	5.48	1.65	0.785			
	EID_5	4.30	1.72	0.703			
	EID_6	5.19	1.47	0.708			
	EID_7	6.20	1.27	0.695			
	EID_8	5.73	1.66	0.724			
	EID_9	6.09	1.33	0.731			
	EID_10	5.22	1.73	0.74			
	EID_11	5.11	1.86	0.765			
Social openness	Social_1	3.15	1.22	0.679	0.600	0.813	0.795
	Social_2	3.98	0.95	0.644			
	Social_3	3.82	1.09	0.961			
Willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals	Willingness_1	2.76	1.21	0.672	0.537	0.697	0.664
	Willingness_2	3.04	1.08	0.789			
Attitudes toward waste management practices at the festival	Waste_1	4.15	1.10	0.649	0.554	0.860	0.857
	Waste_2	4.27	1.03	0.727			
	Waste_3	3.82	1.19	0.878			
	Waste_4	3.48	1.43	0.730			
	Waste_5	3.50	1.30	0.720			
Attitudes toward green energy practices at the festival	Energy_1	2.96	1.18	0.693	0.505	0.754	0.751
	Energy_2	3.29	1.31	0.706			
	Energy_3	3.73	1.17	0.732			
Attitudes toward active sustainable participation practices at the festival	Participation_1	3.78	1.24	0.511	0.515	0.754	0.723
	Participation_2	3.15	1.32	0.819			
	Participation_3	3.18	1.32	0.783			

TABLE A3 | Discriminant validity: Fornell-Larcker.

	EID	Social	Willingness	Waste	Energy	Participation
EID	0.716					
Social	0.375	0.775				
Willingness	0.671	0.388	0.733			
Waste	0.436	0.215	0.610	0.745		
Energy	0.427	0.181	0.586	0.649	0.711	
Participation	0.388	0.254	0.443	0.591	0.686	0.718

Note: The items in bold in the diagonal are the square roots of the AVEs and the other items are the correlations. n.r. = not relevant. EID = Environmental identity, Social = Social openness, Willingness = Willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals, Waste = Attitudes toward waste management practices at the festival, Energy = Attitudes toward green energy practices at the festival, Participation = Attitudes toward active sustainable participation practices at the festival.

TABLE A4 | Discriminant validity: HTMT ratios.

	EID	Social	Willingness	Waste	Energy	Participation
EID	—					
Social	0.486	—				
Willingness	0.654	0.608	—			
Waste	0.441	0.365	0.596	—		
Energy	0.420	0.434	0.672	0.856	—	
Participation	0.370	0.543	0.527	0.517	0.914	—

Note: HTMT = heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations. Values below 0.90 indicate adequate discriminant validity under the conservative threshold, while values below 0.95 may be considered acceptable for conceptually related constructs. EID = Environmental identity, Social = Social openness, Willingness = Willingness to pay more for sustainable festivals, Waste = Attitudes toward waste management practices at the festival, Energy = Attitudes toward green energy practices at the festival, Participation = Attitudes toward active sustainable participation practices at the festival.