

Behavior Analysis of Glamping as a Novel Tourism Marketing Trend



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Abstract In the current period, the influence of mass tourism has begun to diminish due to measures and travel limitations. In the post-COVID period, variations in tourist demand and consumption patterns are evident. In this research paper, the concept of alternative tourism is analyzed, along with its characteristics and philosophy, with an emphasis on camping as well as a profile analysis of campers. In addition, the concept of Glamping, a trend in alternative tourism that blends living in nature with the conveniences of a luxury hotel, is examined. There is a review of the evolution of Glamping and the locations where it is practiced, as well as an examination of the profile of tourists who habitually select Glamping and their variations from campers. In addition, a focused behavioral study is undertaken on a sample of 135 individual campers ($N = 135$) by inquiring about their preferences for luxury camping. Through data analysis, rules are extracted, the research's findings are presented, and conclusions are drawn. Finally, the long-term sustainability of this modern type of tourism in contrast to current mass tourism (camping) is evaluated through the development of new innovative tourism services and their dissemination via contemporary digital marketing channels.

Keywords Glamping · Alternative tourism · Mass tourism · Camping · Digital marketing · Behavior analysis

JEL Classifications Z32 · Z33 · M31 · O32 · O33

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© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2023
V. Katsoni (ed.), *Tourism, Travel, and Hospitality in a Smart and Sustainable World*,
Springer Proceedings in Business and Economics,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-29426-6_34

537

1 Introduction

Alternative Tourism Basic Concepts

Tourism is now listed among the major sectors worldwide. Tourism is a crucial source of income for many nations, including our own (Greece). Tourism also contributes to the social sector by playing a crucial role in infrastructure development and the preservation of natural and cultural resources. However, tourism has been severely impacted by the epidemic since it has undergone a complete transformation as a result of rules emphasizing safety and hygiene. In the current period, the influence of mass tourism has begun to diminish due to measures and travel limitations. In the post-COVID period, variations in tourist demand and consumption patterns are noticeable.

Alternative tourism supplanted mainstream tourism because of restrictions imposed to prevent the virus from spreading further. Alternative tourism is a wise investment for generating substantial returns by catering to smaller elite groups. The desire of visitors for alternative forms of tourism (experiences close to nature, culture, religion, etc.) is clear, requiring them to leave their “comfort zone” (Samarathunga, 2022). Due to a certain requirement, the motive for a journey is generated. Consequently, motivation motivates individuals to fulfill this need. The motivations of an alternative tourist differ from those of a mass tourist and deviate from the established norms.

This study paper will focus on the alternative kind of tourism known as “Glamping” or glamorous camping, examining its application sites and the feasibility of its implementation in Greece. Finally, it will be determined if this type of tourism is more resilient than mass tourism in our country.

2 Literature Review

Tourist Profile

The new generation of tourists consists of individuals born between 1981 and 2000. They appear to demonstrate distinct differences from prior generations:

- Creating memories through a variety of experiences is a key goal for Millennials, who define a happy, meaningful life as the accumulation of such memories.
- Traveling Millennials are hungry to explore, engage, and experience the world. They are travelers with an open mind who strive to independence and flexibility and view travel as a good opportunity to know themselves and the world.
- Millennials are an engaged audience who are more inclined than previous generations to travel independently and are receptive to new travel products and experiences.

These traits fuel the trend of creative tourism, which is characterized by the proactive development and execution of unique personal experiences suited to the tourist's own interests, personality, and way of life. Consequently, whereas earlier generations were more likely to allow businesses to guide their trips, Millennials prefer to take charge of their experiences. As a result, this generation is more likely to individually plan their travel itineraries as opposed to relying on the advice of travel agents or participating in scheduled tours or group vacations.

In addition to accumulating experiences, Millennials also visit off-the-beaten-path locations and appreciate unique activities. Part of this age group's travel motive is the pursuit of novelty: experiencing a different way of life, visiting new locations, and learning new knowledge. When it comes to choosing a destination, Millennials tend to choose less popular locales, i.e., developing destinations that they view as "genuine," demonstrating less interest in the conventional destination that their parents choose. This off-the-beaten-path tourism can also encourage some aspects of sustainability, since many people eschew hypertourism sites in favor of under tourism locations. In their pursuit of real experiences, they contribute to local economies and support small-scale, locally owned enterprises. This is accompanied by environmental awareness, environmental ideals, and a readiness to pay a premium for sustainable brands.

Sustainable Tourism

The increasing expansion of tourism raises several concerns. Popular tourist sites, congestion, and poor infrastructure have become a concern, and unsustainable tourist numbers can stress the natural environment and residents. Today, however, there is a strong emphasis on so-called Sustainable Tourism. According to Euromonitor International's Sustainable Travel Index, compared to other continents, Europe is a model for sustainable tourism development, placing a high value on economic, environmental, and social sustainability (Katsoni et al., 2012). Greece ranks 32nd out of 99 countries, fourth in sustainable transport, and fourteenth in economic sector instability (Antonopoulou et al., 2022; Theodorakopoulos et al., 2022). However, what exactly is sustainable tourism? According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), *sustainable tourism* is defined as "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental implications and serves the demands of tourists, the industry, and the people at the receiving locations." Its principles include:

- the correct use of environmental resources.
- the preservation of each community's cultural distinctiveness; and
- the promotion of enterprises' long-term economic development.

Many have cited COVID-19 as an opportunity to promote sustainable tourism. However, among the industry's concerns are whether tourism will resume normal operations and whether the pandemic has permanently altered the nature of travel. How can we guarantee that small, local tourism businesses continue flourishing and contributing to sustainable development? Then, there is a significant paradox: Is sustainable tourism growth even possible? The COVID-19 virus is an ongoing global pandemic that has surpassed the 2003 severe acute respiratory syndrome

(SARS) and 2012 Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) as the world's worst epidemic since World War II. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, the COVID-19 virus had spread to more than 180 nations by April 14, 2020, infecting approximately 1.98 million individuals and causing 126,753 deaths worldwide. It is commonly considered that the tourism industry was the vehicle for the global transmission of the COVID-19 virus, resulting in significant economic losses due to local lockdowns and strict travel restrictions enforced to curb the virus's spread (Matiza, 2020).

The pandemic has incited consumer preferences toward greener, closer to natural solutions. To lessen the tourism industry's impact on the environment, it is necessary to adopt more sustainable practices. Consumers now advocate for more sustainable practices. Therefore, tourism must place a strong emphasis on the transition to sustainable growth. It is highlighted how important it is to manage a destination, even if it means restraining expansion and lessening the social and environmental demands of rapid tourism development. In a broader sense, an effort is made to balance the three dimensions of social, environmental, and economic sustainability over the long term.

Tourism Pre-COVID Era

Tourism undoubtedly provides relaxation, enjoyment, an escape from daily life, unusual experiences, and education through the amusement. It boosts the income in the host countries, eliminates economic crises, provides jobs, and enhances the destination's image. However, the error is believing that it can only have beneficial effects. The opposing force is the term "hypertourism." Hypertourism refers to the presence of an insufficient number of tourists at a particular destination and causes pollution, destruction of the environment, inability to enjoy the landscapes due to excessive people, heightened anxiety among the local population, and an increase in hotel prices. This is owing to the rapid growth of technology and social media of natural and cultural heritage, which has resulted in gathering enormous numbers of people in a specific time frame. In other words, hypertourism refers to the unhappiness of tourists and locals owing to the impact of tourism on a place that exceeds specified limitations (economic, ecological, psychological, etc.). Hypertourism is a result of technological progress and its repercussions. Specifically, easier trip planning and execution, with greater flexibility and freedom of choice, cheaper flights, simple international connectivity, and wide social media exposure (Instagram, Facebook, Internet in general). Before their journey, the latter made many aware of each location's attractions and how to access them (Panas et al., 2017).

Tourism Post-COVID Era

Due to the development of COVID-19, this circumstance has drastically altered. The coronavirus has altered how we travel and live. Local lockdowns, border closures, and travel restrictions have been enacted in nearly all tourist sites. As a result, most tourists will select a domestic or regional international location. The conduct of tourists has undergone a substantial change. People are more cautious, avoiding crowds and hypertourism, and preferring more isolated and less frequented areas

over group travel. Every trip is characterized by social distance and several hygienic standards.

In general, the risk makes it tough for psychology, and there is a chance that it will affect the tourist's desire to travel negatively (Giannoukou et al., 2022). In general, natural disasters have a bad effect on a destination's image, making it risky for tourists. Specifically, when confronted with risk, tourists may postpone their vacation, reevaluate their destination of choice, and endeavor to lessen the perceived risk, or eventually cancel their excursions (Matiza, 2020). Globally, the tourism industry suffers demand challenges (due to instability and uncertainty) as well as supply issues (job vacancies, economic deficits, etc.). Therefore, the recovery of the travel and tourist industry necessitates a coordinated multi-stakeholder strategy that addresses both the demand and supply elements of tourism. The hotels were dealt a tremendous blow. Specifically, the micron mutation caused many hotel cancellations in the first quarter of 2022, particularly in metropolitan hotels that run year round (Halkiopoulos et al., 2020). This occurs because of the cancelation of major events and trade exhibits. In January, only 20% of hotels in the city were available. This industry is in a difficult position because to the pandemic, the previously existing unfair competition, and the phenomena of short-term leasing. Listed below are some current hotel sector trends:

- Health and safety regulations. This not only improves the hotel's image, but also fosters a relationship of trust with the consumer, whose key concern in the post-COVID period is assuring a "protected" lodging.
- Sustainable tourism. This is not a new sort of tourism, but due to our confinement during the past two years, there is a pressing urge to reconnect with nature and her splendor.
- The specialized journeys. Tourists are always in search of new experiences, trends, and "something new." Examples include "smart tourism," "cultivation," "health and luxury" trips, and of course, "Glamping."
- Local travel. Despite the continuous opening of international borders, most travelers choose to stay within national borders. The "staycation" is consequently a trend that is here to stay for quite some time, and hotels should capitalize on this by targeting local tourists. (The top seven hotel marketing trends for 2022 and 2021)
- Alternative accommodation. Regarding the selection of accommodations, Millennials (the new generation) travel differently than older generations. First, they are frequently picky about how much they spend on their accommodations, opting for expensive boutique hotels on one trip and reducing their spending on the next. However, they frequently spend more time outside of the lodging, returning just to sleep and spending their money on unique activities rather than lodging. Today, these attitudes have resulted in numerous changes: The rise of Airbnb and other internet platforms, as well as the emergence of Glamping and luxury lodges, offer an air of sophistication to classic lodging categories (Ketter, 2020; Pawlicz et al., 2022).

Tourism has never been required to pause and reassess the model, nor has it ever had the opportunity to do so. Destinations can take this opportunity to implement selective and sustainable practices. If tourism experts and marketers who are the leaders of tourism industry (and with the technological advances ought to become digital leaders) (Antonopoulou et al., 2019, 2020, 2021) are continually reflective to notice and respond to developments in the tourism sector, they can avoid obstacles (Deyoung, 1987). Every place, activity, and business are starting from fresh, and only the most well-prepared will survive (Pardo & Ladeiras, 2020).

Alternative Tourism

According to Laarman and Durst (1988), alternative tourism presents the following characteristics:

- Preferable virgin places that the human element have not altered.
- They choose to “mingle” with the permanent residents of an area rather than staying within the culture.
- They do not care about tourist infrastructure.
- Before making a trip, they have done personal “research.”
- They travel alone or in small groups of people.
- They are higher paid individuals, with more days in a place than a traditional tourist.

Some of the conditions around which alternative types of tourism operate are the following:

- Caring for the environment
- Small accommodation
- Accommodations that are following the local architecture but also friendly to the environment
- The small number of visitors
- The protection of cultural heritage and traditional values (familiarity with local cultures)
- The active participation and activation of tourists
- The quality of the services offered (environmental protection, friendly service, etc.)
- The financial benefit for the local economy.

It seems to have some benefit to the host culture that goes beyond simply injecting money into its economy. The coronavirus outbreak provides an opportunity for not-so-popular destinations to establish a long-term image as sustainable. Although the development of alternative types of tourism is slow, there are several benefits (financial, environmental, mixing of locals, etc.). Concerning the size of tourist accommodations, Schumacher’s (1972) saying “small is beautiful” prevails in alternative tourism. Alternative tourists mostly choose small accommodation units and local businesses.

Types of Alternative Tourism

Some of the alternative types of tourism are

- Conference-Exhibition tourism. Display in urban centers (or more generally inaccessible areas) where delegates and visitors can carry out further activities.
- Religious Tourism. It entails highlighting, organizing, and promoting religious monuments or monuments for pilgrimage (e.g., the Holy Mount, Meteora, Patmos, etc.).
- Sports Tourism. The holding of global sports events using sports facilities in big cities (Olympic Games, para-Olympic Games, winter games, football games, etc.).
- Spa and Therapeutic Tourism. Utilization of thermal natural resources to develop thermal areas (Panteli et al., 2021).
- Rural Tourism. Development of outdoor areas of tourist interest, from the point of view of carrying out activities that bring people closer to nature, e.g., walking, hiking, mountain climbing.
- Geotourism. Highlighting, promotion, and visitor activities of a country's geosites (volcanoes, caves, canyons, fossiliferous sites, major geological faults, ancient or inactive mines and quarries, landforms, and landscapes created over the geological ages or nature) and activities for their inclusion in tourist networks (thematic or non-thematic) according to the (general or special) characteristics they gather (Katsoni, 2015).
- Marine Tourism. It refers to land-based tourism activities such as swimming, surfing, sunbathing, and other coastal leisure activities that take place on the coast and for which proximity to the sea is a prerequisite, including their related services. Marine tourism refers to marine activities such as boating, yachting, cruising, and nautical sports, as well as land-based services and infrastructure.
- Cultural Tourism. A tourism activity in which the visitor's primary motivation is to learn, discover, experience, and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products at a tourist destination. These attractions/products related to a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional characteristics of a society that includes arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, literature, music, creative industries, beliefs, and traditions.
- Culinary Tourism. Tourism activity is characterized by the visitor's experience associated with food, products, and activities while traveling. These activities include visits to food production sites, cooking classes, gastronomy festivals, etc. (Panas et al., 2022).

As tourism is dynamic and societies evolve, so make people's demands for new experiences. Some genres have huge appeal, others are at an early stage. The only certain thing is that in the post-COVID era, many forms of alternative tourism have emerged due to the human need for safer experiences in line with health protocols. After COVID-19, alternative tourism will completely replace the mass one, as it helps to exploit tourism's economic resources and protect the operators in a short-term context. Places like Spain and Greece, which suffered the devastating effects of

mass tourism, are embracing alternative tourism largely due to their small economies (Arora & Sharma, 2021). Due to changes in tourism demand, new, emerging, or renewed products already fit the new tourism pattern:

- Premium services: Perhaps the most durable pattern. A type of tourism more exclusive and personalized and therefore much easier to adapt to the transition period through vaccination (money will not be a problem for the consumer if safety is ensured).
- Cycling, hiking, nature, and rural tourism: These products answer the main concerns of tourists in the new situation by offering outdoor activities in uncrowded destinations and facilities, allowing them, at the same time, to improve their health and mental and physical situation. In fact, the sale of bicycles is increasing and is used daily as an alternative to public transportation, especially now with the tremendous gasoline price increase.

New products, unconventional: People find new ways to respond to market needs in every crisis. The pandemic crisis is no exception, and the solution of traveling to visit family and friends is popular. Likewise, Glamping is an unconventional product, i.e., the combination of premium service with “returning to nature.” In other words, a luxury experience in a safe location, away from the fear of contracting the virus.

Camping

Camping has varied implications for different people. It represents a wilderness experience for adventurers. Camping is an escape, family vacation, and inexpensive accommodation for parents. Camping is a type of outdoor recreation that includes both action and accommodation (Brooker & Joppe, 2013). We would suggest that the meaning of the word camping is group synergy in the countryside during the summer months. In the literature, the term “Glamping” has been interpreted in a variety of ways, one of the most common being “glamorous camping.” “It is a long-lasting experience that provides creative, recreational, and educational opportunities through outdoor group living (Blichfeldt & Mikkelsen, 2016). It uses skilled leaders and natural environment resources to foster the psychosocial, physical, social, and spiritual growth of each camper.” Who are the campers, though? The camp is demographically open to all age groups (Stott, 2019). In contrast to the rest of the globe, only in Australia and the USA has the involvement of teenagers (18–24) fallen marginally. The camp is primarily attended by couples with children ages 6–12. Outdoor hospitality is also popular with childless couples of elderly ages (Brooker & Joppe, 2013). Camping has become an important tourism commodity in the present day. Using a tent or trailer to sustainably camp close to nature is increasingly popular (Caldicott et al., 2022). A variety of camping accommodations are available (Lang’at, 2020). Camping is unique in that visitors can bring their own accommodations, and the campsite offers space and infrastructure (Ma et al., 2020). Camping as a kind of lodging offers a variety of levels, allowing everyone to find a suitable style (Sommer, 2020). The diagram below illustrates the various types of camping accommodations (Fig. 1).

Tent	Caravan	Motor Homes	Mobile stable accommodations	Non-mobile stable accommodations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tent • Rooftop Tent • Tent Trailer • Others like Sleeping Beach Chair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caravan • Folding Caravan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motor Caravan or Recreation Vehicles (RV) • Car Camping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caravan • Tiny House • House Boat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chalet • Lodge • Cabin • Camping Barrel

Fig. 1 Types of camping (Camping Tourism, 2017)

Glamorous Camping or “Glamping”

In the last 20 years, ecotourism has developed rapidly, and much research has been conducted on it. For example, camping is a type of tourism that is part of ecotourism. Camping accounts for 373 million overnight stays and for some European countries, including Croatia, it represents one of the essential tourism products. However, the Mediterranean, known as the leading camping destination for Europeans, has reached a stage of maturation/stagnation but even decline. This shows the vital need for changes in development strategies and the creation of new activities that will lead to the recovery of camping and the creation of a more significant competitive advantage through sustainable development and technology. These changes concern the implementation of new business ideas (Markova & Nikitina, 2022). After all, innovation and seasonality are at the center of interest in tourism in general. Overcoming seasonality ensures the even distribution of economic profits but also reduces the environmental pressure destinations face (Cvelić-Bonifačić et al., 2017). Over the past decade, camping has transformed by implementing new and innovative accommodations called Glamping (Young, 2017). Although “Glamping” has become an umbrella term for many accommodation units and equipment types, there is still no clear picture of its unique quality characteristics (Vrtodušić Hrgović et al., 2019). Camping in the century we are going through is based on the trends of the time which show the preference of tourists to stay in the countryside and have all the “facilities” of an accommodation. The popularity of Glamping, especially among younger people, results in the complete transformation of traditional camping, thus affecting the competitiveness of this sector (Milohnić et al., 2019).

What is Glamping, and where is it found?

Glamping—a combination of the word’s “glamor” and “camping”—is an emerging concept in camping that combines comfort with direct contact with nature (Brochado & Pereira, 2017). By Glamping, we mean luxurious accommodation in various types of accommodation in the countryside and, more generally, in structures entirely in harmony with the natural environment that combines high aesthetics and offers superior level services. According to the Oxford Dictionary, “Glamping” is a form of camping that includes accommodation, facilities, and services that are more luxurious than those traditionally associated with camping. It is, therefore, not simply staying in a tent but an upgrade to camping. This is a new philosophy in

tourism, fully adapted to the standards of the post-COVID era. We would call it an “affordable” extravaganza. Accommodation can be in a tent, in “yurts” (old version of the modern tent), tree houses, mobile homes, caravans, igloos, “capsules,” “bubbles,” and many more with all the comforts of a luxury hotel (Lopes et al., 2020). Therefore, glamorous camping combines escape from everyday life, contact with nature, and exploring new experiences (Goldkamp, 2022).

It seems that it is a type of tourism that “came to stay”!. More generally, it is not yet clear which types of accommodation belong to Glamping, their characteristics, and how the various stakeholders perceive Glamping. Furthermore, the question arises as to whether there is sufficient demand for accommodation units to be considered Glamping and how this demand is perceived by various stakeholder groups in the camping business. Another issue is how Glamping is defined by operators, manufacturers, and visitors. Glamping removes the negative features of camping—shaky tents, smelly sleeping bags, improvised food, etc., and they are replaced by accommodations such as cabins, yurts, treehouses, and more. These residences are often furnished with luxurious beds, quality linens, carpets, antique furniture, and modern, stylish bathrooms (Brooker & Joppe, 2013). Additionally, it would be noteworthy if this sort of alternative tourism, as Glamping, could be adapted to special groups, such as those with spinal cord injuries or who face a variety of mobility-related health issues, in order to improve their quality of life (Tzanos et al., 2019). Moreover, for optimal incorporation into the social network, they are challenged with social isolation in many nations.

Lately, Glamping is gaining the benefits of camping, but also of hotel businesses at the same time. Glamping motivates many entrepreneurs to transform classic camping sites into Glamping as a competitive advantage for their further development (Milohnić et al., 2019). Glamping is widely popular in France as well as in most Mediterranean countries. Camping and Glamping, particularly as holiday options, have also become very popular in Germany (Groß et al., 2022). In Slovenia, clubbing in the last ten years has developed considerably. The government, in 2004, to support innovative ideas, proceeded to award them. Also significant is the development of various types of camping in Croatia, which started with caravans on campsites. However, the number of Glamping sites is not the same in every European country. There are significant differences in the number of offers in different countries (Wellner, 2015). The demand for Glamping and the number of sites in Europe suggest that Glamping is not just a new word but a new segment of the camping industry (Olçay & Turhan, 2017). It appeals to new groups of customers who would not usually camp. This could create new opportunities for campsite operators and the camping industry at times of higher domestic demand (Sommer, 2020).

Who are Glampers?

Millennials (born between 1980 and 2000) seem to be big fans of Glamping vacations. They have embraced Glamping vacations to differentiate themselves from their parents’ generation through new experiences. In addition, millennials’ desire to share their Glamping vacation on social media is evident when on vacation (Milohnić et al., 2019). Our country, although at an early stage, seems to adopt this global trend.

According to a 2020 survey, among 18–40-year-olds (a sample of 150 people), 41% would stay at a glamorous campsite, regardless of price. 75% belonged to the age group of 26–40 years. However, this trend seems to be reaching other audiences as well. More generally, workers who need to relax and avoid the daily routine, residents of urban centers who want to escape from the fast daily pace, families, couples, and individual travelers. Generally, we would say that glampers are younger, educated, and permanently employed with good incomes (Milohnić et al., 2019).

Campers and glampers are not fundamentally different. Both are vacationers who enjoy being outdoors. Campers and glampers seek authenticity by experiencing nature as a form of escape. However, they do it differently. Nature and escape are the two main elements involved in experiencing authenticity. Campers like to interact with nature and seek adventure, while glampers like to experience nature as spectators and see it as a fairy tale (Sommer, 2020).

The push factor (“getting away from it all”) obviously motivates people to seek Glamping vacations. Glampers’ most important driving factor is spending time with family or friends. Another driving factor is the need for rest, relaxation, and tranquility. Glampers want to relax and enjoy a quiet place. They want to escape everyday life and have a strong need for privacy. The most crucial pull effect that impacts where glampers travel (destination-wise) is the glamper’s desire to experience nature and see beautiful places (Sommer, 2020). Specifically, Leci Sakáčová identified several pull factors:

- The need to be close to nature
- The need for privacy
- Interest in outdoor activities
- The need for luxury and high-quality service.

Resort glampers like to have everything they need during their vacation. On the one hand, they want to be close to nature, but on the other hand, they also want every possible comfort. Glampers expect high quality and are willing to pay a higher price for it (Petruša & Vlahov, 2019). According to Petruša and Vlahov, the tourists’ desire to see beautiful places and live an unforgettable natural experience is the primary motivation for Glamping. Environmental friendliness is also essential for glampers (Sakáčová, 2013). These are two critical features of Glamping that seem difficult to combine: luxury versus eco-friendliness. Camping and Glamping can be classified under nature-based special interest tourism. For both variants, proximity to nature is essential, despite the difference in the perception of nature. The type of accommodation is essential for both glampers and campers. For glampers, however, staying in unique or particularly luxurious accommodation is important. Moreover, they want more comfort and higher infrastructure and services. The most significant difference between campers and glampers seems to be the glamper’s desire for privacy, while campers seek social contact (Sommer, 2020).

Glamping in the Post-COVID Era

According to research conducted in 2021 by Craig and Karabas, the popularity of Glamping seems to be increasing in the post-COVID-19 era because it allows

for social distancing. Secondly, it is an accessible form of outdoor recreation (Brochado & Pereira, 2017). So since social distancing is an inherent feature of Glamping, travelers enjoy their trip with less risk compared to traditional accommodations while at the same time participating in outdoor recreation. Before COVID-19, travelers planned their leisure trips, creating various accommodation channels to consider all their alternatives. One consumer targeting strategy is to target leisure travelers based on their past Google searches. Locating past plans can be particularly fruitful for Glamping vacations considering travelers with pre-COVID-19 plans are exponentially more likely to have post-COVID-19 plans. Another characteristic we are interested in is experience. Future consumer behaviors are closely related to their past experiences. The research results (Craig & Karabas, 2021) also reveal that current hotel/resort travel plans are the main predictor of plans after the COVID-19 era.

Glamping in Greece

Greece and a few others passed a legislation about the alternative form of tourism known as “Glamping” immediately. Its form is the same as it is in the rest of the world: accommodations in nature that offer luxury hotel amenities. More specifically, in October 2020, the Glamping brand was established in Greece, with a duration of 5 years. Accommodations that receive this mark must necessarily be at least 3*.

The criteria that were determined are the following:

- The natural environment should not be burdened, but the facilities should be in harmony with it.
- To use environmentally friendly materials.
- Accommodations should be of quality construction but simultaneously able to be “assembled” and “disassembled” or transported.
- To include systems of electricity supply, water supply, drainage, etc.
- Promote the forms of tourism (Fig. 2).

Let us look at some Glamping options in Greece below.

Hani Agramada in Halkidiki

A tree house and loft-type apartments at the foot of a mountainside in Halkidiki combine unique experiences such as hiking on beautiful, unmapped paths, wine-tasting, visiting Peristeri’s waterfalls and walking in the forest with a four-wheel drive vehicle.

Surf Club Keros, Limnos

Tourist resorts with a series of activities such as yoga, windsurfing, kiting, exploring the natural environment, walking in nature, etc., with a restaurant that offers traditional recipes, local wines, and cocktails.

Odyssey Eco Glamping, Poros

Ten tents among olive, lemon, and orange trees decorated with taste and respect for nature and Greek traditions, with electricity, some necessary electrical appliances,

Fig. 2 Glamping logo



and private bathrooms a short distance away. Naturally, activities such as cooking classes, wine tasting, soap making, weaving classes, etc., could not be missing.

Bubble Tents, Nea Moudania

A unique luxury camping experience inside inflatable tents and an option for outdoor jacuzzis. An eco-resort with options for hiking, boat trips, kayaking, diving, mountain biking, paragliding, 4 × 4 offroad, and various other water sports.

Stolidi mou

A tree house in Atsipopoulos Rethymno, Crete that offers a luxury accommodation experience with bar, garden, air conditioning and terrace, free Wi-Fi, bathroom with hydromassage, and flat screen TV.

Kotsifas Estate Treehouse

“Hidden” on a farm with olive trees and orchards with organic products, looks like something out of a fairy tale. Breakfast comes in bed while meals come directly from the garden and vegetable garden.

Margariti’s Treehouse

This Tree House on the west coast of Corfu, built on a 7-m-high olive tree, is ideal for those who love nature and are looking for a quiet place to relax, among olive groves, with a beautiful view of the sea in front and the mountain in the back.

Mountain tea, Pauliani, Fthiotida

An unforgettable Glamping experience in luxury tent-domes, built on the green slopes of Mount Oiti, with an outdoor heated jacuzzi with hydromassage and all the necessary electrical appliances. The possibility also for activities in nature.

Episkopos Lux Caravan, Nikiana, Lefkada

A landscape of extraordinary beauty, the accommodation covers all types of holidays with the comforts of luxury accommodations for natural holidays.

Sea view Mobile homes, Vourvourou, Halkidiki

A unique summer adventure in brand new luxury mobile homes with panoramic sea views, contemporary luxury, timeless style, and elegance for ultimate moments of relaxation.

Yurt Treehouse Combo, Kalamata, Messinia

The Art Farm highlights the agricultural and cultural heritage of the area and aims to inform, educate and entertain visitors. Inside it is built the “Yurt Tree House Combo.” It combines nature and activities like cooking classes, drone handling, trekking, cultural events in the amphitheater, seminars on rural culture, and many more.

3 Methodology

The questionnaire-based collection of primary data constitutes the research methodology. To lower the cost of time, Google Forms were used to design and fill them, and their dissemination was accomplished by putting them on social network pages, such as Facebook and Instagram, and sending them via email. They were also provided in physical copy at a tourist office to tourism sector professionals. The administered questionnaire was developed by the researchers based on secondary data gathered through a survey of secondary sources, such as scholarly papers, books, articles, the Internet, and statistical studies. The questionnaire contains three sections. In the introduction text, the goal of the study is stated, respondents are informed that their

responses would be kept strictly confidential, and an appeal is made for their participation in the study. The first section of the questionnaire asks individuals about their demographic and socioeconomic factors. The questions in Section A pertain to the choices and travel preferences of tourists in general. In part B, the questions are pertinent to the investigated topic, namely Glamping.

Methods of Statistical Analysis

Some statistical analysis methods were used to analyze the following questionnaire and draw conclusions. First, the t-test is a type of statistical inference used to determine whether there is a significant difference between the means of two groups, which may be related to specific characteristics. It is mostly used when data sets, such as the data set resulting from flipping a coin 100 times, follow a normal distribution and may have unknown variances. A t-test is used as a hypothesis testing tool, which allows the testing of a hypothesis that applies to a population. To determine statistical significance, a t-test examines the t statistic, t distribution values, and degrees of freedom. An analysis of variance must be used to conduct a test with three or more means. Essentially, a t-test allows us to compare the means of two data sets and determine whether they come from the same population. Mathematically, the t-test takes a sample from each of two sets and determines the problem statement by assuming a null hypothesis that the two means are equal. Then, based on the applicable formulas, certain values are calculated and compared with standard values, and the assumed null hypothesis is accepted or rejected accordingly. If the null hypothesis qualifies for rejection, it indicates that the data readings are robust and likely not due to chance. There are three types of t-tests, and they are categorized as dependent and independent t-tests.

Research Objectives

The research objectives are the following: to record demographic data regarding tourists who prefer alternative types of tourism and specifically Glamping, to capture travel and tourism habits, to investigate whether tourists are aware of Glamping, and whether they will be choosing it for their future holidays. To be able to proceed with further research, but also to derive our research hypotheses, we should first study the already existing research, which has generally outlined the profile of glampers, as well as their habits. More specifically, the research by Cvelić-Bonifačić, Milohnić and Cerović showed that those who choose Glamping are younger (34% were 36–45 years old, and 17% were 18–35 years old). They also seem to have higher incomes (40% 3,000–5,000 euros monthly, 22% more than 5,000 euros). Glampers are usually families; according to this survey, 78% travel with their families. Regarding the reason for choosing Glamping, most participants seem to choose it to relax, to have a “passive vacation” without concepts and obligations. Finally, it seems that glampers generally prefer staying in hotels on their vacations, thus answering whether glampers refer to camping guests or hotel guests who have discovered a new original type of accommodation on a campsite.

Another survey conducted by KOA, which owns more than 500 campgrounds across North America, highlighted other characteristics of glampers. More detail

suggests that those who travel a lot (>7 trips per year) choose to try Glamping. Also, it seems that they choose Glamping mainly because of absolute relaxation, tranquility, and escape from everyday life. Still, staying in cabins is preferred over other types of Glamping accommodation. Finally, 67% of travelers surveyed agree that Glamping is an authentic vacation experience.

Research Hypothesis

- [RH1] Those who choose Glamping for their future holidays are of a younger age.
- [RH2] Those who will choose Glamping on their next vacation are people who travel more.
- [RH3] Main reason for choosing Glamping is relaxation.
- [RH4] There is a preference for the choice of “cabins” as opposed to the other types of Glamping accommodation.
- [RH5] People with a higher level of education would choose Glamping on their next vacation.
- [RH6] It is considered important that Glamping is an original-unique experience.
- [RH7] People with higher incomes would try Glamping.

4 Results

Most of the sample were women at 62.2% (N = 84), with the corresponding percentage of men at 37.8% (N = 51). Regarding the age groups, most participants were 25–34 years, at 36.3%. Regarding the educational level of the participants, 27.4% (N = 37) were holders of master’s and doctoral degrees, while 54.1% (N = 73) were graduates of higher education, i.e., TEI and post-secondary education. 80.7% (N = 109) of the participants were employed, 3% (N = 4) were unemployed, and 5.2 (N = 7) were retired. The monthly income of most participants ranged from 800 to 1,500 euros in a percentage that corresponded to 41.5% (N = 56) of the participants, while the next income range was that of 0 to 800 euros in a percentage of 28.1% (N = 38). Most participants answered that they travel twice a year at a rate of 39.3% (N = 53). To the question with whom you usually travel, most participants answered that they travel most often with their family, 43.7% (N = 59) while 27.4% (N = 37) answered that they travel with friends and 23% (N = 31) answered how he/she travels with his/her partner. When asked how long the respondents’ vacations last on average, most answered that their vacations last from four to seven days at a rate of 48.9% (N = 66). The next question was about the intention of the participants to make a trip within 2022, and 82.2% (N = 111) answered that they intend to make a trip within the year. The next question aimed to investigate where this trip will take place, and 43.7% (N = 59) answered that if they travel within the year, they will travel to Greece, while 41.5% (N = 56) answered that they would travel both to Greece and abroad. The next question concerns the participants’ accommodation type, to which 60.7% (N = 82) answered that they usually stay in hotels while only

21.5% (N = 29) answered that they stay camping and Glamping. Most participants answered how they book their vacations through online platforms such as Airbnb booking and Trivago, at 56.3% (N = 76). The next question aimed to investigate the participants’ knowledge about Glamping. 47.4% (N = 64) answered that they know Glamping. Most participants answered negatively about whether they have ever stayed in glamorous Glamping at a rate of 73.3% (N = 99). The next question explored what type of Glamping accommodation the participants would choose; the majority answered that they would choose bungalows and cabins. Rather positively, most of the participants answered the question if they would choose Glamping for their next vacation, 47.4% (N = 64). The next question was about the inhibiting factors regarding the choice of Glamping, and the price is one of the main inhibiting factors for the participants at a rate of 37.8% (N = 51).

Regarding the price they would be willing to pay to stay in a Glamping accommodation, most participants answered that this price would vary between 50 and 70 euros, with a response rate of 50.4% (N = 68). At the same time, the next question regarding why they would choose Glamping accommodation had to do with relaxation at a rate of 40.7% (N = 55). When asked how important specific factors are for participants to choose a Glamping accommodation, the survey findings show how environmentally friendly a Glamping accommodation is considered very important with an average of 4.42, while including sports and recreational activities are considered almost neutral with an average of 3.36. In addition, the participants consider it very important that the accommodation is in a quiet and remote location with an average of 4.12 responses and that it is an alternative and original experience with an average of 3.91, while at the same time they consider it important that the equipment is modern with an average of 3.81 and consider it neutral to provide catering services clothing supplies and food with an average of 3.33. Also, they consider it indifferent to vital that it is a beautiful location 3.55 while at the same time they consider it indifferent to vital that it has Wi-Fi with an average of 3.67 (Table 1).

It can be seen from the t-test analysis (Table 2) that $T = 38,732 > 2 \text{ kai } p = 0.000 < 0.005$; this means that there are statistically significant differences between the

Table 1 Descriptive statistics [How important do you consider the following factors for Glamping?]

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std.
[Friendly environment]	130	2	5	4.42	0.725
[Sport/entertainment activities]	135	1	5	3.36	1.266
[Quiet/remote area]	128	2	5	4.12	0.944
[Alternative/innovative experience]	135	1	5	3.91	1.181
[Modern equipment]	135	1	5	3.81	1.175
[Extra facilities/amenities restaurants/clothing stores shopping/food supplies, etc.]	135	1	5	3.33	1.309
[Picturesque place/area]	135	1	5	3.55	1.262
[WIFI]	135	1	5	3.67	1.304

Table 2 Sex [ANOVA one-sample test]

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	95% conf.	
					Lower	Upper
Sex	38.732	134	0.000	1.622	1.54	1.71

averages of the genders of the sample regarding their intention to choose a Glamping accommodation.

As F is small 2.161 (Table 3) the adjusted p value = 0.062 is greater than alpha 0.005, we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that the difference between the means of the age groups is not statistically significant.

The ANOVA test that examines the relationship between the means of educational level regarding the intention to visit Glamping accommodation on their next vacation (Table 4) with $F = 6.707$ $p = 0.002 < 0.005$ shows that there are statistically significant differences between the means of educational level regarding with the intention of choosing Glamping on their next holiday.

In relation to the average of the working status groups and their intention to do Glamping (Table 5), it seems that there are no significant statistical differences between the groups with $F = 2.151$ $p = 0.078 > 0.005$.

A one-way ANOVA was performed to compare the effect of salary group averages on Glamping choice on subsequent vacations (Table 6). A one-way ANOVA revealed

Table 3 Age [ANOVA one-sample test]

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	9.573	5	1.915	2.161	0.062
Within groups	114.308	129	0.886		
Total	123.881	134			

Table 4 Do you choose Glamping for your next holidays/age? [ANOVA for educational level]

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	11.428	2	5.714	6.707	0.002
Within groups	112.453	132	0.852		
Total	123.881	134			

Table 5 Do you intend to choose Glamping for your next holidays? [ANOVA for job occupation]

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	7.689	4	1.922	2.151	0.078
Within groups	116.193	130	0.894		
Total	123.881	134			

Table 6 Do you intend to choose Glamping for your next holidays? [ANOVA for wage groups]

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	1.500	4	0.375	0.398	0.810
Within groups	122.382	130	0.941		
Total	123.881	134			

Table 7 People who choose Glamping for their holidays are used to travel more

		Intention	Travel frequency
Intention	Pearson correlation	1	-0.366**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	134	134
Travel frequency	Pearson correlation	-0.366**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	134	134

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

that there was not a statistically significant difference in choice intention between at least two groups of the independent variable as $F = 0.398$ and $p = 0.810$.

A Pearson correlation test was performed to test the following hypothesis (Table 7). The two variables seem to have a negative correlation, which means that the more the participants get used to traveling, the less they intend to visit Glamping accommodation on their future holidays.

5 Discussion

[RH1] Those who choose Glamping for their future holidays are younger

According to the statistical analysis results, since the difference between the means of the age groups is not statistically significant, the hypothesis we made that the people who would choose Glamping to a greater extent are the millennials is not proven. Other ages seem to view this type of holiday as positive or to a greater extent.

The above could be happening because Glamping is a type of alternative tourism, which, as mentioned above, combines contact with nature but also the comforts of a luxury hotel. For this reason, older people can choose it, as a classic campsite has no restrictions.

[RH2] Those who will choose Glamping on their next vacation are people who travel more

The research showed that the more used participants travel, the less they intend to visit Glamping accommodation on their next holiday. Therefore, our original hypothesis is rejected. This may be explained by the fact that people who have traveled a lot and thus acquired many different travel experiences may have already tried Glamping. Therefore, it does not seem such an original and new experience to them, unlike people who do not have many travel experiences.

[RH3] Main reason for choosing Glamping is relaxation

According to the respondents' responses, the main reason for choosing a Glamping accommodation is relaxation, at 40.7%. Therefore, hypothesis 3 is confirmed. This is because its comforts (lux services) are suitable for relaxation, just as is the case with, for example, a 5-star hotel.

[RH4] There is a preference for the choice of "cabins" as opposed to the other types of Glamping accommodation

The analysis of the data set also confirms hypothesis 4, as most respondents said they would choose bungalows and cabins for their accommodation. The specific type of accommodation is known to the Greek public, in contrast to, for example, other types (e.g., yurts), which appeared unknown during the test survey carried out before the regular one.

[RH5] People with a higher level of education would choose Glamping on their next vacation

According to Table 4, we observe that people with a higher educational level outperform with a statistically significant difference compared to people with a lower educational level in terms of choosing Glamping in future vacations. So, our original hypothesis is confirmed. This could be since these people read and search more, even their personal issues such as vacations. So possibly, people with a lower educational level considered Glamping as something almost the same as camping.

[RH6] It is considered necessary that Glamping is an original-unique experience

It becomes apparent, with a mean of 3.91, how the participants consider it essential that Glamping is an original-unique experience. More specifically, it is the 3rd most crucial criterion right after environmental friendliness and quiet/remote location. The tourist, especially after the influence that COVID-19 has on the choice of his vacation, is looking for new original experiences, "out of the box," which will offer him security, but at the same time, will take him out of the daily routine, of 2 years old, who didn't even have the opportunity to travel.

[RH7] People with higher incomes would try Glamping

According to Table 6, the hypothesis that income influences the choice of Glamping is not confirmed as there is no statistically significant difference between the various wage scales. Therefore, the above case could be settled, as Glamping is a type of alternative tourism that we would not say that its competitive advantage is considered the price, quite the opposite. Nevertheless, perhaps also due to a lack of

the necessary knowledge regarding this type of vacation (judging from the answer given to the question “19. How much money would you be willing to pay for one night in a Glamping accommodation?”) that most participants answered that this price would vary between 50 and 70 euros with a response rate of 50.4%), people of all salary scales choose it.

6 Conclusion

This study’s objective was to examine the attitudes of tourists concerning Glamping accommodations. For this purpose, a questionnaire was developed, which included the opinions and attitudes of participants on this sort of lodging. Based on this survey, we can conclude the following. First, most participants were females between the ages of 25 and 34. Most of the participants were tertiary or post-secondary education graduates, and a significant proportion of them were employed. In terms of their travel behavior, their average monthly income varied between 800 and 1500 euros. Most respondents travel an average of two to three times per year, typically with their families on vacations that run between four and seven days.

The respondents were then required to answer questions regarding their travel habits throughout this year, during which they indicated that Greece will be their most likely travel destination in 2022. In contrast, most respondents indicated that when selecting accommodations, they prefer hotels, with only 21% indicating that they prefer camping. The attendees reserve their accommodations through online portals. Similarly, the majority responded negatively when asked if they were familiar with Glamping and when asked whether they had ever been at a glamorous camping. When asked which style of Glamping accommodations they prefer, most respondents selected bungalows or cabins. Simultaneously, they appeared optimistic about picking Glamping for their next vacation. For the research participants, the cost appears to be the most significant deterrent to selecting this type of holiday. In addition, they indicated that they are willing to pay between 50 and 70 euros per night for this type of lodging. Finally, they responded that the primary reason they would pick Glamping is to escape their normal routine. On a 5-point Likert scale, the following questions required respondents to indicate which Glamping-related considerations they deemed most significant. Most participants responded that they would choose it to be more environmentally conscious, and a very important factor is that the accommodation is in a quiet and remote area. However, with an average response of 3.91, the participants consider how it is to be about an alternative and original experience to be quite significant.

Then, the participants’ average responses to the question addressing their intention to visit Glamping lodgings were compared to a variety of demographic variables. The findings of the t-test, which analyzed gender as an independent variable, revealed statistically significant variations between the sample averages of men and women regarding their propensity to select this type of lodging. In contrast, the

ANOVA analysis of the remaining demographic factors revealed a significant difference between the typical age groups and their intents to visit these lodgings. Similarly, the differences between the averages of the participants' educational level and their inclination to visit Glamping lodgings are statistically significant. In contrast, no statistically significant differences were detected between pay groups and the intention of individuals to visit Glamping accommodations.

Further Implications

The issue was chosen due to the interest it generated, as it relates to a relatively new kind of alternative tourism that has not been developed in Greece to the same extent as in other countries. Consequently, the relevant literature was rather restricted. Future study might be conducted on a larger scale, with more resources and over a longer *period*, as there are unexplored areas that are worthy of investigation so that Glamping can be implemented in our nation to the same extent as it is in other countries. By claiming the Glamping brand, a beginning has been established, and there is room to expand this unique sort of alternative tourism. The audience seemed to have showed a great deal of interest in the topic, as there *were* favorable comments following the survey. However, it appeared to be an unfamiliar genre to the majority. Future studies could include tourism businesses in addition to the final consumer (potential tourist). Finally, integrating additional variables and investigating more components would help to obtain more qualitative results. Consequently, we would suggest that Glamping represents a new template of alternative tourism, which, particularly in the post-COVID-19 period (Craig, 2021), might witness significant growth in Greece. To refer to some limitations of the present study we could add that due to a lack of financial resources and concurrent activities, sample collection was hampered by cost and time constraints. To collect as many responses as possible in the shortest amount of time, a particular number of questions were selected so that completing the questionnaire would not be demanding. Furthermore, using typical data collection techniques such as questionnaires and self-report scales, this study aimed to identify Glamping as a new alternative tourist trend within the tourism industry. Since it is imperative to apply innovative techniques through the field of artificial intelligence and expert systems (Giotopoulos et al., 2019; Halkiopoulos & Giotopoulos, 2022; Halkiopoulos & Papadopoulos, 2022; Halkiopoulos et al., 2021; Katsoni & Dologlou, 2017; Sarigiannidis et al., 2021), as well as the field of neuromarketing (Halkiopoulos et al., 2022) with the application of neuroimaging tools (Al-Kwafi, 2015) for the analysis of behavioral patterns (Giannoukou et al., 2022) and choices in the tourism industry (Panas et al., 2020), promoting crucial themes and leading decision-making we consider these issues and the method of data collection to be among the study's limitations.

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