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GLAMPING IN RUSSIA: RELEVANCE AND DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS

Anastasia Dorofeeva

Faculty of International Tourism, Sport Business and Hospitality Industry
FSBU of HPE Financial University under the Government of the Russian
Federation

anytag@yandex.com
49, Leningradsky prosp.,
Moscow, Russian Federation, 125993
+7 (977) 461-45-86

Abstract. The paper considers the investigations of prospects for the development of glamping - a new trend in outdoor tourism - in Russia and its relevance. The purpose of the paper is to reveal whether this type of tourism is able to meet the needs of Russian people of different age groups. The author highlights the key characteristics of this type of accommodation. People's preferences in the sphere of tourism and the main blocking factor affects the development of glamping in Russia are revealed. The article describes the results of a sociological survey conducted by the author in Russia about people' attitude to glamping, its development prospects in the country, the ability to meet the tourists' needs and ways to popularize it. A total of 500 respondents from three age groups were interviewed. It was revealed that older age groups are more interested in such a vacation, but less aware of it. Several ways to popularize glamping in Russia are proposed by the author.

Key words: glamping; tourism industry; relevance; development prospects; consumers' preferences; promotion.

JEL codes: L 83; O 14.

Introduction

Tourism industry is one of the promising sectors of the economy and a highly dynamic sphere. Constant changes in consumers' preferences and requirements lead to the emergence of new accommodation facilities.

Post-modern tourist is an expert, demanding, sophisticated and increasingly critical of travel offers. This type of tourist needs to live experience. He is constantly looking for authenticity and emotions [1]. One of the new trends in the sphere of tourism, designed to meet the needs of the modern consumers, is glamping.

Today, the greatest interest in this trend is shown in the United States of America, Great Britain, Australia and South Europe [2]. On the well-known internet-portal Booking.com to the format of "glamping" refer more than 1.8 million accommodations worldwide. Glamping is not very common in Russia yet [3]. According to the expert assessment of the travel company Russia Discovery, there are about 30-50 glamping sites in Russia in Moscow and the Moscow region, in Karelia, in Altai, in Krasnodar region and others. The most famous of them are «Walk-City» in the Tula region, «Forest and Sea» at Moscow region, «LeapRus» in Kabardino-Balkaria and «Cheposh Park» (Altai) [4]. Currently, it is developing in the Arctic zone [5; 6].

Glamping as a business has several features. Firstly, it does not require large investments – it is cheaper than to arrange a hotel or cottage. The installation of glamping is easier to coordinate since it is classified as tourist equipment. Besides, glamping is quite easy to scale – it is possible to start with 2-3 points. Moreover, glamping can be used both seasonally and year-round [7].

The purpose of this article is to reveal whether this type of tourism is able to meet the needs of people of different age groups, to identify the level of awareness of Russian people of glamping. The aim of the study is to find out what are the prospects for the development of glamping in Russia and what may be obstacles.

Our main tasks are as follows:

- to give an interpretation of the term «glamping», identify the key characteristics of this type of accommodation;
- to find out about people's preferences in the sphere of tourism and determine how much glamping matches them;
- to make conclusions about the relevance, prospects and problems of glamping development in Russia;
- to identify appropriate ways to promote glamping in Russia.

The subject matter of the study is glamping as a new trend in outdoor tourism, which is just beginning to develop in Russia.

The actuality and originality of the research - in Russia the market of glamping is at the initial stage, that is why it is an underexplored area of tourism sphere. The number of research papers, which are dedicated to the study of glamping, is rather limited. Although, according to estimates of Russia Discovery [4], in 5-6 years there will be at least 500 glamping sites in Russia and the demand for this

type of tourism will grow. This research paper is a contribution to the area of tourism management, and it can be seen as a starting point for future studies of glamping and recreation management.

1. Literature Review

The term «glamping» started to be actively used in the United Kingdom in 2005. The word is new, but the concept of glamping has its roots in the Middle Ages. When members of high society wanted to spend several days or weeks in the open-air luxurious tents completed with silk fabrics, embroidery, expensive rugs and furniture were constructed for them [8].

In the new millennium camping, which was seen as a cheap and simple mass accommodation in the 20th century, returned to its «posh» roots. The comeback is all about innovative, creative and luxury accommodation in an exceptional natural environment [9].

What is «glamping»? How can we define it? According to the Cambridge Dictionary [10], «glamping» is a type of camping that is more comfortable and luxurious than traditional camping. The word is a mixture of «glamorous» and «camping». The slogan «Where nature meets luxury» is the most concise interpretation of «glamping» [11].

More comprehensive definition with the emphasis on the main advantage and the distinctive features of glamping is offered by Groe [1]. Glamping is a new way to go on holiday which allows you to spend a few days in direct contact with nature without sacrificing comfort. It tries to get in touch with nature in a respectful and less invasive way: thanks to the ecostructures. Ecological and eco-friendly accommodation built according to architectural models that have zero environmental impact. Filipe, Santos and Barbosa [12] propose a similar approach to the interpretation of the term with reference to the main aspects of glamping. According to them, the most important motivational driver to go glamping is the direct contact with nature. Glamour, comfort, privacy and a different experience are also important aspects that consumers appreciate.

An interesting interpretation indicating the types of glamping accommodation is presented on the website Glamping.com [13]. Glamping is a way to authentically experience the most awe-inspiring locales around the world. It is becoming a synonym for luxury accommodation that most often takes the form of tents, but it also includes numerous more innovative types of accommodation such as yurts, tree houses and mobile homes. In this interpretation, as in the previous ones, the main advantage of glamping is emphasized – it gives the feeling of complete unity with nature.

Having examined several interpretations of the concept of glamping, we can conclude that this type of accommodation is an improved, «5-star» camping which involves living in the wilderness in the most comfortable conditions. It is a new trend in outdoor tourism that combines nature and luxury and gives an opportunity to get back to the nature without sacrificing an ounce of convenience. It

suggests various options for leisure activities: trekking, fishing, paraplanner, horseback riding, indoor activities (cards, reading) and more. Glamping is a type of eco-tourism that involves the use of natural resources and fits organically into the surrounding landscape, without harming pristine nature.

2. Materials and Methods

Research methods

The following methods, which were used in the research: evaluation of the key features of glamping, interviews, survey data analysis, systematization and categorization of facts and concepts.

Research Stages

The research was conducted in three stages.

The first stage included: formulating the subject, purpose and tasks of the article; investigation of previous researches devoted to glamping; determining methods appropriate to the purpose and tasks of the research.

In the second stage, the survey data analysis and interviews were conducted to gain an insight in the preferences of people of different age groups and their level of awareness of glamping.

The third stage involved analysis and systematization of the results received; investigation of the prospects and obstacles for the development of glamping in Russia; drawing conclusions.

3. Results and discussion

To carry out the research six questions were formulated:

1. What is glamping? What particular features does it have?
2. What are the expectations that tourism industry is called to satisfy nowadays?
3. Is glamping able to meet the needs of people in the sphere of recreation?
4. What blocking factors affect the development of glamping in Russia?
5. Are Russian people aware of the existence of such a new trend in tourism industry as glamping?
6. How can glamping be popularized?

This research paper comprised quantitative as well as qualitative data collection tools. The findings have been presented according to the questions in the survey.

A questionnaire was developed in two language versions (English and Russian) to minimize the risk of misunderstandings. It was distributed among 500 Russian people aged from 18 to 60. Then all the participants were divided into three age groups: 18-25 (predominantly students of the Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation), 25-40 and over 40.

The questionnaire contained 4 items, two of which were designed to investigate people's preferences and expectations in the sphere of tourism. The third inquired about the sources from which they most often get advertising information about tourism. The purpose of the last item was to establish the level of awareness of such type of tourism as glamping. Participants were asked to choose options which reflect their preferences (Tab. 1).

Tab. 1: Questionnaire to identify people's preferences in the sphere of tourism and the level of awareness of Russian people of glamping¹

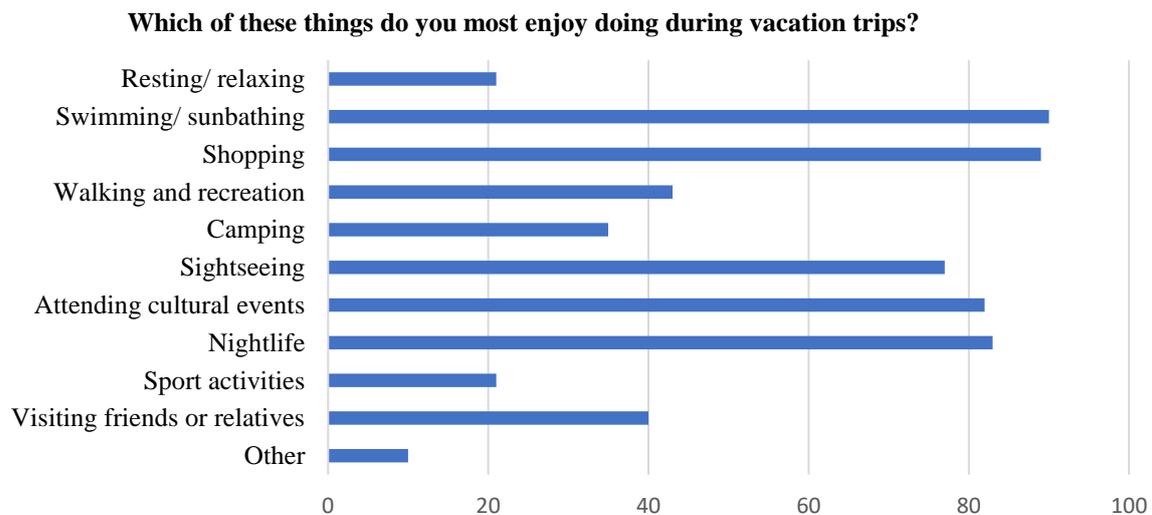
Please help me find out about your preferences by taking a few moments to fill out this survey form.	
Age:	
1) Which of these things do you most enjoy doing during vacation trips?	
Resting/ relaxing	Sightseeing
Swimming/ sunbathing	Attending cultural events
Shopping	Nightlife
Walking and recreation	Participating in sport activities
Camping	Visiting friends or relatives
Other	
2) Which of these items are important for you when you are planning your future vacation?	
Big cities	First-class hotels
Wilderness and national parks	Budget accommodation
Shopping	Nightlife
Museums, art galleries and theatres	Being physically active (outdoor activities)
Feeling at home away from home	Indoor activities (cards, reading)
Meeting people with similar interests	Ecological compatibility
Other	
3) From what sources do you most often get advertising information about tourism?	
Friends and relatives	Internet
Magazines and newspapers	Tour agency
TV	Other
4) What is «glamping»?	
Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey.	

First and second research questions were used to determine the participants' needs and preferences in the sphere of recreation. They duplicate each other to some extent, so the final result is more reliable. All answer options to these questions can be divided into two groups: those that refer to glamping and those that are not.

In response to the 1st question participants aged from 18 to 25 mainly chose those types of activities that are not related to glamping. The most prevalent variants were: «Swimming/ sunbathing» (90%), «Shopping» (89%), «Nightlife» (83%) and «Attending cultural events» (82%) (Fig.1).

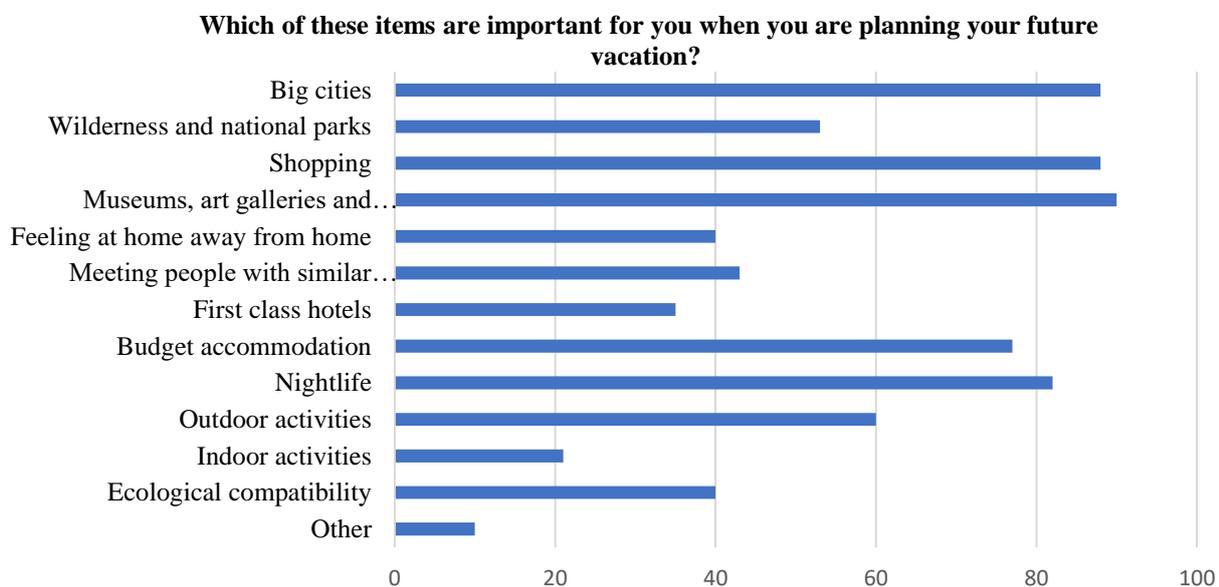
¹ Compiled by the author based on the conducted research

Fig. 1: Answers to question 1 (age group 1)²



While answering the 2d question and choosing the key features of vocational trip respondents aged from 18 to 25 also gave preference to those that are not related to glamping: «Big cities» (88%), «Shopping» (88%), «Museums, art galleries and theatres» (90%), «Nightlife» (82%) and «Budget accommodation» (77%) (Fig.2).

Fig. 2: Answers to question 2 (age group 1)³

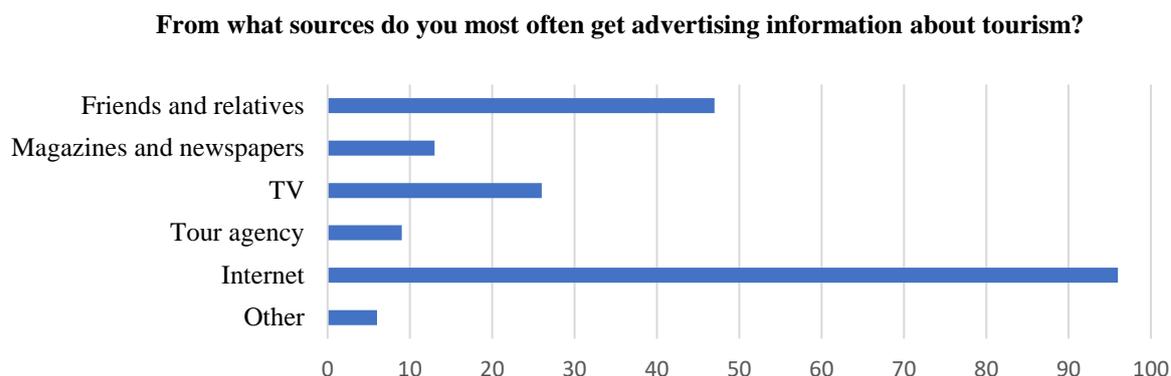


The purpose of the third question was to find out what are the most common sources for getting advertising information about tourism. For people aged from 18 to 25, these sources are as follows: «Internet» (96%), «Friends and relatives» (47%) (Fig.3).

² Compiled by the author based on the conducted research

³ Compiled by the author based on the conducted research

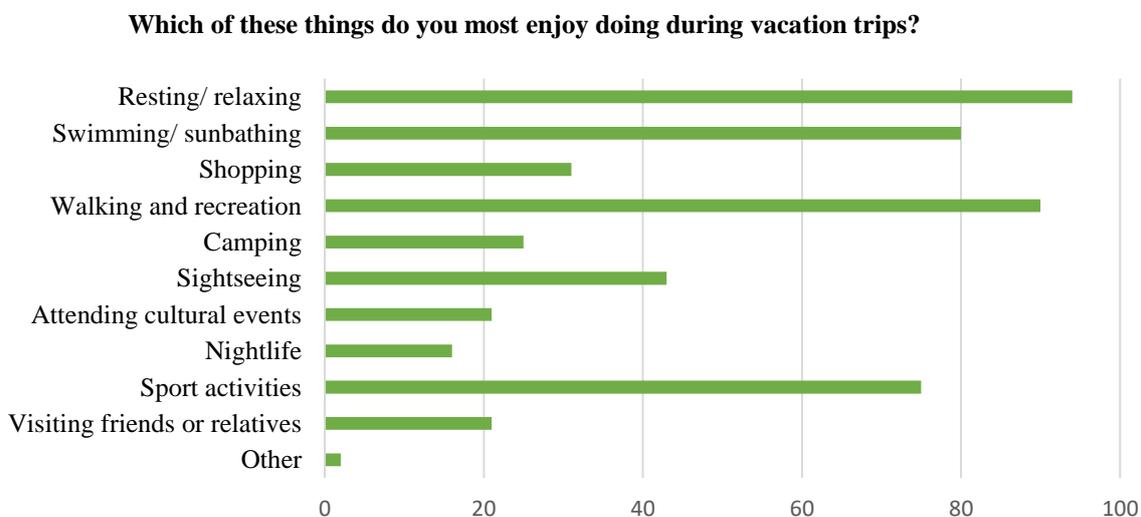
Fig. 3: Answers to question 3 (age group 1)⁴



In order to reveal the level of awareness of glamping, we asked participants to answer the fourth question: «What is «glamping»? The most precision answers given by the first age group were: «a new type of camping which includes more comfortable accommodation», «glamorous camping», «a type of tourism that combines the comfort of a hotel room with the possibility of outdoor recreation». In general, a high level of awareness was demonstrated by people aged from 18 to 25: they overwhelmingly answered correctly on the 4th question (76%). Only 24% of respondents gave an incorrect answer or left a question unanswered.

In response to the 1st question participants aged from 25 to 40, in contrast to the first age group, chose those types of activities which refer to glamping. The most prevalent variants were: «Resting/relaxing» (94%), «Swimming/ sunbathing» (80%), «Walking and recreation» (90%), «Sport activities» (75%) (Fig.4).

Fig. 4: Answers to question 1 (age group 2)⁵

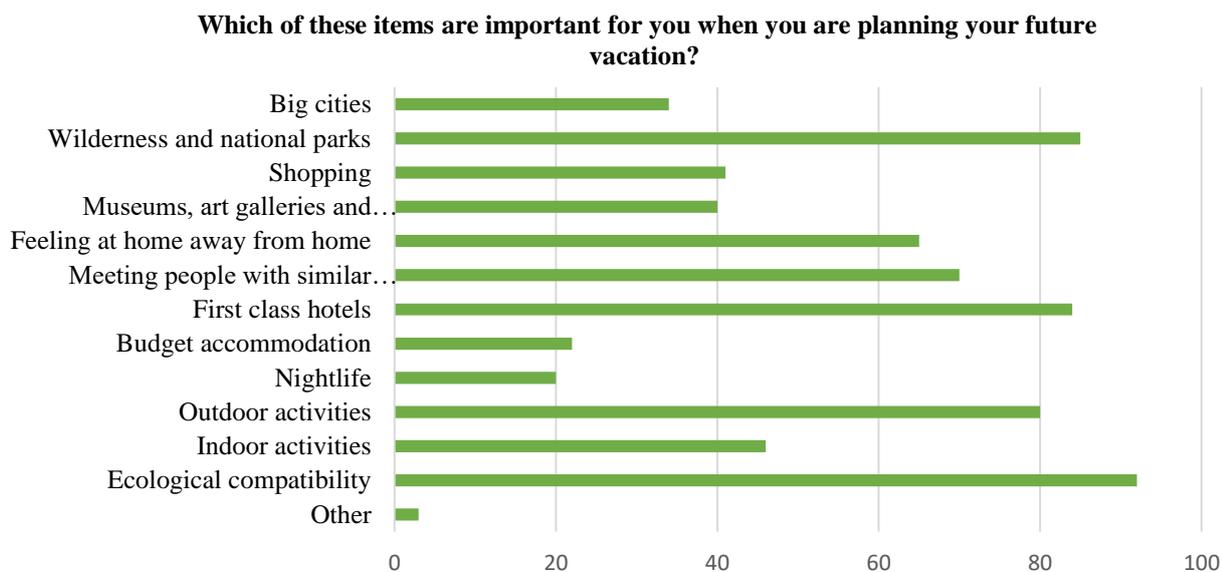


⁴ Compiled by the author based on the conducted research

⁵ Compiled by the author based on the conducted research

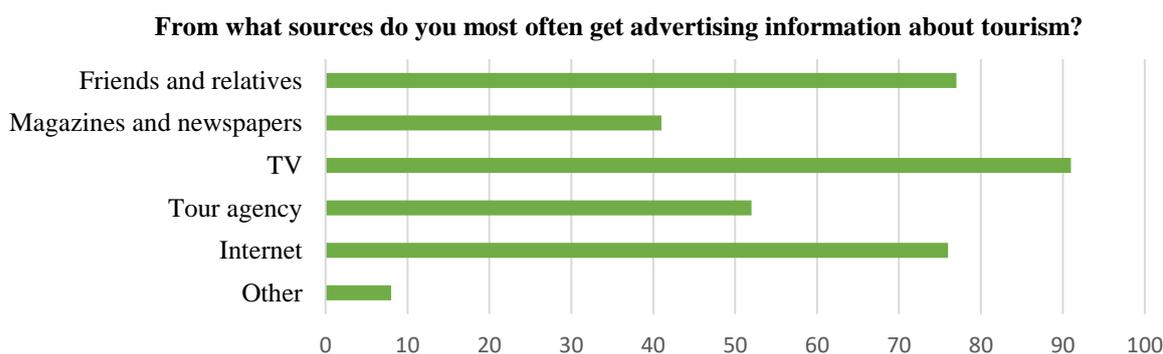
Choosing the key features of a vocational trip (the 2nd question) respondents aged from 25 to 40 also gave preference to those that are connected with glamping: «Wilderness and national parks» (85%), «Meeting people with similar interests» (70%), «First class hotels» (84%), «Outdoor activities» (80%) and «Ecological compatibility» (92%) (Fig.5).

Fig. 5: Answers to question 2 (age group 2)⁶



The most common sources to get advertising information about tourism for people aged from 25 to 40 are as follows: «Friends and relatives» (77%), TV (91%) and Internet (76%) (Fig.6).

Fig. 6: Answers to question 3 (age group 2)⁷



Responding to the 4th question, participants of the second age group showed a much lower level of awareness of glamping compared to the first age group. Only 41% of respondents aged from 25 to 40 were able to give a correct answer to the question «What is glamping? » The most common

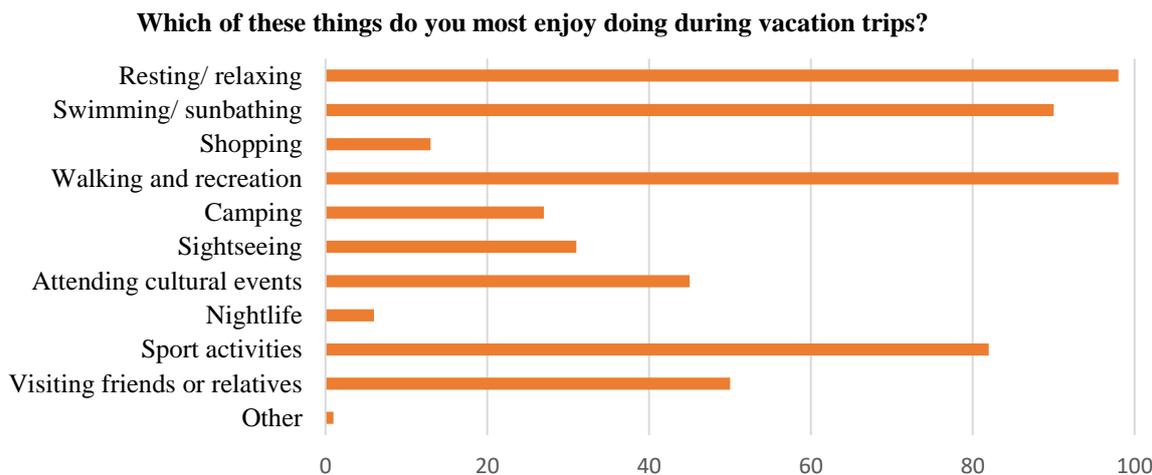
⁶ Compiled by the author based on the conducted research

⁷ Compiled by the author based on the conducted research

responses from other people (59%) were: «it is a type of tourism», «something which is connected with tourism», «unfortunately, I do not know» or skipping the response.

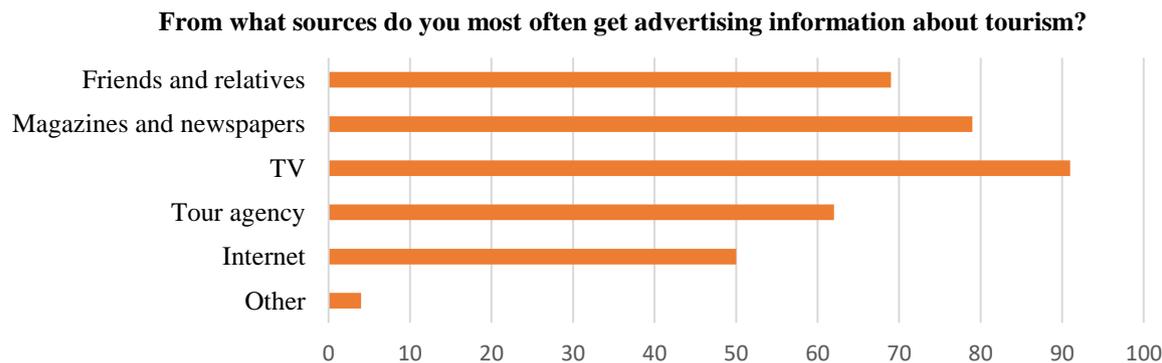
In response to the 1st question participants over 40 years mainly chose types of activities related to glamping, as in the previous age group: «Resting/ relaxing» (98%), «Swimming/ sunbathing» (90%), «Walking and recreation» (98%), «Sport activities» (82%) (Fig.7).

Fig. 7: Answers to question 1 (age group 3)⁸



The most common sources to get advertising information about tourism for people aged over 40 are: «Friends and relatives» (69%), Newspapers and magazines (79%) and TV (91%) (Fig.8).

Fig. 8: Answers to question 3 (age group 3)⁹



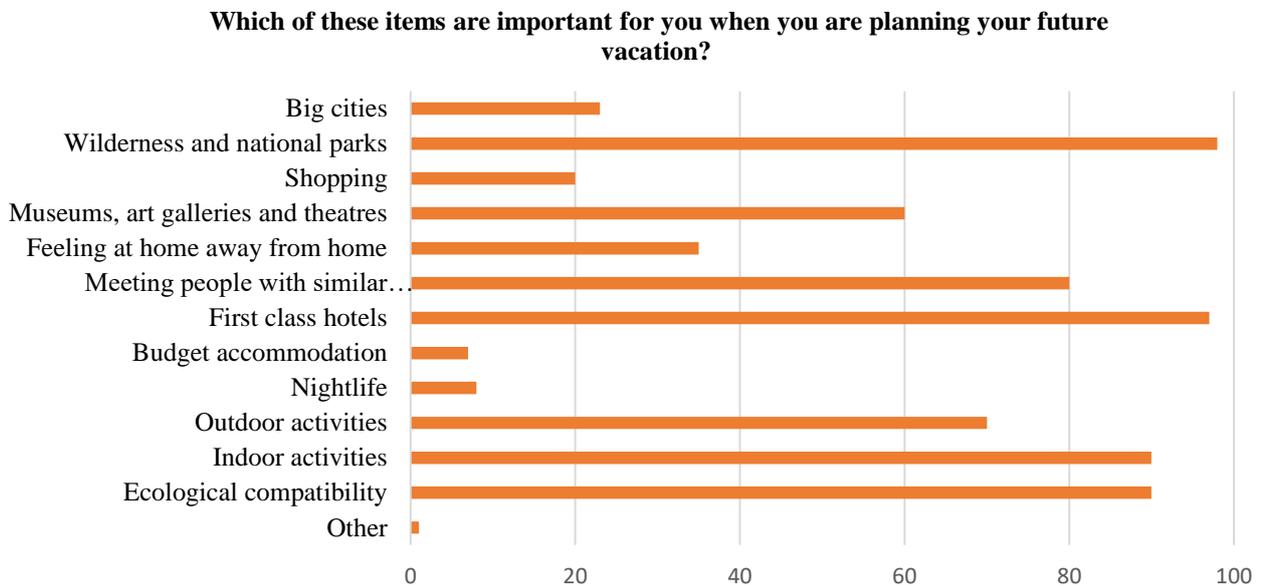
While answering the next question and choosing the key features of vocational trip respondents aged over 40 gave preference to those that refer to glamping: «Wilderness and national parks» (98%),

⁸ Compiled by the author based on the conducted research

⁹ Compiled by the author based on the conducted research

«Meeting people with similar interests» (80%), «First class hotels» (97%), «Indoor activities» (70%), «Outdoor activities» (90%) and «Ecological compatibility» (90%) (Fig.9)

Fig. 9: Answers to question 2 (age group 3)¹⁰



Finally, the 4th question revealed the lowest level of awareness of glamping in the third age group. Only 19% of respondents aged over 40 gave correct answers to the question «What is glamping?» 50% of the participants missed this question. Others (31%) gave such answers as «I do not know», «I have never heard about it».

On the whole, thanks to the questionnaire an interesting paradox was detected. In the first age group (18-25), where awareness of glamping is on the highest level, people are not interested in the type of recreation offered by glamping. In the other age groups (25-40 and over 40), where a lower level of awareness was revealed, people, on the contrary, have needs that this type of tourism can meet. Consequently, the target audience of glamping in Russia is people over 25 years old.

In general, there are good prospects for the development of glamping in Russia as this type of recreation can meet people's expectations. Thinking about a future vacation people choose characteristics related to glamping (such as «Wilderness and national parks», «Feeling at home away from home», «First class hotels», «Being physically active», «Indoor activities», «Ecological compatibility»).

However, the low level of awareness among the target audience may become an obstacle for the development of glamping. In our opinion, the key to solving this problem is a competent popularization. We have identified the sources from which people most often receive advertising

¹⁰ Compiled by the author based on the conducted research

information about tourism («Newspapers and magazines», «TV» «Internet»). Based on these findings, we can suggest several ways to promote glamping in Russia (Tab.2).

Tab. 2: Ways to promote glamping¹¹

Sources	Advantages	Opportunities
Internet	- Interactivity - Ability to select a target group of consumers (targeting) - The number of Internet users is growing constantly	Advertising campaigns in social networks and by e-mail
		Unobtrusive Pop-Ups
		Advertising on thematic sites and online platforms (forums, blogs and portals connected with tourism)
TV	- Wide audience coverage - Brightness and visibility - The use of special effects	The popularization of glamping as a new type of tourism on Federal channels
		Advertising of Russian glamping in the programs dedicated to tourism
Newspapers and magazines	- Prevalence among the older generation - People's trust in certain publications	Publication of articles about glamping in popular magazines («Liza», «Daria») and Newspapers («Moscow today»): the key characteristics of glamping should be stated briefly and clearly.

Conclusion

Thus, the study identified the key characteristics of glamping – a new trend in outdoor tourism. We found out the preferences of modern people in the sphere of tourism. The research revealed that the development of glamping is relevant in Russia due to the demand for services that it offers.

However, awareness of this type of tourism among potential consumers is not high enough. This may become an obstacle to the further development of glamping. To solve this problem, we have proposed several ways to popularize glamping using the Internet, TV and press.

Our investigations into this area are still outgoing. This research has thrown up several questions in need of further examination of a detailed portrait of the potential consumer of glamping services for more effective promotion of this type of tourism on the Russian market.

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ГЛЭМПИНГ В РОССИИ: АКТУАЛЬНОСТЬ И ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ РАЗВИТИЯ

Дорофеева Анастасия Романовна

ФГОБУ ВО «Финансовый Университет при Правительстве РФ»

Москва, Россия

Аннотация. В данной статье рассматриваются перспективы развития глэмпинга – нового тренда в сфере туризма - в России и его актуальность. Цель работы – установить, способен ли данный вид туристических услуг удовлетворить потребности людей различных возрастных групп. Автор выделяет ключевые характеристики данного типа размещения. Были выявлены предпочтения людей в сфере туризма, а также основное препятствие для развития глэмпинга в России. В статье описаны результаты социологического опроса населения России, проведенного автором, об отношении к глэмпингу, перспективам его развития в стране, возможности удовлетворить потребности туристов и путях его популяризации. Всего было опрошено 500 респондентов трех возрастных групп. Выявлено, что старшие возрастные группы более заинтересованы в таком отдыхе, но менее осведомлены о нем. Автором предложены способы продвижения глэмпинга в России.

Ключевые слова: глэмпинг; индустрия туризма; актуальность; перспективы развития; потребительские предпочтения; продвижение.

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Contact

Anastasia Dorofeeva

FSBU of HPE Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation

49, Leningradsky prosp., 125993, Moscow, Russia

anytag@yandex.com

Научный руководитель: доцент Департамента языковой подготовки ФГОБУ ВО «Финансовый Университет при Правительстве РФ» Калугина Ольга Анатольевна.