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**CAMPING AS A FORM OF NATURE TOURISM**  
**Case Study: Svanen / Joutsen Camping**

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<p>This research was carried out with the aim of elaborating the benefits of camping sites and their relationship with nature. The objective of this research aimed at finding out how to improve on the Svanen camping site so as to increase tourist inflow which is why it was used as the case study. Over the past years, Svanen camping site has been experiencing some setbacks for lack of profit making. So, there was a need for new ideas, innovations and individual physical investments so as to favour profit making.</p> <p>The reason for choosing this topic was to demonstrate that camping is in all its aspects related to nature tourism. In the course of writing this research, nature based activities and camping activities that are practiced by families, youths and elderly people were looked into. There was also detailed information about the Svanen camping site and its various facilities. The research also contains a summary of the history of camping and how it evolved stage by stage from the 60's till date. A brief description of Pietarsaari was also given so as to comprehend the location of Svanen/Joutsen Camping. This was a research based thesis and the method used was qualitative research method. A semi-structural interview was conducted and the information gathered helped to build up helpful recommendations and conclusions for the research.</p> <p>All in all, the research talked about the connection between camping and nature tourism, the impacts nature tourism has on both the environment and also on the individuals involved directly or indirectly with nature. All the actual camping grounds are in the open, be it wilderness, mountain or river side, not forgetting garden camping. The interviews carried out were to determine whether Svanen camping site could be more profitable in the coming years. Based on the responses, recommendations were given. This research is a reliable and valid one because it was carried out using actual facts with the help of interviews from participants and guests.</p>		

<b>Key words</b> Camping, camping ethics, impacts, nature, Pietarsaari, Svanen camping, tourism activities, tourism.
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## **ABSTRACT**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

This research work aims at elaborating the benefits of camping sites. This is to say, the thesis wants to show how camping and camping sites are important to both the campsite owners and to the visitors as well. The main objective is to find out how to improve on the conditions of Svanen camping site so as to increase the influx of tourists and also, to attract the native population in the practice of camping. Both camping and nature tourism are closely related since most camping takes place in the nature which favors its practice.

The tourism industry has many sectors and sub sectors that provide tourists with different experiences among which are camping and nature tourism. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), it is estimated that the international tourist's arrivals in 2013 grew to 5% and is estimated to rise to 1.6 billion by 2020 (WTO 2013). This makes tourism the largest employer in the world because it makes up a total of 10% of the world's employment rate (Ecotourism Statistical Fact Sheet, 2000.) These statistics demonstrate how important the tourism industry is and how it will continue to grow. The following paragraphs discuss specific sectors of tourism.

Camping in itself is a very interesting activity to carry out whether as single or as a family. The tourism industry is a vast and challenging area to write about and that is why there is maximum narrowing when elaborating on a particular field. The combination of camping and nature tourism is due to the fact that it is a very common practice in Finland and around the world. Camping is an outdoor and recreational activity which is usually practiced during one's free time or vacation. The practice of camping is beneficial to individuals because it gives natural, social and educational knowledge when being practiced, and this can be the reason why many people still practice it, especially youths. Nature-based

tourism is one of the fastest growing tourism sectors nowadays. One of the main reasons for this could be that there are more people in the world who live in urban areas with little or no access to a natural environment. (Renn& Walker 2008, 115.)

Nowadays, nature tourism is not known to be a vacation category of its own because no one actually talks of taking a nature-based vacation. Instead, other terms such as camping and outdoor retreats are used. So, nature tourism is valued by the tourism industry based on the visitors' demands, activities, and various experiences in relation with the nature. When on vacation, the location for most activities is often in the natural environment as this determines the success of such trips. Therefore, nature can be seen as crucial to the visitor's experience and at the same time, enhances the visitor's experience. All these factors complement each other and thereof make up the visitor's total satisfaction with their vacation. (Tourism New South Wales 2012.)

This research is divided into three parts which are the introduction, the body and the conclusion. This is a research based thesis and the method applied is the qualitative research method. In the first chapter which is the introduction, there is a summary of the main concepts which are nature tourism and camping. In the second chapter of this research, there is a clear definition of camping and a brief description of the history of camping too. Mention is also made concerning the types of camping forms that exist. The third chapter talks about nature tourism and the various types of nature tourism sites and activities. The next chapter which is chapter four is about camping as a form of nature tourism. Chapter 5 is based on Svanen Camping. The sixth chapter talks about the research and the various interviews. Chapter seven consists of the recommendations conclusion with some suggestions on how to improve on the Svanen camping site in order to attract more tourists.

## **2 DEFINING CAMPING**

In this research work, the main subjects are camping and nature tourism which will be defined accordingly and some examples of camping will be given. Also, a piece of history about camping sites will be given. Added to that, mention will be made about the origins of camping and how it spread out to different parts of the world. There will also be a description of the ethics of camping which entails the rules for campers and the conditions of the campsites before and after departure.

Camping is defined as an outdoor activity which usually takes place in the nature. It is the activity of spending holidays living in a tent (Oxford University Press 2013.) Those who practice this activity are known as “campers”. Campers usually leave their homes and spend one or more nights in tents enjoying the nature. Camping often involves the use of tents and caravans just to name a few. Camping is also considered as a cheap form of accommodation services. According to Locke, a camping site is an area of land where there are two or more spaces for tents and caravans (Locke 2008, 239).

Camping sites are known to be sites where the traveler or tourist comes along with his or her own accommodation facilities, such as tents. It can therefore be said that it is a type of self-catering accommodation. Camping sites usually go hand in hand with some additional recreational services, such as kitchen facilities, toilet and shower facilities, and sauna facilities in some cases (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert & Wanhill 2008, 351). Camping is practiced nowadays by different age groups, and it is a seasonal activity in the Nordic Regions like Sweden, Norway and Finland due to the weather conditions.

## **2.1 The history of camping**

The history of camping began three thousand years ago when military forces camped during wars and it was not as sophisticated as it is now with all the fancy and well-furnished caravans because, it was not considered a recreational activity. When it was seen as a recreational activity, people went for camping with chariots, horses and sailing boats. Camping is characterized by the zeal to be in close contact with freedom and nature. When the act of paid holidays was made popular in 1936 in France, camping became more popular and there were considerable developments added to it. Later in the fifties, the demand for camping increased which led to the creation of customized camping sites with the necessary amenities. (Recherche Camping 2010.)

The practice of camping as a recreational activity became popular only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The founder of camping is Thomas Hiram Holding a British, who wrote about his camping experiences in 1906 in the United Kingdom. In 1887, Holding visited the highlands of Scotland during a cruise trip and decided to camp in his canoe. He also went on a cycling camping tour with four of his friends and later on published a book in 1898 titled “Cycle and Camp in Connemara”. He then invited all those who were interested in this form of camping to contact him. One of the first British camping sites was opened in 1894, found in Howstrake on the Isle of Mann. It operated during the summer period and rapidly expanded during the following decades. During this period, it attracted over 600 people per week and was equipped with tents and a dining hall made up of a marquee. After the publishing of the book, the Association of Cycle Campers was created in 1901. The association had only thirteen members in the beginning. Subsequently, it was this association that gave rise to the Camping and Caravan Club which has over one million members due to the popularity of camping (History of Camping 2010.)

Recreational camping continued to excel and after World War One, the International Camping Organization was formed. This saw the emergence of equipped caravans and many more camping sites were opened not only in the United Kingdom, but also around the world. People considered camping to be cheaper and the quality of the camping goods and equipment were improving each year. During the organizing of a festival, camping grounds were equipped with camping facilities for the people attending the festivals. This helped them to stay close to the proceedings of the festival. After World War Two, organized camping was more and more gaining grounds but this time, it was done internationally. This means that people now travelled with their caravans from one country to another, from one continent to another and they got benefits from the camping clubs if they were members. (Camping Info 2012.)

## **2.2 Types of camping**

Camping is wide ranging due to the existence of different types of campers and their interests. There are many different types of camping and each of them has their own special features which makes them unique. Camping ranges from historical camping to youth camping and are practiced in the same or different areas. Most often it takes place in the nature, open air zone where all the features of nature are felt and every individual is free to choose what sort of camping will be best for his or her experience. Camping types can be grouped into different categories, depending on their features. They could be summer camps, religious camps, space camps, family camps, language camps and many others. Next follows a description of various forms of camping (The Different Kinds of Camping. 2013)

Summer camps usually have different activities such as adventure camping which consists of various hard activities that elderly people cannot practice. Adventure camping is mostly associated with the adrenaline-type of experience. The camper sets out on a journey with no defined objectives, ready to experience whatever the nature offers. There is also back-country camping which is camping that involves staying in non-commercialized areas or remote areas that involve lots of physical and mental capabilities. It can be practiced by one or more people and the routes are not designed routes, so very often the camper sets out on a journey without a route map. (Boehlke. 2012.)

Winter camping is usually, as its name states, practiced during the winter period. It is physically challenging because the weather is very cold and usually, if not well dressed, one can freeze. Campers are equipped with warm clothing and nutritious food so as to keep the body temperature warm. This type of camping usually falls under the extreme camping types and in order to practice this, there is the need to purchase a special winter tent which is designed to prevent cold from entering into the tent. (Miller 2006.)

The emergence of garden camping as well is a new trend. This type of camping is one where homeowners rent out their private gardens to campers. This is practiced from urban to rural gardens and the campers get information about these available gardens through their network which is known as “Camp in My Garden”. This concept started off in the United Kingdom and is now spreading throughout Europe and other continents. It is also known as Glamping which simply means glamorous camping where more amenities are included. (Urban Gardens 2013)

Social camping is camping that is organized based on group interests. A group of families who share the same interests organize a camping trip in the bid to know each other more and also for their children to interact with each other. Recreational and Vehicle camping (RV camping) is one of the most popular forms of camping and it is mostly practiced by families, it involves travelling with a caravan for recreational purposes. (Krueger 2006).

Back packing camping is a physically demanding form of camping whereby the camper carries his or her belongings in a bag on the back. Usually, the people who practice such camping have less choice in choosing what to carry in their bags starting from the most important ones. Those who embark on this type of camping experience do so in order to experience what the nature has to offer and it is mostly practiced while climbing the mountain. Car camping is the type of camping whereby one takes his or her car and drives directly into a campsite and spends the night in the car. This is a special interest camping and usually, it is unplanned. Wilderness camping is camping in the middle of the forest where there are no kitchen, toilets, shower facilities. All your human needs and wants are deposited into the nature thus making use of the free gift of nature (Camping Articles 2006).

Tent camping is a form of camping which is practiced world-wide by many campers. It involves sleeping in a tent and having the necessary equipment such as cooking utensils, sleeping pads, sleeping bags, camp safety items just to name a few. It usually takes place in campgrounds, national parks, nature parks and in the wilderness. There are tents with different sizes ranging from family size tents to one person's tent. (Camping Articles 2006.) Next is the festival camping which takes place on a festival ground. This allows the visitors at the festival to be close enough and it also offers cheap prices. (Camping Info 2012.)

### 3 NATURE TOURISM

Defining nature tourism is hard because the field is very broad and this has made it difficult to be able to come out with one exact definition of what nature tourism is all about. But one thing is certain, the fact that in all the definitions, there is the re-occurrence of the terms recreation and natural environment. (Fennel 2000.) Nature tourism is travelling to a natural area by individuals leading to the welfare and wellness of the local people (Tourism New South Wales 2012). Usually, nature tourism is classified under the alternative ‘tourism group type’ and this is because alternative tourism is usually in opposition to the mass tourism type, which is defined by its activities and practices, which take place in a natural environment. But there are some elements that bring mass tourism and nature tourism under the same group and this is also defined by the natural environments in which mass tourism and nature tourism is practiced. Nature is a system that is determined by casual laws which provides a vast and valuable source of raw materials and energy as well (Hall, Muller & Saarinen 2009, 131.)

Nature has often times been a very important and significant tourist destination especially for those people who enjoy being in the nature. In recent years, there has been a large demand for nature-based activities from tourists. “Nature-based tourism is one of the most tangible benefits that people derive from conserving biodiversity”, said Professor Andrew Balmford, a Professor of Conservation Science at the University of Cambridge (University of Cambridge 2013.) With this he meant that people often seek to be connected with nature and feel all its features which are hereby known as biodiversity. (Research 2013) Nature is often connected with health and wellness due to the fact that it serves as a therapy in certain ill-health cases. These activities can be in the form of leisure or recreational activities. Nature tourism involves activities like bird-watching,

sight-seeing, wild-life viewing, mountain climbing and canoeing, just to name a few. (Outdoor Recreation and Nature Tourism 2007.)

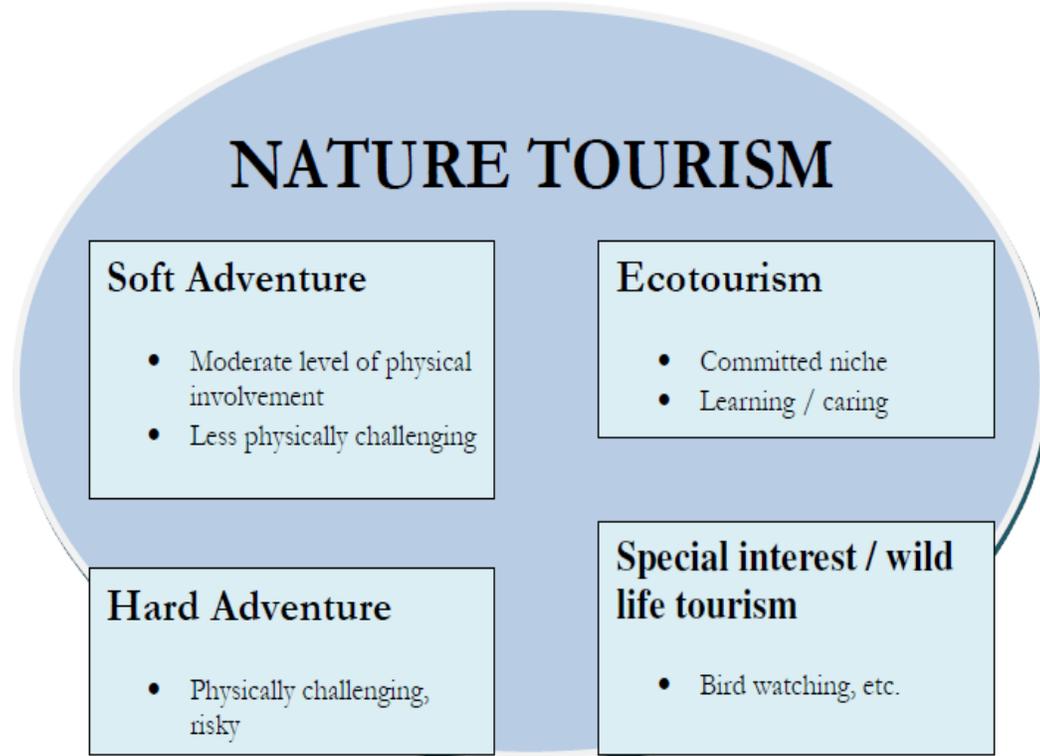
In Finland, nature tourism is one of the Finnish sectors that are known outside Finland on the international market. Most of the nature-based activities take place in natural attractions or areas that have been built artificially to accommodate the activity. This is referred to as man-made nature-like attractions. Further readings have shown that Finland and other Scandinavian countries have a great consideration for nature tourism due to its importance as a source of national income (Lundmark 2005).

Usually, most natural attractions like national parks, forests and wild-life, among others found in a country are the reasons for the influx of tourists. In Finland, nature is considered to be one of the most valuable resources and it covers 69% of the total surface area of the land. Studies have revealed that nature tourism in Finland has developed greatly with more focused areas and themes on nature. (Kolb 2006, 1-3, 16-17.)

Nature tourism carries many positive effects for the inhabitants in that it impacts greatly on the area or region of location, on the communities of that particular location and on the attraction itself. The money generated from the income of tourists usually is used to maintain the attraction and also to develop the services offered. Human beings have endless opportunities to use nature and its features for the good being of people. (What is Ecotourism 2012)

### 3.1 Types of nature tourism activities

Nature tourism activities can be classified into four different classes which are: ecotourism, special interest tourism/wildlife tourism, hard adventure and soft adventure. There are several types of nature-based activities. Nature-based activities are those activities that take place in the open air; it could be in a park, a garden, mountain and forest. Nature tourism activities take place in the natural attraction of a site, if it has one to offer. These activities range from 'soft activities' to 'hard ones'. Some soft activities include: bird watching, camping, and stargazing, safaris, fishing, nature photography, picking of flowers and mushrooms, and hunting, while the hard nature-based activities include rock climbing, mountain hiking, trekking, rafting, kayaking, nature-based downhill bicycle tours, horse-riding, and visiting a wilderness camp. (Tourism New South Wales 2012)



## GRAPH 1. Nature Tourism (adapted from Tourism New South Wales 2012)

Graph 1 shows that nature tourism involves the practice and experience of a natural environment, which is generally in the form of outdoor activities. These activities vary from passive to active. With all these elements, it is possible to combine them in one journey or trip.

### **3.1.1 Special interest / wildlife tourism**

Wildlife tourism covers a wide range of nature conservation. The reason why special interest tourism is grouped with wildlife tourism is due to the fact that not all tourists have the same interests when it comes to visiting a natural environment. The reason why tourists are attracted to a particular site is due to the quality of the environment and what it has to offer to please the visitors. Biodiversity and the conservation of endangered species might be very interesting to some visitors while hunting and bird watching can be uninteresting for them and will not be pleasing for the other tourists who love these activities. Visitors who practice the wildlife tourism are most of the time interested in watching animals in their natural environment. Special interest and wildlife tourism is attached with wild animals and “non-domesticated” animals (Tourism New South Wales 2012) Wildlife tourism also includes zoos, fauna parks, eco-accommodation close to wildlife areas, organized tours in parks. There are other related activities which involve wildlife arts, botanic gardens and museums. Wildlife tourism is an animal friendly and an ecological form of tourism which usually portray animals in their natural environment. It is also considered to be a valuable tool for nature conservation.

### **3.1.2 Hard adventure**

This form of nature tourism activity is defined by the level of physical strength that a tourist uses during his or her visit to the environment which is physically demanding and has a high risk level. Tourists who practice this hard adventure, most of the time engage themselves in specialized nature tourism travels (Weaver 2001, 82). A tourist who practices hard adventure tourism often tends to have diverse abilities regarding the various levels of physical challenges they want to have. This tourist usually decides to experience hard travelling circumstances through the wilderness just to enjoy nature to its fullest (Weaver 2001, 74.) Hard adventure also is also associated with thrill tourism which deals with activities that favor the rush of adrenaline in a human being. This is also very risky and dangerous as it involves dangerous activities like trekking through the forest and mountainous regions, rock climbing and parasailing. It also involves a lot of physical strength. Both themes have danger and adrenaline as their point of interest (Types of Adventure Tourism 2013)

### **3.1.3 Ecotourism**

Ecotourism was initially used to depict nature-based travel to natural reserved areas with a specification on education. Ecotourism is the responsible travel of individuals coupled with educational factors and the appreciation of the natural environment. Furthermore, ecotourism is a sustainable and non-disturbing type of nature tourism which emphasizes on knowing more about the nature and its resources, thereby promoting the conservation of nature. (Fennel 2008 24.) Ecotourists lay a strong focus on learning about the nature and the environment and also look for means on how to minimize negative impacts on the nature and environment. Ecotourists are the ambassadors of the many rules about protecting

the environment to which many other market groups have adopted its visions. (Tourism New South Wales 2012.)

Ecotourism is also concerned with involving communities and uniting conservations and these are done using the ecotourism rules which are first of all to minimize impact on the environment, build up respect, environmental and cultural awareness, to provide beneficial experiences for the host and the visitor, give room for conservation through direct financial benefits, empower the local people through financial aids and also alert visitors about the host community's climate, religious and political stature. (What is Ecotourism 2012.)

#### **3.1.4 Soft adventure**

Soft adventure tourism is the form of nature tourism that involves little or no physical experiences; it is less strenuous and usually has a low risk level. Tourists who practice this type of tourism often require the use of third parties or mechanized transportation which is cars and bikes, coupled with comfortable accommodation facilities. These tourists are not ready to experience any type of hard activities during their journey and stay in the wilderness. (Weaver 2001, 74.) This type of tourism is suitable for families who embark to national parks to visit some bird sanctuaries and some productive agricultural lands. Some cruise lines promote this type of tourism by creating routes to exotic destinations where tourists can practice photographing, safari tours and voluntary works in some local destinations. (Soft Adventure Tourism 2012.)

### 3.2 Nature tourism sites

In nature tourism, it is not unknown that most of the sites are outdoor sites, usually located in the forest or even parks and garden. Other sites include mountains, rivers, the wilderness, natural parks, and historical sites. Nature-based and wilderness tourism, together with their activities are usually grouped together under the term ‘alternative tourism. Alternative tourism refers to the activities practiced by tourists which are usually the opposite of the mass scale tourism. Usually, it is hard to differentiate the impacts of nature-based tourism from those of mass tourism. An example is the case of national parks that receive hundreds of visitors which is mass tourism and on the other hand, can be considered as nature-based tourism due to its location and activities in the park. (Hall et. al 2009)

TABLE 1. The range of tourist leisure activities (adapted from Hall, Muller & Saarinen 2009, 116)

<b>Touring</b>		<b>Water-related activities</b>	
Hiking	Cycling	Fishing	Canoeing and rafting
Horseback riding	Donkey riding	Swimming	Windsurfing
Touring in caravans	Cross-country skiing	River tourism (e.g. houseboats, barge)	Speedboat racing
		Sailing	Facilities on the aqualand type
<b>Sporting activities</b>		<b>Activities on dry land</b>	
Pot-holing	Rock climbing	Tennis	Golf
		Volley ball	Football
<b>Cultural activities</b>		<b>Health-related activities</b>	
Archeology	Cultural routes	Fitness training	Health resorts
Restoration sites			Spa and wellness

Table 1 illustrates the various sorts of activities and special areas or sites that are practiced in the nature. It encompasses tours, water-related activities, sports, dry land activities, cultural activities and health-related activities. All the above mentioned activities have different benefits when practiced indoors and outdoors. Usually, outdoor activities have a greater impact on individuals; they could be positive or negative impacts. These will be discussed further in the paragraphs below.

Nowadays, nature and its natural attractions are considered as a source of pleasure to individuals. Wilderness especially in the Nordic Regions is regarded as a stream of vitality and it attracts visitors from around the world who want to experience the beauty of nature and its wild landscapes and mountain sceneries. The primary interest of a nature-based tourism activity is its natural environment which represents the principal attraction and motivation for a varied class of tourist activities. In most cases, the areas that make up a wilderness should be in an unspoiled natural condition. This means that it is usually void of any infrastructures such as roads and buildings. Instead, the natural landscape and its natural resources should be used without alterations, making man a visitor. (Hall et al. 2009)

### **3.3 Nature camping ethics**

Camping ethics are ethics or laws that are put in place in order to regulate the various sites where camping takes place. Camping ethics also known as ‘outdoor ethics’ are defined as a set of guidelines to be followed when outdoors or when practicing camping (A conversation on Ethics, 2013). An organization known as the Leave No Trace for Outdoor Ethics set out to promote conservation in the outdoors and also came into existence with the aim of educating people on their

impact on nature. This organization has seven principles put in place and which provides a framework for outdoor recreation decision making. These principles include: plan ahead and prepare, travel and camp on durable surfaces, dispose of waste properly, leave what you find, minimize campfire impacts, respect wildlife and finally, be considerate of other visitors (The Leave No Trace Seven Principles, 2013).

Some common camping ethics include camping on previously used sites if possible. This will avoid the soil from deteriorating and will also favor the growth of vegetation. This is followed by disposing human waste properly and therefore, the use of portable toilets is advisable. In the absence of a portable toilet, the human waste should be put in a six to twelve inches hole and this should be done away from streams and common areas. Trash should be packed out and not left or buried into the camping sites. (Camping Ethics 2012.) Campers should also avoid noise pollution so as to respect the other occupants of the camping site. Every individual present at a campsite should be examples to their fellow campers. This is to say, they should also consider their own impacts and those of other campers as well. (Wild Camping. A Guide to Good Practice 2012.)

### **3.4 Impacts of nature tourism on individuals**

When talking about impacts in a certain domain, we must look at both the negative impacts and positive impacts in order to make the picture complete. The impacts may include social impact, economic impact, cultural impact, environmental impact and political impact. All these impacts could be beneficial and harmful at the same time. Nature tourism has many positive impacts on the environment as well as on human beings. These impacts play a great role for

every individual who is involved directly or indirectly with the nature. It is a challenge to determine whether the positive impacts surpass the negative ones, and vice-versa. But one thing is for sure, and that is that: people who are involved with nature usually find it more beneficial than harmful. (Community Nature-based Tourism Development 2011.)

It can be said that more harm comes from humans for example through the destruction of the forest and natural places, cutting down trees also known as deforestation, air pollution, littering after camping, trampling, destruction of rare species of flowers and animals or disturbance of wildlife, natural disasters, misuse or mismanagement of natural resources the degradation of landscapes and the surpassing limits of recreational capacities which leads to overcrowding (Caroline A 2000, 11.)

The positive impacts it has on human beings can be seen as follows: It helps in the wellness of individuals and some patients also. It is reported by Cheng and Monroe that nature tourism impacted on people in specific ways which are: enjoyment of nature which is combined with the love for sounds in the nature, seeing wild flowers in the nature, enjoying nature in order to drive away sadness, collection of shells and rocks for fun empathy for creatures which goes also with the fear of seeing animals hurt, wanting a clean environment for animals, enjoying touching animals and plants in the woods and taking care of animals. Sense of oneness goes to say that people cannot live without the presence of animals and plants in their lives. Humans are part of the nature; therefore, outdoor activities relieve human beings of their sadness. Sense of responsibility goes to say that keeping the environment in the nature clean is a sign of sustainability, human beings are not allowed to change the settings of a natural environment and also, change begins with a step by someone in nature. Therefore, it is important to protect the nature (Cheng & Monroe 2010, 41.)

Cheng and Monroe carried out this research with the help of a survey and they were able to come out with individual questions and answers as to what impacts the nature had on humans of different age groups. Different tourists have different expectations from the nature or wilderness. They are classified into four sectors, naming them attitudes to wilderness areas.

TABLE 2. Four attitudes to wilderness areas (adapted from Hall et al. 2009, 136)

	Objective	Justification	Wilderness Image
Utilism	High standards of social and human well-being by increasing production	Unrestricted right of man to exploit wilderness areas to promote his well-being and production.	A source of raw materials and fuels
Humanism	Human perfection and mental balance	Unrestricted right of man to exploit the wilderness to promote his/her perfection	A valuable opportunity that people should develop through their own actions.
Mysticism	Unity of man and nature	The highest value of human life is to aim at the sacred state embodied in unspoilt nature	Basically a large spiritual entity
Biocentricism	Safeguarding the inherent value and functions of wilderness areas	All species are equally valuable. Man has no special position	A total ecological system with an inherent value of its own.

The table above portrays how human beings in their different mind states regard the wilderness and its features. As it clearly shows, they all have contrasting views and expectations as to what they can gain from the nature. Natural environments promote and excel human development in that, it serves as a medium to reach ethical values and mental equilibrium. By mysticism, people or tourists are seen as a part of an extensive entity formed by nature and therefore, sets to look out for the unity between people, the natural and the divine. (Hall et al. 2009, 137.) Biocentrism emphasizes on the worth of natural environment and damage on the nature should be avoided. (Lanza 2013)

#### **4 CAMPING AS A FORM OF NATURE TOURISM**

In recent years, there has been an increased demand for nature-based activities or outdoor activities. It is estimated that 13 million people engage in camping throughout the world (Tent Camping Facts and Figures 2012). This is because people often want to get away from the township so as to relax in the Greenland zone (nature). With this increasing demand, there has also been a huge challenge for nature-based infrastructures such as camping facilities for all age groups, singles, couples, families and invalids (O'Neil, Riscinto, & Hyfte 2010, 143). Camping is considered as a form of nature tourism because of its activities which are the same as those of nature tourism activities. Such activities are hunting, fishing, canoeing, bird watching, and hiking, nature watchers, walking, cycling and biking. Another similarity is the seasons in which these activities are at their peak. Most people practice camping and go for nature based tourism sites during summer, ranging from May to September. The location of each term is also what binds them together. Camping takes place in the nature because most camping sites are found usually far from the town, thus in the nature, surrounded by wildlife. Camping and nature tourism have the same features and require almost the same efforts in each of their fields. (Tent Camping Facts and Figures 2012.)

Camping, being an outdoor activity is used by many institutions now to train and educate students about the various activities that they can practice and learn in the nature. This form of education is what is known as outdoor education which according to Louv, is a means of curriculum enrichment, whereby the process of learning takes place outdoors. (Louv 2006.) Louv also points out that nature camping is very beneficial for humans in the sense that: it causes stress reduction when activities are practiced in the nature. There are various nature therapies which are prescribed to both children and adults and it has been very beneficial (Benefits of Camp: Psychological Aspects 2013)

Camping is also related to nature due to the fact that most camps have realized that more and more people are aware of the benefits of nature and so have created new schemes to suit all nature lovers and different recreational and leisure activities for youths and adults. Most schools tend to have the tendency of camping with the students. (Shelby 2010.) This activity then makes it possible for the students to experience a unique form of habitation, totally different from their normal habitat. Some camps indulge in teaching the campers survival tips in the wilderness, how to track down animals, how to identify different flower and animal species. Moreover, camping and nature are usually self-catering environments. This goes to say that the people involved in these two places usually tend to provide for their needs themselves, in a restricted way, they do not have access to the basic features of city-life. (Tent Camping World 2013.)

Talking of camping without the mention of nature tourism and ecotourism will not be complete and this is because it is considered important and the fastest growing sector of international tourism (Ecotourism Statistical Fact Sheet 2000). Camping sites have had an increased number of visitors over the years due to increase want of humans to have their recreation in a non-industrialized area which is the wilderness where camping take places. National parks also serve as a camping ground for some tourists (Facts and Figures 2012). This is because they offer touristic opportunities for recreational activities based on nature, most of which take place during the summer period. Camping is also regarded as an activity of its own due to the fact that, most campers come in groups of two or more and families are also part of the classification. Camping in relation with nature tourism is also vulnerable due to the lack of visitor orientation. Visitors or tourists or campers who travel from the urban area to the wilderness to experience its free gifts of quietness should be aware of the various damages that affect a camping site. These damages can be seen as air pollution, trampling and littering to name a few. Visitors should be made conscious of the values of the

nature which will lead to their appreciation of the nature. (Newsome, Susan, More, Ross. & Dowling 2012, 104.)

#### **4.1 Benefits of nature-based camping**

There are many positive factors that influence the practice of nature-based camping in every country. Usually, the more a region is rich in natural areas, the more it tends to have tourists from different areas. Nature tourism gives rise to foreign exchange and also helps to increase the revenues of a country. It also diversifies the economy, it is a source for employment, and it favors the growth of rural areas due to their richness in natural sites where various nature-based activities can be carried out. This also leads to an increase in infrastructures like camping sites, well equipped sites for caravans and tents and also the amelioration of natural parks so as to welcome the visitors or guests. (Benefits of Nature and Camping 2013.)

Nature based camping is favorable for stress-relief. This is because when individuals find themselves in the nature, in contact with the trees, birds and other features, there is the tendency to concentrate more on what they have around than thinking about their problems and worries. When they return to their normal daily routine, they have a clear mind and a refreshed spirit which sometimes help them to tackle their worries or problems. (Benefits of Nature and Camping 2013.)

Nature Camping is also beneficial to children because, when children are in the nature, they are more awakened by what the world has to offer like the scenery of the forest. Some summer camps offer survival skills to children so as to

enable them help themselves in the absence of adults and in case of any disasters. Children who practice camping in nature can also learn how to cater for plants and animals, they also get to identify harmful and harmless insects. Children have the opportunity to see and feel those things which they are taught in class, they get to practice and eventually taste the different fruits and vegetables growing in the nature without artificial ingredients on them. (Benefits of Nature and Camping 2013.)

Nature camping is also important for families. This helps bring them together and it makes the children look up to their parents for survival and protection. During a family camping, fathers tend to teach their sons a few hunting skills, fishing skills and also they do some handy jobs like setting traps for animals. Mothers on the other hand try to be closer to their girls: they try to know every detail of their daughter's life that is hidden from them. It also helps them to have fun together as a family, to play games together and swim together. All these activities usually do not take place when they return to their normal daily lives. (The Benefits of Family Camping 2013.)

#### **4.2 Trends in nature-based outdoor recreation**

The general trends of nature-based outdoor recreation are defined by the total number of people who take part in the activities or the practice of camping itself, the total number of days, the tools used, push and pull factors. Between the years 2000 to 2007, the total number of participants in nature-based activities increased by 4.4 % from about 208 million to 217 million. Also, the total number of days rose from 67 to 84 billion which is approximately 25% worldwide. Fastest growing nature activities like photography, nature

observation, kayaking and hunting have also attracted guests from different age groups. (The Latest on Trends in Nature Based outdoor recreation 2008.)

Over the last forty years, it is reported that the total number of people practicing forest camping has amounted to 56 million in the year 2000 (Trends in developed forest camping 2009, 52.) The latest trends of camping involve campers who want more of social interacting than just the luxury or quality of the environment in which they are. This trend led to a rise in campfires because it facilitates interaction when different individuals sit around the fire while it burns out (Trends in developed forest camping 2009.)

There has also been a great change on the various equipment and technologies involved in nature-camping. Campers tend to buy sophisticated camping tools like camping cars, latest tent models and usually, they seek to go where they can exhibit these acquisitions. Many tents, clothes and sleeping bags used for camping have changed from natural to synthetic fabrics. Most tents have been converted into water-resistant tents, gas stoves or electric cookers have replaced the traditional firewood places, sleeping pads are made self-inflating pads, replacing the traditional leaves used in the 60's. All these modern trends have led to comfort for campers. (Trends in Developed Forest Camping 2010.)

There are also the electronic entertainment and communication technologies which are common among all campers whether young or elderly. Most camping grounds or campsites now offer wireless connections to their guests. All these latest trends make them to be less engaged in active nature-based experiences which are caring more about the flora and fauna, the natural beauty of the area where they find themselves and the various rivers or lakes which are available around them. Nature-based campers look for comfort and personal convenience

and very few still go out solely for the nature features. (Trends in Developed Forest Camping 2010.)

In Finland, there are one hundred and twenty seven campsites. This statistics is taken from the Finnish Camping webpage. Each camping site has a specific classification whereby, stars are used to differentiate the camping sites according to their services and facilities. About one hundred camping sites have been awarded with stars. A lone star campsite has basic provisions while a five star campsite offers the best services. Also, Finland is part of the Camping Key Europe which gives its members specific benefits when they are in any camping site in Europe. (Finnish Campsite Association.)

## 5 SVANEN / JOUTSEN CAMPING

This chapter contains a summary of the history and activities that take place at Svanen / Joutsen Camping. Pietarsaari will also be presented briefly as the town in which the camping site is found. Svanen as it is called in Swedish and Joutsen in Finnish is a camping site that is found in the Ostrobothnian region of Finland, precisely in Pietarsaari. It is located approximately 3.4 kilometers away from the city center of Pietarsaari. It became functional in June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1954. Much is not said about the founder of the site and it makes it difficult to be able to give detailed information about its owner. (Svanen Camping 2012.)

But the fact remains that when it became operational, it was just a small camping site which consisted of just three cottages given to visitors for accommodation and another small cottage which was used as the cafeteria, and also a the reception and a room for the caretaker at the time. The total number of beds that were there at that time in Svanen Camping were twenty-six beds where, twelve were meant for women, twelve for men and the other two were used for families, thus they were put in the family cottages. As the years went by, the number of cottages increased due to the influx of tourists and more demands. These cottages were added between the 60's and the 70's. (Svanen Camping 2012.)

Later on in 1970, more facilities were added like showers for men and women, toilets for men and women and later for the invalids. In the year 1983, a new café was built together with five new cottages. This therefore made the old café to be transformed also into two cottages, thus making a total of seven new cottages. The more tourists the site got, the more innovations were also made regarding the needs of the tourists. Most of the tourists that resided in Svanen at

the time were from Sweden and Norway. This was as a result of the boat traffic that existed at that time between Finland and Sweden. With the end of the boat traffic between both countries, the influx of tourists decreased and thus Svanen became less popular. (Svanen Camping 2012.)

Presently the camping site is owned by the city of Pietarsaari and it employs university students from Centria University of Applied Sciences in order for them to practice their work placement. It is operational only once a year and that is during summer; from May to August. The main building which is the reception and café of Svanen is equipped with a terrace and tables and chairs where visitors can have their coffee under the sun. Usually, coffee, tea and pastries are sold together with other basic necessities. Inside the café, there is a free internet connection with a couple of computers meant for everyone, and there is also a television meant to entertain the guests. At the reception window, visitors can fill in their passenger's cards and book for their cottages at the same time. (Svanen Camping 2012.)

Nowadays, Svanen Camping has taken a different turn with altogether twenty-eight operational cottages having ninety-nine bed places and other benefits with the Camping Key Europe Card. Seven cottages have their own internal kitchen; five others have both internal kitchen and internal toilets. Svanen is also a two-star camping site in Pietarsaari. It has a total number of twenty-four caravan places for tourists travelling with their caravans and these places are equipped with electricity. The prices for these caravan places vary from the use of the electricity or not. Next to it is a large area meant for tent users. The space is provided to accommodate more than thirty tents. Childcare facilities have been added also in order to facilitate the stay of families with children. These facilities include playgrounds, a toilet equipped with a nappy changing table and some toys for the children. (Svanen Camping 2012.)

There is also a laundry facility, meant for both the workers and the tourists residing in the cottages. For the laundry services, the visitors pay to the reception before they can use the laundry. Another facility found at Svanen Camping is the sauna which is built beside a small lake, for tourists who wish to experience some warmth as part of the Finnish culture. Sauna is part of the Finnish culture meant for relaxation. It was built beside the lake because most people who go into the sauna sometimes want to go for a swim before or after. This sauna facility is also payable. (Svanen Camping 2012.)

A grilling space is also provided for passers-by who have their grilling equipment with them. But wood is provided upon request only to those staying in the cottages. A public kitchen was added also and this is equipped with cooking utensils like pots, plates, spoons and forks together with four gas cookers. There is also a refrigerator where tourists using the kitchen can keep their food stuffs. There are also benches and tables for them to eat comfortably after cooking. Another facility is the children's playground which has playing toys for sand and some sliding grounds for them to have fun. (Svanen Camping 2012.)

### **5.1 Activities at the Svanen camping site**

There are many activities that take place at a camping site depending on its location, and also on the visitors' demands. Svanen camping is not an exception either and many activities are practiced there during the summer. Svanen camping is a favorable site for activities due to its beauty, calmness and distance from the city. Some visitors come in by cycling, with caravans and even personal cars. The visitors who come in by cycling are usually from neighboring countries who decide to take a European tour by cycling (Svanen Camping 2012.) While

on the other hand, inhabitants of the town practice some Nordic sports like the Nordic Walking which involves the act of walking with the help of sticks. It is a form of sports usually practiced by elderly people. (Nordic Walking Guide 2013).

The most popular activities at Svanen involve; a mini-golf field. In order to be able to play, the visitors pay the sum of two euros at the reception in order to get the playing equipment. There is also a beach volley ball field with four sections, usually booked beforehand by visitors in order to reserve and this limits the problem of congestion. The balls for this are kept in the reception. (Svanen Camping 2012.)

Another free time activity found at Svanen camping is the football field which is opened to everyone wanting to play football and the balls are also kept in the reception but it is optional, the visitors can bring their own balls if they do not want to pay for the camping site's balls. It is totally free to practice fishing also at the camping site's lake. Fishing with a hook and a lance is permitted. Another popular activity is the canoeing activity. Here, the camping site is in partnership with the Botnia Canoe Company who rents out canoes to visitors and also to its company workers. All the above are the most practiced activities in Svanen Camping. (Svanen Camping 2012.)



She made a plan for the town and then built the city town hall and then decided on the appellation Jakobstad. But the Finnish speaking Finns retained the old name Pietarsaari. Pietarsaari is located in Western Finland, on the Gulf of Botnia. Pietarsaari is considered to be an important industrial center due to its growth in industries, coupled with importation and exportation of goods. So at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the town rapidly became an industrial town. Pietarsaari is also the town of the national poet Johan Ludvig Runeberg. (Welcome to Jakobstad/Pietarsaari 2013.)

Pietarsaari has also been involved in boat traffic especially with the famous Jakobstads Wapen which was among the first ships to sail to foreign countries with goods. In 1969, a ferry operator known as the Jakob Lines was established in Pietarsaari. Its first ship was known as M/S Nordek and as the years went by, it had twelve ferries of which, two were chartered ferries while the other ten were owned by the operator. In 1991, another boat traffic operator known as Vasabåtarna took possession of the company and later on merged with Silja Line, which is one of the famous ship traffic operators in Finland. (Jakob Lines 2005.)

There are many entertainment facilities in Pietarsaari and also many other camping zones in around the city of Pietarsaari. These other areas are Pavis which is another leisure resort, O'Leary's which is an entertainment facility where anyone can watch football games especially during the weekends. (About Jakobstad 2012) Kristallen which is an ice skating area, usually suitable only during winter, Pietarsaari is known to host many events each year among which are the following: the JakobsDagar which is Jakob's Days in English which takes place every year during the month of July. There is also the Jeppis Jazz festival which usually takes place during the autumn and the Ostrobothnia Food Festival. With the happening of these festivals, there is an influx of tourists from

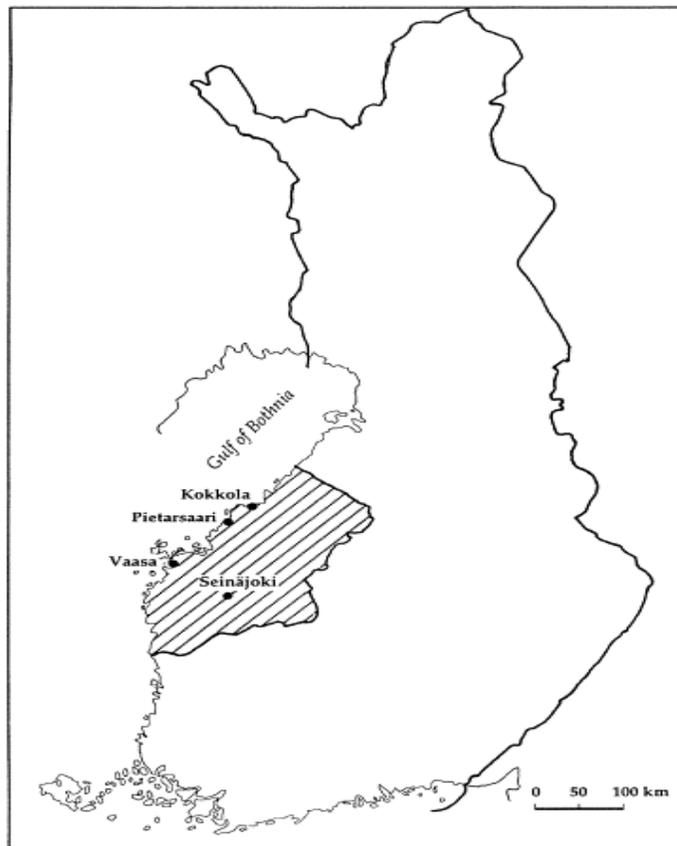
neighboring countries like Sweden, Norway and Estonia. During each festival, the camping sites and other accommodation facilities in the city are full of tourists. (Welcome to Jakobstad/Pietarsaari 2013.)

Faith, which is represented by an anchor, Hope, represented by a cross and Charity represented by a heart are famous symbols that are hung up on the streets of Pietarsaari during the Christmas Festivities. Every inhabitant of Pietarsaari whether a native or foreigner must see or hear about these symbols. They are very important symbols for the city because in the past years, the town was not equipped with street lights which were later on placed in the 1880's. These symbols were hung up so as to lighten up the streets during the joyous celebration of Christmas. (Welcome to Jakobstad/Pietarsaari 2013.)

Pietarsaari is also home for museums which contain historical facts. These museums keep records of past events, past home designs, past dress codes and farm house samples. Museums are also a good way to learn about the past and it portrays the importance of history (Why do People Go to Museums 2012.) There is the Malm House museum, Mother Westman's cottage and also the Runeberg's cottage which is opened only during the summer period. (Welcome to Jakobstad/Pietarsaari 2013.)

There is also a city library where every inhabitant of the city can go to free of charge. There are journals, movies, computers with internet connection, and academic books for students, some newspapers found in the newspaper reading room and music compact discs. The library also has a meeting hall where students or other social groups can book it for teamwork. Also, the library makes it possible for book packages to be delivered at home for homebound elderly persons. (The Jakobstad City Library 2013.)

The city of Jakobstad also has some beautiful gardens which are functional mostly during the summer season. Among these gardens is the Aspegrens Rosenlund garden which is one of the oldest and well maintained gardens in Finland. It was established in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Dean Gabriel Aspegrens. The School Park Botanical Garden is one of the city's gardens and it has about 1500 species of flowers or plants. These few mentioned natural places are a good leisure area for nature lovers. (Jakobstad / Pietarsaari 2013.)



GRAPH 3. Location of Pietarsaari. (adapted from Journal of Transport Geography 2013)

## **6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES AND ANALYSIS**

Research methods have been defined by several authors and each has their own approach to the theme. Veal defines research as the detailed study of a subject, with the main aim of discovering new information or reaching new understandings. Research is all about discovery, which is making known that which was unknown to the public. The data and material used in this research work was derived from various sources. These sources are classified as qualitative research methods, interviews and autonomous findings. Help and guidance from experts was also part of the contributions that make up the whole research. (Veal 2006, 193.)

### **6.1 Qualitative research method**

The research method used for this project was the qualitative research method under which, interviews were conducted, and personal experience was derived and integrated in this research, public opinion as well as customers' opinion were also gathered and analyzed. The whole work is based on quality information and data collection and analysis.

The existence of camping and its relationship with nature tourism made it possible to formulate the questions that were used in order to collect the required information and later on analyze them. The form of interview that was used was the semi-structured interview. This type of interview is the most used in social researches. Specific questions are usually drafted by the researcher, which are later answered by the parties involved. In order to make it easier to analyze later, an audio recorder was also used so as to enable the researcher to maintain personal and eye contact, and also save all the components of the interview so

that nothing is left out. (Dawson 2009, 28, 66.) All these features differentiate qualitative research method from quantitative research. Quantitative research involves the use of numerical data collection and analysis while qualitative research is the data analysis through interviews and observation.

This research was conducted with the aim of first of all elaborating the benefits of camping sites and their relationship with nature tourism, then followed with the objective of improving on camping sites in order to increase the influx of tourist especially in the case of the Svanen / Joutsen Camping Site. Using the quantitative research method would not have been suitable due to the fact that it involves numerical data collection which is not needed in this case. Svanen camping site deals with the quality of customer service and not the quantity. No large amount of answers was required but rather, emphasis was laid on the aspects of quality and on what ground it could be improved. It was also conducted in order to gain an understanding of motivation reasons and opinions. Qualitative research made it possible to get a deeper understanding of the problem in order to draft the questions that will help solve these problems. Respondents were then selected to fulfill a given quota. The questions that were asked in this interview were to give the researcher a better understanding of the situation and also, to evaluate the different past and current environments of the camping site so as to plan for the betterment of the services in the future.

## **6.2 Presenting the result of the research**

This research was carried out with the help of interviews. The interviewees are presented as follows: the co-operating lecturer in the running of Svanen camping site interviewee A, former staff supervisor interviewee B and one visitor to the camping site interviewee C. These interviews took place between the dates July

2<sup>nd</sup> to August 2013. Gathering the necessary information from these active staffs and visitor will help in identifying the hindrances to profit making and also will help to give some recommendations to help mediate the present status of Svanen. The interviews are divided into three different themes which will be examined in the paragraphs below. The chronological order of the interviewees is as follows: The co-operating lecturer in the running of Svanen camping, known as interviewee A, the former staff supervisor, interviewee B and finally, the visitor, interviewee C.

### **6.2.1 Presenting the interview with interviewee A**

This interview was structured according to 3 themes. The first theme aimed at knowing if Svanen had yielded any profits during the past years except for 2012 to which she replied:

It has not really yielded any profit because that is not the main goal of Svanen. The main goal of Svanen project is to give working practice places for our students

Theme 2 was about identifying the major challenges of Svanen and her reply was:

The major challenges that Svanen is facing are the conditions of the cottages

Theme 3 asked about the marketing strategy of Svanen:

Because Svanen's primary aim is not to make profits but provide a practice place for students, its marketing strategy may not be effective marketing but rather advertising. Meaning, advertising is to attract the public's eyes and interest while effective promotion deals with demonstrating to the community of residence that you care by participating in community events. With this, you gain the people's loyalty. This is the reason why Svanen does not have

loyal customers because we practice adverts and not promotion. We want students to practice their work placement and get credits and experience with that. That is the main focus. Profit making comes as a secondary factor.

### **6.2.2 Presenting the interview with interviewee B**

Theme 1 talked about interviewee B's year of work in Svanen and the various tasks assigned. Interviewee B stated that:

I was working in Camping Svanen as one of the three student supervisors during the summer 2012. The supervisors were responsible for example, training and orientating the workers, making orders from the wholesaler, fixing the working schedules (only one of us took care of this), contacts e.g. with cooperation partners, various paperwork as well as planning and maintaining the general course of the summer. Apart from that, we participated also in the common tasks that the other workers were doing such as customer service and cleaning. We had rather free hands from the school to run Svanen

Theme 2 consists of asking about the reasons why Svanen was able to make profits last summer (2012) and not the previous years to which interviewee B replied and stated:

I think the major thing affecting last year's positive revenue was the big order received for May (due to which we also started the season earlier than normally) together with the decrease in the staff costs. The high occupancy rate of the weekend during Jacob's Days can be seen as an annual phenomenon and also has a positive effect on the income

Theme 3 centered around finding out if improvements were needed in Svanen and if yes, in which areas to which, interviewee B stated:

The biggest and most crucial improvement needed must concern the general condition of the cottages and the area. Many of the cottages and public premises are starting to be in a rather bad

shape and they should be properly fixed. The area is really beautiful and peaceful; some renovation would increase the value of the entire experience in Svanen for the guests. This has already been proved for instance by all the positive feedback and popularity of the renovated Honeymoon cottage. In addition, marketing could be something to be thought about too.

Theme 4 was about the recommendations as regards the overall running of the camping site. Interviewee B stated:

The concentration should lie on good customer service and area, premises and cottages that are clean. Both employees and supervisors that are active and willing to take responsibility are also important. The language skills should be carefully considered; at least half of the workers should be able to speak Finnish or Swedish so that the working shifts would work smoothly. Also having someone from the town of Pietarsaari that would concentrate on Svanen would be of great help.

### **6.2.3 Presenting the interview with interviewee C**

Theme 1 talked about her first impression as a guest of Svanen camping to which the interviewee replied:

When I first came to Svanen, what attracted me most was the multicultural environment of the staff. When I asked, I got replies that the staff consisted of members from Finland, Nepal, Bangladesh, Nigeria and Cameroon. Also, some of them could speak Swedish and Finnish as well as English and that was really nice. Another factor was the manner in which everything was organized in the café and the service was fast. The environment was neat and the grasses were trimmed, I even lay on the grass. The whole surrounding was quiet and the room assigned to me was neat and comfortable. The green grasses were all well-trimmed and I enjoyed lying down on it. Also, the public areas like the sauna, kitchen toilets and bathrooms were clean. So in all, I was satisfied with both the customer service and the cleanliness

of the area. Also, I like the fact that there are some courts for sports, like the volley ball courts and also the golf courts. The open fields could also be used as football fields during the mid-summers. The existence of a children playing ground also was a good idea because it will enable parents and their children to spend quality time together in the playing fields. What I also acknowledge was the fact that there was a path for handicaps at the reception and also there was a toiled for invalids. This means that the camping site considers all social classes and leaves none out.

Theme 2 was about evaluating the number of guests in the interviewee's opinion and if it was high or low:

In my opinion, I did not get to meet many other visitors at the camping site and I don't know the reason why. The few guests I saw were mostly youths and elderly couples and for me, I think the number was low, compared to other camping sites I have visited.

Theme 3 talked about describing the pricing system of Svanen to which interviewee C replied:

The pricing policy of Svanen Camping during my stay was quite affordable, compared to other camping sites. Most especially the breakfast price which was just six Euros, fifty cents 50 EUR and it entailed tea or coffee, bread of your choice, sausage, cucumber, tomato, egg: boiled or fried, porridge, butter, jam, milk and cereals. With all these in other camping sites, the price would be a little higher. My cottage was a two person's cottage and it costs just twenty eight Euros per night and the room was equipped with a fridge and a cooking stove. There were also a couple of plates and cutleries, a pot and a frying pan. Also, the sauna cost ten Euros for forty-five minutes (smiles).

### 6.3 Findings

This research was set to examine the relationship that exists between Nature Tourism and Camping. The case study was the camping site Svanen/Joutsen Camping. This site was used as a case study because in the past years, it has been facing financial setbacks and non-profitability despite its location which is very favorable and suitable for Nature tourism activities. With the interviews carried out, a lot of information was gathered on how to manage and remedy the situation.

From the responses gotten, it is clear that Svanen is not very visited because of lack of a good marketing strategy. With this lack of marketing, many people do not know about Svanen so it causes fewer visits. There is also a lack of updating on their webpage. It lacks some basic information and therefore, most people shy away from incomplete information for fear of being misled.

The research also showed that from interviewee A's point of view and the supervisor's point of view, the area of Svanen needed some renovations. Most cottages are worn out and therefore, not rented out to clients. Also, other aspects can be gathered from the visitor's interview that she enjoys the area. They are satisfied with the natural looks of the site, combined with its quietness.

Another finding was the element of profit making which according to the supervisor; the camping site was able to make profits in 2012 because it opened in May and closed by the end of August. This is unlike the previous years and even this year. Most times, the camping site opens by June and closes in early August. This is a very short period for any business which wants to make profits.

This is also seen as one of those major causes why Svanen has not been able to make profits in the previous years.

One of the interviewees said that she admired the nature and even lay on the green grass. There is also the aspect of the environment. Svanen is blessed with nature, flowers, and fruits like berries, a lake and also trees. This is the reason why some visitors go to certain camping sites just to enjoy these features.

It can be seen from the interviews that Svanen is being administered by students from Centria University of Applied Sciences and therefore, there could be a lack in the managerial experience which could be the reason for the unpopularity and no-profitability nature of the site. These students who serve as supervisors are given free hands to run the camping site the way they deem fit. The supervisors also get involved in doing tasks that are assigned to other workers and this can be considered as doing over work. The supervisor believed that a reduced number of workers will be favorable to Svanen, rather than having a large number of staff.

#### **6.4 Reliability and validity**

When a research is carried out, it is very important to consider its reliability and its validity so as to ascertain all the results with backup points. No research is exempted from this law of reliability and validity and this is because it is important both for the researcher and the readers of the research.

When talking of reliability of a research, this is in other words to say that if the research, or test or even an experiment is conducted repeatedly, it will yield the same results without any omissions. While on the other hand, validity signifies the accurate extent to which a research assesses the precise ideology or concept that the researcher seeks to measure. So, reliability centers on accuracy while validity treats the success of the study or research which the researcher seeks to measure. (Veal 2006, 41.)

This qualitative research which focuses on camping as a form of Nature Tourism and which has for case study the Svanen/Joutsen Camping is classified as reliable and this is because the research was based on actual facts with the help of interviews which were later on analyzed. The interviewees were active members, who are in charge of Svanen, supervisors and also one guest. Questions were formulated and interviews were carried out which facilitated the smooth flow of the research and its findings. What makes it more reliable is the fact that these interviewees answered the questions with knowledge based on their various involvements and experiences at the camping site.

While on the other hand, the validity of the research cannot be doubted because the current situation of the Svanen/Joutsen Camping is known by almost all the inhabitants of Pietarsaari/Jakobstad. This is because of the various reviews written by some guests and former workers, recognizing the fact that Svanen/Joutsen is losing its popularity. So it is not only based on the personal opinions and experiences of the interviewees. Added to this is the fact that the sources used while carrying out this research were up to date sources and they included: websites, books, articles, E-books and E-journals.

From the interviews carried out with the supervisor, it could be noted that another reason why sales are slow in Svanen is due to the lack of adequate language skills. Finland has two official languages which are Finnish and Swedish. The international students should be capable of communicating in either of the languages or better still, both languages so that the burden of answering the phone and making bookings for the rooms does not have to be on the only Finnish speaking staff present at the reception.

## **6.5 Recommendations**

After the whole process of carrying out various interviews and writing down the reports, together with the analysis, it is very necessary to come up with some recommendations, based on the facts that were gathered during the research. Svanen/Joutsen Camping is a very peaceful camping site, equipped with all the necessary amenities that are required for a camping site. It has a lot of potentials which will enable the influx of visitors, not only Finns, but other nationalities at Svanen. It will be very beneficial if proper marketing skills and strategies were applied. More posters should be created before the opening dates of Svanen. More information should be added to the website and it could even be redesigned so as to suit any potential visitor. Even though its primary aim is not profit making, the marketing strategy should be mixed so as to create loyal customers in the future so that even if students no longer use it as a place for their work placement, it can still be operational for the community and its inhabitants. More thoughts should be given to this point about the marketing strategy.

Another important recommendation will be for the city of Pietarsaari to initiate renovations at Svanen camping. Most cottages are damaged due to water falling

through the ceilings. Such cottages should be rebuilt and furnished and even repainted. New mattresses should be bought and put in place of the old ones.

Regarding the management of Svanen, it will be better if the city sent in a specialist or better still, employed an experienced person with managerial skills who will be in charge of running the affairs of the camp smoothly. Student supervisors do not usually get respect from their fellow classmates and this makes it difficult to carry out given orders or tasks. But with the presence of an experienced person, who is unknown to the workers, there is bound to be respect and therefore, work will be effective.

It would be easier to have less working staff at Svanen. This is to say, the number could be reduced and the salaries paid to the staff increased. This will make them more conscious of their work. This will motivate the staff to even market the Svanen camping to friends and families because they will be delighted with both the working hours and the salary.

Another recommendation would be for Svanen to engage in event organization. Youths and other age groups love to attend events organized anywhere in the city or out of the city. If Svanen organizes regular events such as sports competitions, musical evenings or karaoke, concerts, dancing competitions, plan intercultural events so as to facilitate integration for foreigners who study in Pietarsaari, there will be more revenue for Svanen and this will lead to profit making. These events could be assisted with the sales of snacks and some bakeries made by the staff. This would also aid in raising the number of visitors.

Svanen could also organize some nature guided tours thereby making use of its natural resources and environment. It could make available some floating cottages on the water and employ an experienced person to be in charge of that. School children love to play outside and therefore, it would be a nice opportunity for Svanen to organize some children's activities.

## 7 CONCLUSION

After the whole process of carrying out various interviews and writing down the reports, together with the analysis, it is very necessary to come up with some recommendations, based on the facts that were gathered during the research. In the above study, it can be ascertained that nature and camping are closely related due to the facts that have been discussed. Camping life is in all its aspects attached to nature because without nature, there would not be any camping: so camping depends on nature for survival. Outdoor activities also have a great influence on both the individuals who practice it and also on the environment. The study revealed that different individuals have different needs. Different age groups do different outdoor activities. Most youths go for extreme nature activities like downhill bicycle riding, mountain climbing and hiking. While elderly people tend to like soft activities, that will enhance their well-being. More and more families choose natural environments like summer camps and well equipped camping sites and even camp in the wilderness.

Also, recent studies show that camping and nature tourism is becoming the number one activity for families and this is because it is less costly and more fun making. This has led to people designing new camping equipment, new nature travelling first aid packs and even created awareness among the local communities on how to make revenue with their natural environments. Also, with these developments, rules about the environments have been formed as is the case with ethics. This can be seen in the case of Garden Camping (Glamping).

From the description of the Svanen camping site, more information is gathered about its various activities and facilities that make its visitors want to come back again, coupled with the good customer services the visitors receive. Another fact

is that the more there is an influx of visitors who are demanding, the site is bound to continue to invest on infrastructure so as to make more profits. More cottages would need to be built; public facilities would also need to be ameliorated with affordable prices too. The location of the camping site also favors its influx of visitors.

From the impacts that nature tourism has on the environment and people, we can see that it is not just a one-sided topic. Camping also has a lot of impacts on the environment and on the people who practice it and it is mostly for the benefit of the individuals practicing it. Camping depends on nature in order for it to be effective.

Finally, more emphasis should be laid on the ability of Svanen/Joutsen Camping to make profits. This is because every business which comes into existence is meant for profit yielding and Svanen is not an exception to the profit making rule. Although it was gathered that its primary goal was to help students carry out their work placements, it still needs to look into the profit making aspect. This will help the site to be opened even after the students finish their studies at the university.

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**Interview themes for Co-operating lecturer in the running of Svanen**

**Research: Camping As a Form of Nature Tourism. Case: Svanen / Joutsen Camping**

**Interview type: Semi-structural Interview**

- ❖ Having been running Svanen / Joutsen Camping for the past years, do you think it yielded any profits? Why?
  
- ❖ Can you identify the major challenges of Svanen / Joutsen Camping?
  
- ❖ How would you describe the marketing strategy of the camping site?

**Interview themes for the Supervisor**

**Research: Camping As a Form of Nature Tourism. Case: Svanen / Joutsen Camping**

**Interview type: Semi-structural Interview**

- ❖ Can you introduce yourself?
  
- ❖ What year did you work in Svanen and what were your tasks?
  
- ❖ Why in your opinion did Svanen make profits in 2012 and not the previous years?
  
- ❖ Does Svanen need improvements? In which areas?
  
- ❖ Any personal recommendations regarding the overall running of Svanen?

**Interview themes for Svanen guest**

**Research: Camping As a Form of Nature Tourism. Case: Svanen / Joutsen  
Camping**

**Interview type: Semi-structural Interview**

- ❖ Can you introduce yourself?
  
- ❖ What were your first impressions of the camping site?
  
- ❖ How would you evaluate the number of guests during your stay in Svanen? High or low?
  
- ❖ What can you tell about the pricing system of Svanen?