Sustainable innovation in Danish Campsites

A study of how Danish campsites engage in sustainable innovation, the barriers they face, and how they overcome them

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Abstract

This thesis sets out to investigate how Danish campsites engage in sustainable innovation, what barriers they face, and how they overcome them. To examine the problem formulation, a questionnaire has been distributed to Danish campsites. Employing an explanatory mixed-method research design, 26 interviews with Danish campsites have been carried out as well. Through descriptive statistics, the answers of the 85 respondents of the questionnaire are calculated and subsequently analyzed. The survey analysis creates a basis for further in-depth examination of the interviews which are analyzed through Structural, In Vivo, and Pattern coding.

In the analysis of the interviews, a division of the respondents is made based on their number of innovations, which is a measure of innovativeness. This results in three groups: less innovative, medium innovative, and highly innovative. The analysis of the data has provided the researchers with knowledge on how Danish campsites engage in sustainable innovation and the that barriers they face. It also reveals that the innovation process for the Danish Campsites begins with drivers of sustainable innovation, which can be narrowed down to four drivers: economization and efficiency, customer demands, the influence of policy, and green values. The driver of the influence of policy is a current topic due to recent regulations regarding waste sorting being imposed on Danish businesses, including campsites.

The innovation process is also investigated, and the analysis reveals that the campsites go through five phases when engaging with sustainable innovation. The stages are: Idea generation, decision-making, acquisition of support prior to implementation, implementation, and evaluation. When engaging in sustainable innovation, the respondents also face certain barriers. The barriers are: Economic constraints, time and human resources, and finally regulations. All the campsites are facing these barriers to some extent, yet how they overcome the barriers is very different.

Finally, the analysis findings are combined in a discussion of possible ways to overcome barriers to sustainable innovation. Theoretically, this thesis contributes to a greater understanding of the innovation process within campsites. Practically, the thesis suggests several policy recommendations relating to how more Danish campsites can be helped to overcome barriers to innovation. The recommendations include creating more financial incentives, making applying for funding easier, getting DMOs to help with planning and implementation of sustainable innovations due to scarcity of time, developing stronger collaboration between DMOs and SMEs so that DMOs can better understand campsite needs, as well as better facilitation of networks, groups, and other collaborations which will benefit campsites in pursuing more sustainable innovations.

Keywords: Sustainability, innovation, innovation process, barriers to innovation, camping

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1. Introduction

Denmark's national Destination Management Organization (DMO), VisitDenmark, (2023, p. 7) states in their strategy that "green and sustainable solutions with less environmental and climate footprint" is one of three things that they focus on. In Denmark, nature is a key pull factor in terms of attracting tourists, and outdoor tourism is becoming increasingly important (DKNT, 2019). In recent years, the demand for outdoor tourism and sustainable vacation has increased in Denmark (DKNT, 2021). According to Dansk Kyst- og Naturturisme (DKNT, n.d.), there is a major market potential in linking camping to outdoor tourism (DKNT). Outdoor tourism, sustainability, and camping have thus been linked in a project lead by VisitDenmark titled 'Camp Now.' The purpose of Camp Now was to help campsites in Denmark develop more sustainably to accommodate the increasing demand for sustainability among tourists that seek the outdoors (VisitDenmark, 2020). Camping is indeed an important accommodation type to consider in relation to sustainable development in Denmark because in 2022, camping accounted for 12,8 million out of a total of 39,6 million overnight stays (eStatistik, n.d.). According to Danmarks Statistisk (n.d.), there is a total of 407 campsites in Denmark. However, most campsites in Denmark are supposedly merely in the beginning stages of working with sustainability, even though tourists increasingly expect tourism accommodations to address sustainability in some form (Jan Aagard, n.d.). In order to help campsites with their sustainable efforts, the two industry associations of Camping Outdoor Denmark and HORESTA have developed two sustainable certifications. Camping Outdoor Denmark has developed a certification named Green Stay to help the campsites structure their sustainable efforts and make their work with sustainability visible to consumers (Camping Outdoor Danmark, n.d.). HORESTA has similarly developed the Green Camping certification to combine the fact that campsites often operate in nature with the government's push to use sustainability in their marketing of tourism in Denmark (Green Camping, 2023). However, few campsites have become certified thus far (Camping Outdoor Danmark, n.d.; Green Camping, 2023).

To learn more about sustainability among campsites in Denmark, we conducted a background interview with a senior development consultant from DKNT who has been affiliated with sustainable development and innovation in campsites. This interview revealed that the extent to which campsites work with sustainability differs, and that the campsites generally struggle with renewal because daily operations take up their time. To help the campsites with sustainable development, DKNT, in collaboration with VisitDenmark, embarked on the sustainable innovation project named Camp Now (see background interview Appendix F). In academic literature on innovation, innovation has often been equated to development and economic growth in particular (Fayos-Solà and Cooper,

2019; Hall and Williams: Gomezelj, 2016). However, as Booyen and Brouder (2022) argue, rather than focusing on economic growth, scholars now tend to view innovation as a tool that can be used to address the major challenges of our time, such as climate change. The Camp Now project thus helped 10 campsites with sustainable innovation and adapting sustainability to fit into their contexts. However, according to the senior development consultant from DKNT, it is not easy for Danish campsites to introduce new measures. Danish campsites are particularly challenged by strict planning and nature protection regulations in relation to development, as well as lack of knowledge about how to best approach sustainability. Generally, the interviewee calls for more information about how campsites innovative in relation to sustainability (see Appendix F). However, few scholars appear to have examined innovation in campsites (Morretto et al., 2019; Font, English and Gkritzali, 2018; Blichfeldt, 2009). In fact, there is a research gap in academic literature concerning camping in general as well as in relation to innovation (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2020; Brooker and Joppe, 2013). Furthermore, how tourism businesses engage in innovation is also under-researched and generally poorly understood (Rodriguez-Sanchez, 2019; Pikkemaat et al., 2019, Hjalager, 2010). This has thus led us to the following problem formulation:

How do Danish campsites engage in sustainable innovation, what barriers do they face, and how do they overcome them?

To examine how Danish campsites engage in sustainable innovation, we draw on theory relating to drivers of innovation in tourism as well as the innovation journey within tourism. To examine what barriers the campsites face, we draw on theory relating to barriers to innovation and sustainability in tourism. Furthermore, because this is an under-researched area in academia, we have adopted an explanatory research design. The purpose of the explanatory research design has been to first gain a broad understanding of how Danish campsites work with sustainability as well as the barriers they face. Therefore, we distributed a survey all the Danish campsites that we could reach, which ended up having 85 participants. The findings of this survey were used to design the interview guide for subsequent semi-structured interviews with 26 participants. To analyze the survey data, we used descriptive statistics, and to analyze the interview data, we did Structural, In Vivo, and Pattern coding. In accordance with the problem formulation, the analysis is divided into three main topics, which are: drivers of sustainable innovation, the innovation process, and barriers to sustainable innovation. Within the analysis on drivers, we address economization and efficiency, customer demand, the influence of policy, and green values as drivers. The innovation process is analyzed in five phases: idea generation, decision-making, acquisition of support prior to implementation, implementation, and finally evaluation. In the section on barriers, we analyze economic constraints, time and human resources, as well as rules and regulations and how the interview participants overcome these barriers.

To this end, the interview participants have been grouped into three: the less innovative, medium innovative, and the highly innovative, because initial analysis indicated that there are differences between those groups in how they are driven to engage in sustainable innovation, the barriers that they face and how they overcome those barriers. Finally, we discuss our findings and conclude the thesis with several policy recommendations.

2. Literature review

2.1 Innovation and tourism

In order to examine how Danish campsites engage with sustainable innovation, it is first necessary to consider the meaning of innovation. The word *innovation* derives from latin and means renewed or changed. However, innovation appears to be an elusive concept that is difficult to define in academic literature. Indeed, the concept of innovation has become a buzzword that is often used without reflecting on what it precisely entails. Brooker and Joppe (2014), found that the overuse and misuse of the term can be explained by the fact that innovation is a misunderstood concept, with many different definitions. Edwards-Schachter (2018) similarly notes that a comprehensive definition of the concept of innovation is lacking in mainstream innovation literature. Gustafsson, Snyder and Witell (2020, p. 111) state that "we see a research field that is heterogeneous with little or no agreement on the key assumptions and core concepts." In 1983, Kanter defined innovation broadly as; "the process of bringing any new, problem-solving idea into use […]. Innovation is the generation, acceptance and implementation of new ideas, processes, products or services […] Acceptance and implementation are central to this definition; it involves the capacity to change and adapt" (1983, p. 20-1). The definition hints at the fact that innovation can take many different shapes and that it involves something new. Singh and Aggarval (2022) who have developed a consensus definition among 208 definitions of innovation via a grounded theory approach have similarly found that newness and solutions that create value are important factors in innovation definitions. However, the shapes that innovation takes, and the degree of newness have been discussed to a great extent since Kanter's definition, which will become apparent later in this section. Within tourism specifically, Hjalager (2010 p. 2) has defined innovation as: "Everything that differs from business as usual or which represents a discontinuance of previous practice in some sense for the innovating firm." All of these definitions thus list some key characteristics of innovation, namely implementation, change and newness.

Furthermore, it is only within the last three decades that scholars have begun examining innovation within tourism specifically rather than within the traditional manufacturing industries (Madanaguli et al., 2021; Hjalager, 2010). Therefore, a limited number of innovation theories have been developed with tourism in mind. However, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism supported 1 in 10 jobs and accounted for 7% of global trade in 2019 (UNTWO). Tourism thus has a large impact globally and according to Hjalager (2010, p. 1), is a "phenomenon characterized by immense innovativeness." As opposed to the manufacturing sector, the service sector is characterized by intangibility, closeness between production and consumption, and limited protection of intellectual property (Gomezelj, 2016). Innovation thus has particular characteristics, meanings, and definitions depending on the discipline that one examines innovation within. In relation to the innovativeness of tourism, Hjalager (2015) has listed the 100 innovations that transformed tourism and looked at the major and disruptive innovations that took place outside tourism that significantly impacted tourism. However, innovation takes place everywhere in tourism, from the hotel that launches a new website to the restaurant that gets a new environmental certification and does not necessarily disrupt tourism as a whole. Rather, Hall and Michael (2008) suggest looking at innovation as systemic in the sense that innovation permeates the entire tourism system. To examine how Danish campsites engage in sustainable innovation, it is thus necessary to examine what innovation entails. In tourism, scholars tend to categorize innovations according to "degree of change or type of change" (Mu, Bossink and Vinig, 2022, p. 103411). In the coming sections, conceptualizations of degree of change and type of change are thus presented.

2.2 Innovation categories

One way to define innovation is categorize innovations. Both researchers and policymakers have attempted to identify categories of innovation. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has identified two main innovation categories in the Oslo Manual of 2018. However, these categories are not specific to tourism. In the manual (OECD, p. 20), innovation is defined as "a new or improved product or process (or combination thereof) that differs significantly from the unit's previous products or processes and that has been made available to potential users (product) or brought into use by the unit (process)." This definition has elements of categories of innovation as well as degree of novelty. The degree of novelty will be discussed in the next section.

Referring to the OECD definition to categorize innovation is, however, not specific to tourism. Indeed, tourism researchers have identified innovation categories that specifically relate to tourism. Orfila-Sintes and Mattson (2007, p. 382) have examined innovation in hotels and categorized

innovations as “management, external communications, service scope and back-office.” Hjalager (2010, p. 2) differentiates between similar innovation types, namely “product, process, organizational/managerial and market innovations.” However, scholars do not agree in terms of the number of categories. For example, Novelli, Schmitz, and Spencer (2005) have examined innovation in SMEs by referring to seven categories of innovation. These are nevertheless very similar to Orfila-Sintes and Mattson and Hjalager’s categories. In the following, Hjalager’s (2010) work on categorizing innovations is presented:

1. Product or service innovations that are characterized as being new to the customer in the sense that they are completely new or altered products/services or products/services that have never before entered into a particular market.
2. Process innovations that typically occur backstage and involve innovations implemented to increase efficiency and productivity.
3. Managerial innovations, which are innovations that involve changes in the management, structure, and organization of the tourism business. A manager might decide to provide more training to strengthen the internal knowledge capacities of the tourism business, create a new system for onboarding to better retain staff, or implement a flat management style, to name a few examples.
4. Marketing innovations that revolve around changes in a tourism business’ marketing or sales methods and general communication with the customer.
5. Institutional innovations, which are innovations that involve new collaborative/organizational structures whose purpose is to enhance the tourism business, such as participation in networks or franchising (Hjalager, 2010).

Such categories are useful to distinguish between types of innovation, but as other scholars have pointed out, innovations often have characteristics of each of these categories. Weiermair (2005) has argued that innovation often affects the whole tourism value chain from the booking phase through the actual stay to the after sales services. For example, if a new tourism product is introduced, it is likely to affect the internal processes of the tourism business as well as marketing, whereby innovation output in one area becomes innovation input in another. Novelli, Schmitz, and Spencer (2006) have similarly found that innovations in tourism tend to be linked or dependent upon each other. However, categories of innovation are useful for analytical purposes because they provide a common language to talk about and compare innovations.

In a systematic literature review from 2016, Gomerzelj (2016) found that the innovation type most studied in relation to tourism is process innovations. Next comes institutional innovations, product/service innovations, and finally managerial innovations. However, as Gomerzelj (2016)

points out, researchers use different definitions and categorization typologies to study innovation in hospitality. In a study of innovation in Swedish hotels, Wikhamn and Wikhamn (2018, p. 2489) found that "62% produced service/product innovations, 46% process innovations, 50% organizational innovations and 60% marketing innovations." While innovation and innovation types have been examined to some extent in hotels (Vladimirov and Williams, 2018; Wikhamn and Wikhamn, 2018; Souto, 2015; Orfila-Sintes and Mattson, 2007) it is likely that innovation behavior differs between the different types of tourism firms that make up the tourism industry (Orfila-Sintes and Mattson, 2007). Therefore, it may be unlikely that campsites focus on the same innovation types as, for example, hotels, however, very little research has been done on innovation in campsites, which shows a gap in the literature (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2020; Blichfeldt, 2009). As Kallmuenzer (2017) argues, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), such as campsites tend to primarily focus on hardware innovations, such as upgrading the hotel facilities, rather than service or managerial innovations. Applying similar categories of innovation to the context of campsites can thus shed light on how campsites in Denmark engage in sustainable innovation. According to Hjalager (2002) the tourism business is primarily comprised of SMEs. According to the European Union (EU, n.d.), a medium-sized business is defined as a business that has less than 200 employees and a turnover of less than 50 million euro. A small business is defined as a business that has less than 50 employees and a turnover of less than 10 million euro.

2.3 Degree of innovation

Another way to categorize innovation is to look at the level of innovation, which is also indicated by the OECD definition of innovation. Typically, innovation is associated with newness (Pikkemaat, Peters, and Bichler, 2019). Innovations tend to be classified as incremental or radical (Mu, Bossink, and Vinig, 2022). Incremental innovation involves innovations with "a low degree of novelty" that are low-risk and low-cost. On the other hand, radical innovation involves innovation "with a high degree of novelty, which breaks with what existed previously and is the result of non-obvious paths or ideas" (Souto, 2015, p. 144). Radical and incremental innovations can be difficult to distinguish because they are context dependent. Martínez-Ros and Orfila-Sintes (2009) define the two levels of innovation in simpler terms, where an innovation is radical if it is the first time it is adopted by the firm whereas an innovation is incremental if it is a modification to an existing innovation. In terms of impact on a tourism firm's performance, radical innovations seem to have the most potential for positive impact (Souto, 2015). Nevertheless, innovation in tourism is often considered slow and incremental (Zach, Schnitzer, and Falk, 2021; Zach, Krizaj and McTier, 2017; Booker and Joppe,

2014), or even scarce (Alsos, Eide and Madsen, 2014). An explanation for this may be that the distinction between incremental and radical innovation is insufficient to explain the innovation that occurs in reality (Omerzel, 2015). Indeed, Brooker and Joppe (2014) have criticized the distinction between radical and incremental innovation and argue that "radical innovation may not be appropriate within service industries, as small changes fit better within existing organizational structures." Relatedly, Wikham and Wikham (2018) found that 73% of the innovations they studied in Swedish hotels were incremental, which suggests that a different measure of level of innovation is necessary to capture the innovation that occurs within tourism businesses.

The distinction between incremental and radical innovation then seems to be problematic because it fails to recognize innovations that fall between incremental and radical innovation. Brooker and Joppe (2014, p. 504) address the criticism of the radical and incremental categorization of innovations by introducing a liminal position between radical and incremental innovators and argue that "innovation is not […] a binary concept. Rather, it is a continuum, where "new" is both relative and contextual to the sector." In their typology, they categorize innovators according to how much risk they are willing to tolerate, how easy innovations should be to put into practice, how affordable innovations should be, and how quickly the investment should be made back. Brooker and Joppe (2014, p. 504) name those that implement ideas that are "easy to put into practice, are affordable, and contribute to short-term profits" painters. Then comes artisans that develop new ideas to a greater extent, and finally artists that are more willing to take risks and reimagine ideas. Brooker and Joppe's findings thus demonstrate that measuring the level of innovation according to whether an innovation is incremental or radical can result in the omission of a lot of innovations that occur in tourism.

2.4 Drivers and determinants of innovation

Hall and Williams (2008) argue that there are certain factors that drive innovation, and that they mainly relate to competition, economy, demand, technology, strategy, and individual entrepreneurship, although other drivers have been defined. Typically, for tourism firms to innovate, they have to see value in the innovation (ibid). In this regard, Hjalager (2002) explains that competitiveness can be a driver of innovation, and Sundbo et al. (2006) add that a key aspect of competitiveness being a driver is to meet customer demand. Furthermore, Sampaio, Thomas, and Font (2012) add that personal environmental engagement can drive SME owners and managers to work with sustainability due to a passion for sustainability and environmental values. Warren, Becken, and Coghlan (2018) further that personal belief systems and knowledge do have an impact

on how SMEs approach sustainable innovation processes. Jarvis, Weeden and Simcock (2010) relatedly identify that marketing innovations such as sustainable certifications can act as drivers for SMEs in tourism, because of how it might position the tourism businesses positively as well as how it helps them implement more sustainable solutions. It thus seems important to consider drivers of innovation when examining how Danish campsites engage with sustainable innovation because drivers appear to set the innovation process in motion.

Another important part of beginning the innovation process is related to determinants of innovation. Orfila-Sintes and Mattson (2007) have examined determinants of innovation in hotels in relation to the four innovation types, namely management, external communication, service scope, and back-office, that they identify. Their findings reveal that the different innovation types have different determinants of innovation. Divisekera and Nguyen (2018) have similarly examined determinations of innovation and to that end, they have developed a conceptual framework, which can be seen in figure 1.

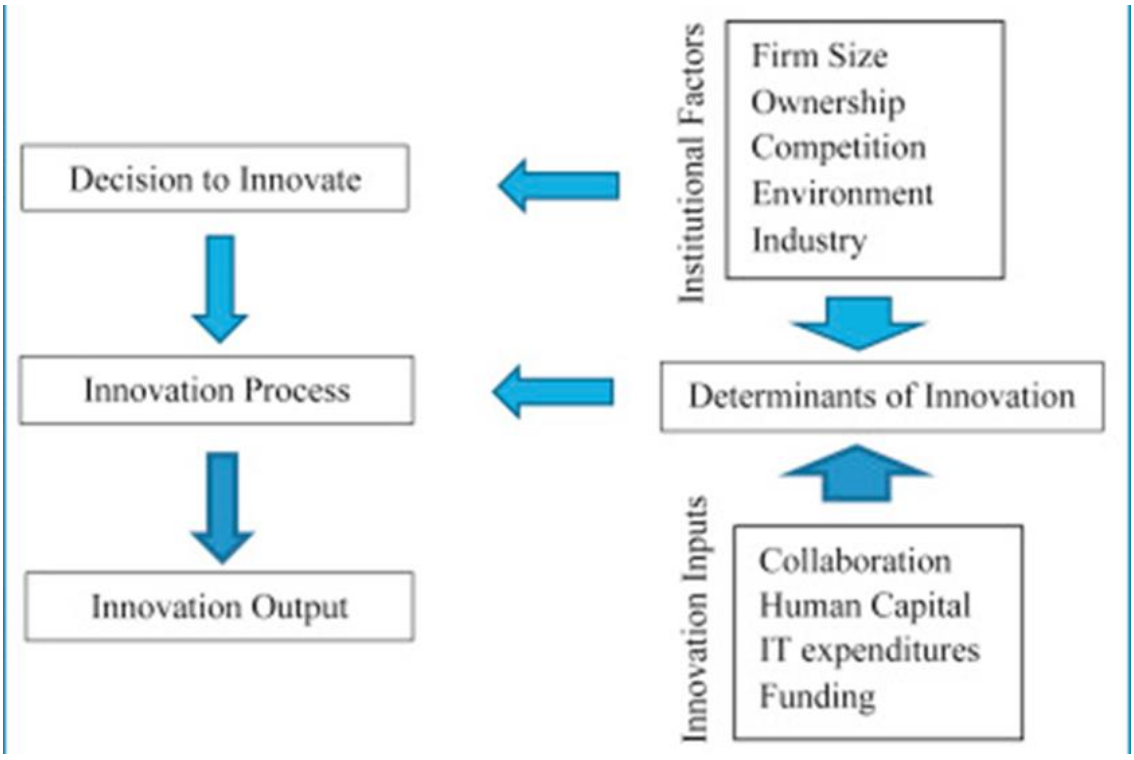

Fig. 1 Determinants of innovation from Divisekera and Nguyen, 2018, p. 159.

The conceptual framework displays innovation as a two-stage process, where the first stage of the process involves the "firm's decision to engage in an innovation process" (Divisekera and Nguyen, 2018, p. 159). This decision is affected by the institutional factors, which include firm size, ownership structure, competition, environment, and industry. Futhermore, to produce the desired innovation output, tourism firms need to make certain inputs. These include collaboration, human capital, IT expenditures, and funding. The innovation output can be innovation relating to the categories of

innovation detailed above (Divisekera and Nguyen, 2018). Divisekera and Nguyen (2018) tested the framework in relation to product/service innovation and marketing innovation. They found that major determinants for product/service innovations are collaboration and human capital and major determinants for marketing innovations are collaboration and investments in information and communication technology (ICT). Divisekera and Nguyen (2018) generally found that collaboration is an important input for innovation, which is why it is considered next.

2.5 Collaboration and the role of knowledge

Collaboration is related to knowledge transfer, which describes the process of knowledge moving from its source to its user. Networks in particular have received attention in tourism scholarship for their important role in providing access to knowledge (Alford and Duan, 2018; Booyens and Rogerson, 2017; van der Zee and Vanneste, 2015, Novelli, Schmitz and Spencer, 2006), which suggests a link between collaboration and likelihood of innovation. Knowledge sources for firms can be divided into external or internal sources (Marco-Lajara et al., 2018). Externally, the source of knowledge may be a network of tourism firms, where the individual firms get access to resources such as information and advice (Panzer-Krause, 2019). The source may also be a human resource that comes from the hiring of experts (Song, Almeiad and Wu, 2003), the destination management organization (DMO), training and research centers such as universities, and the chain that a tourism firm may be part of (Marco-Lajara et al., 2016). Internal sources of knowledge can be comprised of the firm's "employees […], values, databases, procedures, organizational routines, and efforts in technological development (ibid, p. 1992). Human capital is considered particularly important within other types of firms, however, campsites are SMEs are characterized by seasonality and rotations in staff (ibid). That may suggest that the decision-maker's personal human capital is of greater significance within SMEs.

Innovation is rooted in knowledge and knowledge is recognized as one of the most important resources for firms to be able to compete and innovate (Raisi et al., 2020). Quinatane et al., (2011, p. 936) have similarly stated that "knowledge is a pre-requisite for the innovation process to occur." Indeed, in a longitudinal study of sustainable innovation at an Australian tourism accommodation provider, Warren, Becken, and Coghlan (2018, p. 1798) found that "[i]t was the owners' changing learnings and worldview that were the essential levers to transition to progressive [sustainability-oriented innovation] stages." In a study of technology-based innovations in hotels, Bharwani and Mathews (168) found that information gathering and knowledge management systems, such as data mining, allows hotels to understand trends in the industry as well as match their service offerings with

customer demand. Knowledge is thus important for innovation to occur, however, in relation to campsites, Tejada and Moreno (2013) have noted that little attention has been paid to understanding innovation processes in small and medium tourism enterprises (SMEs). A unique characteristic of SMEs is the ownership structure, where the owner is often the manager and therefore the primary decision-maker. The owner is also often involved in the day-to-day operations (Tzschentke, Kirk & Lynch, 2008), which suggests a limited need for formal knowledge transfer systems among employees. Indeed, according to Thomas and Wood (2014), tourism firms depend to a great extent on external knowledge in innovation in comparison to businesses in other sectors. Therefore, it seems necessary to address the role that external knowledge in particular plays in innovation in these smaller tourism businesses such as Danish Campsites.

According to Jantunen (2005), the process of acquiring and using knowledge does play an important role in a firm's innovation processes because that is what allows companies to evolve, particularly when faced with change. This process is reflected in the concept of absorptive capability, which has been coined by Cohen and Levinthal (1990). According to Cohen and Levinthal (1990, p. 128), absorptive capacity is concerned with the role that external knowledge plays in a firm's innovative capabilities and "the ability to exploit external knowledge." Cohen and Levinthal argue that absorptive capacity is largely determined by an individual's prior knowledge and experience related to a particular innovation. The amount of prior knowledge and experience with the innovation then determines the firm's ability to both evaluate and utilize external knowledge. Absorptive capacity is thus a key aspect of the innovation process because innovation depends on the generation of new ideas through the combination of knowledge resources (Buhagiar et al., 2021). Therefore, it seems important to examine the different knowledge sources that the Danish campsites use.

2.6 The innovation process

While innovation in tourism is being examined to a greater extent, the innovation process itself has largely been neglected (Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2019). Different models that map the innovation journey in general have been developed (Oeij, van der Torre and Dhondt, 2019; Cooper, 2014), however, the innovation process in tourism is poorly understood (Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2019). In Hjalager's (2010, p. 9) words, "[t]here is an incomplete understanding of how innovation processes take place in tourism enterprises and organizations, including what types of capacities and incentives they draw on." Since Hjalager's review, several studies have focused on aspects and phases of the innovation process (Nordli, 2018; Hoarau, 2014; Rønningen, 2010; Baggio and Copper, 2010), however, few seem to have actually attempted to map the innovation journey in tourism (Buhagiar et

al., 2021; Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2019; Hjalager and Nordin, 2017). The result is a limited understanding of the innovation process within tourism and thus a gap in the research.

Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2019) have attempted to map the process for bringing new products to market within a tourism context. They conceptualize the process as consisting of different stages categorized as idea generation, coalition building, idea realization and transfer/diffusion. In figure 2, the stages are divided into different tasks.

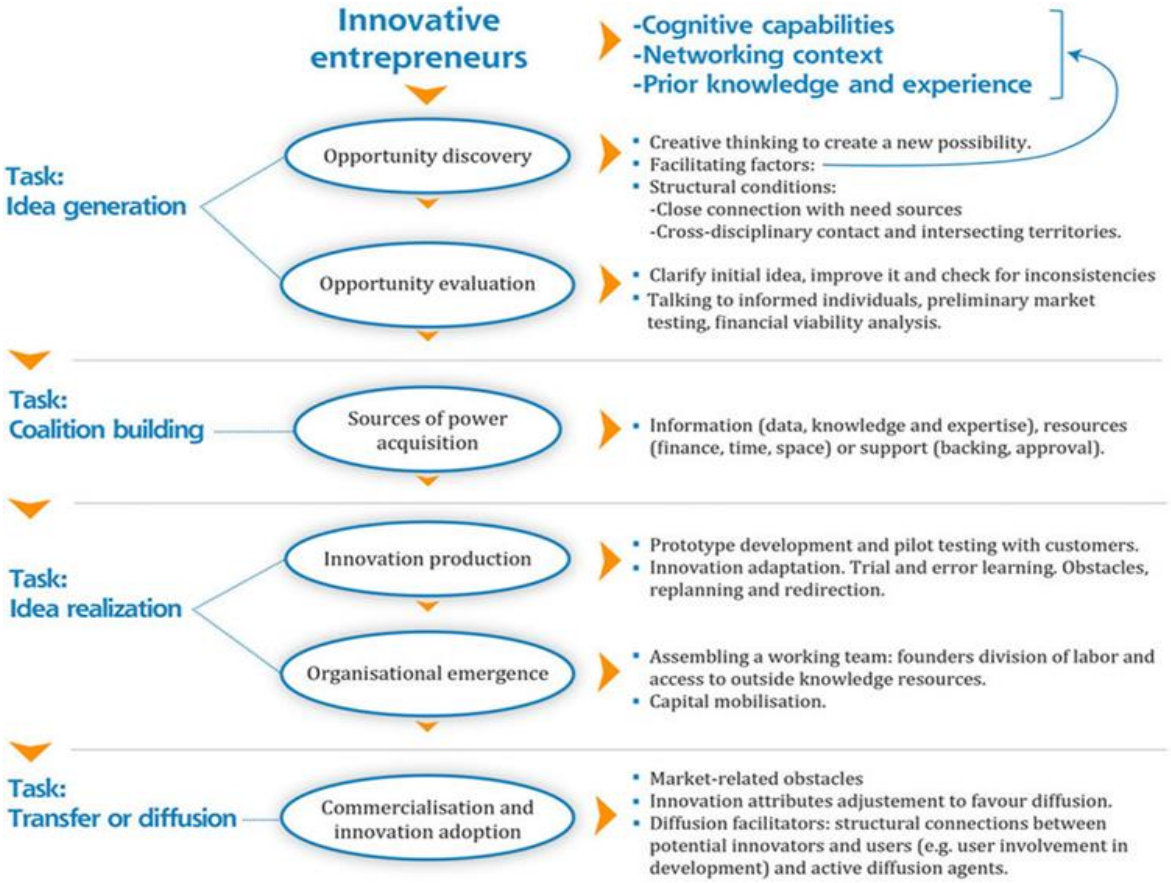

Fig. 2 Innovation phases and innovation tasks from Rodriguez-Sanchez, et al., 2019, p. 882.

2.6.1 Idea generation

The task of idea generation has the subtask of opportunity discovery and evaluation, which involves idea and opportunity spotting as well as initial evaluation of an idea (Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2019). Ardichvili et al. (2003) have identified some major factors that affect how opportunities are recognized and identified among entrepreneurs in general. Those are alertness of problems and needs, prior knowledge necessary to recognize the value of an idea, accidental discovery, the social networks of the innovator, as well as their personality traits. In the context of tourism, Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2019) have found that their sample of new-to-tourism entrepreneurs tend to discover ideas via

alertness to problems arising from their first-hand experiences and daily life in their work environments. Once the entrepreneurs spotted an opportunity, they used their prior knowledge to assess the opportunity. The whole process often involved teams of people discussing the ideas back and forth. Then followed evaluation of the idea, where the entrepreneurs did initial market testing of a prototype or sought validation within their networks or from professionals (Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2019). Furthermore, in general innovation literature, idea evaluation involves idea evaluation and validation. Ideas are commonly assessed according to "whether they are worthy of further development or implementation, need to be revised or need to be rejected" (Bhimani et al., 2021, p. 1). Idea evaluation also involves consideration of risk (Boudier et al., 2023). However, the study of Rodrigues-Sanchez et al. (2019) took place in a specific environment of new-to-tourism entrepreneurs that were bringing a product to market. As previously discussed though (see section 2.2), a lot of innovation within tourism takes place behind the scenes, for example to make processes more efficient. As Aliasghar et al. (2019) argue, findings from studies of product innovations may not be applicable to studies of process innovations. Furthermore, it seems unlikely that SMEs, such as campsites in Denmark, are able to gather teams to have such formalized processes for generating ideas.

2.6.2 Coalition building

In figure 2, coalition building has a subtask of acquiring information, resources or support. Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2019) conceptualize coalition building as taking place multiple times during the innovation process. Aldrich and Renuzilli (2005, p. 323) have argued that business owners often use "their core network ties to obtain legal, loan, financial and expert advice" and that business owners prefer using their core network ties rather than contacting outsiders. Furthermore, the use of this support system is likely to increase the innovator's confidence in the idea (Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2019). As argued by Hjalager (2010), collaboration is key to foster successful innovation particularly for SMEs, such as Danish campsites. Similarly, Zach (2016, p. 271) has argued that collaboration "is a key contributor to successful innovations in the tourism industry." How the Danish campsites collaborate and for what purpose thus seems important to investigate when trying to understand how they engage in sustainable innovation.

2.6.3 Idea realization/implementation

Within Rodriguez-Sanchez et al.'s (2019) model, idea realization has the subtasks of producing the innovation through prototyping, and organizational emergence, where a team to realize the innovation is sometimes mobilized (see figure 2). The innovation is also typically tested one way or the other, and Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2019) have argued that co-production with the user throughout the process and particularly in this stage leads to a product with fewer problems. This is also the phase in which the innovator receives feedback on the idea and where the idea may be adjusted according to that feedback (Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2019). However, it seems likely that sometimes testing may not be feasible within the Danish campsites as daily operations may take priority, as the senior consultant in DKNT noted (see Appendix F). The idea realization stage has also been named the implementation stage by scholars such as Buhagiar (2021), where implementation involves bringing the innovation to life within the organization.

2.6.4 Transfer/diffusion

Finally, transfer/diffusion has the subtask of commercialization and innovation adoption, where the innovation is brought to market (Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2019). However, bringing a product to market is not the only type of innovation within tourism and not necessarily the most frequent innovation type as highlighted by Wikhamn and Wikhamn's (2018) study of innovation in Swedishh hotels, whereof 73% of innovations were process innovations. Nevertheless, evaluation of whether the adopted innovation was successful or not may take place, but the evaluation criteria appear likely to differ from product innovations.

It should be noted that innovation is not necessarily a linear process, but rather more dynamic (Hjalager, 2010; Ottenbacher, Shaw, & Lockwood, 2006). Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2019) have addressed the gap regarding innovation processes and contributed with a map of the innovation journey that includes the phases discussed above. However, it should be kept in mind that their model is developed based on a sample of new-to tourism entrepreneurs tied to start-ups, which is a very specific environment for innovation. The model can be seen in figure 3.

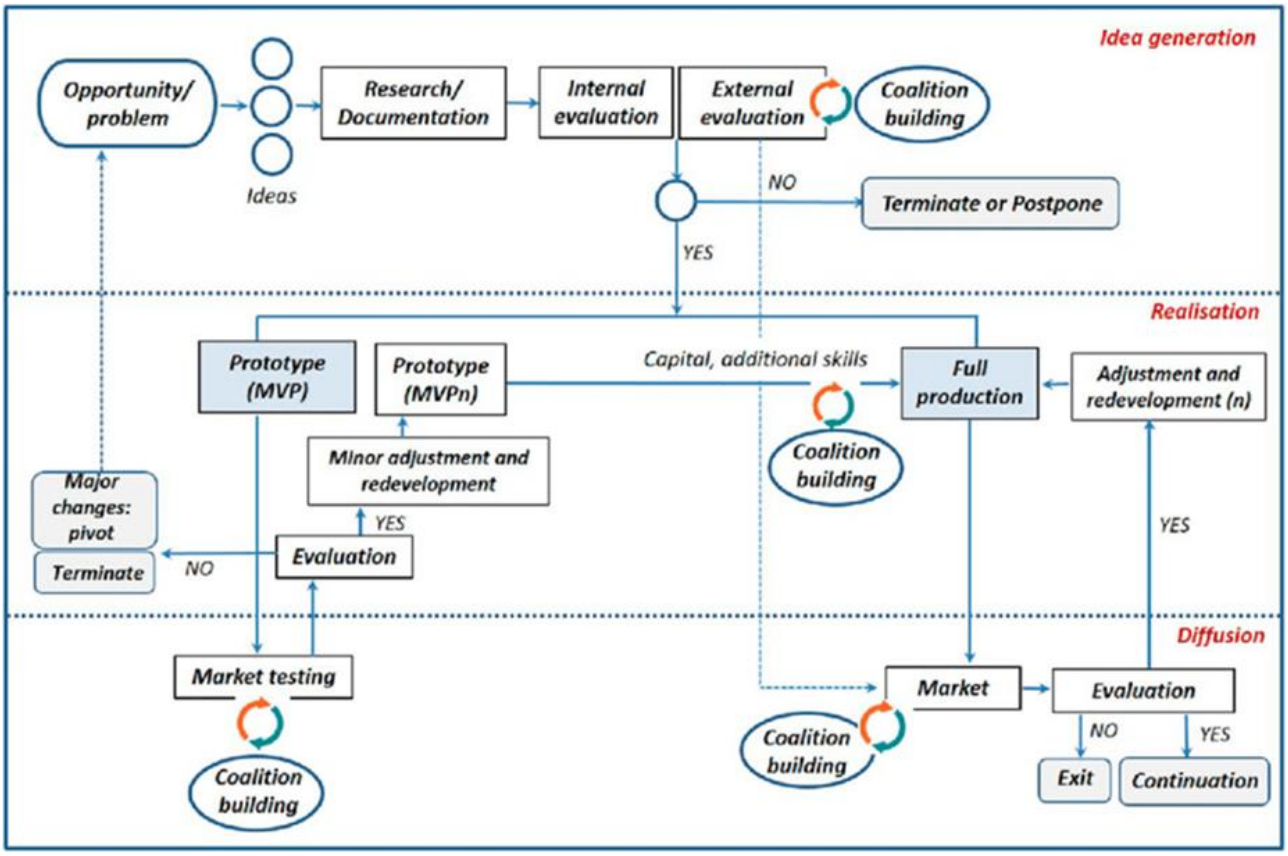

Fig. 3 The innovation journey of new-to-tourism entrepreneurs from Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2019, p. 897.

According to their model, innovation begins with idea generation. Idea generation is conceptualized as a dual process that consists of opportunity/problem spotting and idea evaluation (Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2019). Idea generation is followed by realization of the idea which involves building prototypes to be used as the basis for evaluation or seeking validation through coalition building and rapidly developing the idea. Finally, the innovation is taken to market in the diffusion stage. Throughout the innovation process, the innovators partake in coalition building to support the innovation process (Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2017). While adapted for tourism start-ups, the model provides insights into the tourism innovation process in the sense that it highlights the complexity of the journey and the phases that innovators in tourism may go through. However, the model revolves around bringing a product to market, and it seems likely that bringing a sustainable innovation to life may differ from this model.

2.7 Sustainability in tourism accommodations

Innovation has long been viewed as a tool for increasing a firm's competitiveness and has been associated with economic growth and development in the fields of science and technology (Fayos-Solà and Cooper, 2019; Hall and Williams, 2019, Gomezelj, 2016). In contrast to this conceptualization of innovation, some scholars are beginning to view innovation as a tool to overcome the challenges of our time, such as "greenhouse gas emissions, providing clean energy, ensuring food and water security, addressing health and development challenges or protecting the environment" (Booyen and Brouder, 2022, p. 1). As Edwards-Schachter (2018, p. 65) states, innovation, not just in tourism, has become a "Holy Grail" that is viewed as the solution to create economic growth as well as a tool to address the sustainability issues of our time." Several researchers that study tourism also argue that innovation will play a central role in sustainability in tourism in the future, whereby they depart from the previous focus on economic growth (Booyens and Brouder, 2022; Fayos-Solà and Cooper, 2019; Satta, Spinelli and Parola, 2019; Warren et al., 2018). In relation to tourism, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNTWO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) define sustainable tourism as: "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and the host communities" (UNWTO, 2005). This was further manifested with the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals. With these, the UNWTO and UNEP introduced the "'triple bottom line' approach to sustainability" (Scheyvens et al. 2016, p. 273), or the three pillars of sustainability. These pillars refer to economic sustainability, social sustainability, and environmental sustainability (Choi et al., 2006).

Innovation and sustainability in a tourism context is though undeniably under-researched as it is pointed out by Hjalager (2010), and it is narrowing in further with research aimed at investigating the specific area of sustainability and innovation in the tourism accommodation sector (Warren, Becken, and Coghlan, 2018). Santos et al. (2021) argue that it is necessary to focus on sustainability and innovation in combination to lay a new brighter path for the future (Santos et al., 2021). Calabrese et al. (2018) argue that sustainability even works as a driver for innovation and building businesses. Later, they make a call for more research that sheds light on the relationship between sustainability and service innovation, thus highlighting a gap in the literature (Calabrese et al., 2021). Warren, Becken, and Coghlan (2018) have examined sustainable oriented innovations (SOI) and developed a model (see figure 4) that illustrates how small and medium-sized accommodations work with sustainable innovation. Sustainable innovation contributes with new solutions for environmental and societal issues which can relate to services, processes, products and

the renewal of business models (Geradts and Bocken, 2018). As the model illustrates, the sustainable innovation journey spans from resistance towards the need for initiating sustainable innovations and extends to actual 'radical' sustainable solutions implemented in the business (Warren, Becken, and Coghlan, 2018).

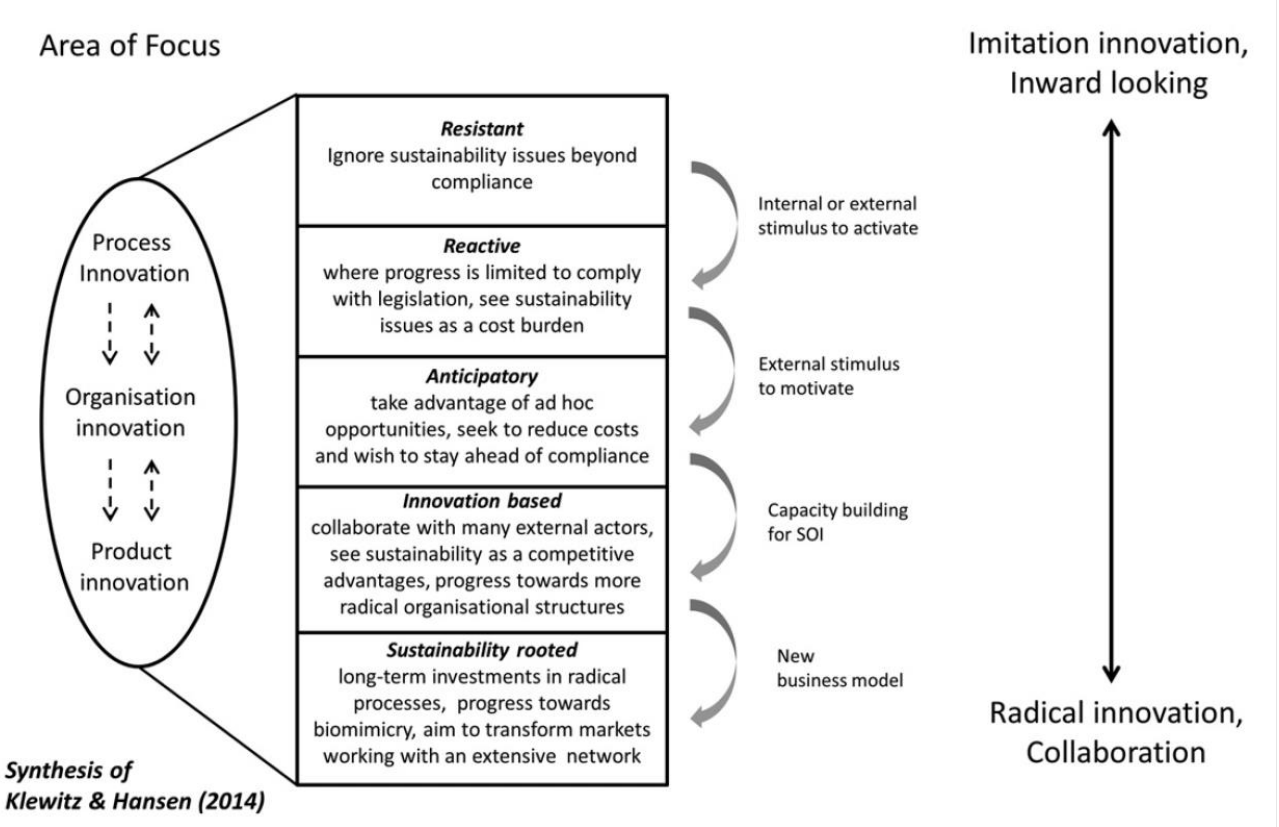

Fig. 4 Sustainability-oriented innovation transitions from from Warren, Becken, and Coghlan, 2018, p. 1788.

According to Warren, Becken, and Coghlan (2018), SMEs that have just started out with sustainable innovation may be more reactive in terms of merely complying with legislation. SMEs then progress towards becoming more proactive in relation to sustainable innovation and perhaps introduce more radical innovations. In relation to examining what barriers the campsites face, the model thus indicates that there are internal barriers relating to the personality traits of the business owner with regard to sustainability. However, there are also external barriers to innovation, which will be discussed next.

2.8 Barriers to innovation

Barriers to innovation have been researched in tourism although to a limited extent when it comes to sustainable innovation (Warren, Becken, and Coghlan, 2018). Therefore, the model and described internal and external barriers of the model presented by Warren Becken, and Coghlan (2018) is referred to as the tourism sector and specifically the accommodative area is inherently rooted in the service industry. Warren, Becken, and Coghlan (2018) introduce a model which consists of the 'internal and external barriers and drivers' of sustainability-oriented service innovation (see figure 5). The scholars thus recognize that barriers and drivers exist both internally and externally to the firm and that drivers and barriers affect each other (Warren, Becken, and Coghlan, 2018).

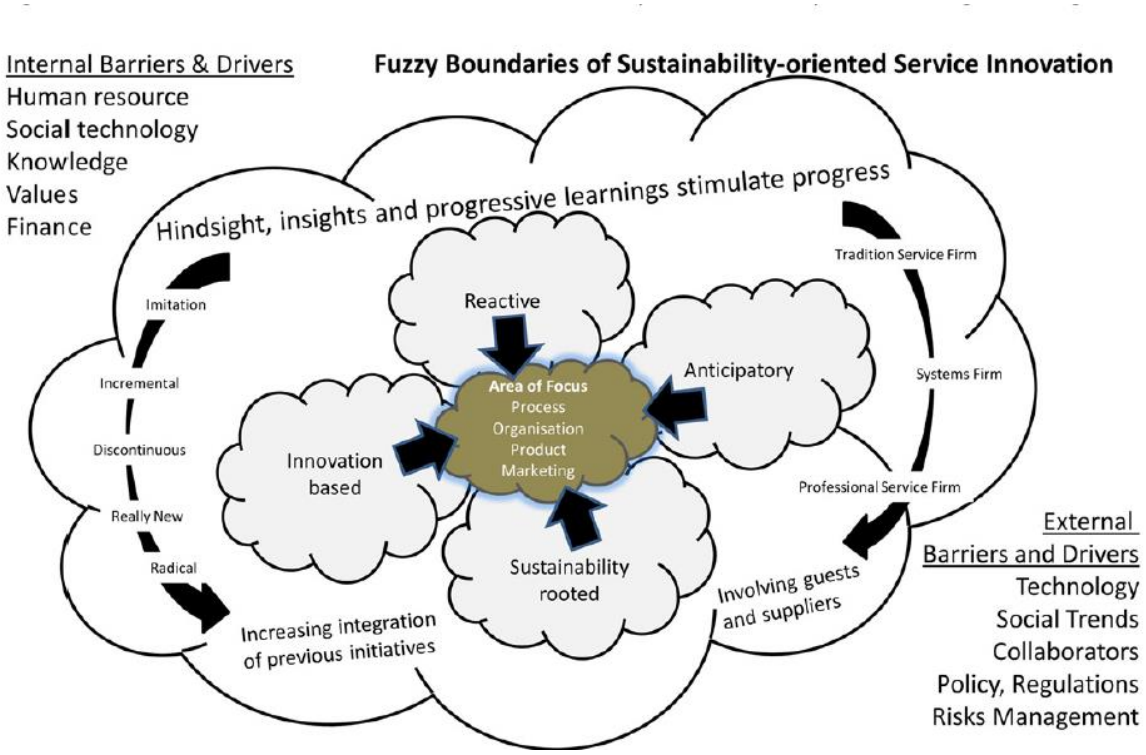

Fig. 5 Sustainability-oriented Service Innovation model from Warren, Becken, and Coghlan 2018, p. 1799.

The following sections address the potential barriers that campsites may be exposed to when working with innovation and touches upon both the internal and external barriers identified in the model as well as in equivalent relevant literature.

2.8.1 Structure and size

The size of small businesses such as campsites are often considered a to innovation, as argued by Blichfeldt (2009, 417). According to Hjalager (2010), this is a widely recognized issue in academic literature. Hobbson and Essex (2001) further explain that engaging in sustainable practices can be more difficult in the SMEs due to their potential lack of resources and capacity in all areas of their business. Kraus et al. (2023) explain that innovation in SMEs often relies on the extent to which small business owners are personally invested in the project, Warren, Becken, and Coghlan (2018) emphasize that motivation to engage in innovation comes from the owners' belief systems and prior knowledge. Hjalager (2002) further claims that for small businesses, daily operations take priority, which makes it difficult for them to implement sustainable innovations compared to larger franchises and chains. Furthermore, family-owned businesses may be more stuck in generational patterns and thus more unlikely to innovate (Kraus et al., 2023). Hjalager (2010) also argues that a more formal process of knowledge transfer is needed within small tourism businesses to help them innovate. Similarly, Sharma et al. (2020) claim that the success rate of green initiatives increases if the employees are involved and engaged in sustainability and commit to training. Calabrese et al., (2018) further stress how partnerships and networks within a service innovation context are important for successful implementation of innovations. According to Warren, Becken and Coghlan (2018), SMEs are considered to be hesitant towards implementing sustainable initiatives, because they fear of taking risks due to their limited financial resources resulting from their small size.

2.8.2 Cooperation and networks

Blichfeldt (2009) emphasizes the importance for tourism businesses working with innovation to be affiliated with a network for motivational purposes and for easier access to knowledge. However, fear of competition can keep SMEs from joining networks and thus deprives them of potential access to knowledge (ibid). Hjalager (2002) has similarly found that aversion to cooperate and thus gain the benefits of cooperation is caused by this internal competitiveness among tourism businesses. Sundbo et al. (2006) further argue that sometimes considerations of competitiveness and potential copying of ideas outweigh the need to collaborate with other tourism businesses. This aversion has been linked to the small businesses' struggle to survive within a competitive market. However, in the context of Nordic countries, Hjalager (2010) explains that the public sector has a great impact on innovation in tourism because public institutions often support innovation via research, skill development, assistance with legal questions, and help to strategize. Collaboration with public institutions can thus

seemingly aid innovation. Kraus et al. (2022) further emphasize the need for solid networks among smaller businesses working with sustainable innovations because collaboration is known to accelerate innovation and stimulate positive outcomes in implementation. Therefore, aversion to cooperation can be a barrier to sustainable innovation.

2.8.3 Resources and finances

Sharma et al. (2020) have investigated the existing literature on eco-innovations in hospitality research and found that a major barrier to sustainable innovation among smaller tourism businesses is lack of financial resources, which is highlighted in general literature on innovation in SMEs as well. However, as Kraus et al (2023, p. 2) argue, small businesses should rather "structure and formulate innovation in response to changing market conditions." According to Kraus et al. (2023), financial uncertainty and vulnerability to a changing market can make SMEs reluctant to introduce innovations that do not immediately result in profit. In addition, the lack of resources tends to keep small businesses from researching and developing skills needed to engage in innovation (ibid). Furthermore, Carter, Whiley and Knight (2004, p. 49) suggest that the current changes and innovations made to foster sustainability and environmental protection within tourism sectors are made for larger operations able to set aside resources for sustainability and are not suited for "addressing incremental and cumulative changes." This lack of adaptable instruments for smaller businesses calls for operational innovations that can assist smaller businesses develop more sustainably (Santos et al., 2021).

2.8.4 Regulations and policies

Kraus et al. (2023) further argues that small businesses are particularly vulnerable to changing regulations and policies. Sundbo et al (2006) similarly explains that societal tendencies and changing policies greatly affects the innovativeness of tourism businesses and their extended networks. According to Hall and Williams (2008, 88), tourism businesses sometimes perceive the state as "a barrier to innovation and enhanced productivity." Hjalager (2020) further explains that regulations and resistance from both the municipality planning regulations, nature protection organizations, and other institutions regulating land-use and the use of coastal areas in Denmark can act as a barrier that keeps Danish tourism businesses from introducing new innovations. However, the state and other official institutions could arguably possess a dual role in not only hindering but also driving

innovation. As Hall and Williams (2008, p. 21) argue, the state provides a "policy and regulatory environment that can serve to encourage new innovations or protect existing ones." Hall and Williams (2008) further argue that this notion of the state being the problem is outdated but that it necessitates more research. According to the two scholars, the state "is a major direct and indirect agent in innovation, and tourism innovation in particular" (Hall and Williams, 2008, p. 88). It is thus interesting to examine how the Danish campsites perceive the role of the state in relation to innovation.

2.8.5 Technological barriers

Technological innovations and associated systems can also be complicated for tourism businesses to introduce. Sharma et al. (2020, p. 476) address the "fear of technology" that is represented in accommodative businesses, hotels, in the tourism sector, and the employees' reluctance to learn to use new technologies. Business owners may thus be particularly challenged by the immensity of the task of persuading employees to adapt and learn new skills related to technology (ibid). However, technology can ease the daily operations within the business and thus perhaps create more opportunity for sustainable innovation (ibid). However, as Pace (2016) argues, the implementation of new technological solutions depend to a great extent on the absorptive capacity and internal knowledge of the firm. Larger businesses with more human capital than SMEs may thus be better able to introduce technological solutions and free up time for sustainable innovation.

2.9 Innovation in campsites

To examine how campsites engage in sustainable innovation, it is first necessary to explore camping. Camping comes in many different shapes and has different meanings to different tourists. Traditionally, the term 'camping' refers to the act of staying in a tent for a short period of time, either in a designated campsite or in the wilderness (Brooker and Joppe, 2013). It has also been associated with RVs, caravans, shelters, and more recently glamping. The outdoor hospitality sector is popular amongst tourists because it combines different levels of comfort, style, and uniqueness, while bringing the tourist closer to nature. In Europe, campsites account for 13% of all overnight stays (Eurostat 2020). Among the EU Member States, Denmark and Luxembourg are the two states in which tourists spent the highest number of overnight stays at campsites (33%) (Eurostat 2020). Despite its popularity amongst tourists, camping has received minimal attention in academic literature

(Rogerson and Rogerson, 2020). Brooker and Joppe (2013) aimed at providing insights into the outdoor hospitality sector and its evolution from a simplistic form of accommodation to its contemporary position. Their findings reveal that even though natural settings are of high importance among campers, there has been a trend since the 1920s towards comfort. Across the sector, this trend has led to continuous product innovation, ultimately culminating in glamping and the many innovative features that come with the introduction of this (Brooker and Joppe, 2013, 5). They also noticed that most actors within the outdoor hospitality sector are operated as small family businesses. As a result, they found that "capitalizing on trends will require the most innovative operations to lift, shift and adapt new concepts" (Brooker and Joppe, 2013, p. 5). Blichfeldt (2009) who examined an innovative Danish caravan park similarly noticed how many of the campsites are run by family businesses. Family run businesses have been blamed for a lack of innovativeness in the tourism sector due to their size (Blichfeldt, 2009). However, studies of innovation in campsites seem to have been limited to a single campsite (Font, English and Gkritzali, 2018; Blichfeldt, 2009), which highlights gap in research regarding innovation in campsites involving several campsites. As Rogerson and Rogerson (2020) also argue, camping is one of the most under-researched accommodation types and similarly highlight a gap in the academic literature regarding innovation in campsites.

2.10 Theoretical framework

Different concepts and theories have been discussed in this section, however, not all will be used as the theoretical framework to guide the questions of the survey, interview and analysis. However, since drivers appear to set the innovation process in motion, they are included in the theoretical framework of this thesis. Hall and Williams (2008) identified e.g., competitiveness, consumer demands, entrepreneurship and economy as drivers of innovation. Sustainable drivers for tourism businesses include certifications for marketing purposes, (Jarvis, Weeden and Simcock, 2010), the fact that sustainability is often considered a hygiene factor (Mair and Jago, 2009), the personal environmental engagement of the decision-maker (Sampaio, Thomas and Font, 2012), as well as competitiveness among SMEs within tourism(Hjalager, 2002; Sundbo et al., 2006) Yet, these drivers are arguably intertwined with the barriers SMEs in tourism might experience (Warren, Becken and Coghlan, 2018). In trying to determine the innovation types that campsites typically engage with in relation to sustainability, a choice has been made to focus on Hjalager's (2010) categorization of innovation. This is because Hjalager's categorization specially focuses on innovation in tourism and because most researchers studying innovation in tourism appear to use very similar categories, if not Hjalager's categories (Wikhamn and Wikhamn, 2018; Gomerzelj, 2016; Orfila-Sintes and Mattson, 2007;

Novelli, Schmitz, and Spencer, 2005). The use of similar categories of innovation thus allows a comparison between innovation in campsites and other tourism enterprises, such as hotels, and the study thus adds to the accumulated knowledge in the field in a meaningful way. The degree of innovation is examined with reference to the distinction between radical and incremental innovation.

In order to examine the role of knowledge in innovation processes in campsites, the division between external and internal sources of knowledge is referred to. The purpose of that is to determine whether there are differences between the campsites in terms of the knowledge sources they rely on, particularly in consideration of Thomas and Wood's (2014) statement that tourism firms depend on external knowledge sources to a great extent. While the actual innovation process is under-researched in tourism, there are some basic stages that innovators generally move through which are also used to guide the data collection and analysis. Therefore, to examine the innovation process in relation to sustainability in campsites, Rodriguez-Sanches, Williams, and Brotons' typology of stages divided into different tasks is referred to. Relatedly, the literature review indicates that the campsites are likely to meet certain barriers that they have to overcome. Therefore, we refer to Warren, Becken and Cohlan's (2018) model of internal and external barriers to sustainable innovation in services (see figure 5). Since campsites are SMEs and Hobbson and Essex (2001) have found that size can affect the innovativeness of SMEs due to their limited resources, time, and knowledge, the barriers related to size appear important to examine. The barrier of finances is also examined because, as Kraus et al., (2023) have found, SMEs are more exposed to sudden changes in their economic situations and may thus be more hesitant towards implementing sustainable innovations. In this regard, the complexity of personal sustainable values and economic constraints can be difficult to navigate in relation to sustainable innovation and is thus also considered (Tzschentke, Kirk and Lynch, 2004). Other barriers that are examined include reluctance towards new technology (Warren, Becken and Coghlan, 2018), as well as aversion to collaborate (Sundbo et al., 2016), as well as changing regulations and policies affecting SMEs (Kraus et al., 2022).

3. Methodology

In this section, the methodological framework is presented. The methodological framework takes its point of departure in the research question and the paradigm of pragmatism. The explanatory mixed-method research design is adopted for this study due to the under-researched nature of innovation in campsites (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The research design consists of a quantitative phase of data collection and analysis that informs a qualitative phase. The quantitative phase takes the shape of a

survey that has been distributed to 396 campsites in Denmark. The survey data is then analyzed via descriptive statistics. The findings from the quantitative phase informs the second part of the explanatory research design, which consists of semi-structured interviews. The survey findings are thus used to help design the interview guide for the interviews. The qualitative data is analyzed via Structural coding combined with In Vivo coding, which is ultimately formed into categories with Pattern Coding (Saldaña, 2016). This section also includes a discussion of the limitations of the chosen methodology as well as considerations of ethics. The first section thus outlines the pragmatic approach of this study.

3.1 Pragmatism

Paradigms commonly guide research, and according to Guba and Lincoln (1994), paradigms are determined by the worldview of the researcher defined as the researcher's ontological and epistemological assumptions when it comes to research. Ontology refers to the nature of reality and what can be known about reality, and epistemology refers to the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the investigator and the investigated (ibid). The researcher's ontological position can thus constrain their epistemological position. As an example, if reality is assumed to exist 'out there', then it must be studied objectively, which thus also impacts the researcher's choice of methodology. Paradigms conceptualized as worldviews can also affect the topics that researchers choose to study (Morgan, 2007). However, because paradigms are inherently belief systems that "must be accepted simply on faith" (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 107), one paradigm cannot be proven to be superior to another.

Morgan (2007) has criticized Guba and Lincoln's conceptualization of paradigms precisely because of the top-down understanding of paradigms that imposes more and more restrictions as it moves from ontology to epistemology to methodology. Because Guba and Lincoln's paradigms are strongly associated with certain methodologies, mixing quantitative and qualitative methods has also been described as unfeasible because they are considered incompatible (Bryman, 2021). However, Morgan (2007, p. 61) advocates defining paradigms as "dynamic systems of belief within a community of scholars" without Guba and Lincoln's harsh boundaries. Morgan (2007) is a proponent of the pragmatic approach to research where the research question is placed at the forefront of scientific inquiry. In the research at hand, following the pragmatic approach has been deemed most appropriate given the nature of the research question, which is best addressed by combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, as is explained in more detail in the next section.

Pragmatists accept that both a single socially shared reality and multiple realities interpreted by individuals exist because pragmatism assumes intersubjectivity (Morgan, 2007). The separation of reality into objective (positivism) and subjective understandings of reality (constructivism) are thus rejected because rather than focusing on the nature of reality, pragmatism instead focuses on the nature of experiences. In terms of research, scholars then have different experiences that "lead to different beliefs and different actions" whereby their own social worlds for inquiry are created (Morgan, 2007, p. 1049). From the perspective of pragmatism, it is thus not necessary to separate positivism and constructivism by ontology and epistemology. Rather, paradigms can be viewed as "dynamic systems of belief within a community of scholars" (Morgan, 2007, p. 61). Pragmatism thus allows for mixed-methods research because the harsh boundaries between e.g., positivism and constructivism are no longer relevant from this perspective. Instead of focusing on philosophical considerations, the problem formulation takes priority (Morgan, 2007). This means that pragmatists can choose the methodology most appropriate for addressing the problem formulation, whether that be quantitative, qualitative or a mixed-methods research design (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019). Furthermore, pragmatists need to "identify genuine problems that are part of actual social situations, […] carefully define them, and then initiate the inquiry to address them" (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019). As mentioned in the introduction (see section 1), we attempted to ensure that the problem identified in the literature was a genuine problem for people involved with campsites in Denmark. Therefore, a background interview with an expert in sustainable innovation in campgrounds was conducted prior to data collection, which confirmed that campsites in Denmark and experts in the field can benefit from more knowledge on how campsites engage in sustainable innovation, what barriers they face, as well as how they overcome them (see Appendix F).

3.2 Research design

In this study, a mixed-method research design is used due to the under-researched nature of camping and innovation in tourism in general. When conducting mixed-method research, qualitative and quantitative methods are combined to provide different forms of information about the same issue (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Typically, quantifiable data such as numbers that are acquired by asking closed-ended questions is categorized as quantitative data. Data that involves text, speech, and behavior that is acquired through open-ended questions is categorized as qualitative data (Biesta, 2010). However, as previously touched upon, quantitative and qualitative data have long been strongly associated with different epistemological and ontological assumptions according to Guba and Lincoln's distinction between paradigms (Bryman et al., 2021). Previously, quantitative research

was considered more accurate than qualitative data, however, that perception has changed significantly in the last years (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

The purpose of quantitative research approaches is to attempt to understand the social experience as external and objective. The researcher is thus considered independent of the studied (Bryman et al., 2021). Quantitative research is deductive and typically tests objective theories through examining how measurable variables relate to each other (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The strength of quantitative data is then that it allows researchers to survey a large population and to provide more general understandings of an issue (Creswell and Plano, 2013). However, quantitative approaches fall short of considering the context of the study and may disregard important factors relating to the issue (Maarouf, 2019). On the other hand, the purpose of qualitative research approaches is to gain subjective knowledge on how "individuals interpret their social world" (Bryman et al., 2021, p. 32). The strength of qualitative research is that it provides a more in-depth understanding of an issue and considers the context of the studied (Creswell and Plano, 2013). Qualitative research is inductive in the sense that it attempts to understand meanings and is typically more oriented towards developing theory (Maarouf, 2019). However, qualitative data can only include a limited number of participants and the findings cannot be generalized (Maarouf, 2019). Quantitative and qualitative approaches thus have different strengths and weaknesses that complement each other.

Mixed-method research is then defined as involving "the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data in response to research questions [where] the two forms of data are integrated in the design analysis" (Creswell and Creswell, 2018, p. 215). The argument for conducting mixed-method research has typically been that it allows the researcher to capitalize on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods and to offset their respective weaknesses by integrating them (ibid). The researcher thus gets a stronger and more complete understanding of the problem by combining methods. As mentioned, from a pragmatic standpoint, there is no issue with combining methods that view reality as either objective or subjective, because pragmatic research assumes intersubjectivity. This means that pragmatic research accepts that there is both a socially shared reality and that individuals interpret this reality differently and in multiple ways (Morgan, 2007). There are, however, more specific reasons for choosing the mixed-method research design relating to the problem itself. The aim of the problem formulation is to how campsites in Denmark engage in sustainable innovation and to address the barriers that they face. There are approximately 407 campsites (DK statistik, 2023) in Denmark, so the method deemed most appropriate to get a more general understanding of the campsites' engagement with sustainable innovation is thus quantitative data collection in the shape of a survey. Through statistical analysis, the researchers are then able to quantify the behavior of the campsites in relation to sustainable innovation. However, given the

complexity of the sustainable innovative engagement potential for different ways of overcoming barriers to sustainable innovation, the quantitative data is followed up with qualitative semi-structured interviews. Both methods are thus relevant to address the problem formulation, and a combination of methods provides a better understanding of how campsites engage in sustainable innovation.

In mixed methods research, quantitative and qualitative data can either be collected concurrently or sequentially (Maarouf, 2019). In choosing a research design, we have referred to Creswell and Creswell's (2018) typology of three core mixed methods research designs. The explanatory design, which is utilized in this study, involves first collecting and analyzing quantitative data to get a general overview of a topic and following that up with qualitative data collection and analysis. Given that there is very little research on innovation in campsites in general, we deemed it necessary to first do quantitative data collection and analysis. However, as the literature review suggests, innovation is a complex topic to study, and important aspects such as the innovation process and how campsites overcome barriers to sustainable innovation require more detailed data collection. Furthermore, by choosing the explanatory research design, we can pick up on the quantitative findings that are puzzling or require further explanation. This research design also achieves triangulation, which has been defined by Bryman et al., (2021, p. 556) as "the practice of cross-checking results […] gained using a method associated with one research strategy against the results […] gained using a method associated with the other research strategy." In this study, the findings from the quantitative data are checked with the findings from the qualitative data, whereby the research results are strengthened.

In the explanatory mixed-method research design, there are thus two phases of data collection. The quantitative phase informs the qualitative by providing questions for, in this case, the semi-structured interviews. (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The point of integration in an explanatory design is when the researcher connects "the quantitative results to the qualitative data collection" (ibid, p. 222). We carefully plan what quantitative results to follow up on in the interviews so that qualitative data builds upon the quantitative data. This study thus begins with a quantitative survey that studies a sample of the entire population of campsites in Denmark. The survey provides a "numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions" regarding the specific issue of sustainable innovation in campsites (Creswell and Creswell, 2018, p. 12). The quantitative survey then informs the questions for the subsequent semi-structured interview guide, which is elaborated on in section (3.3.2). In the analysis, the tendencies within the survey sample are thus built upon via the findings from the interviews.

3.3 Data collection

3.3.1 Survey

The quantitative data has been collected through self-completion questionnaires and investigates the topics of innovation types, the degree of innovation, the innovation process, and barriers to innovation all in relation to sustainability. The questionnaire consists of 20 questions, with the majority being closed-ended likert-scale questions. Closed-ended multiple-choice questions are also utilized throughout the survey. The different types of questions are accounted for in this section. One open-ended question is used in the beginning of the questionnaire, but it merely revolves around the respondents' role in the company.

3.3.1.1 Survey design

In order to avoid "respondent fatigue," likert-scale questions with similar themes have been grouped on the same page in the survey (Bryman, 2021, p. 217). This means that despite the relatively high number of questions, the total page number of the questionnaire is less, giving the impression that the survey is not too overwhelming or time-consuming for the respondent to complete (Bryman, 2021). As mentioned, the survey primarily consists of different types of closed-ended questions and likert-scale questions. The likert-scale is a multiple-item measure, used to measure the intensity of feelings or attitudes (Bryman, 2021). The questions are phrased either as statements, asking the respondents to indicate their level of agreement with the given statement. This is done with the use of a five-item scale, which goes from e.g. "very rarely" to "very often", or "not at all" to "very much." A middle position has been added to the likert-scale, allowing the respondent to indicate neutrality on the statement (Bryman, 2021). Furthermore, the responses on the likert-scale have been balanced, ensuring that the response choices do not favor a positive or negative response (Bryman, 2021). An alternative way to phrase most of the likert-scale questions is the "tick all that apply" format. However, Bryman (2021) argues that such questions are often left incomplete, and therefore the likert-scale was deemed favorable for the research at hand.

3.3.1.2 Survey sampling

Non-probability convenience sampling has been used for this project because the problem formulation addresses a specific group of participants, namely campsites in Denmark. Therefore, there is one criterion for the sampling of participants of the survey, which is that the participants should be from a campsite located in Denmark. Convenience sampling is a way of gathering respondents in an area that is not difficult for the researchers to approach (Bryman et al., 2021), which in this case is the specific group of Danish campsites. Despite the issues that might occur with gathering respondents because of other limitations such as time, interest and availability, the target group for the survey is rather accessible because their e-mail addresses can be retrieved online. Convenience sampling has, however, been criticized because of how it is "impossible to generalize the findings" (Bryman et al., 2021, p. 176). The purpose of applying this sampling method to the study is nevertheless to investigate tendencies in how the respondents work with sustainable innovation. These tendencies are important since they become part of the foundation of a more in-depth exploration, as the findings of the survey are used as the basis for the interview guide in the following semi-structured interviews. As Bryman (2021) explains, convenience sampling is a reasonable sampling method for creating a basis for further analysis on a subject. In relation to the explanatory research design, this method is therefore deemed suitable for this purpose.

The survey has been distributed to the 407 campsites in Denmark (DK statistik, 2023). The circumstance of the survey only being answerable online, for the purpose of the collected data being transformed into descriptive statistics for the analysis, resulted in not being able to engage the campsites with no visible or traceable e-mail addresses. The campsites' e-mail addresses were found on various industry association websites; however, no single website had an overview of all the campsites in Denmark. Therefore, Google Maps was used to find the rest of the campsites. The sites with no webpage or no online presence have thus not been contacted. Unfortunately, the e-mails could not be delivered to a few campsites. Eventually, we reached 396 campsites. After the initial e-mail, a follow-up e-mail was sent in order to improve the response rate. Ultimately, the sample ended up consisting of 85 respondents, resulting in a response rate of 21,5% of the 396 that received our e-mail.

3.3.1.3 Survey questions

The initial questions serve as an introduction to the survey. In question 1, the respondent is asked about their role in the business. The purpose of this question is to determine whether the respondent is the primary decision-maker in terms of innovation. Furthermore, the respondent could indeed be considered an internal source of knowledge, and thus an essential resource in ensuring that the business is able to compete and innovate (Raisi et al., 2020). Question 2 seeks to gain knowledge on the different types of campsites that are participating in the survey. In question 3, the respondent is asked about the size of the campsite in terms of number of employees. In the literature, the size of a firm has been emphasized as an influential factor in innovation. Several scholars agree that small businesses lack the resources, motivation, or interest to pursue growth opportunities through innovation and that it is, in fact, only a small fraction of campsites that exhibit innovative traits in their pursuit of growth (Divisekera and Nguyen, 2018; Blichfeldt 2013; Brooker et al. 2013). The answer options in the survey are guided by a similar division of the different size groups that are presented in data around campsites in Denmark, provided by EStatistik (2023).

In question 4, the topic is the ownership structure of the campsite. In the literature review, it was pointed out that a large number of campsites are operated as small family businesses (Brooker et al. 2013, Blichfeldt 2009). Kallmuenzer's (2017) study of drivers of innovation in hospitality revealed that innovation within family firms in hospitality tend to be driven by the entrepreneurial family and employees. Ownership structure is generally an important internal determinant for innovation. Specifically, firms with foreign ownership proof tend to be more prone to engage in innovation and succeeds with these than domestic firms (Divisekera and Nguyen, 2018). However, the campsites may also be part of a chain, which can both stimulate and be a barrier for innovation (Panzer-Krause, 2019). Question 5 addresses the number of innovations that the campsites have introduced within the last two years in consideration of Zach, Schnitzer, and Falk's (2021) claim that innovation in tourism happens slowly. Two years has been chosen as the demarcation due to both the background interview with the senior consultant from DKNT who stated that several campsites have recently changed owners (see Appendix F), which may have an impact on innovative behavior, and because COVID-19 put a stop to a lot of tourism-related activities in the year of 2020.

The purpose of the questions from 6-10 is asked to determine what types of sustainable innovations the campsites typically implement based on Hjalager's (2010) five innovation categories of product/service innovations, process innovations, managerial innovations, marketing innovations, and finally institutional innovations. As previously mentioned, Wikkhamn and Wikkhamn (2018)

found that hotels primarily produce service/product innovations and Kallmuenzer (2017) found that SMEs primarily implement hardware innovations. Applying these same innovation categories can thus reveal the types of innovation campsites implement in relation to sustainability specifically. A limitation of attempting to categorize innovations is that innovations are often interdependent and interconnected and thus difficult to separate. However, examples of sustainable innovations in tourism that can be placed into these categories will be used as examples in the questions to enhance comprehension. Sustainable products or services can be defined as those that "are built in accordance with the environment, community, and cultures in a way to provide certain benefits rather than threats to tourism development" (Haid and Albrecht, 2021, p. 3). Examples include local products (Warren, Becken and Coghlan, 2018), measures to increase accessibility (Väisänen, Uusitalo, and Ryynänen, 2023), and more sustainable accommodation options. A new sustainable internal process may involve reduction of consumption (Warren, Becken, and Coghlan, 2018), and the introduction of more sustainable energy sources, cleaning products, and recycling (Hassanli and Ashwell, 2018).

Sustainability marketing is marketing that promotes sustainable products leading to an increase in demand for these products and even changes in consumer behavior (Hard and Albrecht, 2021). Examples include marketing of new sustainable products and communication to encourage sustainable guest behavior (Pahrudin, Liu, and Li, 2022). In relation to management innovations, Hjalager (2010) mentions training of staff, measures to increase workplace satisfaction, changes in the management style, and new collaboration opportunities, which can all be adapted as examples that relate to sustainability. Hjalager's (2010) examples of institutional innovations, such as participation in networks, franchises, and certification programs, can also be adapted as examples relating to sustainability. However, for simplicity's sake, the question is phrased to revolve around collaborations while referring to Hjalager's examples. The purpose of question 11 and related sub questions is to examine the campsite's typical degree of innovation. The questions take their point of departure in key aspects of Brooker and Joppe's (2014) findings regarding the degree of risk, the time frame for results, investments into research and the degree of change being important factors for innovation.

With question 12 and related sub questions, the aim is to examine whether the campsites' ideas for sustainable initiatives primarily come from inside or outside the firm in consideration of the distinction between internal and external knowledge sources (Marco-Lajara et al., 2018). It is particularly interesting to examine whether the campsites generally get their ideas from knowledge sources outside the firm as suggested in the literature review. Therefore, the campsites are asked to specifically name their sources of inspiration. The internal sources of inspiration listed are the employees, research and development within the firm, or their internal

databases and routines (Marco-Lajara et al., 2018). The external sources of inspiration listed are observations of what other firms are doing, suppliers, networks, potential chains, the DMO, training and research facilities, and from the hiring of experts (Marco-Lajara et al., 2016; Hoarau, 2014; Song, Almeiad and Wu, 2003). An option of choosing 'other' has been included as well. However, whether the campsites use knowledge from these different sources is deemed to be better to examine via subsequent qualitative interviews. While the innovation process may be challenging to examine in detail in a quantitative survey, it is possible to ask whether the campsites go through some of the different stages of the innovation process. As mentioned in the literature review, Rodriguez-Sanches, Williams and Brotons (2017) have divided the innovation process into different stages and in questions 13-14 the campsites are thus asked to state the extent to which they have gone through two of the stages. The questions address testing of their ideas as well as adjustment of the idea after implementation (Rodriguez-Sanches, Williams and Brotons, 2017).

The purpose of questions 15-19 is to examine the different barriers that the campsites may encounter based on the barriers defined by Warren et al. (2018). When investigating the barriers that keep businesses from engaging in innovative, sustainable practices, the decision for starting the process of an innovative project is the first step, as it is explained by Divisekera and Nguyen (2018). The inputs needed and the barriers connected to these share several similarities such as cooperation, technological implementations, the capital to finance the project, employee engagement, and subsequent questions thus ask about potential barriers connected to the size and structure of the business, the external environment, and the competitive landscape (Divisekera and Nguyen, 2018). These factors relate to the barriers listed by Warren, Becken, and Coghlan (2018) and will be the foundation for investigation how campsites in Denmark experience barriers to implementing sustainable innovations. The sub questions thus address the barriers of staff, time, economic resources, engagement of employees, as well as the role of knowledge of sustainable innovation. Finally, question 20 asks about the impact of rules and regulations on innovativeness among the campsites. As it is mentioned in the background interview (Appendix F, p. 3), a major theme for frustration among the campsites is accordingly the rules and regulations they experience, when they wish to innovate. Furthermore, Hjalager (2020) explains how the regulations relating to nature protection organizations might be a barrier to Danish tourism businesses and their innovativeness. Thus, the question is relevant for examining how this might be apparent and for further analysis on how this barrier can be overcome. The survey questions can be found in Appendix A.

3.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

3.3.2.1 Qualitative interviews

Through qualitative interviewing, researchers attempt to "understand the world from the subjects' point of view (Brinkman and Kvale, 2015, p. 3). Kvale has defined the purpose of qualitative interviews as seeking "qualitative knowledge as expressed in normal language" rather than aiming at quantifying knowledge (Kvale, 2007, p. 11). A main characteristic of the qualitative interview is the flexibility that is inherent in this way of collecting data (Bryman et al., 2021). In a qualitative interview, the interviewee is a central guide for what data is collected and which form the interview will take (Bryman et al., 2021).

3.3.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

Bryman et al. (2021) explain how a semi-structured interview holds the potential for researchers to target particular topics. According to Svend Brinkmann (2013), the format of a semi-structured interview allows the interviewer to get more relevant data because the researcher can ask follow-up questions. Thereby, a more detailed and nuanced perspective on the subject that is researched is added. Kvale (2007) argues that the rhythm of the interview and the interviewer's sense of where it is going leads the interviewer to ask the relevant questions. It is important for the interviewer to follow this path with the intention of gathering the relevant data for the research. By utilizing the semi-structured interview, it is possible to ask follow-up questions, change the structured questions and vary the order of the prepared questions (Bryman et al., 2021). The outcome of using this method for interviewing is the amount of detail and opinion of the interviewee that it is possible to collect (ibid). In this study, the semi-structured interviews can supply the data collection with in-depth knowledge of how campsites in Denmark work with sustainable innovation and help elaborate on the findings from the quantitative data.

3.3.2.3 Interviews sampling

The participants for the interviews were sampled as all Danish campsites for the purpose of assisting with a more thorough analysis of the themes within the survey data. The broad sampling thus imitates the sampling of the survey by addressing all campsites in Denmark which similarly resulted in

variation among the respondents in terms of their work with sustainability. The sampling technique that has been used is thus “purposive sampling” due to the one criterion of being a campsite in Denmark (Bryman, 2021). Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling, meaning that the sampling is not done at random (Bryman, 2021). Instead, we have the group of all Danish campsites whereby the possibility to gather information from diverse and distinctive sources is heightened. Thus, providing the analysis with a variety of views on being a Danish campsite working with sustainable innovation. This is an element of the purposive sampling method that enlarges the diversity in responses, thus allowing the researcher to ”identify similarities and differences across the sample” (Bryman et al., 2021, p. 378). Bearing this in mind, it should be noted that conducting this type of purposive sampling excludes the possibility to use the information gathered through the interviews to generalize, however, that is not the purpose of this study (Bryman et al., 2021).

The interviewees were given the chance to show their interest in being interviewed in the final part of the survey, which was sent out to all campsites in Denmark. The initial reason for sampling participants for the interviews via the survey was that it would then be possible to collect relevant data on both campsites that extensively work with implementing sustainable initiatives as well as campsites that struggle with their sustainable innovation aspirations for the purpose of addressing the problem formulation. However, due to the scarcity of campsites responding to participate in interviews, the sampling was then extended to meet the single criteria of being a Danish campsite, and all 396 campsites that we reached out to in the survey were then contacted. As Brinkmann (2013) argues, researchers do not necessarily get to choose between a broad selection of interviewees but must simply accept the few volunteers that might be available. However, the sample is made up of respondents of varying degrees of innovativeness. The interviews were conducted between the 11th of April 2023 and the 25th of April 2023.

There are several practical issues to consider before conducting interviews, such as selecting a setting where it is possible to hear and understand each other, respondent and interviewer, and most desirable is a quiet space for the sake of minimizing background noise. (Bryman et al., 2021). Furthermore, it is advisable to use recording equipment with a certain quality and familiarity to the interviewer, and lastly it is necessary to explain to the interviewee the importance of the interview for the researchers, and thus show them appreciation of their time (Bryman et al., 2021). As we interviewed the participants who were willing to participate in an interview, the first part of the contact with them was initiated via e-mail. Here we scheduled a time for the participants, to conduct a telephone interview with them, which was then carried out on the selected date. Due to the great distances between the respondents selected for interviewing, the interviews have been conducted via telephone. In relation to interviewing via telephone, there were certain challenges to

overcome, of a practical nature, for the purpose of collecting useful data for further analysis. One difficulty experienced during the interviews was the telephone connection, which was occasionally not ideal, thus resulting in certain words being difficult to identify when transcribing. The same issue with identifying certain words and phrases occurred because of how the interviewees in some cases communicated with a dialect or other rhetorical divergencies. Despite those obstacles, Bryman et al. (2021) explains how telephone interviewing is unlikely to affect the answers of the respondents much more than if the interviewees were conducted face-to-face.

2.3.2.4 Interview guide

When conducting semi-structured interviews, the interview is rooted in the set of questions that are meant to guide the interview with the desired area of focus, known as the interview guide (Bryman et al., 2021). When designing the interview guide, Brinkmann (2022) stresses the importance of having the problem formulation be the connecting element throughout the interview. The problem should thus be reflected in the interview guide as well as in the following processing of data. Furthermore, Brinkman (2022) argues that preparation for the interview should follow five steps, those being considerations of 1) the area that is studied, 2) its relevance, 3) how the study should be carried out, 4) the participants as well as 5) the number of participants. Additionally, Lofland and Lofland (1995) suggest asking the question of what is puzzling about this specific subject to remain focused on the data that is actually relevant to collect and further extract from this interview. The interview guide is typically constructed based on the issues surrounding the problem formulation and the literature review (Bryman et al., 2021). Furthermore, as Brinkmann (2013, p. 92) underlines, "data are always codetermined by theory and methodology." Therefore, it is important to build a theoretical foundation when designing the interview guide. This is done by basing the questions on the findings from the survey, which are based on questions related to the literature review and the overall problem. By using open-ended questions, it is possible to gather data originated in the actual opinions and observations that the interviewees express. Therefore, the questions reflect an interest in their perspective (Bryman et al., 2021). The language and style of questions are also important factors to consider. Kvale (2007) argues that it is important to ask uncomplicated questions that are as concise as possible. Furthermore, the questions should be relatable and understandable for the interviewee (Bryman et al., 2021).

Due to the mixed methods explanatory research design, the interview guide (see Appendix C) in this particular project is based on the preceding survey analysis. The interview questions refer to the themes and tendencies that we wish to further investigate for the purpose of

getting a more nuanced perspective on how Danish campsites engage in sustainable innovation as well as the barriers they face and how they overcome them. The interviews begin with the interviewees being asked three introductory questions. These relate to the role of the interviewee within the campsite, the number of employees, and finally the initiatives that have been made on the campsite over the last two years. As mentioned in the theoretical justification of the questionnaire, these introductory questions are structured around how internal factors affect the "firm's decision to engage in an innovation process" Divisekera and Nguyen (2018, p. 159). Those institutional factors include firm size, ownership structure, competition, environment, and industry. Although data has already been collected on these topics in the survey, the researchers have no knowledge about the specific answers of the interviewees as the questionnaire was anonymous. Given that these factors potentially affect the innovation process of the campsite, they are deemed important to also include in the interviews.

The remaining interview questions revolve around the innovation process and barriers to innovation, since this thesis aims to get an understand of how campsites engage with sustainable innovation as well as the barriers that they may face. As mentioned in the literature review, the innovation process seems to have been neglected in research on innovation in tourism. There are, however, some general stages that innovators go through when implementing new initiatives. They typically revolve around ideation, information gathering, testing, and finally implementation (Rodriguez-Sanchez, Williams and Brotons). Based on the data analysis of the survey, it seems that not all campsites test their ideas prior to implementation but several seem to adjust their ideas after implementation according to feedback (see Appendix B, p. 15). Therefore, a purpose of some of the semi-structured questions in the interview guide is to get a better understanding of the particular processes and stages that campsites go through when innovating. Particularly in consideration of a key finding from the survey, which is that the respondents mainly introduce sustainable process innovations that do not readily seem to fit into the innovation process of bringing a product to market (see Appendix B, p. 8.) The survey also provides a clearer picture of how the campsites get the idea to introduce an innovation, but they get their ideas from several different sources (see Appendix B, pp. 11-15). Therefore, some questions in the semi-structured interview revolve around examining the campsites' sources of knowledge and inspiration for ideas, the process of implementing that idea, and whether they collaborate with anyone during the process. Barriers appear to play a significant role in the innovative capabilities of the campsites within the survey sample, particularly when it comes to the human resources of staff and time as well as finances and knowledge about sustainable innovation (see Appendix B, p. 15-17) While the literature on barriers to innovation among tourism accommodations has described some of the barriers, the specific barriers that campsites face have yet

to be explored in more detail. Particularly, the survey analysis revealed that political decisions and regulations can play a dual role of both enabling more innovation or restricting innovation (see Appendix B, p. 17). This warrants further exploration in the interview guide, for which reason a series of questions focus on the barriers to sustainable innovation.

3.4 Data analysis

3.4.1 Descriptive statistics

The method used to analyze the quantitative data is descriptive statistics. Statistical analysis describes the process of "gathering, measuring, classifying, coding, computing, analyzing, and summarizing systematically acquired numerical information" (Ritchey, 2008). The purpose of descriptive statistics is primarily to summarize a group of measurements to make general statements about the sample. Descriptive statistics then revolve around summarizing the number of observations and looking at how frequently certain responses occur in the sample (Ritchey, 2008). Furthermore, descriptive statistics describe the sample, which consists of a part of the population, rather than make conclusions about the whole population based on the sample as inferential statistics would (Rosenthal, 2012). Therefore, it is not possible to draw conclusions that go beyond the sample in this study. The population consists of all the campsites in Denmark, 407, however, we only ended up being able to reach 396 campsites. The sample is the number of respondents that participated in the survey, which is 85. The responses are summarized using percentages which reflect part of the whole and provides a common denominator across the dataset (Ritchey, 2008).

3.4.2 Coding

The data from the 26 interviews with campsites in Denmark is analyzed via coding. When referring to codes in qualitative data analysis, the code is a way that the researcher categorizes and interprets the collected data (Saldaña, 2016). A code is described as a concise word or phrasing used for describing the principle of part of qualitative data sets such as interviews, field notes, documents, e.g. It is further described as a construction created by the analyst, for the purpose of interpreting the collected data. When coding qualitative data, *synthesizing* the data is an act of categorizing and structuring it, for the purpose of creating meaning and clarification. This grouping or categorization of familiar parts of the data can be carried out, because of the similar characteristic that is to find

within the data (ibid). As Bryman et al. (2021) explain, there are several ways to identify codes, different approaches to coding, and different definitions of a code versus themes and categories. The interview questions as well as intuition and experience guide us to create the categories in which the data is systematized. Saldaña (2016) has described coding as a parallel to obtain the average or mean in a qualitative data set, whereas qualitative data collected through e.g. interviews, connects to the categories that essentially provides the data with a sense of collective meaning. This collective meaning is useful for further analytical endeavors, and for connecting with the theoretical foundation in the analytical part of the research.

3.4.2.1 First cycles of coding

Saldaña (2016, p. 69) suggests combining several methods of coding when working with the first cycle of coding in a project: "to capture the complex processes or phenomena in your data," though it depends on the nature of the project. Saldaña (2016) mentions how there is no such thing as a 'right' coding method to choose, since it depends on the specific research. Because all qualitative studies are unique, an individually assessed coding method should be chosen for each project. The first coding method used in this project is Structural coding. Structural coding categorizes the data into codes that function as labels allowing for further coding and analysis (Saldaña, 2016, 98). Structural coding uses questions to navigate through the data set, and thus codes the text through this question (98). Structural coding is an initial phase of coding. The method of Structural coding has been applied in this project as a tool to examine and process the collected data because it assists the analysis with a clear index of categories relevant to the questions asked in the interview guide. In this thesis a Structural code relates to a question from the interview guide used when conducting the interviews, and an example of a structural code relates to the question: *"Tell us about the barriers, that you experienced along the way?"* (see Appendix C). The questions utilized in the coding process stem from the interview guide, and thus reflect both the overall problem formulation for the project about the barriers the campsites might face, and the theoretical foundation of the project. This particular question, which is in this case transformed into the code: *"B2. Human resource (structure & time)"* refers to themes from the literature review. This procedure has been repeated with the other questions in the interview guide (see Appendix E, p. 3).

Additionally, the data is coded with the method of In Vivo coding, which is a technique where the codes found consist of "a word or a short phrase from the actual language found in the qualitative data" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 105). By coding with the language of the respondent, it is possible

to gather relevant knowledge of their experience and thus code the data through their perspective. As Saldaña (2016, p. 106) explains, In Vivo coding develops our understanding of the mindset of the interviewed and makes it: "*more likely to capture the meanings inherent in people's experienc*e." This adds interesting information to the analysis, by applying the respondent's perception of the themes they are presented with during the interviews, and thus allowing for a more detailed analysis. In this particular project, the In Vivo codes consist of snippets of information concerning the participants attitudes and opinions on the reflections they express when interviewed, exemplified by the code of "*it is a process"* on working with sustainability (see Appendix E, p. 4)

3.4.2.2 Second cycle of coding

The first cycle of coding resulted in many codes that necessitated a second cycle of coding to blend Structural and In Vivo coding. Indeed, qualitative data is considered somewhat fuzzy, and therefore the process of categorizing and structuring data sets is not necessarily linear. It often involves several cycles of coding (Saldaña, 2016). As Saldaña (2016) explains, it is often useful to sort the codes that are found in the data into categories. This is beneficial for the further analysis of the data, because of how it elaborates and clarifies the important information within the data, and thus gives the codes a "consolidated meaning" (Saldaña, 2016, 10). The second cycle of coding used in this project is pattern coding because it allows us to group the smaller data summaries from previous rounds of coding into code assemblies that can be turned into a pattern code. The codes that emerge from pattern coding thus identify themes that include both Structural and In Vivo codes. The Pattern code thus reflects the commonalities among Structural and In Vivo codes in a single statement that describes "a major theme" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 238). As an illustration of the themes and categories extracted from the process of pattern coding, the code: "external knowledge sources" has been created as a result of combining the Structural codes and In Vivo codes. Onwards, these pattern codes will function as themes for further analysis. The themes and codes can be seen in Appendix E.

4. Limitations

An important criticism of the practicalities of conducting mixed-method research to keep in mind is that it is more time-consuming. It demands a lot from researchers in the sense that it requires the researcher to have the necessary skills to conduct both quantitative and qualitative research (Maarouf,

2019). It is quite common for researchers to specialize in either quantitative or qualitative research according to their philosophical convictions, as previously discussed (Maarouf, 2019; Fetters and Molina-Azorin, 2017; Morgan, 2014; Creswell and Plano; 2013). However, the researchers of this study are of the pragmatist conviction that the problem formulation should determine the research design by choosing the design best suited to address the problem. From this outset, a mixed-method approach has been deemed most appropriate. We have been aware of our lack of expertise in quantitative research and have attempted to better this issue throughout the study by consulting various literature on the subject to acquire the necessary knowledge. According to the research design, the analysis of the survey data informs the themes for further investigation in the interviews, which were subsequently conducted. Therefore, our knowledge about quantitative data was deemed sufficient enough for us to include some tendencies from the survey data which contributed to a more thorough understanding of the campsites' sustainable innovation process and the barriers that they face.

The interviews collected vary in length, which is due to both the amount of information that the participants were willing to share, and secondly due to the employees at the campsites being distraught by questions from colleagues and customers. It was made clear to us by some respondents that they were willing to be interviewed, even though they experienced a busy period for their industry, being a campsite and in the beginning of the season for visitors. Brinkmann (2022) furthermore mentions how ethically, and for the purpose of making the interviewee feel comfortable with the interview situation, it is important to make sure that they do not feel obliged to commit to the interview, if it is not suitable or convenient for them. Thus, there are interviews in various lengths, honoring the limited amount of time that some interviewees had available for us. When interviewing the participants, it is ideal to possess the same knowledge on the themes that is explained by the interviewees, to be able to understand the motivation of the participants as well as to be able to ask relevant follow-up questions. For some of the interviews, we experienced not possessing sufficient knowledge on subjects such as electricity, water management, solar panels, and other related details, to meet the interviewee and thus formulate follow-up questions that were specific on their experience on this particular subject. However, it should be noted that the data is collected for the purpose of arriving at an answer to the problem formulation, which revolves around the sustainable innovation process and the barriers campsites face and is less focused on the contents of the actual sustainable practice.

Another limitation revolves around the issue of gathering an adequate number of participants for the survey, that was sampled to contain all contactable campsites in Denmark. This resulted in sending out follow-up emails to all the campsites that did not respond initially, which

ultimately led to far more responses and thus deemed a worthy effort to make. It is however our concern to ethically exceed the boundaries of the campsites contacted, not intending to bother them unnecessarily. Therefore, the follow-up emails that were sent contained appropriate apologizing for the disturbance and inconvenience for them, and all responses which were received with a rejection, were replied with a polite response and an appreciative remark.

Furthermore, the effort to gather a sufficient number of respondents for the survey ended up in a total of 85 respondents. Thus, being 21,5% of the 396 campsites in Denmark that we were able to reach, which causes the analysis of the data collected from the survey to not be suitable for generalization. It is however not the purpose of the survey, as mentioned previously, which is emphasized by using the non-probability convenience sampling method, where the data is not collected for the purpose of making general assumptions of the discoveries (Bryman, 2021). Furthermore, we were not able to reach all 407 campsites in Denmark since 11 of them were unreachable via e-mail. Due to the fact that we are currently situated in Northern Jutland, there is a limitation to our mobility to reach campsites in further parts of Denmark, and thus collecting survey data from the campsites with no email represented online within the time frame of this project. With several rejections regarding participation in the interviews, involving both issues revolving around busyness and personal interest, we ultimately ended up with 26 campsites agreeing to participate in the interviews. Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) argue that there is no "right" number of interviewees, but that the right number has been reached when the amount of data has been collected to sufficiently address the research questions. Despite limitations due to the extent of the paper and the time constraints of the deadline for handing in the project, the researchers deemed the data collected through the interviews sufficient to proceed with the data analysis.

5. Ethical considerations

As Brinkmann (2022) reflects, the interviewer co-produces knowledge with the participant in semi-structured interviews. Since the purpose of conducting the interviews is to better understand the interviewees' experience with sustainable innovation, it was thus necessary for us as researchers to reflect on our own preconceptions regarding sustainability prior to involving participants and analyzing the data. This is a key part of the process of being self-critical and addressing our potential bias (Bos, 2020). We thus recognize that we are interested in sustainability in general, and carefully reflected upon this interest when designing the survey and conducting interviews to attempt not to impose personal bias regarding sustainability. In terms of co-creating knowledge, we thus let the

interviewees' statements guide the conversation regarding sustainability and provided encouragement when appropriate.

Another ethical consideration which relates to the pragmatic nature of this study is that the campsites should benefit from it. As Brinkmann states (2022), one should consider how a study benefits those studied. In the interviews, it became apparent that the participants were curious about how others work with sustainability and whether they face the same barriers as them. Many were particularly interested in the results of our study, and in order to not just extract knowledge from the participants but also offer the participants something useful, we will send the results to them as well as a small pamphlet where advice from the campsites within the study is gathered. Furthermore, we also aim to produce policy recommendations regarding how to help more campsites overcome barriers to innovation that we intend to send to industry associations.

To ensure that we achieved the informed consent of all participants within the study, we notified the participants about the purpose of the study, the data collected, the storage of data, the rights of the participants in relation to withdrawing data and being informed about the results if interested, complaint procedures as well as the names and affiliations of us as researchers in line with current GDPR regulation. Furthermore, all participants of the study were anonymized to ensure their confidentiality. The survey respondents were anonymous unless they chose to fill in their e-mail that allowed us to contact them for a follow-up interview. Before writing their e-mails, however, respondents were informed according to GDPR regulations (GDPR, n.d.),(see Appendix G). The interview respondents were also informed according to GDPR regulations and interviews only proceeded if we gained their consent to record the interview, treat their data, and use the data in the project (see Appendix G). All transcriptions were anonymized both in relation to names and place names that could identify the respondent. However, the background interview with the respondent from DKNT, has been anonymized to some extent, but the interviewee gave consent to potentially being able to be identified for the purpose of us using the interview as a background interview (see Appendix F).

6. Analysis

6.1 Characteristics of interview and survey sample

Throughout the analysis, we refer to relevant survey findings, whereby the interview data builds upon the survey data in accordance with the research design of the thesis. The survey sample consists of 85 campsites. Of those, 62% are owners of the campsites. Most of the campsites, 63%, are a mix of RV camping, tent camping, and other types of camping. In terms of ownership structure, 68% of the campsites are family-owned businesses and they are all SMEs in terms of size, since 61% have 1-4 employees and 21% have 5-9 employees (see Appendix B, pp. 2-7). The survey respondents were also asked how many innovations they have introduced within the last two years, and as figure 6 illustrates, 33% have introduced 0-2 sustainable innovations, 48% have introduced 3-5, and 17% have introduced 6+ innovations. However, as the interview findings will reveal, the interview respondents introduce more innovations than the survey group of respondents. Therefore, we decided not to measure according to intervals in the interviews, and therefore we merely refer to the general findings from the survey throughout, whereby the interview data builds upon the general findings from the survey in accordance with the explanatory research design.

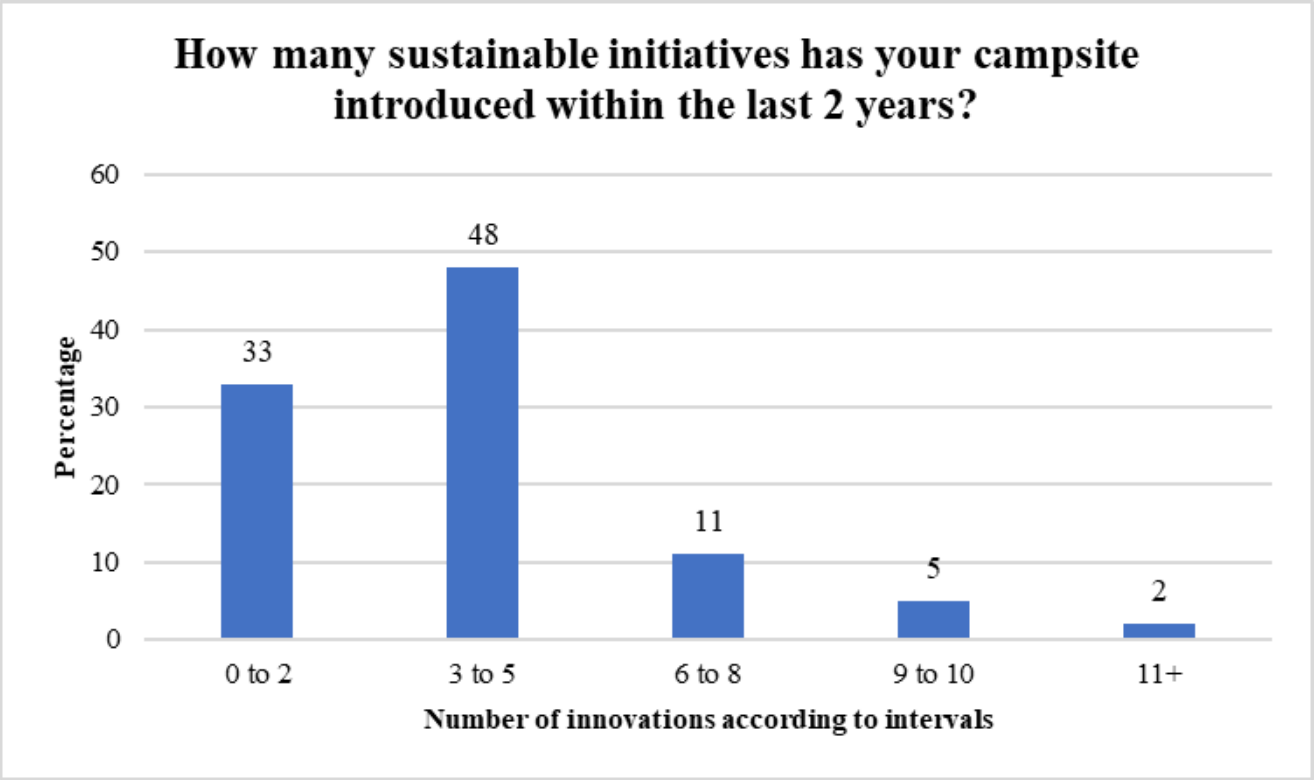

Fig. 6 Number of innovations introduced by survey respondents.

The interview sample consists of interviews with respondents from 26 campsites throughout Denmark. Table 1 below illustrates the characteristics of the campsites within the sample. As the table demonstrates, most of the respondents are owners of the campsites, and the ownership structure among the campsites is a mix between mainly family-owned campsites and campsites owned by solo owners. The ownership structure among the solo owned campsites varies between sole proprietorships, units of production companies, and other types of company constellations. The number of employees ranges from 0 to 40 but as a consequence of seasonality, the campsites within the sample tend to hire part-time employees for the summer season. Therefore, the number of employees includes both full-time and part-time employees as the respondents did not distinguish much between them. Most of the respondents have worked at their campsites for 10+ years, although the sample also consists of several new-to-camping owners. The respondents come from many different backgrounds in terms of work experience, and the sample thus includes both a previous project manager, a schoolteacher, and respondents that have previous experience working in tourism. When this information was not revealed in the interviews, it was sourced online.

Respondent	Role in company	Ownership structure	No. of employees (both part time and full time)	Year they started working at campsite	Respondent's previous experience
IL.1	Owner	Family-owned	0	2021	No experience working in tourism
IL.2	Host	Chain	1	2019	Student, parents owned campsite before
IL.3	Owner	Solo owner	0	2020	Project manager at global provider of cleaning products
IL.4	Owner	Family-owned	17	1993	Worked at campsite for 20 years
IL.5	Owner	Family-owned	'some part time'	1989	School teacher
IL.6	Owner	Solo owner	7	1987	Worked at campsite for 25 years
IL.7	Marketing manager	Family-owned	9	2014	Communication director and journalist, co-

					owner's parents had campsite before
IL.8	CEO	Association	Member-driven	2012	Run by association from 1957, experience of the board is unknown
IL.9	Owner	Family-owned	4	2021	Nurse, co-owner was an engineer
IL.10	Owner	Family-owned	6	2019	Worked in municipality
IM.11	Owner	Solo owner	5	2004	No experience in tourism before
IM.12	Owner	Family-owned	0	2017	Consultant
IM.13	Assistant manager	Solo owner	40	2012	Service industry
IM.14	Host	Chain	2	2021	Car dealership
IM.15	Owner/CEO	Group of 5 owners	5 and volunteers	2021	Holiday resort and park, studied tourism
IM.16	Owner	Family-owned	6	2015	Laboratory technician, co-owner was buyer at hotel chain
IM.17	Owner	Family-owned	5-6	2004	Bank
IM.18	Owner	Solo owner	25	2003	Worked with sustainability in Asia
IM.19	Owner	Solo owner	0	2022	Worked at other campsites for 10 years
IM.20	Owner	Solo owner	5, ‘some part time’	Approx. 1993	Worked at campsite for 30 years
IH.21	Owner	Family-owned	0	2023	Physical therapist, co-owner was a contractor
IH.22	Owner	Family-owned	13	2008	IT consultant
IH.23	CEO	Solo owner	12	2005	Worked in tourism
IH.24	Owner	Family-owned	6	1996	Ecological farmer

IH.25	Receptionist/responsbile for green transition	Family-owned	24	Grew up at campsite	Student, grew up with the campsite, parents have owned it for 26 years.
IH.26	CEO	Solo owner	6	2011	Retail

Table 1 Characteristics of interview sample

Rather than being asked to count the number of innovations the interviewees had introduced within the last 2 years, the interviewees were asked which innovations they had introduced within those 2 years so that we could count their innovations and possibly classify the innovations according to innovation type and degree of novelty. To count and classify the sustainable innovations, we first refer to Hjalager's (2010, p. 2) definition of innovation related to tourism, which defines innovation as "everything that differs from business as usual, or which represents a discontinuance of previous practice in some sense for the innovating firm." Next, we refer to Choi et al.'s (2006) definition of sustainability as anything related to economic, social, or environmental sustainability. Therefore, any time a respondent mentions something which is new to them in their context related to sustainability, it is counted as an innovation. In total, the 26 interview respondents have introduced or are working on introducing approximately 161 innovations. Figure 7 illustrates the number of innovations that the respondents have or were working on introducing at the time of the interviews.

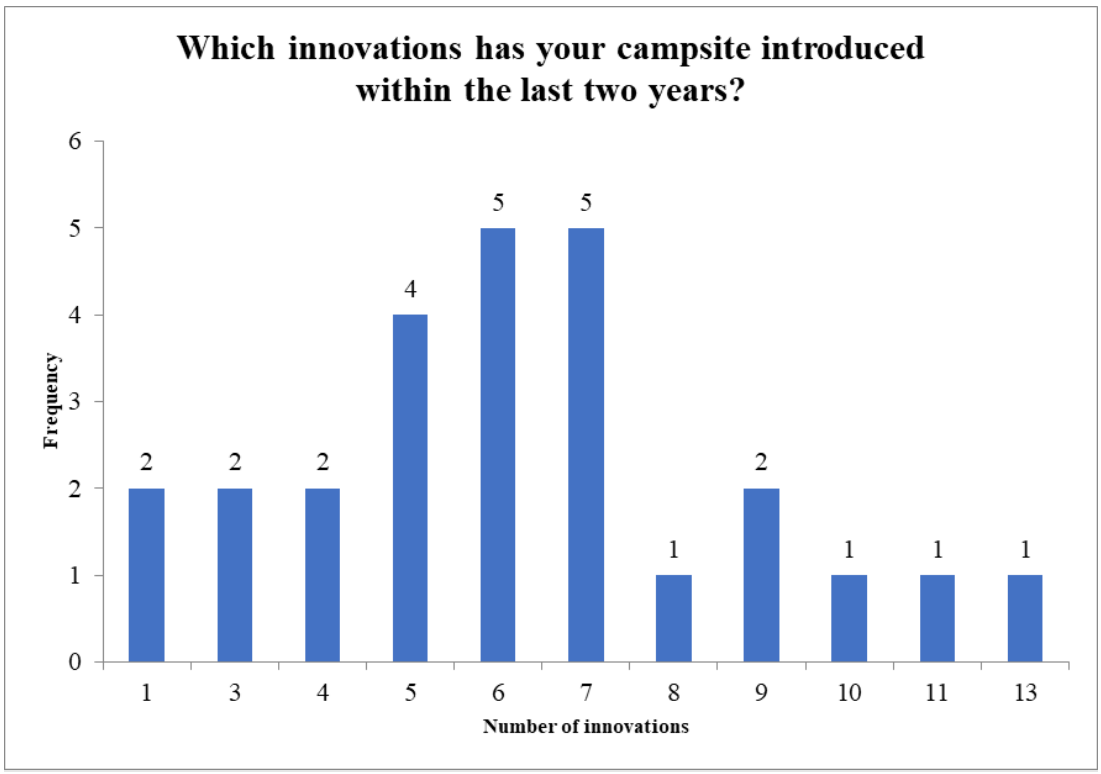

Fig. 7 Number of innovations introduced or being introduced by interview respondents

It is thus interesting that respondents within the interview sample have introduced more innovations than the respondents within the survey sample. That may be a result of the quantitative nature of the survey, where respondents were asked to count the number of initiatives that they had recently introduced. Indeed, in the interviews, respondents generally started by mentioning some innovations and as the interviews progressed, they mentioned more innovations that they had initially not thought of.

6.2 Division of the analysis

The thesis set out to examine how campsites engage in sustainable innovation, what barriers they face, and how they overcome them. In the initial examination of the data, it became evident that certain campsites are more driven to innovate by certain factors, such as economization and efficiency or green values. Furthermore, some campsites appeared to use certain knowledge sources more or collaborate more with certain actors rather than others throughout the innovation process. The kinds of barriers that some campsites faced as well as the ways they overcame them also appeared different. To further examine these differences, a division of the respondents was necessary. To this end, we decided to divide the interview respondents according to the number of innovations they had introduced because the data initially indicated that the respondents that introduced fewer innovations appeared to be more driven by economizing than green values, use external knowledge sources less, and have more difficulty overcoming barriers. As figure 7 above indicates there, there is a large middle group of respondents in terms of number of innovations that they have introduced. In order to accommodate this group, we decided to divide the respondents in three groups using the median, which is 6,5, as a point of departure. In order to avoid overlapping groups, the category of less innovative respondents includes the respondents that have introduced 1-5 innovations, the medium innovative group includes the respondents that have introduced 6-7 innovations, and the highly innovative group includes the respondents that have introduced 8-13 innovations. This division is also apparent in table 2.

Category	Interview name	No. of innovations
Less innovative	IL.1-10	1-5
Medium innovative	IM.11-20	6-7
Highly innovative	IH.21-26	8-13

Table 2 Division of interview respondents according to number of innovations

Dividing the respondents according to number of innovations over a period of time, which in this case is 2 years, is a way to measure innovativeness. However, measuring innovativeness in this way

is not common in the existing literature, and there are other ways to measure innovativeness that are interesting to explore in relation to the data. In relation to innovation in manufacturing, Lumpkin and Dess (2001, p. 142) have defined innovativeness as "a firm's tendency to engage in and support new ideas, novelty, experimentation, and create processes that may result in new products, services, or technological processes." A tendency is difficult to measure, but in tourism, scholars tend to categorize innovativeness according to "degree of change or type of change" (Mu, Bossink and Vinig, 2022, p. 103411). As discussed in the literature review, degree of change is typically categorized according to newness and thus how incremental or radical an innovation is (Mu, Bossink, and Vinig, 2022; Pikkemaat, Peters, and Bichler, 2019). Incremental innovation is defined as having a low degree of novelty as well as being low-risk and low-cost. Radical innovation then has a high degree of novelty and is more risky (Souto, 2015). The type of change is typically classified according to different categories of innovation, such as whether the innovations are product, process, managerial, marketing, or institutional innovations (Hjalager, 2010). To examine the type of change, we thus refer to Hjalager's (2010) categorization of innovations.

Of the approximately 161 innovations, most of the sustainable innovations fit into Hjalager's category of process innovations that occur backstage and optimize a back-end part of the business. Figure 8 illustrates the kinds of process innovations introduced by the respondents and the number of times they have introduced similar innovations. The process innovations that are mentioned most often thus have to do with energy optimization (38,6%), water consumption (33,8%), and heating (30,6%) and the innovations are generally very similar.

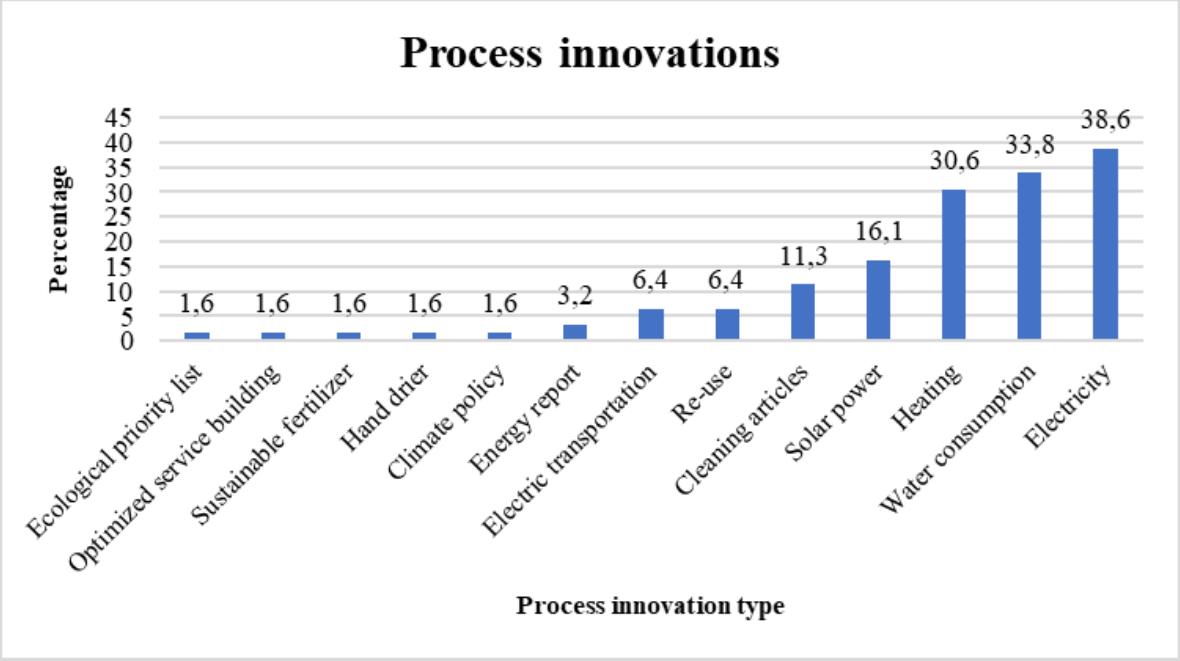

Fig. 8 Process innovations introduced by interview respondents

The second most common innovation type is product/service innovations, as seen in figure 9. Of those, sorting waste is the most common innovation that is introduced (30,6%), followed by guest experience innovations (14,5%) and biodiversity initiatives (12,9%). For most campsites, waste sorting comes as a result of a recent regulation, which was introduced throughout several municipalities across Denmark. As of January 1st 2023, the new regulations dictates that waste must be sorted into 10 fractions. This must be followed by all businesses, including campsites (Miljøministeriet, 2023).

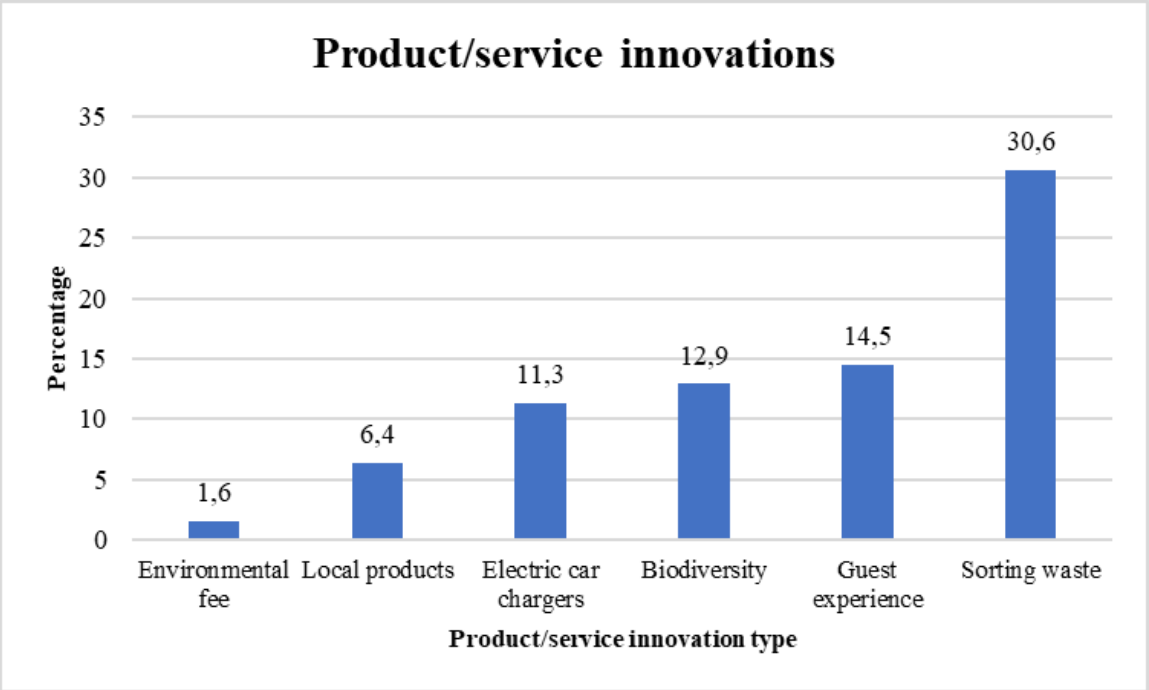

Fig. 9 Product/service innovations introduced by interview respondents

The third most common innovation type is marketing innovations, but as figure 10 demonstrates, very few respondents introduce sustainable innovations related to marketing. As the figure shows, 16,1% have introduced a certification, either Green Stay, Green Camping, or a certification related to electricity, and 3,2% have introduced sustainable communication initiatives.

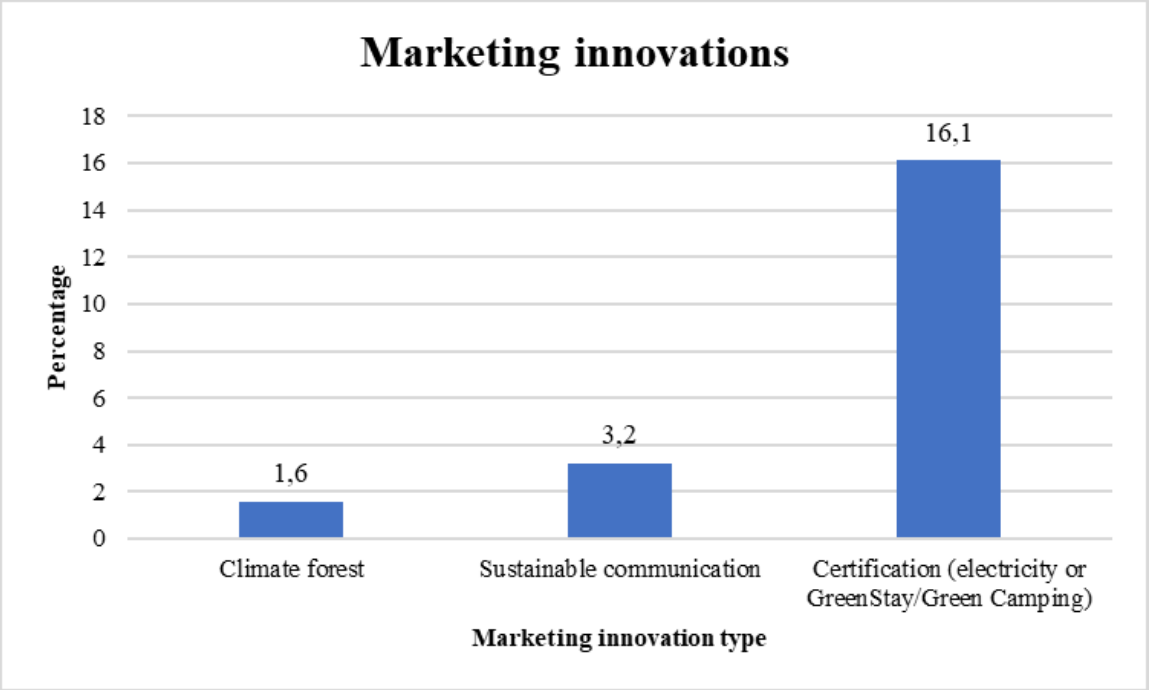

Fig. 10 Marketing innovations introduced by interview respondents

Finally, 2 respondents have participated in new projects that can be categorized as institutional innovations, which are new projects relating to sustainability, and 2 have introduced innovations that can be categorized as management innovations, those being an idea bank for sustainability and initiatives relating to employee well-being. As Kallmuenzer (2017) has found, most SMEs tend to focus on hardware innovations. The high number of process innovations indicates that the same can be said for the campsites within the campsite. Furthermore, the figures also show that a lot of the innovations that the campsites introduce are quite similar and do not appear to be new to the sector. In relation to degree of innovation, it thus seems that most of the innovations have a low degree of novelty, which means that they cannot be characterized as radical innovations according to Mu, Bossink, and Vinig (2022). While these are interesting ways to potentially categorize the respondents according to innovativeness as well, we found that distinguishing between number of innovations is more interesting and reveals more differences in the case of these respondents.

The analysis is then divided into three sections that explore 1) drivers of innovation, 2) the innovation process, and 3) barriers to innovation and how the respondents overcome them. Throughout the analysis, the similarities and differences between the three groups are presented and discussed to uncover the reasons why some campsites introduce more innovations than others.

6.3 Drivers of innovation

In this section, the drivers of sustainable innovation among the campsites are explored. As Hall and Williams (2008) argue, drivers of innovation in general are different and depend on both the type of tourism activity as well as the individual decision-maker. The Danish campsites within the samples are generally driven to introduce sustainable innovations by factors relating to 1) economization and efficiency, 2) customer demand 3) influence of policy, and 4) green values. However, there are both similarities and differences between the less, medium, and highly innovative respondents within each driver.

6.3.1 Economization and efficiency

As Hall and Williams (2008) argue, innovation has to create value for tourism firms. That value is often connected to enhancing profits and thus to increasing returns on investment. Enhancing profits can be an incentive that drives innovation, and economic hardship can force tourism firms to innovate more (Hoarau-Heemstra and Eide, 2019). However, whether the extent to which the decision-maker acts on factors relating to e.g., economy, depends on the strategy of the decision-maker. According to Hoarau-Heemstra and Eide (2019, p. 16), strategy revolves around "what goals to pursue, what actions to take and how to use resources to achieve goals." Within the interview sample, a key driver of innovation is economic performance, however, that driver is split between 1) reducing costs and 2) replacing older facilities, which will be explored in this section.

The most prominent driver of innovation among both the less and the medium innovative respondents is the desire to save money by, for example, reducing the consumption of electricity, heating, and water via process innovations (IL.3, IL.4, IL.7, IL.9, IM.11, IM.12, IM.16, IM.17, IM.19, IM.20). As Hoarau-Heemstra and Eide (2019) argue, economic hardship can force tourism firms to innovate more. In the case of the Danish campsites within the interview sample, many have felt the effects of the energy crisis in 2022-23. The energy crisis was a spillover effect of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which led to a decrease in the supply of energy and thus high energy prices throughout Europe (Den Store Danske, n.d.). As a result, some respondents are particularly aware of areas in which they can save money by switching to more sustainable solutions, as the following quotation from a respondent that runs a particularly large campsite regarding measures to reduce water consumption demonstrates:

"And it is obvious that after last year's energy crisis, where we have had crazy high energy prices, that is something that motivates to go out and say okay, where is it that we can save on things?" (IL.7).

The quotation exemplifies a general finding, which is that process innovations appear to often be introduced because respondents can save money doing so. The less and medium innovative respondents are generally very aware of their financial situations and introduce sustainable measures if they make sense in terms of reducing expenses. As respondent IM.20 who has installed a lot of innovations for the purpose of energy optimization puts it, "it is purely the economy" that drives the idea of switching to the more sustainable option of a heating pump. Respondent IM.18 appears particularly concerned about economy and similarly states in relation to saving on resources; "it is both out of necessity and out of desire that you are sustainable in this business," which shows that economic hardship drives innovation in the case of some campsites. Indeed, several of the respondents within the sample state that they strategically look for ways to optimize their business by reducing consumption and saving resources, where their strategic goal thus becomes energy optimization. As respondent IM.17 explains, "we always try to optimize daily operations" in relation to energy saving innovations. When asked about what the first thing other campsites should do in relation to working with sustainability, IM.11 who has worked with sustainability since taking over the campsite encapsulates well how campsites can benefit from considering economy: "Go after economy. Where can I save some money? […] It is incredibly simple, but it benefits both costs, bottom line, and reduces costs" (IM.11). Saving money is thus a key incentive that drives innovation for respondents within both the less and the medium innovative group.

Another aspect of the economic driver is that of replacing broken or near-broken facilities with more sustainable options, which is most common among the less innovative respondents. Problems with the old facilities are mainly discovered first-hand by the decision-maker. The following quotation regarding switching out an old boiler to a new air-to-water pump exemplifies how awareness of sustainability combined with the need to switch out an older facility can lead to innovation:

"And then those fossil fuels, there needs to be found some alternatives, some more climate friendly solutions for them. And then it is an older facility, so the lifetime is not infinite. Ehm, so those are of course some thoughts that we have in relation to future-proofing the business in the best possible way" (IL.1).

The quotation demonstrates the respondent's general alertness of sustainability in their daily operations. Furthermore, the quotation shows that a primary strategic goal is to future-proof the

business by changing an old facility, and in order to do so, the respondent decides to introduce a sustainable innovation. However, the strategic goal with the sustainable innovations differs slightly among the medium innovative respondents that also replace older facilities that are causing problems (IM.11, IM.16, IM.18, IM.17, IM.20). One respondent who previously had gas boilers that the employees had to check once a day noticed that the employees' time was being wasted and guests were unable to shower when a gas boiler broke down, whereas a flow gas water heater enabled a faster process in terms of heating the water again (IM.11). This innovation was thus not necessarily inspired by a monetary issue related to an old facility, but rather by an efficiency issue. Another respondent within the medium innovative group similarly mentions wanting to change their old pill fire to a more sustainable solution because they, among other factors, have observed that "pill fires are a headache, that requires a lot of work […], not the least of personnel time […], so it would probably be a bit more efficient" (IM.18). Efficiency is again framed as the problem, which is new in relation to the less innovative group. However, the other respondents within this group also often replace things when they break (IM.16, IM.17).

The highly innovative respondents differ from the less and medium innovative respondents because only one of the highly innovative respondents mentioned wanting to change their oil boiler because it was old and because it was "terribly expensive" (IH.24). The others within the group do not seem to be particularly driven by economization or efficiency. In fact, several of the highly innovative respondents have introduced rather expensive sustainable innovations recently, such as heating pumps, heat recovery installations, solar panels, electric car chargers, and ground heating systems (IH.21, IH.23, IH.25, IH.26). The highly innovative respondents thus differ from the other respondents by not appearing too motivated by economic considerations and by having introduced several expensive innovations.

To summarize, a key driver for especially the less and the medium innovative respondents is related to economy. Considerations of economization drive them to strategically reduce costs by introducing innovations that decrease consumption and to replace older facilities with more sustainable alternatives as they break or become too costly. Campsites within both the less and the medium innovative groups are driven to innovate by economic hardship, however, some medium innovative respondents appear to also introduce innovations that improve efficiency in terms of time. On the other hand, the highly innovative respondents appear more concerned with sustainability than economy, and economic considerations do not seem to be a key driver for them.

6.3.2 Customer demands

Within tourism literature, sustainability is sometimes considered a hygiene factor, which implies that customers or guests expect that sustainability is somewhat inherent in tourism businesses' practices and activities. Furthermore, if the expected sustainability standards are not met, that might result in discontent from guests (Mair and Jago, 2009). The campsites within the interview sample do consider customer demands, and this section examines how the campsites respond to their guests' expectations in relation to the topics of 1) competitiveness, 2) guest expectations and 3) certifications.

Competitiveness appears to be a driver for some campsites. As Hjalager (2002) claims, tourism businesses and SMEs are quite competitive, which is also emphasized by Sundbo et al. (2006) who explain that this competitiveness might overshadow their wish to cooperate with other campsites. One of the strategies that respondents use to become more competitive involves attempting to reach new market segments. As respondent IH.26 explains, they recently installed a bicycle repair station and bought three electrical bikes for the purpose of attracting: "the more active and 'green' campers" (IH.26). Respondent M.19 similarly mention how they have installed several chargers for electrical cars, because they wish to accommodate Norwegian guests. Respondent IM.13 further reflects on how they might gain a competitive advantage from becoming more sustainable:

"[…] we also experience an increase in guests who specifically demand things like that [a functional garbage disposal system]. So it will probably be a competitive parameter at some point" (IM.13).

The quotation indicates that competitiveness is on some respondents' minds. However, sustainability is not necessarily something that the campsites benefit from working with in terms of attracting customers and increasing profits. Rather, sometimes respondents just consider the fact that sustainability may simply be something that guests expect, which fits with sustainability being a hygiene factor. As respondent IL.6 explains: "You have to follow the customer's needs, what they think about it and what they request" (IL.6). This respondent observes how some of their visitors travel with solar panels on their cars, and that observation makes them reflect on their guests' expectations regarding sustainability at the campsite. Respondents IM.15 and IM.16 additionally describe that their guests expect them to have more efficient waste sorting systems. Furthermore, respondent IM.18 explains that even though sustainability is not something guests necessarily expect now, they believe it will continue to become more important for guests and their future destination choices. As Warren et al. (2018) argue, it is important for tourism businesses to understand how their guests approach sustainability. In the case of the Danish campsites, it seems that particularly the

medium innovative campsites attempt to understand their guests' demand for sustainability. The highly innovative campsites do not seem to reflect much on the potential competitive advantage that can result from working with sustainability. Respondent IH.23 who mentions that they always want to improve in relation to sustainability explains their reflections regarding potentially attracting guests:

"So you can ask yourself the question, do people come here and do people travel because hotels and campsites are only going green? Or do they not choose us because we are green. So those are questions that we have to ask" (IH.23).

The quotation exemplifies that some campsites are unsure if sustainability is something they can use to attract guests or if it actually discourages guests from choosing their campsite. As respondent IH.22 explains: "People begin to think [sustainability] is important. It is still not why people choose a particular campsite. We are not chosen just because we are green. We are not. But maybe it can be a decisive factor" in relation to a guest making the choice between two campsites where one is more sustainable (IH.22). The quotations exemplify that the highly innovative respondents consider their guests' reaction to their work with sustainability, but that they generally do not believe that it is something that can attract guests or but rather that it can perhaps being advantageous when guests are presented with a less sustainable option. Therefore, the highly innovative respondents do not appear to have a particularly competitive agenda, whereas the less and the medium innovative campsites appear more driven by competitiveness.

However, the fact that several medium and highly innovative sites are Green Stay certified seems to contrast the notion that the highly innovative respondents are not particularly concerned about competitiveness. Being a certified campsite might be advantageous in terms of attracting guests. Jarvis, Weeden and Simcock (2010) explain that SMEs that work with sustainable certifications may adopt more sustainable innovations and that gaining a more favorable marketing position can drive the wish to become certified. Within the interview sample, 6 campsites are either Green Stay or Green Camping certified (IM.16, IM.18, IM.20, IH.22, IH.23, IH.26). The Green Stay certification is made by Camping Outdoor Denmark, which is an industry association for Danish campsites. The certification of Green Stay is developed on the basis of UN's sustainable goals and helps guide consumers to find sustainable campsites (Camping Outdoor Danmark, n.d.). Interestingly, only medium and highly innovative campsites are certified. However, respondents IL.9, IM.13, IH.21 and IH.25 are in the process of becoming certified or thinking about becoming certified. For example, respondent IL.9, who recently took ownership of their campsite and is in the beginning stages of planning and creating a vision for the future of their campsite, has their sights set on the EU flower certification. Curiously, most of the medium and almost all of the less innovative sites are not

certified, nor do they express a wish to be. It might not be a very surprising finding, given that there are certain criteria revolving around sustainable initiatives that the campsites need to fulfill in order to become certified. Perhaps the less innovative are thus not able to obtain the certification yet.

Jarvis, Weeden and Simcock (2010) state that the extent to which certifications have a real impact on sustainability should be questioned since certifications may simply be used for marketing purposes. The less innovative campsites reflect upon this as well. Respondent IL.7 has considered becoming certified; however, they have not decided to pursue certification yet because they are not sure if it matters to their guests. They further mention that sustainability is not something that they feel the need to brand themselves on. Respondent IL.9 is interesting in this regard, because they mention wanting to pursue the EU flower certification, however, they have not shared it with other campsites. They want to communicate their sustainable efforts, as they explain:

"Because if we had this, I mean this certification and this label, then people could see that it is something that we live up to, and then it would be something we could brand ourselves on, and maybe increase our tourists... the number of tourists" (IL.9).

The quotation thus indicates that IL.9 is thinking about using the certification for marketing purposes to increase the number of guests. Furthermore, several of the certified campsites express that their certification motivates and drives them to act on implementing more sustainable innovations. As IH.26 explains, you have to keep introducing sustainable initiatives to maintain the certification: "So it is not a sleeping pad, you always have to maintain it, and you have to reach 80% the next time. You cannot just say well now I have done what I am supposed to. It is a development […] (IH.26). The quotation thus exemplifies how certifications can drive future plans for sustainable innovations, which other campsites express as well (IM.13, IM.20, IH.21, IH.22, IH.26). For some sites it seems that these certifications function as a framework to plan their sustainable initiatives. Hall and Williams (2008, p.20) claim that organizations that work with "strongly centralized procedures" are more likely to be successful in terms of incremental process innovations. Respondent IM.13 explains how certifications can help them:

"This is also one of the reasons why we want to be certified, to be able to systematize our work with sustainability. So we are not just doing things here and there but instead have a plan. So we hope that when we get around to it [the Green Stay certification], that we will have a plan of action […]" (IM.13).

Therefore, campsites do not just pursue certifications to gain a competitive advantage. They also do it because certifications help them plan their future sustainable initiatives. It seems that the highly

innovative campsites in particular are using their certifications as plans of action to drive their work with sustainability.

In summary, competitiveness generally appears to drive less and medium campsites to introduce sustainable initiatives, but they are unsure how to position themselves in the market. Only medium and highly innovative respondents possess certifications, although one of less innovative campsites hopes to pursue certification soon. Achieving certification does appear to be a driver to the campsites, particularly in relation to using them as plans of action for future sustainable initiatives.

6.3.3 Influence of policies

This section examines how policies and regulations influence innovation, and sometimes drive innovation in the campsites. In the literature review, political decisions and regulations have been described as one of the barriers to innovations. Kraus et al. (2022) have argued that the issue of changing regulations generally is a major issue in the field of tourism, with SMEs being particularly exposed. Sundbo et al (2006) further explain how societal tendencies, as well as changing policies greatly affect the innovativeness of tourism businesses. In the survey, the campsites were asked how rules and regulations affect their work with sustainability. Their responses are illustrated in figure 11. As the figure shows, 36% answered that regulations affect their work with sustainability positively, 31% answered that regulations affect their work negatively, and 33% answered that regulations do not affect their work. The survey analysis thus indicates that regulations can play a dual role of both being a driver of innovation, and thus not only a barrier to innovation.

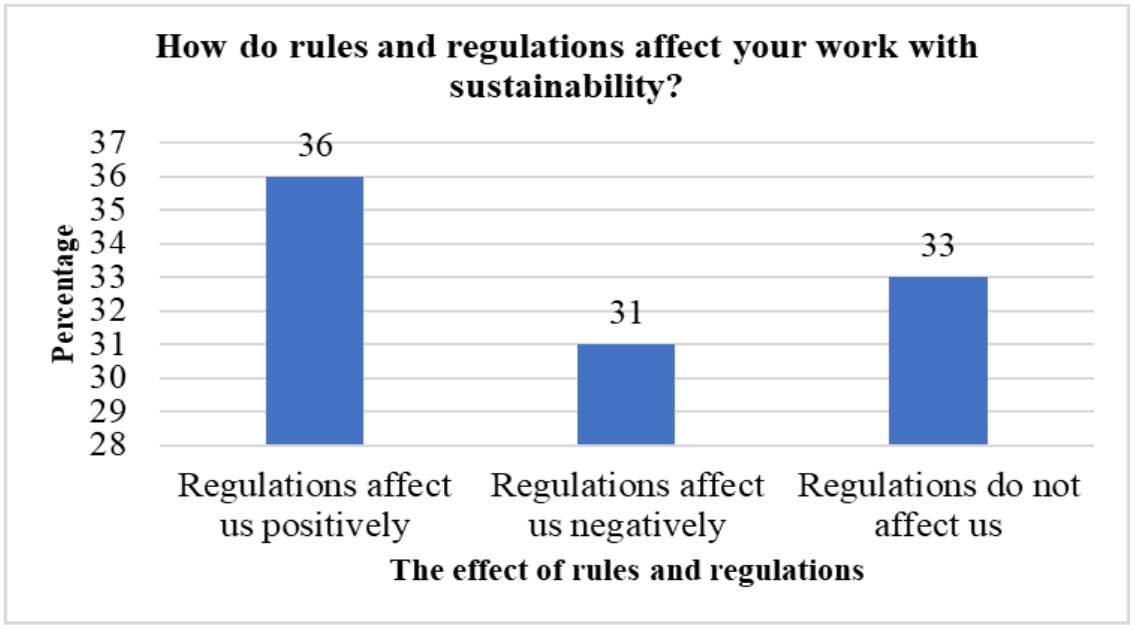

Fig. 11 The effect of rules and regulations on survey respondents' work with sustainability

These findings were further intensified during the interviews in which several campsites brought up the topic of political decisions and regulations, and the campsites' perspectives and approaches to these. However, this section focuses on regulations as a driver. For the campsites that participated in the interviews, a reoccurring theme was the recent regulation regarding waste sorting. Hence, a large part of the following section revolves around statements about this topic.

The interview data was coded with the pattern code 'regulations' as this was a theme that several respondents highlighted. From the 26 campsites interviewed, only three of them did not mention anything related to political decisions and regulations (IL.3, IL.6, IH.24). Although a majority of these campsites' perception of political decisions and regulations point to it being a barrier to innovation, as discussed in the literature, further investigation of the pattern code of 'regulations' revealed a theme of these regulations driving innovation within these campsites. Although the most common situations in which the campsites encounter regulations in their work typically occur when rules are restricting them in initiating sustainability projects, projects being imposed on them seem to have a dual role in it both driving and hindering innovation. This correlates with Hall and Williams' (2008) findings that the state also holds other roles than just hindering innovation. Another side of the state's role is that it also fosters innovation, for instance by encouraging new innovations. The most recent regulation regarding sustainability is that of waste sorting, which has been introduced throughout several municipalities across Denmark. This specific initiative was the most discussed barrier, and driver related to regulations and is mentioned by all of the above camping sites. Waste sorting was introduced in most municipalities as of 2023 and must be followed by all businesses, including campsites (Miljøministeriet, 2023).

All campsites face the same regulations and possibilities. However, their mindset towards these regulations being imposed, is what sets them apart. The campsites can be divided into two overall groups; 1) the ones with a positive mindset towards sustainability regulations, and 2) the ones with a negative mindset. Starting with the campsites that display a negative mindset towards the regulations, this mindset is present across the less and medium innovative campsites, that find that this innovation was forced upon them (IL. 1, IL. 8, IL. 5, IM. 11, IM. 12, IM. 16, IM. 15, IM. 17, IM. 18, IM. 19, IM. 20). This notion of the regulations being imposed on them is specifically highlighted by several campsites. Two of the campsites talk about the sorting of waste as something that was imposed (IL. 1, IL. 8). Respondent IL. 1 describes this innovation, saying that they only chose to focus on introducing it due to it being imposed by their local municipality and that it was a rule they had to follow. Respondent IL. 8 talks about waste sorting as something that they are forced to do, "We're in the middle of a grand waste sorting. That's something that we must do. It's not like we're doing it of our own free will." (IL. 8). In other words, the campsites above show a reactive behavior,

in them simply complying with said regulations. This correlates with Warren, Becken and Coghlan's sustainability-oriented innovation transitions" , as SMEs that have just started out with sustainable innovation might be more reactive, meaning that the simply follow the reles (2018).

The notion that the campsites were 'forced' and simply 'obey' by introducing waste sorting is not unique. In fact, several other campsites share similar opinions. While examining different statements regarding regulations being imposed, it becomes clear that most of these campsites that share a negative mindset towards the regulations probably would not have implemented waste sorting on their own. For them, action by the government or local municipality was needed to push certain sustainable innovations within these campsites. This also anchors the fact that rules and regulations are major drivers of innovation, considering that all campsites interviewed have implemented or intend to implement waste sorting after the introduction of these recent regulations. Interestingly, none of the highly innovative campsites share this negative mindset of feeling forced to implement waste sorting at their campsite, despite this regulation being imposed on them. Whether this is due to their negative mindset impacting barriers related to regulations, will be examined thoroughly in the *barrier* chapter of this analysis (see section 6.5.3).

Moving on, the following will examine the campsites that share a positive or a neutral mindset towards the introduction of the most recent regulations. Interestingly, what seems to have a major influence on the campsites' mindsets towards sustainable innovations being imposed is whether they have previous experience with the innovation that is being imposed on them through the regulations. Compared to the reactive campsites, it generally seems that proactive respondents that had tested sorting trash prior to it becoming a law felt more positive about the new law and felt that there was a solution within reach. As Warren, Becken and Coughlan (2018) explain, SMEs progress towards becoming more proactive in relation to sustainable innovation. This might also lead them to introduce more radical innovations. These respondents were found within all groups, however, within the highly innovative group, the ones that mention the regulation all had prior experience with sorting trash at their campsite (IH.22, IH.23, IH.24, IH.26). Furthermore, apart from the campsites that explicitly mentioned that they had introduced waste sorting at their campsite prior to the new regulations imposing the innovation, two of the campsites that did not mention anything about this regulation did in fact already implement recycling, among other things (IH.21. IH. 25). For the two other groups of campsites, having a positive mindsets is a slightly smaller portion of the entire group. However, there are positive mindsets found within both less and medium innovative campsites (IL.6, IL.7, IL.10, IM.13, IM.14, IM.15, IM.19).

In summary, all the campsites in the sample are faced with the same set of regulations. Recently, the regulatory landscape regarding campsites has been dominated by imposed regulations

related to waste sorting. A small group of the respondents have proactively introduced waste sorting prior to it being regulated. This positively affects their mindsets towards this imposed regulation. This is primarily the case for the highly innovative campsites. On the other side of the spectrum, a vast majority of respondents have a rather negative mindset regarding these regulations. The negative mindset is caused by them feeling forced to implement the imposed regulations, which is evident in their reactive behavior of simply complying with the rules. In the section on barriers related to regulations and policies, how their mindsets affect them overcoming barriers will be examined in section 6.5.3 on barriers to innovation.

6.3.4 Green values

The campsites' green values appear to be important as a driver of sustainable innovation. 20 out of the 26 campsites within the interview sample mention something that relates to the pattern code of 'green values.' According to Sampaio, Thomas and Font (2012), SMEs have different levels of environmental engagement and the extent to which owners/managers of SMEs wish to be involved in demanding sustainability projects varies. Some owners/managers prefer engaging in more dependable projects. Furthermore, the campsites that do involve themselves in novel sustainable projects are also more confident in their own abilities. The decision-makers' personal values thus seem to be important in relation to understanding how these small businesses engage with sustainable innovation. In this section, the theme of green values is examined in relation to the topic of 1) how it is natural to work with sustainability and 2) personal engagement.

In general, the campsites appear to be personally invested in their work with sustainability. Some of the less innovative campsites express a profound wish to work with sustainability, as exemplified by respondent IL.4: "it is something that is included, every time we make a decision about one thing or the other." However, others within the less innovative group merely state that it is natural for them to work with sustainability, which may suggest that it is not necessarily a conscious decision or strategy (IL.5, IL.7, IL.10). Warren, Becken, and Coghlan (2018) have found that the personal engagement of the decision-maker determines how they work with innovation. This personal engagement is expressed by several of the respondents, particularly among the medium innovative respondents. To exemplify, respondent IM.18 who has previously worked with sustainability in Asia states that it is a "moral obligation" to work with sustainability, and the CEO of campsite IM.15 states that it is a fundamental value of their campsite. Respondent IM.12 further explains how their general concern about the environment becomes a driver for working with sustainability:

"So this thing about being a little conscious about the fact that this earth that we live on has to go to someone else, so even though you are only here for a short amount of time, it is important that we recycle things and don't just throw them away" (IM.12).

The medium innovative campsites thus express their commitment to working with sustainability. The highly innovative respondents also appear very personally committed to working with sustainability, as respondent IH.23 expresses regarding their sustainable projects: "So it is my dream to continue like this" (IH.23). Respondent IH.25 who is currently in charge of the sustainable transition at their campsite appears particularly engaged and explains that they work with sustainability with their mother. The respondents within the highly innovative group generally appear quite proactive in relation to working with sustainability, as respondent IH.26 exemplifies by asking themselves: "what can I do to help the environment?" (IH.26). Another respondent within the group hopes to become a good example of sustainability and to help teach guests about organic farming, and that this desire drives them (IH.24). In relation to their drive for implementing sustainable innovations, a tendency points to how campsites within all the groups have some sort of relation to a green ideal that they strive to follow. However, they also differ slightly. The highly innovative campsites appear to be more committed and proactive in relation to sustainability, which indicates a link between innovativeness and personal engagement with sustainability. This finding also relates to Sampaio, Thomas, and Font's (2012) claim that the business owners that are personally committed to sustainability tend to have a strong belief in their own abilities that may result in engagement in more sustainable projects and general resiliency to failure. Since the highly innovative campsites, who are generally more personally committed, might advance more in sustainable projects, it seems likely that they also gain more experience with working with sustainability, which may then result in more sustainable innovation.

In summary, the less innovative campsites are generally concerned about sustainability, though they do not seem to act upon their green values to a great extent. The reasons why will be further investigated in section 6.5.3 which investigates barriers. The medium and highly innovative respondents appear to be more personally committed to sustainability and thus more engaged in their work with sustainability. Their green values thus appear to be a key driver for both the medium and highly innovative campsites.

6.3.5 Sub-conclusion drivers

These findings have led to a definition of economization, customer demand, policy influence, and green values as drivers for sustainable innovation among the interviewed campsites. Table 3 visualizes these drivers and the differences between the three groups of respondents.

Driver	**General findings**	**Differences**		
		Less innovative	**Medium innovative**	**Highly innovative**
Economization and efficiency	Driven to introduce sustainable innovations due to considerations of economization and efficiency	Driven by economization	Driven by economization and efficiency	Not necessarily a key driver
Customer demand	Competitiveness and consideration of customer demand can drive sustainable innovation	Driven by competitiveness	Driven by competitiveness	Driven to some extent by competitiveness, uses certifications as plans of action
Policy influence	Imposed regulations are a driver of innovation, but respondents react differently	Overall a negative mindset towards imposed regulations. Reactive behavior as a result of feeling forced to implement imposed regulation	Mixed group of positive and negative mindsets towards imposed regulations. Mixed group of proactive and reactive behavior	Proactive behavior due to previous experience with implementation. Positive mindset towards regulations
Green values	Green values and personal engagement with sustainability act as a driver for sustainable innovation	Has green values, but experience difficulty with acting on them	More personally engaged, acts on green values	More personally engaged, acts on green values

Table 3 Characteristics of drivers of sustainable innovation in less, medium and highly innovative campsites

Hall and Williams (2008) claim that innovation in tourism is typically driven by factors relating to competition, economy, demand, technology, strategy, and individual entrepreneurship and that innovation has to have value for the business. For the interviewed campsites, that value is oftentimes both related to economization and efficiency, customer demand, as well as the respondents' personal green values. Another driver of innovation for the campsites within the interview sample is that of policy influence, where innovation is driven by governmental regulations, which means that those innovations do not necessarily have value to the campsites.

6.4 Innovation process

This section explores how the Danish campsites within the sample introduce sustainable innovations by examining their innovation processes. The innovation process is conceptualized in terms of 5 stages, the first being 1) idea generation, 2) decision-making, 3) acquisition of support prior to implementation, 4) implementation, and finally 5) evaluation. However, there are both similarities and differences between the three groups of respondents in relation to how they go through the stages, which will be further elaborated on in this section.

6.4.1 Idea generation

Generally, the survey results reveal that campsites g*et* their ideas for new innovations from both internal and external sources. They mainly get their ideas from their own experience/research, from observing what other campsites do, and from participating in networks with other businesses. Then comes their suppliers, customers, chain, industry association and DMO. They rarely get their ideas from education/research centers and from experts that they bring in (see Appendix B, pp. 11-15). However, how the campsites turn those ideas into innovations depends on how they utilize the knowledge that comes from these different sources. As the concept of absorptive capacity demonstrates, it is important to have previous knowledge about sustainability to be able to assess and utilize the knowledge related to sustainability that respondents may come across elsewhere (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990). Furthermore, Quinatane et al. (2011, p. 936), have stated that "knowledge is a pre-requisite for the innovation process to occur." Internal knowledge sources may thus play a key role for both innovation and for the processing and use of external knowledge sources. As Díaz-Díaz and Saá-Pérez (2014, p. 431) state, "firms with a high number of internal knowledge sources are able to increase their absorptive capacity in order to improve innovation." As mentioned in the literature

review, internal knowledge is comprised of the existing knowledge within the firm. External knowledge sources are those that exist outside the firm (Marco-Lajara et al., 2018). The campsites within the interview sample mainly utilize knowledge internally from 1) their employees and 2) themselves, and they mainly utilize external knowledge from 3) consultants, 4) projects and courses, 4) suppliers and 5) contractors.

Only three respondents appear to utilize the knowledge of their employees, albeit to a limited extent (IL.6, IH.25, IH.26). That is interesting, because several respondents have multiple employees (see table 1). As Marco-Lajara et al. (2018) explain, SMEs in tourism are characterized by seasonality and rotation in staff. That is also the case among the Danish campsites, and as the following quotation regarding getting new ideas from their employees demonstrates, that has consequences for the extent to which the campsites utilize the knowledge of their employees:

"No, we don't do that. Because they are young, those employees. They don't have, I mean, they have enough to do with their studies. So they come here to make money. So it is not something we discuss with them. I told you before, they are young people between 17 and 20 years old. But if they come up with an idea, then we listen. Definitely. If they say something like we should do this and this, then we just try it. […]. But I don't expect it." (IM.17).

As the respondent explains, a key characteristic of the seasonal employees at the campsites is that they tend to be young and work at the campsites for a limited period. Therefore, the campsites do not engage in formal knowledge transfer processes with their employees, even though literature on absorptive capacity reveals that having organizational structures in place to facilitate knowledge transfer is important in relation to innovation (Díaz-Díaz and Saá-Pérez, 2014). Only one respondent within the sample has formal personnel meetings about sustainability where they share ideas and decide what to follow up on (IH.25). This respondent also has few employees; however, they demonstrate that having such procedures is possible within campsites.

When asked how the respondents got the idea to introduce certain innovations, a few of respondents simply mention that they got the idea from themselves (IL.5, IL.10, IM.18, IM.19, IH.21, IH.23, IH.26). Of those respondents, only two state that they have previous knowledge about sustainability that they actively use in their innovation processes (IM.18, IH.22). One had a CO2 report made for their campsite, and when asked how they came to that idea, they say that:

"Well, I think I read a little bit about it. And I am interested in it, right? I worked in Sri Lanka, as I said earlier, actually with a company, that is in the board, that invests and works with energy efficiency. So that is something that I also think a little bit about" (IM.18).

As the quotation shows, the respondent is interested in sustainability due to their previous experience working with it and thus uses that experience to research. However, since the respondents rarely utilize the knowledge of their employees and tend to rely on the human capital of the decision-maker, that may suggest that the respondents utilize external knowledge sources to a greater extent, as literature suggests that firms, such as smaller businesses, with limited internal knowledge sources do (Díaz-Díaz and Saá-Pérez, 2014; Thomas and Woods, 2014; Chesbrough, 2012). However, 7 out of the 26 campsites within the sample did not mention any specific external knowledge sources (IL. 2, IL. 8, IM. 14, IM. 16, IM. 20, IH. 21, IH. 24). The remaining campsites all have one external source of knowledge in common; the use of consultants. Respondent IH. 22 sourced an engineer to consult them in optimizing their energy consumption by installing solar panels. Respondent IH. 26 similarly used an external consultant to advice them and help make a plan on how to best handle the waste sorting that is required from the municipality. However, this campsite also mentions that it is difficult to figure out where to go for help and knowledge around sustainability;

"What is difficult is perhaps when there's something new you'd like to work on. And then you need to figure out who to talk to in order to make this happen. We could turn to Camping Outdoor, who might have a connection to someone who might be able to help" (IH. 26).

Respondent IL. 9 found that they did not have enough knowledge around optimizing their energy consumption. The local DMO, Destination Himmerland, and the local business council advised the campsite to seek guidance on this from a consultant. According to the interviewee, the knowledge from the consultant "has been pretty great," particularly in regard to the green transition. Another campsite that has been using consultants as a source of external knowledge is respondent IM.16. They find that the use of a consultant is a useful source of knowledge and inspiration on how to think sustainability into different aspects of the campsite, claiming that many of the ideas coming from the consultants "are really great" and that "we've discussed several different things. He says we could do this, or we could do this, or we could do this. There is no doubt that many of those ideas are really great" (IM. 16).

For of the less innovative campsites, the most common external knowledge source is the participation in projects or courses in collaborations with the local DMO or the industry association (IL. 6, IL. 7, IL. 9). While some DMOs have aided as support and inspiration for campsites and other tourism professionals on a general level, others have had different projects and courses specifically evolving around sustainability. IL. 9 has participated in Destination Himmerland's project Next Step Himmerland. This project, which is made in collaboration with Miljømærkning Danmark, evolves around green transition within tourism. Participants in the projects gained access to concrete plans of actions, sustainable business models, networking around sustainability,

inspirational “Green Talks.” and support in making their business, or parts of it, more sustainable (Destination Himmerland, n.d.). Another similar project is Dansk Kyst- og Naturturisme’s Naturnætter. The ambition of Naturnætter is to reinvent traditional accommodations close to nature, making these more sustainable and attract a new audience (DKNT, n.d.). Respondent IL. 7 participated in this project, and further expresses their excitement to take on yet another project in collaboration with Dansk Kyst- og Naturturisme;

“It is not official yet. But when it comes to the environment, what we’re working on is actually that we’ve joined a project with Dansk Kyst- og Naturturisme called Naturnætter. In this project we’ll be working with alternative types of accommodation that are more sustainable. We have great plans about this. Or not actual plans, but rather a process in which we’ll work together with architects to figure out how we could offer more accommodation close to nature” (IL.7).

Projects and courses are also popular sources of knowledge for medium innovative campsites (IM. 11, IM. 13, IM. 16, IM.18 IM. 19). Some courses are short, 1-day meetings around the Triple Bottom Line (IM. 16) or solutions to waste sorting hosted by HORESTA (IM. 11). Other campsites participate in projects with a longer duration. For respondent IM. 12, this means participating in a project hosted by Energy Cluster Denmark around CO2 calculations. Respondent IM. 13 participated in Dansk Kyst- og Naturturisme’s project CAMP NOW. With the subtitle, *Building sustainable outdoor camps and brands*, CAMP NOW is a project around product development and branding, aiming at making camping an attractive accommodation for sustainable tourists. 10 campsites across Denmark participated in the project, which followed the campsites through three building phases from the idea generation, to implementation and branding.

Finally, another factor which differentiates the highly innovative from the less and medium innovative is that many of the less and medium innovative campsites use their suppliers and contractors as a source of knowledge and inspiration, having frequent knowledge sharing between the two (IL. 4, IL. 5). Interestingly, only one of the highly innovative campsites mentioned this as a source of knowledge, but that these suppliers and contractors from their point of view do not prioritize sustainability. However, the highly innovative campsites find great value in acquiring support within their extended network. This will be elaborated in section 6.4.3. An example of campsites that source external knowledge from their suppliers or contractors working on the campsite is IL. 4. They got the idea to purchase climate neutral forest from the suggestion of his electricity provider:

"It was from a conversation between my wife and I, but also our energy provider. They brought up the possibility to invest in these climate forests, rather than green energy. And then we just agreed that it was a better solution and went with that" (IL. 4).

Similar to the less innovative campsites, the medium innovative campsites find inspiration for sustainable innovations through their suppliers and contractors. This is in particular the case for campsite IM. 11. Two of their innovations are inspired by advice from their contractors. Thanks to the advice from their electrician, their outdated overhead cables that provided electricity was replaced with underground cables, which minimizes their consumption. Furthermore, a supplier of theirs has developed solar roof tiles, which inspired the campsite to consider introducing this on the campsite. However, this project is temporarily on hold due to regulations regarding businesses utilizing these tiles (IM. 11). Campsite IM. 12 was also inspired by their electrician to install a heat pump for their pool. Another campsite that followed the advice of a supplier was IM. 13, who decided to introduce a dosing system for their cleaning detergent to minimize their use of this, as advised by their supplier of cleaning products. As they describe: "when it comes to that detergent, it was the company that sells us the detergent, who said that it would be a good idea if we installed that instead" (IM. 13). Finally, campsite IM. 19 has a good relationship with their local contractors and local district heating, with whom they regularly have conversations with and share their ideas and knowledge;

"Then I also find inspiration through talking with my local contractors and my district heating. They have a few great ideas. For instance, they think I need a battery for my solar panels or other things they find necessary. So those people that I work with from day to day sometimes have some great input. […] And then it's when we're out that we discuss what would be sensible. And then it's basically an ongoing discussion" (IM. 19).

In summary, the respondents appear to utilize the knowledge of their employees to a limited extent due to factors such as seasonality and high rotation in staff. They also tend to rely on the human capital of the decision-maker. Further, they utilize external knowledge sources, such as consultants, whose knowledge they heavily rely on. A major difference between the less, medium and highly innovative campsites is how the less and medium also utilize external knowledge from their suppliers and contractors, and also from their participation in different projects and courses. Instead, they find great value in acquiring support within their extended network. The topic of acquisition of support will be elaborated in section 6.4.3.

6.4.2 Decision-making

Decision-making involves idea evaluation and validation. Via idea evaluation, ideas are "assessed whether they are worthy of further development or implementation, need to be revised or need to be rejected" (Bhimani et al., 2021, p. 1). A key evaluation criterion is typically that the innovation should bring value to the company. Furthermore, the decision-maker often examines whether the innovation is likely to be successful and attempts to mitigate risks (Boudier et al., 2023). In the survey, respondents were asked to rate the importance of avoiding risk when making the decision to introduce an innovation. Figure 12 illustrates the findings from this question. Accordingly, 45% find it moderately important to avoid risk when making the decision to implement a new sustainable idea, 24% find it important, and 8% find it slightly important. Therefore, a majority of the survey respondents find avoiding risk when making the decision to introduce an innovation moderately important or important.

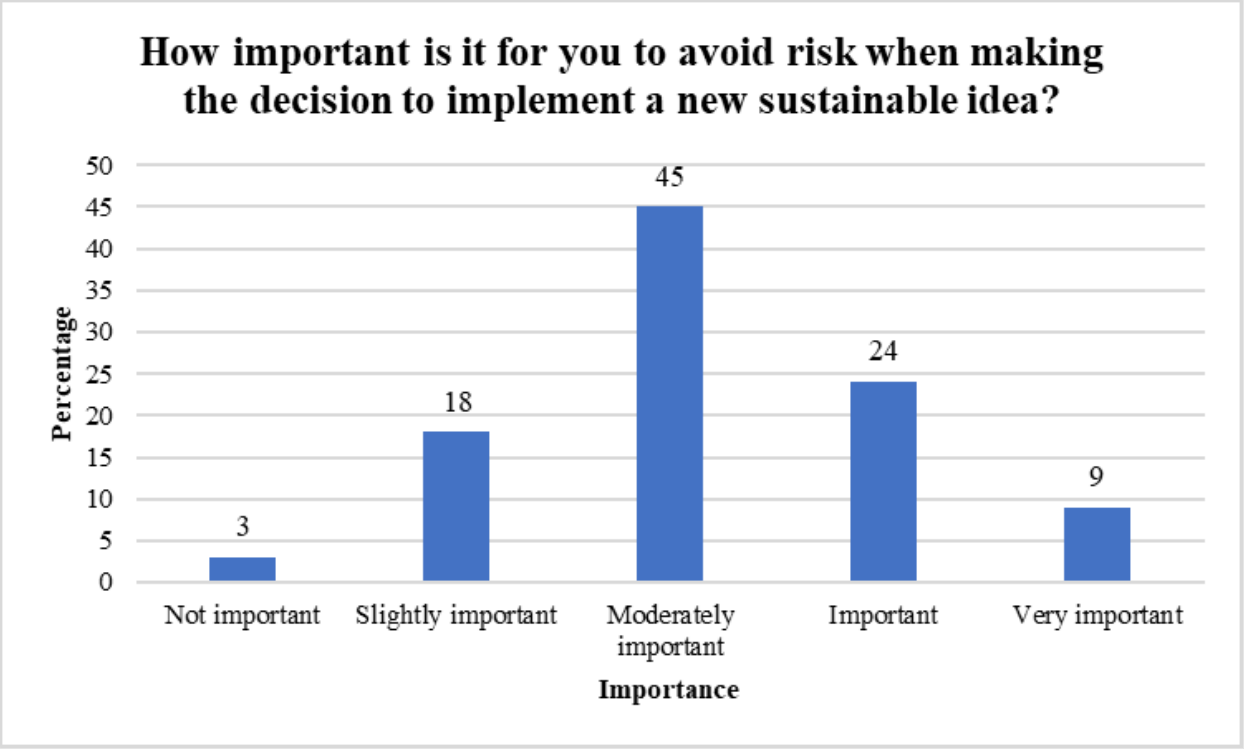

Fig. 12 The importance of risk in decision-making among survey respondents

Furthermore, respondents were also asked to rate the importance of a quick result in their decision to introduce an innovation, which is what figure 13 demonstrates. Accordingly, 37% find it the notion of a quick result moderately important for their decision to move forward with idea, 31% find it important, and 21% find it slightly important. A majority of survey respondents thus chose the option of moderately important or important, as seen in the figure.

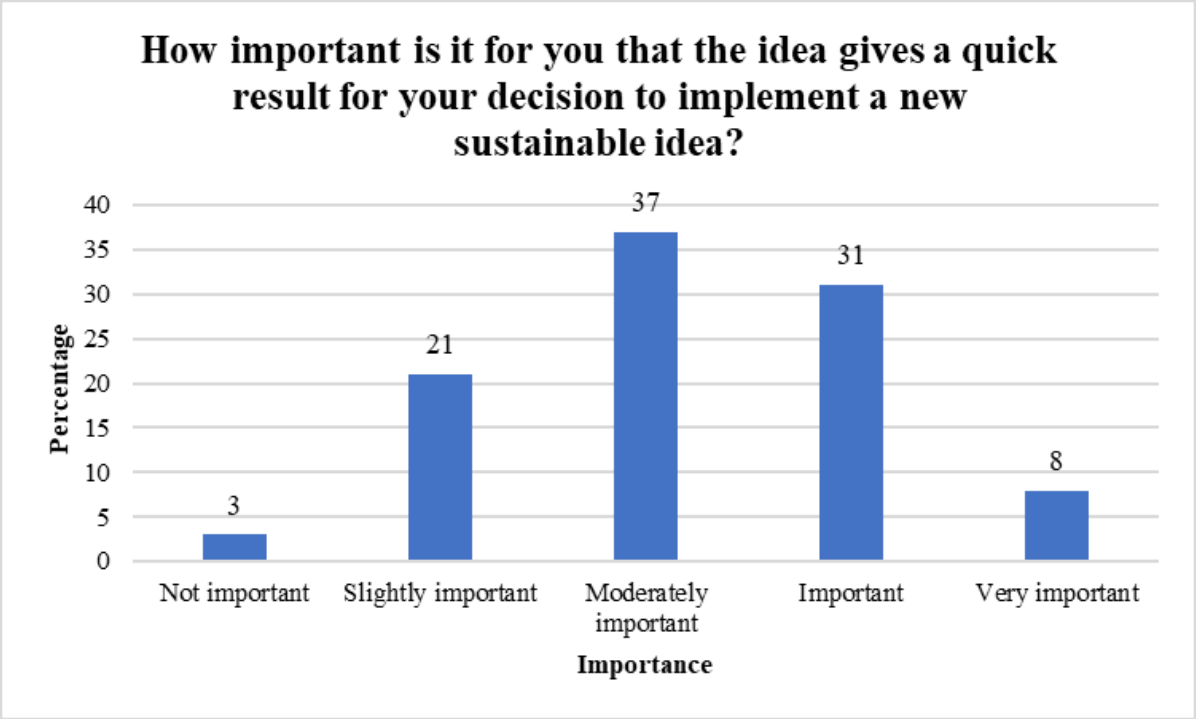

Figure 13 The importance of a quick result in decision-making among survey respondents

Interestingly, the interview data reveals that the timeframe of the results is associated with the financial risks that are involved with the sustainable innovations, which will be explored in this section. The other aspect of decision-making, validation, can involve getting feedback from different sources, such as from other professionals (Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2019). The decision-maker may also reach out to their network for advice on the idea (Aldrich and Renuzilli, 2005). In the case of the interview respondents, they decide whether to go ahead with an idea in three main ways, 1) by discussing it with their partner/co-owner, 2) via feedback from their network and 3) by considering cost vs. benefit. None of the campsites appear to have formal decision-making procedures in place for evaluating an idea, even though scholars tend to explain that idea evaluation is done systematically and that it sometimes involves specific criteria (Frederiksen and Knudsen, 2017; Magnusson et al., 2014). However, a few less innovative respondents and two highly innovative respondents tend to discuss ideas with their partner/co-owner before making the decision to proceed with an innovation (IL.4, IL.6, IL.9, H.21, IH.25). Their discussions appear to occur rather spontaneously, as the quotation shows:

"So what do we do, I don't know. I think we talk a little about it at home and then we think about what could be right, what do we have energy to do, what do we have money for, and then we choose based on those considerations" (IL.9).

While the campsites may not have formal evaluation processes or criteria as such, the quotation exemplifies a general finding across the sample, which is that the act of deciding which idea they

want to move forward with depends on factors such as time and economic resources. The fact that the campsites are characterized by seasonality and fewer economic resources as a consequence of being an SME thus affects their idea evaluation processes. Furthermore, some respondents, particularly those within the less and medium innovative group, sometimes seek advice and feedback on their idea from other sources, which are typically found within their networks (IL.3, IL.4, IM.18, IM.20). As one respondent explains:

> *"Since we have been in the industry for many years, we know a lot of people, and then we check with colleagues what they do and talk a bit about how and what you can do differently" (IL.4).*

As Bourdier et al. (2023) explain, idea evaluators often seek to decrease risks. Asking other campsites how a sustainable innovation has worked for them is a way for the campsites within the sample to mitigate risks and help ensure that eventual implementation is successful. The biggest risk that the less and medium innovative respondents appear to attempt to mitigate is related to their economy. Some sustainable innovations, such as solar panels, are very expensive, and as one respondent who wants to introduce solar panels but is concerned that they will not be able to make their money back explains: "I don't even know if I would dare do it. Because it is a huge investment" (IM.17). This particular respondent is concerned about the government's potential future regulations regarding the surplus electricity that solar panels generate. Changing regulations could impact their ability to sell back electricity to the general grid and thus the profitability of the solar panels (IM.17). However, some of the less and several of the medium innovative respondents have a particular approach to mitigating financial risks, which involves considerations of cost vs. benefit (IL.3, IL.4, IL.10, IM.11, IM.16, IM.18, IM.19, IM.20, IH.24). A key criterion of the intended innovation is that there are economic benefits to implementing it, as the following respondent explains when asked how they determine whether to go ahead with an idea:

> *"Well, that is how quickly the money is earned back, you can say. I mean, the investment should preferably be made back within three years before I think it makes sense" (IL.3).*

The quotation reflects a common finding among the less and medium innovative respondents concerning their decision-making, which is that the innovation should pay off within a relatively short time frame. If they determine that an innovation will not pay off, several respondents either put the innovation on hold or stop the project completely (IL.4, IL.6, IM.11, IM.12, IM.18, IH.22, IH.24). These findings thus relate to the analysis of economization being a driver and demonstrate that the innovation has to make financial sense before the final decision introduce a sustainable innovation is made. In this regard, new funding opportunities can speed up the process of introducing innovations that have been put on hold (IM.12, IH.22, IH.24). However, not all respondents may be familiar with

the funding opportunities that exist because as one respondent explains “you always hear that there is lots of money for the green transition, and we just sit there and think ‘where is that money’? And ‘how do we access them’?” (IL.9). Perhaps if funding opportunities were easier to access, then sustainable innovations may be introduced more frequently by Danish campsites since lack of economic resources sometimes stop projects in their tracks.

Few highly innovative respondents mention that economy is a key aspect of their decision-making regarding sustainable innovations. However, in some cases, their financial situations may delay initiatives because they wait for funding opportunities or regulations to make financial sense (IH.22, IH.24). Rather, it seems that these respondents weigh sustainability higher than the financial benefits of their innovations in their evaluation of an idea. As respondent IH.22 explains, they work with sustainability because it is important to them, and economy merely sets their ideas back a little. Another highly innovative respondent similarly wants to introduce an orangery to be self-producing in terms of herbs for the guests, but explain that “it is expensive, so we have to save up a little” (IH.21). Economy is thus a part of the decision for the highly innovative respondents as well, however, their priorities in terms of the value from their sustainable innovation appears to differ from the less and the medium innovative respondents.

To summarize, none of the campsites appear to have formal decision-making procedures in place for evaluating ideas. The less and medium innovative campsites tend to discuss the idea with their partner/co-owner, and some attempt to mitigate risks by reaching out to their network for advice on how the innovation worked for them. However, the biggest risk that the medium and less innovative respondents attempt to mitigate is related to finances, and they look at the benefits of the innovation vs. the cost to determine whether to proceed. The highly innovative respondents do not appear to attempt to mitigate financial risks to the same extent.

6.4.3 Acquisition of support prior to implementation

The interview data has revealed that acquiring support to implement an innovation is a key part of the innovation process for the campsites within the sample. Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2019) state that businesses commonly fill existing gaps within teams driving innovations to market via the use of outside resources, such as accountants and experts, prior to implementation of the innovation. To gain access to these outside resources, social networks play a significant role because they can provide bridges between the business owner and the outside resource. However, Aldrich and Renzulli (2005) argue that business owners tend to work with their core network ties rather than contacting outsiders.

The Danish campsites within the interview sample mainly acquire support from 1) contractors/suppliers and 2) consultants. However, their experiences using these actors for support are different and the less innovative respondents especially get support to a limited extent from outsiders of their business.

When the less innovative respondents seek support from outside resources, they mainly turn to their contractors and suppliers (IL.2, IL.3, IL.4, IL.5, IL.6, IL.8, IL.10). They tend to seek advice and information or collect offers on the initiatives they want to implement. When asked who they can turn to when they are in the process of introducing an innovation, one respondent says, "in my situation, I turn to a contractor […] you trust the contractor" (IL.10), which illustrates the important role that contractors fulfill and the strong connection that some respondents have to them. Indeed, the contractors often seem to be part of the core network of people that the respondents trust, which Aldrich and Renuzilli (2005) argue business owners are more likely to reach out to.

The medium innovative respondents also reach out to their contractors, although to a lesser extent (IM.11, IM.16, IM.18, IM.17). However, they also appear to have a good relationship with them, and one quotation exemplifies why the respondents in general tend to work with their trusted contractors:

"He had some experience with it [electric car chargers], and we trust him. So, we chose him. We have not really explored other options. We have a good collaboration with him" (IM.16).

The respondent thus explains that the foundation of trust is built on good previous experiences, and that respondents with strong ties to their suppliers, such as these, may be more unlikely to seek support from other resources outside their core network. A factor that may explain why some respondents choose to use contractors they trust seems to be that there are risks involved with using outside resources. The respondents specifically explain that they run the risk of not being able to complete their projects. Indeed, some of both the less and medium innovative respondents have experienced issues when attempting to reach potential contractors or suppliers for collaborative purposes, such as the supplier not being able to deliver (IL.4, IL.5, IM.20). In all these cases, that resulted in the project being paused indefinitely. The following quotation exemplifies that contacting suppliers outside their trusted network can feel risky for the respondents:

"And when you are in on these [solar] panels, you always take a lot of chances where you say that you have to trust him, even though he sells it. And that is both good, but you can also risk the opposite" (IM.18).

Respondent IM.18 is generally very interested in sustainability. However, as the quotation demonstrates, the campsites are dependent on their suppliers to a large extent when it comes to the installation of certain innovations, such as solar panels. The quotation also demonstrates that there are financial risks involved when working with suppliers that the respondents do not know. That is interesting, because those that utilize trusted contractors and suppliers do not mention using prices to evaluate whether to go ahead with them. To them, their relationship with the contractors and suppliers thus seems more important.

According to Rodriguez-Sanches et al. (2019), business owners seek outside resources to fill certain gaps that are necessary to implement their innovation. The gaps may vary. The campsites within the interview sample generally use contractors and suppliers to fill the gap of not having the skills, tools, or products needed to complete their process innovations, especially energy-related ones. As one interviewee says regarding electric car chargers; "we pay for it and have it installed" (IL.8), which exemplifies that they have to source these skills elsewhere and thus also pay the price. Tether and Tajar (2008) differentiate between different types of innovation, one of which is external innovation, where firms outsource their innovations to be developed and installed by suppliers, which is common for process innovations. Indeed, many of the less innovative campsites have merely implemented externally developed innovations, such as electric car chargers, heating pumps, etc., which is why it makes sense that they tend to rely more on contractors and suppliers in the innovation process.

Another gap that the less innovative respondents seem to fill by contacting suppliers is using their suppliers for advice on whether their sustainable solution will work, particularly in relation to doing cost-benefit analysis. This is especially the case among the medium innovative respondents (IL.6, IM.11, IM.17, IM.18), which has been discussed in relation to decision-making (see section 6.4.2). Interestingly, few highly innovative respondent mentions collaborating with a supplier or contractor (IH.21, IH.24, IH.25). However, the innovations that they have introduced do require the use of suppliers and contractors for the innovation itself as well as installation. Examples include heating pumps, solar panels, etc. Nevertheless, the highly innovative respondents may not seek advice from their contractors and suppliers to the same extent as the other respondents. It generally seems that the highly innovative respondents rely on their contractors and suppliers to a limited extent.

Furthermore, consultants are also a key outside resource for several respondents. As Tether and Tajar (2008) have explained, service firms tend to source knowledge from "specialist knowledge providers" such as consultants. The respondents appear to come into contact with the consultants via projects established by the local DMO, a regional DMO, their local business council, or by other types of projects directed towards tourism (IL.7, IL.9, IM.13, IM.15, IM.16, IM.18,

IH.25). These collaboration forms give the respondents access to consultants with an expertise that they may otherwise not be able to reach. Some campsites are thus able to utilize the knowledge of the consultants to their advantage. For example, when asked about the barriers of one of their projects, respondent IL.7 who wants to create a new experience for their guests in protected nature states that planning regulations are very challenging to understand. The following quotation exemplifies how the consultants can help in that area:

"[The Danish Society for Nature Conservation] are such 70's, 80's or 60's, 70's hippies that sit there and say you cannot do anything. But these consultants, that know the law in its essence, ally themselves with people who care about the environment. At the same time, they want to make the environment and nature accessible to people. So they are mega strong allies" (IL.7).

The respondent thus feels that the Danish Nature Agency blocks their initiatives, whereas the consultants are able to better work around the legislation due to their expertise. There are two other main areas where consultants help respondents via their expert knowledge. The medium innovative respondents in particular get help from consultants to expedite the oftentimes demanding and difficult funding process (IM.12, IM.16, IM.18, IM.19). The less innovative respondents appear to mainly use consultants for the purpose of getting advice on their energy-related innovations (IL.4, IL.9). However, accessing the expert knowledge of consultants can be costly. As respondent IM.16 says, "if you were to get the help of consultants, that can be an expensive affair." Therefore, the campsites sometimes utilize their networks and the projects that they participate in to help finance the aid of consultants (IL.9, IM.16). Indeed, very few campsites are able to pay for the consultants themselves, and even when they do, they contemplate the financial aspect of it considerably. Respondent IL.4 who had help from an energy consultant to go through the energy consumption of their campsite explains:

"Often you reach out to an energy expert, and then they go in and say we can save you so and so much money. Then you can make a deal that they get a percentage of the savings. Then the energy consulting does not really cost anything. If you do not have the necessary knowledge, you can purchase that knowledge through an energy advisor" (IL.4).

The quotation thus exemplifies that often, getting the help of consultants is an investment that has to make sense financially. The knowledge that the consultants possess is thus privileged and a way for the campsites to access that knowledge is through economic means. Therefore, it seems that the projects with financial aid for consultants help provide equal opportunity in terms of getting access to the privileged information that consultants hold. This may further result in more sustainable innovation within Danish campsites. It generally seems that the respondents that use their network to

a greater extent and thus have better networking capabilities are better able to move forward in the innovation process. As the following quotation exemplifies, the respondents that participate in projects and networks seem to be better able to meet consultants:

"There are some projects called Next Step, and there you have the opportunity to have a consultant attached to your projects. We have two projects going on with them" (IL.9).

Although respondent IL.9 is within the less innovative group of campsites, they stand out from that group a bit. They recently took over the campsite and have since been very active in different networks and projects. The quotation exemplifies that the campsites that already engage their networks are more likely to also access consultants. In general, participating in networks is considered a way to quickly get access to knowledge (Tether and Tajar, 2008). Indeed, Tether and Tajar (2008) have found a link between a firm's networking capabilities and their likelihood of engaging consultants in their innovation processes (1079). A similar picture can be seen among the campsites within the sample, where the campsites that participate in networks or collaborate more in general are also the ones that appear to utilize consultants more (IL.9, IM.13, IM.15, IM.16, IM.18, IH.25).

Interestingly, few of the highly innovative respondents mention using consultants extensively, but they do participate in projects that typically have consultants affiliated. Four campsites within this group are GreenStay certified or are in the process of becoming certified and appear to use this certification to guide them through their innovations (IH.21, IH.22, IH.25, IH.25. Green Stay offers the help of consultants to achieve the Green Stay certification (Camping Outdoor Danmark, n.d.). Furthermore, two of the respondents have received funding from a project called 'SMV Grøn', where campsites are able to secure funding for new sustainable initiatives, that can include consultants (IH.21, IH.22). Respondents IH.22 and IH.25 do outright mention getting the help of consultants, one for innovations related to energy consumption and the other as part of a project with their local business center. However, the highly innovative campsites appear to generally have a larger network than the other groups of respondents and frequently reach out to other campsites and their industry associations (IH.21, IH.23, IH.24, IH.25, IH.26). Therefore, the campsites are thus not necessarily more independent, but rather seem to have found other types of outside resources to use for support.

In summary, it is apparent that the less innovative respondents seek support from contractors and suppliers more than consultants. The contractors and suppliers fill the gap of not having the skills, tools, or products needed to complete their process innovations, especially energy-related ones. Both less and medium innovative respondents use contractors and suppliers that they know and trust, however, sometimes an innovation requires them to contact unfamiliar suppliers,

which can involve risks. The medium innovative respondents are the ones that seem most likely to engage consultants, and the consultants help expedite the innovation process by providing access to expert knowledge. Few of the highly innovative respondents mention both contractors, suppliers and consultants, however, they appear to utilize their general network which consists of other campsites and their industry associations to a greater extent.

6.4.4 Implementation

The implementation phase typically involves the production of a prototype and testing of the idea. It is followed by the launch phase or the implementation of the idea (Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2019). Nevertheless, the respondents within the interview sample spoke very little of the actual implementation process. They either had their suppliers help them with implementing their ideas, as discussed above, or were able to rather quickly implement their ideas themselves. The survey respondents were also asked to which degree they test their ideas prior to implementation, and figure 14 illustrates the results of that question. As the figure shows, 40% chose the option of not at all or to a lesser degree when asked about the degree to which they test ideas prior to implementation. Merely 17% chose the option of to some degree. Generally, the survey respondents thus test their ideas before introducing them to customers to a very limited extent.

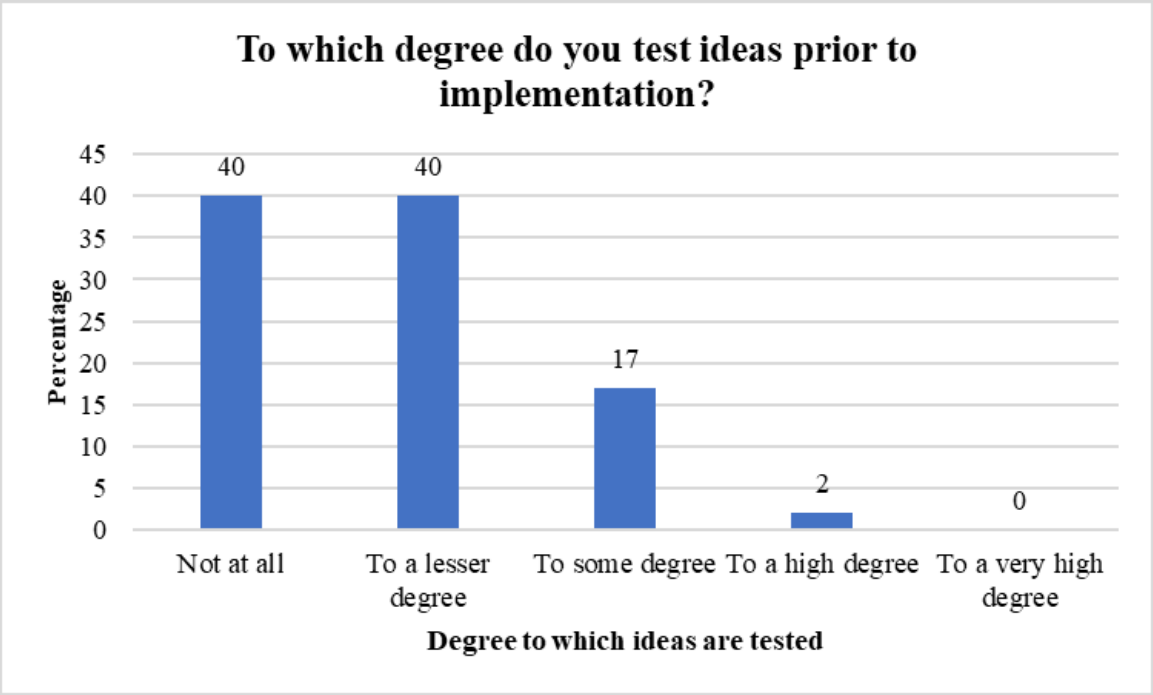

Fig. 14 The degree to which survey respondents test ideas prior to implementation

However, once implemented, the respondents adjust their ideas to a much higher extent than they test beforehand, with 29% of respondents choosing 'to a high degree', and 41% choosing 'to some degree' (see Appendix B, p. 15). In this section, the extent to which respondents 1) test their ideas prior to implementation and 2) adjust their ideas after implementation is explored.

None of the respondents within the less innovative group mention having tested their idea prior to implementing it. A few of the medium and highly innovative respondents talk about testing their ideas prior to implementing them to determine how guests may react or if the innovation works how they expect (IM.15, IM.19, IH.22, IH.26). The following two quotations encapsulate well why the respondents do not commonly test their innovations relating to energy; "when we make something that costs money and requires external people, I am too small to test it for real" (IM.19). Another respondent says that "it is difficult to make a test with a heating pump, right? […] I mean, either you throw half a million into it, or you don't" (IM.20). As both respondents explain, it often does not make sense to test ideas due to the financial commitment that it would require. Furthermore, the process innovations that all respondents tend to implement typically rely on external suppliers delivering and installing the product, as previously discussed (see section 6.4.4t). As Thether and Tajar (2008) argue, a key benefit of outsourcing innovation and utilizing external suppliers is that the innovation comes fully developed and tested. That benefit also seems to reduce the need for testing among the campsites within the sample. Indeed, as one respondent explains; "I mean, you can figure out how much effect a heating pump has. That is quite simple […] You do not have to doubt those numbers" (IM.20). Often, the innovations also simply make sense, as one respondent explains regarding solar panels; "without being particularly scientific, you can almost tell that we should be a good industry to do it in. Because activity sort of follows the movements of the sun" (IM.18). These factors thus help explain why the respondent may not test their ideas.

However, respondents do make adjustments to their sustainable innovations after implementation, although seemingly only to a great extent when the innovations that require guest practices to change, such as recycling and water-saving initiatives. The process innovations that take place behind the scenes, such as heating pumps, LED lights, and solar panels, do not involve guest practices. and respondents rarely adjust them. As respondent IM.18 who has recently had solar panels installed says when asked how their guests reacted to their solar panels: "Positively. They were being talked about when we put them up. We have received a lot of thumbs up, in the positive way." The quotation reflects a common perception among the campsites, which is that guests generally react positively to their process innovations, that is, if they notice them. Rather, respondents tend to adjust their innovations that involve guest practices or that are visible to guests. For example, respondent IL.5 had installed a new timer system for their showers with the help of a technician who

unfortunately passed away. When the respondent wanted to copy the system in their new buildings, they were not able to copy it exactly the same, which resulted in guests having bad experiences. As they explain: "And then we had problems, because people had bad experiences, […] and that must not happen, because then you have people working against you," which made them change their shower heads instead (IL.5). The quotation exemplifies the importance that the guest experience has to the campsites.

Sorting waste is met with the most resistance among respondents. As Klejnen et al. (2009) have found, when an initiative conflicts with people's current habits, that initiative is likely to be met with a significant amount of resistance. Recycling is, however, a special innovation because oftentimes, introducing that innovation was not the campsites' own idea and some have introduced it reluctantly, as discussed in section 6.3.3 on the influence of policy in driving innovation. Respondent IM.17 who has a small campsite and not much time to check if guests sort correctly experiences a lot of issues with getting guests to sort their waste and uses the word 'impossible' twice when talking about changing the guests' behavior. Respondent IM.12 who is not very interested in handling the waste for guests similarly says that "it is difficult to train people to do it" (IM.12). Respondent IM.14 who wants guests to understand the importance of sorting waste explains, "it is habits that must be changed" (IM.14). Finally, the following quotation encapsulates who the customers are that most of the respondents claim resist recycling the most:

"I don't think it is the easiest. Because that age group, 40-50, they don't care. The elderly care. The young care. The middle group is completely indifferent. Now we struggle with it" (IL.8).

The quotations reflect a common feeling among particularly the less innovative and the medium innovative campsites which is that the resistance of their guests is difficult to deal with and that their habits are difficult to change. However, the ways that the campsites deal with this resistance differs. The less innovative respondents that have introduced recycling have generally not come very far in terms of adjusting their recycling initiatives which perhaps indicates that some campsites within this group tend to be more reactive than proactive when it comes to sustainability (IL.1, IL.4, IL.7, IL.8, IL.9, IL.10). The medium innovative respondents generally seem to have come further in relation to adjusting their recycling to accommodate and perhaps change the behavior of their guests (IM.14, IM.15, IM.16, IM.17). To exemplify, one is planning a cartoon character that encourages kids to recycle in collaboration with an artist (IM.15), and two others have tried to put signs on the containers (IM.14, IM.17). Interestingly, the highly innovative campsites overall appear to be much more positive with regard to being able to change guests' behavior. Some were also already working with sorting trash before it became a rule (IH.22, IH.23, IH.24, IH.26), and it seems that this proactiveness

is important in terms of remaining positive that the issue of getting guests to sort waste can be solved (IH.23, IH.24, IH.26).

To summarize, the respondents generally do not test their ideas prior to implementation because the innovations are often expensive and make little sense to actually test. They rarely adjust innovations that do not involve guest practices, but if an innovation involves guest practices and guests either have a bad experience with the innovation or resist it, then respondents are likely to change it. A key example is recycling, and both the medium and highly innovative respondents have come furthest in the adjustment process. The highly innovative respondents also appear more positive about the guests' behavior than the other groups of respondents.

6.4.5 Evaluation

In the period after implementation, the innovation is often assessed according to how successful it was. With relation to product innovations, a common success criterion is rate of adoption by users that depends on certain characteristics, such as whether the product solves a problem for said user (Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2019, 881). However, since a lot of the innovations are process innovations, their main purposes are to increase efficiency, which further depends on how the respondents define efficiency (Hjalager, 2010, 2). Furthermore, within the literature on service innovation in general, it appears to be common to examine whether innovations are successful via measures of customer satisfaction (Truong, 2020). In this section, the respondents' ways to evaluate their initiatives are discussed. However, it generally seems that the respondents evaluate their innovations very little, if at all.

A common way to evaluate a sustainable initiative among the respondents is to examine how much their consumption of water, electricity and other resources was reduced following the introduction of the initiative. Savings as a criterion is found within all three groups of respondents, but it is slightly more pronounced among the less and medium innovative respondents (IL.5, IL.6, IL.9, IM.13, IM.17, IM.18, IM.20, IH.22, IH.25). One respondent exemplifies this focus on savings regarding a timer in their showers; "it has actually made a big difference. We have saved nearly 20% in water by having it" (IM.13). These savings are thus related to economic benefits, however, as another respondent says, economic savings are not the sole criterion for evaluating initiatives:

"We have some really good water savers, so people do not feel that even though they only get 1/3 of the water they normally would get, then it does not feel as if they get no water" (IM.17).

Considerations of the guests' experience is also important, particularly when it comes to initiatives that may affect guests negatively, such as not having enough water to shower properly. Both of these quotations also demonstrate another commonality among the respondents, which is that they tend to look at numerical proof of their savings when evaluating their process innovations. According to Truong et al., (2020), innovations tend to solve problems for customers and then the customers' reaction to the innovation is important to evaluate on. However, evaluating according to guest satisfaction is not common among respondents. Indeed, the respondents that appear to evaluate their innovations based on guest satisfaction are found mainly within the highly innovative group of respondents who develop other types of innovations, such as experiences for guests that thus involve the guests. However, two of the highly innovative respondents mention guest satisfaction very briefly, and thus do not seem to have a formal process for evaluating satisfaction (IH.21, IH.24). They merely seem to notice how excited guests are about the sustainable initiatives. The last respondent intends to formally distribute questionnaires asking guests to evaluate the campsites' sustainable initiatives (IH.25), but no other campsite formally measures guest satisfaction.

In summary, the respondents evaluate their innovations to a very limited extent. Respondents within all groups look at whether they have reduced their consumption or saved money, however, for the innovations that are outward facing, the guests' reactions are taken into consideration as well. A few of the highly innovative respondents mention guest satisfaction as an evaluation parameter, but only one intends to formally evaluate guest satisfaction via a questionnaire. Evaluation of the idea is thus not a significant stage in the innovation process for the campsites.

6.4.6 Sub-conclusion innovation process

These findings have led to a better understanding of how campsites in Denmark engage in sustainable innovation. The innovation process is visualized in table 4. The table outlines the similarities and differences between the less, medium, and highly innovative campsites as they navigate the innovation process.

Innovation stage	General findings	Differences		
		Less innovative	**Medium innovative**	**Highly innovative**
1. Idea generation	Do not utilize employee knowledge Relies on human capital of decision-maker Utilize external knowledge sources, particularly consultants, suppliers and contractors, as well as through participation in projects.	Utilize external knowledge from consultants Participation in projects and courses through local DMO or industry association Rely on knowledge and inspiration from suppliers and contractors	Utilize external knowledge from consultants Participation in projects and courses through local DMO or industry association Rely on knowledge and inspiration from suppliers and contractors	Utilize external knowledge from consultants Mindset of local contractors and suppliers does not live u Acquire knowledge from networks
2. Decision-making	No formal decision-making procedures Discuss ideas with partner/co-owner Advice from network	Mitigate financial risks via cost/benefit	Mitigate financial risks via cost/benefit	Financial risks not as important, sustainability seemingly more important

3. Acquisition of support prior to implementation	Suppliers provide advice, information, and install process innovations	Extensive use of suppliers	Some use of suppliers	Limited use of suppliers
	Consultants provide access to expert knowledge and expedite the innovation process	Limited use of consultations	Extensive use of consultants	Limited use of consultants, but use network of other campsites and industry association to a greater extent
4. Implementation	No testing prior to implementation			
	Adjustments common after implementation	Limited adjustments made	More adjustments made	More adjustments made
5. Evaluation	Not a significant stage in the innovation process			
	Evaluate by how much they have reduced costs or consumption	Evaluate by reduction of cost/ consumption	Evaluate by reduction of cost/ consumption	Limited evaluation by reduction of cost/ consumption
	Guest satisfaction sometimes taken into consideration	Limited consideration of guest satisfaction	Limited consideration of guest satisfaction	Take guest satisfaction into consideration

Table 4 Characteristics of the innovation process in less, medium, and highly innovative respondents

However, while the innovation process takes the shape of these five stages, it should be noted that sometimes the different phases of the process relate and feed into each other. As the CEO of campsite IM.15 explains, the combination of waste sorting being a problem and an artist suggesting creating a waste sorting cartoon for kids led to an adjustment of their waste sorting system as well as the new innovation of the cartoon. Nevertheless, as the analysis reveals, the campsites generally go through these different stages and do so differently. In relation to Rodriguez-Sanchez et al.'s (2019) map of the innovation journey, the campsites generally stand out by not testing or evaluating their innovations

to a great extent. This may be a consequence of the fact that they tend to mainly introduce process innovations.

6.5 Barriers and overcoming them

As Warren, Becken and Coghlan (2018) explain, there are multiple barriers to success when working with sustainability-oriented innovation (1799). The survey respondents were asked about some of the internal and external barriers to sustainable innovation in accordance with the barriers identified in the literature review. As the survey findings reveal (see Appendix B, pp. 16-17), 49% of survey respondents feel that they merely have time to introduce sustainable initiatives to a limited extent. The second most common barrier is being short on staff, and the third most significant barrier relates to the financial resources of the campsite, where 41% of the campsites chose the option of 'to a small extent' in relation to them having the necessary finances to be able to initiate sustainable projects. In this section, some of the barriers which were identified through the survey analysis and subsequently investigated in more detail through the interviews are presented and further examined. The barriers discussed in this section are thus 1) economic constraints, 2) time and resources, and 3) rules and regulations.

6.5.1 Economic constraints

This section revolves around economic constraints as a barrier. The notion that tourism businesses experience financial constraints is widely acknowledged in the literature on tourism accommodations (Sharma et al., 2020; Calabrese et al., 2018; Hjalager, 2010; Carter, Whiley and Knight, 2004; Tzschentke, Kirk and Lynch, 2004; Hobbson and Essex, 2001). As Kraus et al. (2022) explain, SMEs within tourism often experience instability in terms of their economy due to factors such as size, politics, and regulations that affect them greatly. The campsites within the interview sample specifically navigate and experience barriers related to 1) economic constraints 2) and funding for projects.

Economic constraints are mentioned by 21 out of 26 interview respondents, and they commonly find sustainable expensive or feel their financial considerations keep them from introducing sustainable innovations. As Hjalager (2002) argues, SMEs are the most common business size in the tourism sector and their small size affects their financial stability as well as their sources

of income. Nguyen et al. (2021, p. 3) further explain that "of the firm characteristics, firm size is the most widely cited influencer of innovation because it reflects a firm's resources. Due to resource constraints, smaller firms are less likely to invest in innovation." Even though the number of employees vary among the campsites, they are all SMEs, which indicates that they are more vulnerable to instability in their revenue streams as well as a changing market (Hobbson and Essex, 2001). Several campsites within the less innovative group mention that economic constraints are an issue for them (IL.1, IL.2, IL.3, IL.6, IL.8). These respondents generally also have fewer employees compared to other respondents, as seen in table 1. Several less innovative campsites struggle with not having the adequate financial resources necessary for implementing sustainable innovations. Respondent IL.1 has considered several sustainable innovations; however, they do not have the economic means necessary to begin the process of implementing them. Furthermore, respondent IL.3 explains that even though they discuss sustainable innovations with others, they are hesitant to begin the process of introducing them due to financial considerations. Generally, the less innovative respondents do not appear to overcome the barrier of not having adequate financial resources as well as the other groups of respondents, although respondents IL.7 and IL.9 who apply for funding and participate in several projects with DMOs or business centers stand out from the rest of the group.

The medium innovative group of respondents also experience difficulty with economic constraints, but several campsites within the group attempt to overcome this barrier by applying for funding. However, they also experience issues with the process of applying for funding (IM.12, IM.16, IM.18, IM.10, IM.20). For example, respondent IM.18 explains that they need support to complete certain sustainable innovations, and that the funding that they collected from the state only covered the fees related to consultancy on how to implement sustainable projects. This leads to substantial frustration, both with regard to the lack of financial support and the prospect of not being able to implement the sustainable initiatives that they planned with the consultant. For respondent IM.12 the more dominant barrier connected to funding consists of human resources and time spent on the applications for funding. As they explain, "it is really time-consuming, I tell you, everything […] to get the funding straight, project descriptions" (IM.12) They elaborate that the energy that they need to put into the applications is too much for a small business to handle. The quotations exemplify the issues that the medium innovative campsites have with the current funding opportunities, which is that funding is not adequate and applying for funding is too difficult. However, several medium innovative campsites are able to complete sustainable projects despite these issues.

The group of highly innovative respondents also express that it is quite expensive to work with sustainability. Respondent IH.21 mentions that: "it is expensive, and we need to save up a little money for it" (IH.21). Additionally, respondent IH.25 explains that: "the good solutions, the

ones that really make a difference, they are just really, really expensive" (IH.25). This common perception of finances being an issue does not seem to impact the highly innovative respondents as much. The reason why seems to be connected to a general awareness of the financial commitment that they need to make. Another explanation may be that they also appear more self-sufficient in terms of being able to put ideas into action quite easily. As respondent IH.21 states, they consider themselves fortunate to be able to do things themselves and save money and say that: "You can have an idea, and then make it happen, that is lovely" (IH.21). Furthermore, respondent IH.23 explains how they have a project for building a recycled hut for plants, which is something that they intend to build with the permanent residents of the campsite. Respondent IH.26 similarly describes how they, before initiating new ideas on sustainable innovations, normally reflect upon: "what kind of options do you have to do it? And that might lead to some people saying that this should not be prioritized as much" (IH.26). Therefore, it seems that the group of highly innovative respondents carefully consider their financial capacity before embarking on new sustainable projects. However, that does not keep them from sustainable innovation.

Furthermore, some of the highly innovative respondents have been successful in securing more financial resources for their sustainable initiatives which helps them overcome the barrier of financial constraints. Both respondents IH.22 and IH.25 have received funding to help them with different initiatives through different projects. They do not appear to experience the same problems as the medium innovative group of respondents in relation to applying for funding. Additionally, respondent IH.26 has introduced an environmental fee where guests pay 15 DKK per night, and as they explain, that money goes towards:

"Daily operations […] and it covers a lot of expenses with recycling and it can cover some of the new things we have to do in relation to Green Stay. That is what the money goes towards. And I will say, we have not heard a single negative thing about the fee after having introduced it" (IH.26).

The respondent further explains that they are very transparent with their guests regarding what the money goes towards, and this transparency has helped them avoid confrontations. It thus seems that the highly innovative respondents are better able to overcome the barrier of economic constraints by both being able to complete several projects on their own, saving up, applying for funding, and being creative in terms asking guests to pay part of the cost as well.

In summary, all the campsites are occupied by financial issues. The less innovative campsites do not appear to overcome this barrier as well as the others. Campsites within both the less and medium innovative groups attempt to mitigate the issue by applying for funding, although several medium innovative campsites find the application process challenging. However, for the highly

innovative campsites, finances do not appear to be as decisive a factor in their decision to implement an innovation as it seems to be for the two other groups of campsites.

6.5.2 Time and human resources

Another barrier that seems to interfere with how the campsites work with sustainable innovations relates to human resources and time. As Hobbson and Essex (2001, p. 136) explain, SMEs tend to experience "limitations of scale and availability of time and expertise." Furthermore, Hjalager (2002) mentions that there is a tendency among SMEs to prioritize daily tasks due to their size, which further impacts their sustainable ambitions. The interviewees similarly experience issues relating to time and not having adequate human resources for implementing more sustainable projects. The major thematical issues related to time and resources which are identified and examined in this section, are 1) daily tasks and 2) human resources.

According to Warren, Becken and Coghlan (2018 p. 1795), time can be an internal barrier for SMEs because "new concepts require additional time and energy over and above 'normal' business." This reflection seems to correspond with the experience of several campsites within the interview sample, where daily operations take priority for campsites. To exemplify, respondent IM.19 explains that they wanted to participate in an organized project on sustainability, however, they had to prioritize daily operations. The issue of not having sufficient time for sustainable innovation is mentioned by campsites within all three groups (IL.7, IL.9, IM.12, IM.16, IM.17, IM.19, IM.20, IH.23, IH.24, IH.25). The less innovative respondents explain that the workload and busy summer months are stressful and that it is important to be aware of their work environment. As respondent IL.7 describes: "it is extremely important that everybody is comfortable" (IL.7) in relation to working at the campsite during peak season where they are very busy. They are thus careful about how they spend their energy, especially because they are themselves involved in the site as a family and employees. This is further emphasized by respondent IL.9, who explains that daily tasks at the campsite generally demand all of their energy, and that this affects the time and energy left for working with sustainability. These reflections seem to fit with Sampaio, Thomas, and Font's (2012) findings that SMEs might discard environmental initiatives when being exposed to heightened levels of stress.

Some respondents within the medium innovative group seem to struggle with dividing their time between daily operations and sustainability. Respondent IM.13 describes that working with sustainability "is something that you have to do at the same time as all the other things, and that can

be quite a challenge, especially when it involves large projects. Then you need to allocate time to see it through" (IM.13). The quotation exemplifies that respondents often have to strike a balance between working on sustainable projects and keeping up with daily operations. As Warren et al. (2018) have found, hiring more employees can be a solution to the issue of not having enough time to work with sustainability. Some medium innovative respondents do attempt to overcome the barrier via considerations of hiring more employees. As respondent IM.16 who spends a lot of time and resources making sure waste is sorted correctly explains, they have considered hiring another employee to keep an eye on the guests' recycling. However, as they explain, lack of financial resources to pay wage is an issue that might prevent this from happening (IM.16). Relatedly, respondent IM.13 thinks that it would be very helpful to recruit more employees to help them with their work on sustainability, but also note that it is not financially possible for them and other campsites in general due to their size and general limited resources.

A few highly innovative campsites similarly mention something that relates to not having enough time to implement and maintain sustainable innovations (IH.23, IH.25, IH.26). In relation to certifications, respondent IH.26 describes that the criteria of the Green Stay certification can be overwhelming: But I can't remember how many points there are. I believe it is 200-300 points, that you are measured by […] It is really a lot" (IH.26). However, the highly innovative respondents appear to overcome issues relating to human resources by reaching out to colleagues from other campsites or using the networks established by their industry association (IH.21, IH.22, IH.23, IH.24, IH.26). As respondent IH.23 explains: "So then we use each other, right? I have some good and close colleagues […] so then you call each other and help each other" (IH.23). As previously discussed, the highly innovative respondents generally utilize their networks more, and the quotation exemplifies how they benefit from this by being able to source help from their networks. Related, Nguyen et al. (2021, p. 6) argue that collaboration is a crucial for success among SMEs in tourism since: "it allows them to access their collaborator's resources." Accordingly, campsites within all three groups have positive experiences with external networks or other collegial collaborations. Respondent IL.9 exemplifies this by describing that they exchange their experiences and expertise on sustainable projects in the networks that they are associated with. Similarly, respondent IM.19 emphasizes that they have gained new useful perspectives on sustainability from their participation in several networks where they exchange ideas and experiences. Using networks to a greater extent may thus help the less and medium innovative campsites better overcome the barrier of lack of human resources.

In summary, time appears to be a significant barrier to all of the sites in the sample in some way. For the less innovative respondents, daily operations take priority, whereas the medium

innovative respondents attempt to overcome the barrier by hiring more employees. However, their financial situation keeps them from doing so. The highly innovative respondents do not appear to be particularly affected by the barrier of time and human resources, which seems to be connected to an increased use of their network, which consists of other campsites and industry association networks.

6.5.3 Rules and regulations

How policies and regulations potentially drive innovation has already been examined previously in section 6.3.3 on the influence of policies. This section examines how rules and regulations sometimes pose as barriers to sustainable innovation among the campsites. As explained in the literature review, political decisions have been described as one of the barriers to innovation. The issue of changing regulations generally is a major issue in the field of tourism, with SMEs being particularly exposed (Kraus et al, 2022). Sundbo et al (2006) further explain how societal tendencies, as well as changing policies greatly affect the innovativeness of tourism businesses. In section 6.3.3 on the influence of policies, the analysis revealed strong mindsets towards the new regulations imposed by the government. How their mindsets and reactions to barriers affect how they overcome them is examined in this section. But before this, the main barriers to innovation related to regulations are presented. For the campsites within the interview sample, the main regulative barriers to innovation are related to nature protection and the imposing of innovation from the government and other institutions. These include 1) regulations hindering innovation, and 2) regulations being too theoretical. The findings will be presented in two stages; 1) how campsites with negative mindsets overcome barriers, and 2) how campsites with positive mindsets overcome the same barriers.

Starting with regulations that hinder innovation, this barrier is present within interviews with several campsites that discuss the topics of planning regulations and the imposing of regulations. In particular, planning regulations related to nature conservation prove to be a major barrier to innovation. Several campsites mention that, despite these regulations being put in place in order to aid sustainability, it turns out to be counterproductive as it works against sustainable innovation within a number of the campsites. These barriers do not occur in the imposing of new projects, but rather as something that hinders campsites from initiating new projects beyond the imposed innovation. One of the less innovative campsites within the interview sample finds that they are restricted due to rules by The Danish Society for Nature Conservation (IL. 7). Similar statements are found within interviews of several other campsites. Respondent IL. 9 expresses their frustration that due to coastal protection regulations, they are not able to follow through with planned projects:

"Not something that we can do anything about […] But since we're located close to water, we have to take into account that there are some regulations, coastal protection, and what not. I don't even remember what all of that is called. We can't just build anywhere. We have this area at the water, where we cannot build anything […] Camping is allowed, except from between November 1st and April 1st. During winter camping is not allowed" (IL. 9).

As the quotation demonstrates, a clear frustration is present within the campsites that wish to innovate, but that are simply not able to do so due to said regulations. However, it seems as if some of the medium and highly innovative campsites that share a positive mindset more easily come up with solutions and overcome these barriers. Respondent IH.21 is one example of a campsite with a positive mindset. They encounter challenges related to planning regulations within coastal protection, which affects them due to their location:

"We're located within the coastal protection zone. We're right at the beach, which means that we technically can't even pick a bouquet of flowers to put on the table […] We need to ask for permission for everything we do" (IH. 21).

However, these challenges do not seem to hinder them from implementing new projects:

"But I must say, we're quite good at getting exemptions from nearly all regulations. If you just make sure to include something regarding sustainability, then it's not that difficult to get through that" (IH. 21).

Despite some of the campsites managing to overcome the barrier of regulations, a general annoyance with regulations not making much sense is still present within several of the campsites. They point out that regulations are based on a theoretical framework and lack a practical outlook in order to work in reality. Respondent IM. 20 is one of the campsites that expresses this mindset:

"The thing is that sometimes they make these rules or criteria based on theoretical phrases or numbers on a piece of paper. But it's not guaranteed that it'll work in reality. And well, we've had quite a bit of experience within certain areas, where I... This might be because I've been in the field for 30 years, but I'll just open my mouth and tell them that this is not going to work. You can't make me do this, or something like that" (IM. 20).

This quotation illustrates how this interviewee is frustrated with the lack of practical, real-life knowledge of the politicians or rule makers that impose these regulations on the campsites. But it also reflects how the interviewee seems to be hindering themselves in overcoming the barrier due to their negative mindset on these. Instead, the barrier is an excuse to end projects, or to simply not be accepting towards new initiatives introduced from the government. More of the medium innovative

campsites share a lack of trust in the politicians imposing these regulations; “I have to admit, that I don’t really trust [the politicians’] rules as they tend to just flip 180 degrees. And then in the end, the rules you agreed upon didn’t work out in the end” (IM. 17). This quotation reflects the campsite’s mindset towards regulations, indirectly saying that it is not worth the risk of implementing certain regulation-based innovations as regulations change at random. Another reason for this mistrust comes from the campsites feeling as if the municipalities are not able to oversee and manage the new regulations. Respondent IL. 1 who struggles with the implementation of waste sorting explains:

“It’s not really... It’s something we have to coordinate ourselves somehow. It has not been coordinated by the municipality. Since it’s affecting businesses, it technically has nothing to do with the municipality. So it’s the businesses’ own responsibility. So now we’re trying to come up with a collaboration with the port, the assembly hall and the boarding school and places like that. This way this waste sorting could maybe be a bit more sustainable and make more sense for everyone” (IL. 1).

This mindset is also highlighted by respondent IL. 7, who also points out that these imposed rules are being conveyed to the campsites by staff at the municipality who does not necessarily understand what they actually entail:

“The biggest [challenge] is the regulations. Because the municipality are evaluating on rules that they don’t understand […] It’s a big challenge, because the 90 municipalities understand the environmental laws differently. Same goes for the planning- and environmental laws and things like that. That is the biggest challenge. [...] The issue is that the rules are interpret by people who doesn’t really know anything about it” (IL. 7).

What the campsites with these negative mindsets on the regulations have in common is that their mindsets seem to hinder them from overcoming regulatory barriers that they might face. Not all campsites share this negative perspective on barriers regarding regulations. As the highly innovative campsites, and a few of the less and medium innovative campsites, have previous experience with waste sorting at their campsites, they have more ease overcoming any barriers. Furthermore, the positive mindset found in some of the campsites, as addressed in section 6.3.3, seems to help them come up with ideas to overcome these particular barriers (IL. 7, IL. 10, IM.13, IM.14, IM.15, IM.19, IH.22, IH.23, IH.24, IH.26). Respondent IM.19 exemplifies how they need to think creatively in order to overcome barriers:

“It requires a bit of creativity. […] If you lack the encouragement and don’t find it fun, then don’t do it. Just don’t initiate it. You need an excess amount of energy” (IM.19)

This quote highlights how not only a positive mindset towards regulations, but also that being proactive is crucial in succeeding with different projects that might need to overcome several barriers. Ultimately, how the campsites overcome barriers related to regulations, comes down to their mindsets and reactions to these. Some of the medium innovative campsites are positive about being able to figure out a good solution for sorting trash (IM.13, IM.14, IM.15, IM.19). As one says "it will probably come along the way" about the municipality figuring out a better solution for sorting trash (IM.15). This respondent is also actively thinking about solutions, such as making a trash sorting cartoon for the children to be engaged as well (IM.15). Also within the group of less innovative campsites, a less negative reaction to the regulations is noticed. Some of these campsites were sorting waste before it became a requirement, meaning that now they just have to sort trash into more fractions (IL.6). These respondents appear to be more positive about this new regulation as opposed to the ones that have not tried it before (IL.6, IL.7, IL.10). One of them has even implemented fines for the guests if they do not sort correctly (IL.7), and it generally seems that the campsites that have proactively tried sorting trash before feel better prepared to deal with it (IL.6, IL.7, IL.10).

In summary, for a majority of the campsites, the regulations that previously were described as drivers also happen to be barriers for several of them. Different regulations have been put in place in order to aid sustainability, yet the same regulations hinder the campsites from implementing new sustainable projects. Another recurring theme among the campsites interviewed is the notion that regulations and policies that affect campsites have not been adapted to fit into the campsites' reality. The interviewees find that the regulations are too theoretical and lack a practical perspective to ease implementation. Ultimately, what plays an important role in them succeeding in overcoming said barriers seems to be their mindsets towards them.

6.5.4 Sub-conclusion barriers

This analysis has thus revealed what barriers the campsites face as well as how they overcome them. These findings are visualized in table 5 , which illustrates the characteristics of barriers to sustainable innovation in less, medium, and highly innovative campsites.

Barrier	General findings	Differences		
		Less innovative	**Medium innovative**	**Highly innovative**
Economic constraints	Occupied by financial concerns, barrier can be overcome by applying for funding	Seems to be less able to overcome barrier	Apply for funding to overcome barrier, but funding process is challenging	Economic constraints less of a concern, better able to overcome barrier by successful funding bids and by being able to complete projects on their own.
Time and human resources	Limited time available and lack of employees for sustainable projects. Barrier can be overcome by actively reaching out to network	Daily operations take priority, seems to be less able to overcome barrier	Some attempt to overcome barrier by hiring employees, but are unable to do so due to financial constraints	Utilize network consisting of other campsites and industry association networks to overcome barrier
Rules and regulations	Campsites are affected by planning regulations and imposed regulations	Negative mindset towards regulations makes it difficult to overcome barriers Planning regulations hinder sustainable projects	Mixed group of positive and negative mindsets Planning regulations hinders sustainable projects Imposed regulations become a barrier to more innovation	Proactive behavior and positive mindsets aid in overcoming barriers Previous experience help in the implementation of new regulations

		Imposed regulations become a barrier to more innovation		

Table 5 Characteristics of barriers to sustainable innovation in less, medium and highly innovative campsites

While Warren, Becken and Coghlan (2018) have identified several barriers to sustainable innovation, which include human resources, social technology, knowledge, values, finance, policy regulations, as well as risk management in their study of a single tourism accommodation, these findings reveal that the campsites within the interview sample mainly face barriers relating to economic constraints, time and human resources, as well as rules and regulations and that they have different ways of attempting to overcome them.

7. Discussion of ways to overcome barriers to innovation

In the following section, possible ways to overcome barriers to innovation will be discussed. As several respondents within the interview sample mention, they have participated in different projects to help them in their green transition. Examples include Dansk Kyst- og Naturturisme (DKNT)'s project called Camp Now, a project targeted towards sustainable development within campsites in Denmark (DKNT, n.d.)., and Bæredygtig Bundlinje Bornholm, that similarly helped SMEs with their green transition (Business Center Bornholm, n.d.). For the participating campsites, the projects have been a great help in rethinking sustainability and coming up with new ideas on innovations to implement at their respective campsites. However, the Camp Now project merely involved 10 participants, and Bæredygtig Bundlinje Bornholm was only available to businesses on the island of Bornholm. As the respondents within the interview sample mention, they often face barriers relating to financial considerations, the time that they have available, as well as regulative barriers. Therefore, if VisitDenmark and thus the Danish government hopes to help campsites develop more sustainably and work towards the green transition, then it is necessary to help more campsites at a time to overcome barriers to sustainable innovation. In this section, different ways to help more campsites overcome these barriers are thus discussed.

As Saarinen (2022) argues, there is a need for radical changes in how sustainable development within tourism is governed in order to foster more innovations in sustainable tourism. However, findings from the analysis reveal that the interference of official institutions is handled the right way. The literature that shaped the survey questions pointed in the direction that regulations were simply barriers that SMEs are particularly exposed to (Kraus et al., 2022). However, for the campsites interviewed, regulations and policies play a dual role of being both a driver of innovation as well as a barrier, particularly in relation to sorting waste. New regulations regarding waste sorting meant that all campsites were forced to implement this within their campsites as of January 1st, 2023. The reception of this introduction was rather mixed; however, the campsites are implementing this innovation, which shows that even though several campsites were against this imposed innovation, rules and regulations sometimes drive innovation.

However, for a majority of the campsites, these regulations turn into barriers. An interesting finding is that several of the campsites interviewed find that regulations are barriers to more innovation due to the fact that the imposed innovation takes up all the focus at the campsites. Some campsites appeared overwhelmed with the new, imposed task, such as waste sorting, which means they do not have any energy and resources to explore other innovations. Furthermore, the time and resources which could have been used elsewhere on other projects instead go towards trying to successfully implement the imposed innovation. A recurring theme among the campsites interviewed is the notion that regulations and policies that affect campsites have not been adapted to fit into the campsites' reality. The interviewees find that the regulations are too theoretical and lack a practical perspective to ease implementation. This is not only applicable for regulations which impose the implementation of innovations. A similar pattern is noticed in regard to nature protection agendas and restrictions put in place by The Danish Society for Nature Conservation. Several campsites mention that despite these regulations being put in place in order to aid sustainability, they become counterproductive because they work against sustainable innovation within a number of the campsites. Ultimately, these reflections highlight the importance of governmental involvement in sustainable development in SMEs, including campsites. It is however necessary to act carefully for involvement from governmental institutions, as to not impose regulations on the campsites, since it seems to be a barrier and frustration which might hinder their sustainable innovative projects.

To this end, some scholars advocate an approach that limits the generation of growth and economic gain in tourism to better promote sustainability within tourism (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018). However, the findings in the analysis demonstrate that financial considerations are key for sustainable innovation to occur and that some form of economic gain from sustainable innovations is necessary. As the analysis has revealed, the less and medium innovative respondents tend to be

particularly concerned about economy. Economization and efficiency are key drivers for them to introduce sustainable process innovations such as heating pumps, solar panels, etc. However, such innovations are typically also expensive, and the less and medium innovative respondents in particular consider cost vs. benefit to a great extent when deciding which innovations to introduce. Even though economization and efficiency are key drivers of sustainable innovation, the respondents also consider economic constraints a major barrier. As SMEs, they have few economic resources to embark on new projects and have to carefully plan which projects to begin. Therefore, the economic context of the campsites has to be considered when trying to address the promotion of sustainable innovation among campsites.

In particular, creating more financial incentives for sustainable innovation could help campsites overcome the barrier of economic constraints. Examples within the data demonstrate that funding can be of significant help for campsites. Indeed, they sometimes wait for funding opportunities to be able to complete projects, and lack of funding opportunities can stop sustainable innovation in its tracks. Funding opportunities thus help campsites introduce more sustainable innovations, which fits with the findings of scholars who have concluded that public funding can help small businesses innovate more in general (Wang et al., 2017; Lanahan, 2016). However, as Wang et al. (2017) argue, the actual process of applying for funding has not been examined to a great extent in academic literature. The findings in the analysis indicate that measures that make the process of applying for funding easier are necessary, because finding and applying for funding is challenging for the campsites. This creates inequality in terms of who gets to benefit from these funding opportunities. As respondent IM.12 who runs the campsite by herself and struggles to make ends meet explains, applying for funding is very demanding and the process itself is not designed for an SME with limited human resources.

As the statement above indicates, time is also a common barrier to innovation within SMEs, including in the sample at hand. According to the findings, daily operations at the campsites take up much of their time, and their sustainable innovations seem to be of less priority. However, several campsites seem to plan for sustainable innovations either way. Tourism literature on accommodations and SMEs suggest that the lack of employees can keep campsites from reaching their goals and ambitions for sustainable innovations (Blichfeldt (2009; Hjalager 2010; Hobbson and Essex 2001). According to the findings, this seems to be the case for the highly innovative sites, who might have bigger ambitions in terms of sustainability endeavors and struggle to meet these due to lack of employees. In contrast, the less and medium sites appear to have a more reactive mindset when facing sustainable projects, as these are more in need and less a strategically planned goal. The findings contradict the argument of Nguyen et al. (2021, p. 2) who explain that SMEs might be more

flexible for change and more likely to be able to "respond more swiftly to new innovation opportunities, changes in tourism markets or emerging customer needs" due to their small size. Additionally, Blichfeldt (2009) describe how the size of a business does not reveal how entrepreneurial they are is emphasized elsewhere in the literature. Interestingly, when referring to the findings of the highly innovative campsites, they appear to be more driven by personal engagement and green values. They work proactively with sustainability which suggests that those drivers are key for sustainable innovation to happen even though SMEs supposedly should be less prone to innovate.

Furthermore, it seems that external aid in planning and implementing sustainable innovations, possibly from the DMOs, would be helpful for particularly the less and medium innovative sites with regard to their limited financial resources and time. Correspondingly, Wang (2008) argues that in order to have a well-functioning collaboration between a DMO and an SME, the DMO has to better comprehend the requirements and often various demands of all types of tourism businesses. In relation to the findings, collaboration does seem to be important for particularly the highly innovative campsites. They appear to generally have a larger network than the other groups of respondents and frequently reach out to campsites and their industry associations (IH.21, IH.23, IH.24, IH.25, IH.26). This highlights the possible positive influence of networks as help to pursue more sustainable projects, and further empathizes the notion that DMOs and other official institutions should facilitate these.

8. Conclusion

This thesis set out to investigate how Danish campsites engage in sustainable innovation, what barriers they face, and how they overcome them. To answer the problem formulation, we initially conducted a survey with 85 participants and subsequently 26 interviews with Danish campsites. The survey analysis created a basis for further in-depth examination regarding how Danish campsites engage in sustainable innovation, what barriers they face, and how they overcome those barriers.

A key finding of this thesis is that campsites vary in the way that they engage in sustainable innovation and the innovation process according to how innovative they are. In the analysis, we thus divided the respondents according to innovativeness by referring to number of innovations within a timeframe of 2 years. This resulted in three groups: less innovative, medium innovative, and highly innovative. Innovation begins with drivers of sustainable innovation. The campsites generally have four drivers: economization and efficiency, customer demands, the influence of policy, and green values. In relation to economization, the less and medium innovative

respondents in particular want to reduce their energy consumption and switch old and broken facilities to more energy efficient ones. Efficiency in terms of time is important to the medium innovative campsites, whereas the highly innovative campsites seem to be more interested in the sustainable outcome than economy. The demand of customers seems to occupy all campsites in the sample, but the medium and highly innovative respondents reflect more on attracting the 'green' segment. The medium innovative campsites in particular seem to be motivated by the prospect of gaining a competitive advantage from working with sustainability. Being able to market certifications can motivate medium and highly innovative campsites, but the highly innovative campsites in particular appear to be more driven by how it helps them strategize and plan sustainable innovations. Furthermore, recent regulations and policymaking can force campsites to introduce certain innovations, such as waste sorting. The result of this is a reactive behavior in which the campsites, despite negative mindsets towards the regulations, simply obey the rules. The highly innovative campsites seem to have a more positive approach to the matter, and their mindset seems to be connected to their prior experience with innovations and general proactiveness in relation to sustainability. This correlates with findings by Warren, Becken, and Coghlan's findings that SMEs that are new to innovation might be more reactive, before progressing on to a more proactive behavior (2018). However, the less innovative campsites do not appear to be proactive in relation to their green values. For the medium and especially highly innovative campsites, their personal engagement seems to drive them to be more active in relation to sustainable innovations.

By further investigating the innovation process that the campsites go through, it became evident that the campsites generally go through five phases in the innovation process. These findings thus address a gap in the literature regarding the understanding of innovation in campsites (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2020), as well as innovation in tourism in general (Rodriguez-Sanchez, 2019; Pikkemaat, 2019). The phases that the campsites go through are thus idea generation, decision-making, acquisition of support, implementation, and evaluation. Generally, the interview respondents appear to utilize the knowledge of their employees to a limited extent and rely on the human capital of the decision-maker as a consequence of the seasonality of their business. The respondents utilize knowledge from external sources to a greater extent, which fits with the findings of Thomas and Wood (2014). The interviewed campsites source external knowledge from consultants, suppliers and contractors, as well as through participation in different projects and courses. However, the highly innovative campsites differentiate themselves from the less and medium innovative campsites in not sourcing knowledge from their suppliers and contractors, or through participation in different projects and courses to a great extent. Instead, they find great value in acquiring support within their extended network. Furthermore, none of the campsites appear to have formal decision-making procedures, but

the less and medium innovative campsites sometimes discuss ideas with their co-owners or reach out to colleagues from other campsites to help them make their decision. The less and medium innovative respondents also considered financial risks to a great extent, whereas the highly innovative respondents were less concerned about risks. All three groups acquire support prior to implementation, primarily from suppliers, contractors and consultants. The less innovative and some medium innovative respondents prefer using suppliers and contractors with whom they have a good relationship to help them install energy-related innovations, and the medium innovative campsites use the expert consultants to a great extent as well. Some highly innovative campsites also draw on consultants and suppliers but are more likely to also reach out to colleagues from other campsites or to utilize their industry association. In Rodriguez-Sanchez et al.'s (2019) study of innovation in new-to-tourism entrepreneurs, both testing prior to implementation and evaluating ideas after implementation were important phases of the innovation process. However, testing ideas prior to implementation is not common because it is too expensive for the campsites and because the innovations that they introduce, such as heating pumps and solar panels, often come from suppliers who have tested extensively. Rather, campsites tend to adapt their innovations based on their guests' reactions to innovations that affect them. The medium and highly innovative respondents have come furthest in relation to adjusting their ideas. Generally, the respondents evaluate their ideas to a limited extent, and most often in relation to their savings or in the case of the highly innovative respondents, in relation to guest satisfaction.

When engaging in sustainable innovation, the respondents also face certain barriers, and they overcome these barriers differently. The barriers are: economic constraints, time and human resources, and finally regulations. All the campsites are occupied by financial issues. The less innovative campsites do not appear to overcome this barrier as well as the medium innovative campsites that tend to apply for more funding, although the funding process challenges them. The highly innovative respondents are not as preoccupied with financial constraints which seems to be connected to their ability to implement innovations themselves and use of funding opportunities. Time is also a significant barrier for all the campsites, and the less innovative campsites tend to prioritize daily operations, and the medium innovative respondents hope to hire employees but are unable to do so due to economic constraints. These findings cooperates Hobbson and Essex's statement that SMEs tend to experience "limitations of scale and availability of time and expertise" (2001). The highly innovative respondents seem to better overcome this barrier via increased use of their network, which consists of other campsites and industry association networks. Rules and regulations also act as barriers for the campsites because they can result in a lack of time to introduce other innovations. The more proactive respondents within the highly innovative group of campsites

are better able to overcome this barrier because they have gained experience with the innovation prior to it being imposed as a regulation. Furthermore, planning regulations are difficult to navigate for all respondents. However, a positive mindset is noticed within mainly the highly innovative campsites, but also a few of the less and medium campsites. This positive mindset appears to aid these campsites in having more ease navigating regulations. Furthermore, several campsites describe that rules and regulations often fail to take into consideration the reality of owning a campsite.

The analysis culminated in a discussion of possible ways to overcome barriers to sustainable innovation. Based on that discussion, we have several policy recommendations relating to how more Danish campsites can be helped to overcome barriers to innovation. This is illustrated by one respondent who expresses how both drivers and barriers affect them and their work with sustainable innovations:

"There are some things where it might be possible with some encouragement from politicians and things like that to make it more attractive for us smaller campsites with smaller operations to do more [sustainable] things. But the world is not like that. I have to admit that I do not really trust their rules, because they often seem to turn on a dime. And then those rules that they agreed upon, they did not go as planned in the end. I do not even know if I would dare do it [install solar panels], because it is a huge investment" (IM.17).

Based on the feedback from the participating campsites, these are our recommendations for political decisions related to sustainability and innovation in Danish campsites: Policy-makers should create more financial incentives for sustainable innovation. A suggestion is to make funding more accessible to campsites and further make the application process easier by offering the help of consultants. Furthermore, due to the limited time to work on sustainable innovations within SMEs, DMOs could contribute to their innovativeness in giving access to external aid in planning and implementing sustainable innovations. Finally, while the study found that imposed regulations does indeed drive innovation within the campsites, it should be noted that a better understanding of how Danish campsites functions and works in reality, could potentially prevent certain barriers related to imposed regulations. Based on the findings, this study thus suggests that a stronger collaboration between DMOs and SMEs could increase the understanding of campsite needs. Furthermore, DMOs are encouraged to take it upon themselves to facilitate network, groups, and other collaborations which will benefit campsites with pursuing more sustainable innovations.

Theoretically, this thesis contributes to existing literature on the innovation process by identifying and discussing the stages that campsites engaging in sustainable innovation go through. Firstly, it does this by mapping the innovation process of more than one campsite, which

is what previous studies have done (Font, English and Gkritzali, 2018; Blichfeldt, 2009). The thesis also addresses the "black box" that is the innovation process in academic literature (Rodriguez-Sanchez et al., 2019, p. 877). It does that by contributing with a better understanding of not just the innovation process among Danish campsites, but by also taking into consideration the factors that drive innovation prior to embarking on the innovation process, as well as by taking into account the barriers and ways those barriers are overcome. It also addresses a general lack of research regarding camping tourism (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2020), by contributing with knowledge specifically about how Danish campsites work with sustainability. Since we found that there are differences between campsites that are less, medium, and highly innovative measured by number of innovations introduced, a topic for future research could be to examine why some campsites introduce more innovations than others. Future research could also compare sustainable innovation to other types of innovation, such as digitalization, to examine whether the drivers, innovation process, and barriers differ. Similar research could also be conducted on other types of accommodation providers or outside of Denmark, particularly in consideration of the fact that regulations and support from DMOs are likely to differ. Furthermore, a more thorough analysis of the campsites' motivations for working with sustainability could also be interesting in consideration of our findings concerning drivers of innovation. Finally, it seems relevant to address the demand side's perceptions of the sustainable innovations that campsites introduce so campsites can gain more insight into their customers' behavior and wishes.

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