

ABSTRACT

This research was conducted in order to reveal the attitudes of Samui residents towards tourism and foreign tourists. In particular, this study aimed to obtain the demographic characteristics that contribute to residents' attitudes towards tourism and foreign tourists. In addition, the study will identify the problems facing both tourists and local people in Samui under the present tourism boom, and further, will discuss suggestions given by subjects' in order to improve Samui's tourism industry and maximize the satisfaction of both tourists and local people.

The survey sample of this research consists of 100 residents of the Chaweng neighborhood, Bhoput sub-district. Therefore, a cross-sectional design and purposive sampling methods were employed for conducting the research. A questionnaire is developed as an instrument of the study. The questionnaire consists of 39 questions, divided into 3 parts: demographic information and characteristics, general opinion towards tourism and foreign tourists, and suggestions. The data collection took place between December 26th, 2006 and January 5th, 2007. Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 12.0.

The results of the study show that most respondents agreed that tourism did have some impact on Samui and local people. In short, the economic impacts of tourism and foreign tourists are perceived as mostly positive, while social, cultural, and environmental impacts, in some cases, are viewed as negative.