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SUKANYA KANNASOMBAT : THE POTENTIAL OF TRADITIONAL
TOURIST GUIDES TO BECOME ECOTOURISM LEADERS. THESIS
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This study is to explore the potentials of the professional guide in part of being the pioneer of the ecotourism, and also make recommendations on standard guidelines requisite for the tour leader in the matter of ecotourism. To do so, three main factors must be considered : the conversation of natural resources and environment, attitudes on ecotourism, and behavior on guiding tours in line with the ecotourism. The method of the study is made through 360 questionnaires. The statistics used for doing research are descriptive statistics (covering distribution of frequency, percent, mathematical statistics (including co-variance and multivariate analysis).

The findings of the study are as follows :

1. Most guides are male, 31-40 years, and are born in Bangkok. They have completed their bachelor degrees and earned income from tour leading totaling for 12,500-15,000 baht per month. The duration for this occupation is between 1 to 5 years. The frequency of receiving any type of information is moderate.

2. Most tour leaders have moderated potentials of knowledge on ecotourism and conservation of natural resources and environment, attitudes on ecotourism, and behavior of guiding tours in line with ecotourism.

3. Females have gained more knowledge than the males, but the males perform their job in line with the ecotourism better than the females.

4. The tour leaders having completed bachelor degrees or higher have more potentials of knowledge and attitudes than those having completed lower degrees.

5. The samples having less than 30 years of age have the best potentials of knowledge and attitudes.

6. The guides earning a living in other careers have better potentials of knowledge and behavior than those earning a living by being tour leader only.

7. The gender factor has an effect upon the potentials of knowledge and behavior.

8. The age and education level have an influence on the potentials of knowledge and attitudes.

9. The frequency of receiving data and information and knowledge has affected the potentials of attitudes and behavior in a positive way.

10. The average monthly income and attitudes have a positive result to the potentials of behavior only.

11. Income has a negative relationship with knowledge.

12. The duration of earning a living by leading tours has a negative relationship with knowledge and attitudes.

13. The tour leader having the appropriate qualifications for being guides on ecotourism are male or female, aged less than 30 years and have higher bachelor degrees. They have to be motivated by learning and searching for additional data and information and shouldn't be interested in earning income for doing this.