

Thesis Title	The Social Carrying Capacity of a Coastal Tourist Resort: A Case Study of Koh Samed Rayong Province
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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this research are to study the social carrying capacity of Koh Samed and to study factors influencing the social carrying capacity of Koh Samed, Rayong province.

The methodology was based on interviewing, by an accidental sampling, Thai visitors and Thai excursionists at Sai-Kaew Beach and Wong-Duan Beach, totaling 300 cases. The research results indicated that:

Most tourists were satisfied with density levels ranging from 11 sq. metres per person to 25 sq. metres per person or an average of 18.50 sq. metres per person; and reported that they would make a repeat visit if the number of tourists did not increase more than 50 percents (half of the number of tourists at that time).

An analysis of the relationship between the visitor density level which were acceptable to the tourists and the independent variables which were tourist characteristic, pattern of tourism, type of activities and environment of the beach showed that educational level, present place of residence, type of tourists, length of stay, desired distances separating tourist groups, activities, physical environment and facilities were factors affecting and significantly correlated with the visitor density levels found acceptable to the tourists.

In order to develop a model for predicting the density levels satisfied by tourists at Koh Samed the technique of Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis was used, it was found that

factors which could best predict the visitor density level acceptable to the tourists were: physical environment, desired distances separating tourist groups, activities (reading a book, taking a photo and relaxing on the beach) and sports activity. These factors can predict the visitor density levels acceptable to the tourists at 28 percents and will affect acceptability of the visitor if the density levels are more than 67.22 sq. metres per person.

From the research findings, Koh Samed should remain a natural tourist resort with only minimum facilities provided and the carrying capacity at 18.50 sq. metres per person should not be exceeded.