

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents important summary of the study, a summary of the findings, discussions, conclusions, and recommendations for further research.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to study public attitudes toward the six-month relief package of free water, free electricity and free buses, and changes in their behavior after the announcement of the measure. The objective of this study, subjects, materials, and procedures are summarized as follows.

5.1.1 Objectives of the study

The main objective of this research was to find out attitudes of people living or working in Rattanakosin Island in any occupations toward the six-month relief package of free water, free electricity and free buses, and changes in their behavior after the announcement of the measure. The sub-objectives were divided into two points; to investigate public opinions towards the six-month relief package of free water, free electricity and free buses and to examine changes in their behavior in response to the package.

5.1.2 Subjects, Materials, and Procedures

5.1.2.1 Subjects The subjects of the study were one hundred people aged between 20 and 60 living or working in Rattanakosin Island area.

5.1.2.2 Materials The instrument used in this study was a constructed questionnaire of 33 questions, printed in Thai. The questionnaire was divided into four parts; (1) demographic data, (2) public attitudes towards the six-month relief package of free water, free electricity and free buses (3) changes in public behavior after the announcement of the six-month relief package of free water, free electricity and free buses. (4) suggestions. All data received from the questionnaires were analyzed using the SPSS program.

5.1.2.3 Procedures the questionnaires were distributed and collected on the same day from people living or working in Rattanakosin Island and took 5 minutes to complete. It took one week to distribute and collect all the questionnaires. The data collection took place at the end of December 2008.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

5.2.1 Demographic Data

The majority of the respondents were female (65.0%). Most of them were single (67.0%) and in the age group of 20-30 years old (50.0%). The majority of respondents had a bachelor's degree (61.0%) and worked as private company employees (42.0%) with a monthly income of 10,001 - 20,000 Baht. The majority of the respondents (59.0%) lived at their own house/town house.

5.2.2 Public attitudes towards the six-month relief package of free water, free electricity and free buses

Most respondents had a positive attitude towards the six-month relief package of free water, free electricity and free buses. No negative results can be found in the questionnaire.

5.2.2.1 The majority of the respondents (73.0%) agreed that the free water policy was a satisfactory policy and it helped 79 respondents to reduce their water expense. Although 76 respondents agreed that the free water policy is focused on the low-income people only, 67 of them corresponded that free tap water for homes using less than 50 units per month was an appropriate proportion.

5.2.2.2 70 respondents agreed that the free electricity policy focuses on low-income people only, and 65 of them were satisfied with this policy. Beside this, 60 respondents agreed that free electricity for homes using less than 80 units per month and 50% subsidy for those using 81-150 units was an appropriate proportion. Out of a hundred respondents, 59 of them agreed that the free electricity policy helped them to reduce their electricity expense.

5.2.2.3 74 respondents agreed that the free buses policy is satisfactory, and 67 of them agreed that the free buses policy helped them to reduce their travel expense.

Judging from the number, the majority of the respondents (64.0%) also agreed that the free buses policy focuses on low-income people only. More than half of respondents (56.0%) agreed that after the announcement of the package, free buses had the same standard in convenience and safety as before but nearly half of respondents (47.0%) corresponded that the frequency of the free buses was appropriate.

5.2.3 Change in public behavior after the announcement of the six-month relief package of free water, free electricity and free buses

5.2.3.1 After the announcement of the relief package of free water, more than half of respondents which accounted for 31.0% and 30.0% always and regularly used less water to reduce their water expense. 51 respondents always saved water by turning off the tap while brushing their teeth and nearly half of the respondents (45.0%) always saved water by turning off the tap while washing their hair. Judging from the number, 39 respondents regularly saved the water by not wasting the used water but reused it to water plants.

5.2.3.2 After the announcement of the relief package of free electricity, more than half of respondents which accounted for 36.0% and 31.0% always and regularly used less electricity to reduce their electricity expense. 47 respondents always saved electricity by unplugging electrical devices or turning off the light after use and 38 of them regularly saved electricity by ironing a large amount of clothes at one time. Besides, 36 respondents regularly saved electricity by using more energy-efficient home appliances.

5.2.3.2 After the announcement of the relief package of free buses, 31 respondents regularly started to travel by bus more often. However, 39 of them never learned more for the free buss route in order to reduce their traveling expense and 38 of them didn't mind standing in a crowded bus, in order to use the free bus services.

5.3 DISCUSSIONS

This section involves discussions on interesting issues drawn from the summary of the findings of this study.

5.3.1 According to the findings, the majority of respondents had positive attitudes toward the six-month relief package of free water, free electricity and free buses, which is relevant to the survey of Suan Dusit Poll on THE GOVERNMENT'S

NEW ECONOMIC STIMULUS MEASURES, CHAPTER TWO. Out of a hundred respondents, the majority of respondents agreed that the measure was a satisfying policy and it helped them reduce their household expense, which is relevant to the report of Kasikorn Research Center on THAILAND: SIX RELIEF MEASURES WILL EASE IMPACT OF RISING INFLATION, CHAPTER TWO. Although the policy focused on the low-income people only in the majority's opinion, most of them responded that free tap water for homes using less than 50 units per month, the free electricity for homes using less than 80 units per month and 50% subsidy for those using 81-150 units and the frequency of the free buses were an appropriate proportions. Since, the majority of the respondents are living in their own accommodations, they directly gain the benefit from the measure. Unlike the small group of respondents who live in rented accommodation, they rarely gain benefits from the free water and free electricity policy since the cost of water and electricity are calculated differently. Since there were a few respondents living in rented accommodation, their point of view may not be reflected clearly. Besides, more than half of respondents agreed that after the announcement of the package, free buses had the same standard in convenience and safety as before.

5.3.2 According to the findings, the majority of respondents had positive behavioral changes after the announcement of the six-month relief package of free water, free electricity and free buses. After the announcement, the majority of respondents always and regularly used less water and electricity to reduce their water and electricity expense. For example, they always saved the water by turning off the tap while washing their hair and they always saved electricity by unplugging electrical devices or turning off the light after use. On top of that, the majority of respondents regularly saved electricity by using more energy-efficient home appliances. For the free bus policy, the majority of respondents agreed that the free buses policy was satisfactory, and helped them to reduce their travel expense. However, after the announcement of the measure, there were only slight changes in respondents' behavior in free buses service usage. Although the majority of the respondents regularly start to travel by bus more often, most of them never learned more for the free buss route in order to reduce their traveling expense and never considered traveling in a crowded bus in order to use the free bus services.

5.4 CONCLUSION

The study can conclude that the majority of people living or working in Rattanakosin Island in any occupations have positive attitudes towards the six-month relief package of free water, free electricity and free buses and they also have positive behavioral change after the announcement of the measure. The majority of respondents considered that although this economic assistance program focuses on low income earners only, they still agreed that it was satisfactory because it helped them reduce their household expense.

As for the behavior, the majority of respondents always and regularly used less water, less electricity but traveled more by bus in order to reduce their water, electricity and traveling expense after the announcement of the relief package. However, out of three economic assistance programs mentioned in this chapter, the respondents had the least behavioral changes in the area of using free bus services.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made for further research:

5.5.1 The study was limited to 100 respondents living or working in Rattanakosin Island area. To obtain more accurate results, which can be generalized to the population at large, the sample size should be expanded to cover more of the population and more areas.

5.5.2 Further study may also focus on other groups of people such as executive levels or economists to explore and compare differences and similarities in attitudes and behaviors of the different groups.