

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of this study of the desirable characteristics of new pop-up books for adult readers, a summary of the findings from the respondents, discussion of the characteristics of the new pop-up books for these adult readers, conclusions of this study, and recommendations for further research.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This research in selected areas of Bangkok was designed to study the desirable characteristics of new pop-up books for adult readers.

5.1.1 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to explore and discover the preferences regarding new pop-up books for adult readers with respondents from selected areas of Bangkok in 2009. The sub objectives for this study were as follows:

- To examine the current trends of the pop-up books for adult readers and purchasing behaviors for the pop-up books in the Thai market.
- To look into the factors which impact on the characteristics of new pop-up books for adult readers.
- To express the history and development of the pop-up books.

5.1.2 Subjects, Materials, and Procedures

The subjects for this research came from one hundred and sixty adults from selected areas in Bangkok: the office areas in Silom, Sathorn, and Phaholyothin road and Asia Book and Kinokuniya bookstores at Central World Shopping Center. The respondents' ages were focused on the range of twenty-one to thirty-five years.

The materials used for this research were questionnaires with forty-three questions under four parts: demographic data, purchasing behaviors and the characteristics of new pop-up books which the adult respondents would want to buy, factors which could affect the characteristics of new pop-up books for adult readers, and guidelines for developing pop-up books, especially for adult readers.

Data was collected from adult readers in business and shopping areas over three weeks in January 2009. After that, the collected data were analyzed by the SPSS

program in order to find out the descriptive statistics, especially frequency and percentage.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The results of this study can be summarized as the following:

5.2.1 General Information about the Respondents

One hundred and sixty respondents from selected areas in Bangkok were composed of 45 males (28.1%) and 115 females (71.9%). Almost half of these respondents (44.4%) were twenty-one to twenty-five years old, while the smallest group of age range for these respondents (17.5%) was thirty-one to thirty-five years old. Most respondents had an educational background at Bachelor's degree level (68.8%) and Master's degree background (25%). The majority of these respondents (87.5%) were still single. From the total 160 respondents, more than half of them (66.3%) worked for private companies, but no respondents worked as teachers or lecturers. Lastly, two-third of total respondents (40%) earned an income of around 10,000 – 20,000 Baht per month.

5.2.2 Purchasing Behaviors about Pop-up Books and the Desirable Characteristics of Pop-up Books of the Respondents

From this study, some male respondents (6.2%) totally knew about pop-up books and most of them (4.4%) graduated at Bachelor's degree level. More than half of male respondents (17.6%) partly knew about the pop-up books and almost all of these male respondents (12.5%) had earned a Bachelor's degree. On the other hand, one-third of female respondents (20%) totally knew of pop-up books and more than half of them (12.5%) graduated at Bachelor's degree level. Almost half of the female respondents (47.4%) partly knew about the pop-up books and more than half of these females (33.1%) were Bachelor's degree level. Since only 146 respondents totally or partly knew of pop-up books, this study focused on these respondents only. Almost one-third of the male respondents (8.9%) knew about pop-up books from bookstores and half of the female respondents (37%) knew about the pop-up books from bookstores as well.

Some male respondents (7.6%) had experience of purchasing pop-up books before, while the rest of them (18.5%) had not purchased pop-up books before.

However, more than half of them (19.0%) wanted to buy pop-up books. For female respondents, almost half of them (23.9%) had previously bought pop-up books, whereas many of them (50%) have not had experience in buying these pop-up books. More than half of the female non-experience group (61%) stated their willingness to buy pop-up books.

The findings concerning purchasing behavior and the preferred characteristics of new pop-up books derived from 126 respondents had experience in buying pop-up books before, and the respondents who had never purchased pop-up books but wanted to buy them. From this study, the majority of male respondents (23%) wanted to buy pop-up books from bookstores, and the greatest part of the female group (73%) would also like to purchase the pop-up books from bookstores. However, more than half of the male respondents (18.3%) and the majority of female respondents (61.9%) wanted to buy only one copy of a pop-up book. Most male respondents (19.8%) and female respondents (61.9%) wanted to buy pop-up books only 1-3 times per year. The most common purpose of total respondents (32.5%) for buying pop-up books was for gifts on special occasions, and 85.2% of them, consisting of male respondents at 19.8% and female respondents at 62.7%, were prepared to budget not more than 1,000 Baht for buying the pop-up books. With reference to the factors in purchasing the pop-up books, each respondent gave more than one answer. Pop-up movement was the first factor which motivated male respondents (4.6%) and female respondents (12.4%) to buy the pop-up books. Thirty-six respondents out of the total respondents remembered and wanted to buy pop-up books which were composed of six types: comic books from famous cartoons, history of famous cities or countries, fiction, academic books, interesting places in the world, and sexual books, such as the *Kama Sutra Pop-up Book*.

The following part of this study points out the characteristics of new pop-up books stated by the respondents or adult readers as preferred elements of the pop-up books they would like to buy in 2009. These characteristics can be categorized into several aspects which are related to gender indicator, male and female.

Half of the male respondents (14.3%) preferred to buy pop-up books with fiction content. More than half of them (16.7%) wanted to view pop-up components on the pop-up books at 180 degrees when they were opened. Almost half of them

(13.5%) desired to buy pop-up books whose prices were not more than 500 Baht. In addition, the number of pages which more than half of male respondents (16.6%) wanted was 11-20 pages or 6-10 spreads excluding the cover. For paper type, half of them (14.3%) would like to have pop-up books which were produced on two-side coated paper. Almost half of the male respondents (12.7%) preferred to buy the pop-up books in rectangular shape. The most preferred accessory which male respondents would like to have on their pop-up books was a sound module whose position was on the interior pages, followed by a light module as the second preference for the interior pages, and cloth as the third preference on either back cover or the interior pages. Lastly, almost half of the male respondents (11.9%) wanted to have movable pop-up components on every page inside the books.

For female respondents, half of the female respondents (50%) wanted to purchase pop-up book with fiction content. Almost half of them (49.2%) wanted to view the pop-up pieces on the pop-up books at 180 degrees while they were opened. More than half of them (53.2%) wanted to buy the pop-up books with the unit price no more than 500 Baht. Moreover, almost half of the female respondents (43.7%) wanted to have pop-up books with 11-20 pages or 6-10 spreads which did not include the cover. Furthermore, the paper type used for producing the pop-up books which almost half of the female respondents (46.8%) wanted was two-side coated paper. More than one-fourth of female respondents (34.1%) wanted to own pop-up books which had a rectangular shape. The additional accessory which was the first preference for female respondents was a sound module and its position should be on the interior pages of the pop-up books, followed by stickers on the interior pages, and cloth as the third preference for the interiors respectively. Finally, many of the female respondents (35.7%) wanted to have movable pop-up components on every page of the pop-up books.

5.2.3 Level of Agreement with the Factors Affecting Pop-up Book Characteristics

Quality and safety standard: No respondents strongly disagreed that pop-up book quality was a key factor for purchasing pop-up books for adult readers while 46.8% disagreed with this factor. In addition, only 4.8% strongly agreed that pop-up book quality could be assessed by unit price per copy, whereas one-third or 33.3%

disagreed with this statement. The majority of the total respondents strongly and disagreed with the necessity of having a safety test standard or certificate from reliable institutes for pop-up books for adult readers, while less than 1% strongly agreed with this idea.

Packaging and raw materials: Only 1.6% strongly agreed that packaging materials would help add value and attract adult readers to read them, and no respondents strongly disagreed that raw materials, such as paper or ink for producing the pop-up books, must be environmentally friendly.

Pop-up book value: No respondents strongly agreed that the value of pop-up books for adult readers could be assessed by the complexity or difficulty of the pop-up books, whereas half of the male respondents (53.2%) disagreed with this statement. Moreover, only one respondent (0.8%) strongly agreed with assessing value of the pop-up books for adult readers by the number of pages of those books, and no respondents strongly agreed with evaluating the value of the pop-up books for adult readers by contents inside the pop-up books.

Purpose of producing the pop-up books: No more than 10 percent of the total respondents strongly agreed that pop-up books for adult readers should be produced for entertainment rather than knowledge provider, but almost one-fourth of these respondents agreed with this statement. Moreover, no respondents strongly agreed that pop-up books for adult readers could be used for promotional activities in marketing.

Price and purchasing power: Around half of the total respondents agreed that the purchasing power for imported pop-up books would be lower if the prices increased due to economic and currency problem. However, a few respondents (5.5%) strongly agreed that pop-up books were suitable for people with high income only.

Content limitation: A few respondents (2.4%) strongly agreed that the contents for pop-up books in Thailand could be presented without language and culture limitation.

Target group of the pop-up books in Thailand: No respondents strongly agreed that the pop-up books were produced for particular groups in Thailand. None of them also strongly agreed that the adults could always read the pop-up books, although they were produced for children.

Market potential: Only one respondent strongly agreed that the market for pop-up books for adult readers had high potential growth to be developed and expanded in book markets in Thailand.

5.2.4. Recommendations from the Respondents

According to the 40 respondents who provided their recommendations for the pop-up book industry, they mentioned that the prices for the pop-up books should be reasonable so that low-income employees can buy them. This could motivate Thai people to read the pop-up books, increase the literacy rate, and support market expansion. In addition, the content for pop-up books for adult readers must be varied in order to serve the needs from several groups and can be applied to various purposes, such as education, entertainment, tourism promotion, architecture, and scientific experimentation. Raw materials for producing pop-up books should be from recycled paper so as to lower the production cost and the selling price. Extra accessories, such as light modules or sound modules must be added to attract the adult readers. However, they have to be less than the number of pop-up pieces. The pop-up pieces have to be thick enough to endure pulling power or pop-up movement or preventing the pop-up books from tearing off. To enhance the interest in pop-up books, complicated pop-up components should be on the first or last spread of the pop-up books and simple pop-up pieces had to be on the rest spreads of these books with printed texts the simple pieces.

The pop-up books should be colourful and the packaging for these books must be innovative, beautiful, and strong enough for holding the pop-up books in proper form. The pop-up books must look good on the book shelves. Lastly, the pop-up books must be produced in greater numbers than currently in order to promote adults to read more books.

5.3 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This part concerns the interesting suggestions derived from this study. They can be grouped as following:

5.3.1 General Information about the Respondents

More than half of the respondents were females, so this might imply that females have higher potential to participate in pop-up book purchasing than males.

Also, it is noticeable that the majority of adult readers, who were twenty-one to thirty-five years old, earned monthly income around 10,000 – 20,000 Baht (followed by 20,000 – 30,000 Baht), and they also worked for private companies. Thus, this might indicate that the main target group should be private company officers whose salaries were at least 10,000 Baht per month.

5.3.2 Purchasing Behaviors for Pop-up Books and the Desirable Characteristics of Pop-up Books for the Respondents

One hundred and twenty-six respondents, more than half of the total respondents, had bought the pop-up books before, and they were willing to buy more pop-up books. High monthly income is not essential for deciding whether or not the respondents would like to buy the pop-up books because many respondents (9% of males and 22% of females) were adult readers who were willing to buy the pop-up books but who earned 10,000 – 20,000 Baht only.

Bookstores are influential channels which create adults' awareness of the pop-up books, while mass media or online markets have less power as channels for letting the respondents know about the pop-up books. In addition, the bookstore is the most convenient place for adult readers to buy the pop-up books, whereas the Internet market is not a desirable place for purchasing pop-up books.

Most respondents preferred to buy one pop-up book each time and they would like to buy pop-up books only 3 times at most per year. Moreover, the annual budget for buying pop-up books was not more than 1,000 Baht, and the preferred unit price per copy was not more than 500 Baht. The quantity of pop-up books which they wanted to buy was 2 copies each time or 6 copies per year only.

Even though the purpose of buying the pop-up books from the past until now has been for architecture, fashion and promotional business activities, 32.5% of the total 126 respondents would like to buy them as presents on particular occasions rather than using them for other purposes. When the respondents would like to buy pop-up books, they consider pop-up movement the most, followed by images/pictures, price, and contents respectively, three of which correspond to the theory of perception by Best, Coney, and Hawkins, (2004) in terms of stimulating the audiences' attention by colours and movement and position.

Concerning the desirable characteristics of pop-up books for adult readers, it is surprising that the results from males and females for these characteristics, such as content and book format are quite similar to each other. Most males and females preferred to buy fictional pop-up books, and a few of them were interested in academic contents, such as religion, geography or history (like the adult readers in the period before the eighteenth century), and those pop-up components should be viewed in 180 degrees only. Even though the price of the pop-up books are quite high due to labor intensive production, the unit price per copy which both males and females preferred to pay is not more than 500 Baht per copy. Moreover, according to Michael Porter, although differentiation is useful for competing with other competitors and gaining attention from the customers or readers, acceptable pop-up book design to the adults should have simple characteristics for both males and females. For example, most male and female respondents would like pop-up books with 11-20 pages or 6-10 spreads only, with pop-up components on every page, printed two-side coated paper as raw materials, and assembled or formed in a rectangular book shape. Also, both males and females wanted a sound module the first preference of the extra accessory. Therefore, the pop-up books where the producers can differentiate the pop-up books to attract the adult readers should be fiction stories with pop-up components designed on each page and different kind of sound from a sound module.

5.3.3 Level of Agreement with the Factors Affecting the Characteristics of the Pop-up Books

The adult respondents did not consider quality as a key factor for buying pop-up books and it was unnecessary for these books to pass a safety standard. Therefore, it corresponds to the study in the purchasing behavior part that pop-up movement can help motivate their decision to buy the pop-up books, while pop-up books should be sold under reasonable and flexible unit prices to the change in economic and currency situation. This is for the purpose of allowing low-income people to be able to buy them. In addition, the adult readers pay attention to the pop-up books rather than packaging materials and any environmentally friendly raw materials because they disagreed that the packaging materials are essential to enhance a pop-up book's value. The value of the pop-up books also does not depend on the complexity or difficulty of the pop-up books, the number of pages, or the contents. These pop-up books can be

produced for not only entertainment but also as knowledge providers, but adults in Thailand do not want to use them for sales promotion or other marketing activities. However, the contents inside the pop-up books should be controlled under language and culture limitations, so sexual content should not be produced in Thailand. Pop-up books should be produced for various groups of people in Thailand but the respondents still have a perception that pop-up books are produced for children, so pop-up book promotion for adult readers should be applied as the next step to create new perception that besides children, adults can also read the pop-up books. This would help encourage market potential for the pop-up books for adult readers and expand this market in the future.

5.3.4 Recommendations for the pop-up books

The price is the most important part to be considered in order to allow people with low income to read the books and enhance the literacy rate in Thailand based on government policy in 2007 according to Kom Chad Luek newspaper. The contents should be useful to provide knowledge for the readers, simple and varied in order to make them easy to understand in several groups, and pleasant in order to serve the needs for using pop-up books as gifts in special events. In this part, some respondents recommended that the content of the pop-up books should be related to tourism promotion or scientific experimentation in order to diversify the target group.

However, in terms of materials a few respondents suggested that using recycled paper or wasted materials can lower the book cost which contradicts the majority of the respondents who did not care about environmentally friendly materials for producing the pop-up books. The paper should be thick and strong enough to endure pulling pressure and the design should be developed in order to generate great attractiveness for the readers. This recommendation corresponds to the differentiation strategy in terms of improving product design to enhance customers' awareness and provoke them to buy the products. Additional accessories are vital factor to attract the adult readers to buy pop-up books as well, but they should be affixed properly with suitable numbers so as to keep the attention on the pop-up components. The pop-up components should be colorful and some respondents need packaging materials for keeping the pop-up books on their book shelves. Although the level of agreement on the potential of pop-up books for adult readers to grow in the Thai book market is

quite low, forty respondents expressed their opinions that more pop-up books should be produced for adult readers so that this can be one alternative for Thai adults to read more books.

5.4 CONCLUSION OF THIS STUDY

The following conclusion is drawn from the discussion of the study by using the concept of marketing mix. The conclusions are summed up as the following:

5.4.1 Product: Pop-up books should probably be produced for females with monthly income or salary of at least 10,000 Baht. The most outstanding characteristic of the pop-up books which they would like to buy is the relevancy of pop-up movement and the fiction content. However, there were some different points of view exhibited in the comments offered from male and female respondents. Both males and females preferred similar characteristics of the pop-up books, for example, two-side coated paper printed and assembled with 180-degree view of pop-up components and then formed into a rectangular book shape with sound modules on the interior pages as additional accessories. However, males preferred light modules as the second preference on the interiors and cloth as the third preference on the back cover and the interiors respectively. In contrast, female respondents would like stickers as the second preference on the interiors and the cloth as the third preference on the interiors only.

The number of pages, pop-up complication or difficulty, and contents are not significantly taken into account when determining the value of the pop-up books. However, pop-up movement is the most critical factor for the adults to buy the pop-up books

5.4.2 Place or marketing channel: A bookstore is the most important channel or place for letting people know and buying the pop-up books.

5.4.3 Price: Budgets for purchasing pop-up books are stated as not higher than 1,000 Baht and the suitable unit price for the pop-up books should not be higher than 500 Baht. The prices of each pop-up book should also be sensible in order to allow people from different income levels to afford them and they should be flexible due to the current economic situation.

Finally, most respondents agreed that potential growth and expansion of pop-up books for adult readers in the Thai market would be quite low in 2009 because of the “hamburger crisis” affecting daily expenditures such as higher prices of oil and consumer products (Thanet Kongprasert, 2008, p.1). This crisis has affected adults all over the world, but more than half of the respondents exhibited their willingness to buy pop-up books and they also believed that pop-up books would play a more helpful role in increasing literacy rate among the Thai population if the book producers produced more pop-up books for the adult readers.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

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

5.5.1 The period of time for collecting the data should be extended and the sample size from 160 respondents should be enlarged in order to get more accurate information about the characteristics of new pop-up books desired by adult readers.

5.5.2 Since this research focused on adults who had purchased pop-up books and those who had never bought pop-up books but would like to buy them, more research about how to persuade the adults who know of pop-up books but are not interested in buying them should be conducted to find out what characteristics of pop-up books the respondents want and non-buying adults would want.

5.5.3 After the discovery of the desirable characteristics of new pop-up books for adult readers from this study, the researcher may develop further study to explore whether or not these details are feasible and can be applied to the actual production.

5.5.4 In order to obtain a clearer picture of pop-up books from potential buyers who would like to acquire them, the researcher should concentrate on other aspects of demographic factors, such as marital status, correlating to the characteristics of pop-up books which they would like to buy since single and married adults might have different aspects and opinions about this topic.

5.5.5 As pop-up books are widely used only in specific groups and sold only in a niche market, little knowledge and few resources about the pop-up books in printed material format, such as book format or content, are available in Thailand. The

period of time for reviewing literature should be extended so as to get more insights from this study.

5.5.6 Since the respondents in this study came from business areas and shopping centers, most details derived from private company officers. It could be more reliable and avoid bias if the respondents came from other occupation fields, such as governmental officers and teachers or lecturers, in order to get more unbiased results on the characteristics of the pop-up books wanted by the potential consumers in Bangkok.