

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents (1) a summary of the study, (2) a summary of the findings and discussions (3) conclusions, and (4) recommendations for further research.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

5.1.1 Objectives of the Study

This study was conducted under a main purpose: to explore reasons that Thai consumers used to decide to drink coffee more than fresh water.

5.1.2 Subjects, Materials, and Procedures

The subjects consisted of 200 respondents from 10 companies. The research instrument used for collecting data was a self-administered questionnaire which consisted of the information about the demographic characteristics of the respondents, the factors influencing their drinking, and the attitude towards coffee and fresh water consumption. This research study used a purposive sampling to select the samples in the study. That is, each of the selected 10 companies was required to answer a 20-set questionnaire, which in total numbered 200 sets of questionnaires. The survey was conducted in November 2007 and was finished in February 2008. The data was analyzed through SPSS version 12 program. Frequency and percentage were calculated to describe the characteristics of the samples' reasons and their perception about drinking coffee and water. Bar chart applied to illustrate the clear view of the reasons for drinking coffee as well.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings and the discussion of the study can be classified into three parts as follows:

5.2.1 The Characteristics of the Respondents

There were 200 respondents in this study who were working in 10 private companies. The majority of them were female (70%). Nearly three-quarters of them were aged between 24-34 years old (73.6%), holding the position of assistant (78%), and had a monthly income of 10,001-30,000 baht (67.5%). However, the 'Age' and 'Income' were still sensitive issues for Thai people as many did not respond to these two questions.

5.2.2 Factors Influencing the Behavior of Coffee and Water Consuming

According to the suggestion of '*Water of Life*' by Somsak (2003), it mentioned that people should drink at least 8 glasses of water per day. The quantity of fresh water drank by participants in this survey was pretty fair; 5-7 glasses a day (44%) while only 11.5% drank at least 8 glasses per day. The outcome showed that most respondents (54%) preferred to drink coffee because of its good taste, its stimulating effect, and its easy accessibility. This result was similar to that in the survey of National Coffee Association (2006), in which it was revealed that 57% of nearly 3,000 American adults like to drink coffee. For the reasons of drinking coffee, it was the same as the independent study of Mali, the consumer behavior of coffee 2006. The coffee taste and its stimulating effect had attracted people to drink coffee.

The time for drinking coffee was before noon (81.5%) and the quantity of coffee drank per day was not more than 2 cups (89.8%). This information showed that most people knew well about the time and proper amount of coffee consumption. The cost of coffee was 20-50 baht a cup (70.4%) which was a suitable price for the office employees who consumed coffee daily. Coffee houses (68.04%) were the first place where they sought cups of coffee. They were working (88%) and reading books (38.9%) while drinking coffee. This information had the same picture of the in-depth interview conducted in November 2007.

On the other hand, more than a half of non-coffee drinkers said that coffee drinking was unhealthy while others (33.7%) stated that drinking coffee made them suffer from insomnia, strong heartbeats, and headache. The high price (4.35%) and unpleasant taste (5.43%) had less effect towards them.

5.2.3 The Attitude towards Coffee and Water Drinking

The results showed that most of the respondents had accurate information about the advantages of drinking fresh water and disadvantages of drinking coffee. They knew that water was healthier than coffee. For the personal attitude section, it revealed that they accepted that the price of coffee was higher than water; however, they were interested in the varieties of coffee and the environments of coffee houses. Even though many of them disagreed that coffee symbolized maturity, more professionalism, and higher level of social life, there were 20%, 9%, and 6.5% who agreed with those ideas respectively. In addition, the perception about the question that '*Drinking fresh water is unpleasant sometimes*' was extremely varied. Although 48.5% disagreed with this attitude, one-fifth tried to be neutral and 31.5% agreed which was nearly one-third of the overall picture. This might imply that coffee sometimes presents the 'IMAGE' of people. It also might result from the influences of marketing promotions especially from western style coffee houses which might also slightly change the idea of coffee consumption; from simple beverage to a specific and meaningful drink. In addition, some drinkers were under peer pressure to drinking coffee as 90.5% of the influence reported in this study was from colleagues at work.

Moreover, the suggestions respondents expressed at the end of the questionnaire provided some interesting insights into the participants coffee drinking behavior.

1. Most of them learned that the proper amount of coffee to be drank should not be over 2 cups a day, but they were not sure about the bad effects of coffee on their health.

2. Some respondents said that drinking coffee is a 'TREND' from the foreign movies such as Korean series and from the western coffee houses such as Starbucks. In addition, some said that 'BRAND' affects on the attitude of coffee consumers as well. Some people are more likely to behave in line with trend to be or to feel oneness with the 'trend' or 'brand'.

3. Some have the misconceptions about drinking coffee. Instead of having a meal, they turned to drinking coffee and some felt that coffee could boost their freshness in the morning.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

The discussion above can be drawn to the conclusion that most respondents were female and worked as assistants who consumed coffee less than 2 cups of coffee a day. They drank coffee before midday at coffee houses and at their offices which cost 20-50 baht per cup. They drank coffee while working or reading books. The reasons that respondents adopted this behavior were that it has good taste and can keep you awake. While most of respondents knew the effects of drinking coffee, they believed that they could control the appropriate amount of coffee drinking. Therefore, this behavior of people did not relate to the reasonable information as per the theory of reasoned action by Ajzen and Fishbein. Moreover, Thai people's perception of drinking coffee was the symbol of working people due to its stimulating quality and its influence by foreign culture. This circumstance was explained by Herbert Blumer in 'Symbolic Interactionism.' However, many of them had the misconception about coffee consumption. Some thought that coffee can boost energy in the morning. Some accepted that they were addicted and refused to quit drinking coffee because they did not see its immediate effects to their health. Still, some drank coffee instead of eating a meal. This data revealed to the public that currently many Thai people had a low level of accurate information about the effects of drinking coffee; they were influenced by inaccurate information and misconceptions from advertisements. Thus, the proper information about the effects of coffee drinking should be disseminated to public by all concerned parties.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

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

5.4.1 The major limitation of the study was the generalization of the data collected from 10 private companies. The generalization of the study is limited to the

companies using personal contact and e-mail as a method of questionnaire delivery. The samples collected in the study might yield only a small group of persons who were willing to answer the questionnaires. In the absence of a larger base of data, a larger sample size may extend some degree of generalization.

5.4.2 The next studies should consider the extent of the sample group's concern about their health. The marketing strategies would be more consumer-oriented. This study was just to survey reasons that some Thai people used to decide to drink coffee or water. It did not directly show the relationship between health care and the disadvantages of coffee.

5.4.3 The questionnaire of this study should be modified. Some questions provided insufficient choices for the respondents. For instance, Question no. 11 should add more reasons as to why people decided not to drink coffee i.e. headache, health problem.