

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

5.1.1 Objective of the Study

The Main objective of the study is to ascertain the contents and programs on TPBS that the students of Mass Communication department in the Master degree program prefer to view most. In addition, the study aimed at finding the techniques in producing a program that can influence the respondents to pay attention to and watch programs offered by PSB Television and the last objective is to evaluate the Thai understanding of the role of PSB.

5.1.2 Subject, Materials, and Procedures

The study was designed to test the attitude of people with some experience or familiarity with mass communication because Thai PBS is very new in the Thai perception. Besides, at that time of the survey preparation, Thai PBS was awaiting parliamentary approval. The researcher therefore decided to conduct a judgmental or purposive sampling, one type of non-random sampling design, to test the attitude of the students who were Master of Arts students in the Mass Communication (MA), Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication, Thammasat University. The study used close-ended questions as a main component and some open-ended questions in questionnaire to explore respondents' attitudes regarding General information, Thai PBS's role, the existing free TV's role, TV's programs broadcast on free television and Thai PBS factors and techniques presented on TV programs.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDING

5.2.1 Demographic information of the subject

The respondents selected as samples in the study totaled 110. Most of them are female around 65% and male 35%. The respondents were mostly age between 20-30 years old, were studying in the faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication. Nearly 47% of respondents earned a salary of around 10,000 – 20,000 baht pre month.

The majority of respondents (80%) worked in companies not related to the mass media field, whereas a few respondents (20 %) worked for companies divided into 5 categories of media: Televisions, Newspapers, Radio, Magazines and PR & Advertising agencies.

5.2.2 Respondents' understanding of the Thai PBS role

The study conducted and designed to test the attitude of the respondents on Thai PBS's role found that not many respondents studying in the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication had good understanding of Thai PBS's role. It was disappointing that many of them could not explain the differences between free TV and public TV correctly or nearly correctly despite studying in journalism. Although the respondents worked in the media field, they did not completely recognize the fundamental role of Thai PBS.

In general the respondents' perceptions of the new television station, more than half of the respondents were informed about the Thai PBS television station from general news. They mostly knew that Thai PBS had been transformed from TITV. The majority of respondents (62.7%) answered in the part of Thai PBS's administrative management that they perceived the news station was operated by the government. Nearly half of the respondents answered that the Thai PBS is a free organization, a critical fundamental role which is an attempt to avoid outside interference from politicians, government and capitalist groups. There are some respondents who did not recognize how and what kind of management was used in the Thai PBS operation, neither state control nor a free organization.

The survey results indicated that the respondents (77.3%) realized Thai PBS's financial funding does not come from advertising fees but from state funding, the answer was responded to 80% of the respondents. Most of them (80%) knew that they can view Thai PBS by paying nothing because it is not a license-fee model.

The question about the programs on Free TV or commercial TV and Thai PBS, the study perceived that the respondents (71%) understood that the management and programs provided on the existing television are not the same as on Thai PBS. The majority answered nearly 90 % suggested that Thai PBS should focus only on valuable programs and almost 61% did not agree as to whether Thai PSB will broadcast entertainment programs and soap-operas or drama to viewers.

Mainly opinion of the respondents (70 %) agreed that Thai PBS should be free from government, political and capitalism intervention. Around 79% hoped that Thai PBS should be open for people's opinion, expression and participation. However, more than half of the respondents said so far they did not totally understand Thai PBS's role.

5.2.3 Respondents' attitude towards existing television stations

This part, the study result indicated that the numbers of the existing free televisions are enough for respondents' appreciation. Most of the respondents' opinion showed that they are moderately satisfied with the programs provided on these channels. However, they thought all of commercial TV should provide more constructive programs to serve the public interest.

Commercial TVs were acknowledged by respondents to be dominated by government (37.3%), politicians (40%) and capitalist groups (57.3%). The survey results showed that Thai media has at the average level only followed their duties and responsibilities..

In the respondents' opinion, Channel 3 is the favorite channels (47.3%) from the 6 channels, Channel 9 follows as the second most favorite channel. Channel 11 operated by the state government is the last choice for the most respondents (69.1%).

5.2.4 Respondents' attitude toward preferred programs on existing television stations and Thai PBS

The survey results found that the respondents (31.8%) appreciated news programs provided on the 6 existing televisions as the most favorite program in the first ranking, whereas documentaries (14.5%) and soap opera programs (12.7%) were chosen as the second and third.

News programs were also chosen as the first preferred programs on Thai PBS television, following by political (10%) and children (7.3%). The second ranking is political (22.7%), documentary (15.5%) and news programs (14.5%), whereas the third ranking are art and culture (17.3%), politics (11.8) and documentaries programs (10.9%).

The respondents (20%) scored children programs as the most valued program for Thai people, following by economics (19.1%) as the second and news (15.5%) and documentary programs (15.5%) as the third.

Most of the respondents (80%) agreed that Thai PBS should provide all the various types of program including entertainment or soap opera so that people can gain maximum advantage from those programs.

5.2.5 Attitude toward preferred techniques and factors presented on Thai PBS's programs

Social responsibility found in the study results became the priority factors in the first ranking. Respondents (18.2%) thought valuable program are significant and the stations should realize it and keep provide useful and attractive programs at the same time. The respondents (16.4%) paid attention to the factors of non-intervention and unbiased programs, meanwhile some of the respondents (11.8%) preferred various contents to be presented on each program. They considered it will attract the audience's attention.

5.3 DISCUSSION

The study result showed that even persons who are quite familiar with the mass communications field, they can not explain thoroughly the differences between free TV and public TV. Actually free TV is commercial TV. However, some Thais perceive that free TV will not be interfered with by from politician, government and capitalist groups because they misinterpret the word "Free". They thought free TV is free from intervention. In fact all free TV today is dominated in some way by outside power. Media particularly Television Stations are limited to providing some information, hence 100% of the facts have been hidden form Thais.

Thai PBS or Public TV, therefore, was established to serve and acknowledge the people's interest. Unfortunately, the controversial issue of government's taking back ITV from Shin Corporation and turning it to TITV and later Thai PBS caused some people to be confused and to understand that Thai PBS is under state control. Although the first public TV is funded by government from alcohol and tobacco taxes extracting, it is operated as a free organization model without intervention. This is a fundamental characteristic of PSB television worldwide to protect the people advantage and to allow the audiences access to the truthful information (UNESCO, 2001).

The respondents expressed in the survey result that the number of television stations are enough for providing various programs, however they do not appreciate the content on existing televisions. They preferred those television stations to offered more creative and valuable programs. More than that the respondents considered media did not adequately perform their duty. Despite media should have as its responsibility to protect the people's interest and to acknowledge people (Banerjee and Seneviratne, 2005) they preferred to ignore this if their profits were affected. Because commercial Broadcasters depend absolutely on advertisement, the capitalist groupss, politicians or government therefore used this weakest point of commercial televisions to take personal advantage. This fact made the respondents who studied in the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication thought that the existing stations did not perform their duties and responsibilities adequately.

The channel most respondents preferred was channel 3, as shown in chapter 4 followed by channel 9. Channel 3's characteristics are quite clear in their minds of being an entertainment channel the same as channel 7. However in the last few years Channel 3 had added more news programs, they still keep its contents focused on entertainment, variety and particularly soap operas or drama programs.

Meanwhile Channel 9 has the image and position of providing valuable program such as documentary programs under the concept of "Knowledge based society" after it's total overhaul more than 4 years ago. News programs, Economics news programs documentaries, children programs, cultural programs provided on the channel received good feedback at a significant level.

From the preferred channel shown in the study results it can be assessed that the respondents love to watch entertainment, documentary and news programs. News programs today are more informal which is more attractive than in the past. Although the study results explained that the respondents favored news, documentaries, and soap operas, the programs they preferred on Thai PBS were news, documentaries and political programs. Obviously, there are no soap operas. They may think that Thai PBS should have only valuable programs. However, valuable or useful programs are not entertainment, game show and soap operas in the respondents' perception, showed in the second part of the testing their understanding of the Thai PBS channel.

Actually, if we watch the BBC or NHK, there are many kinds of programs including entertainment and docudrama programs. The important thing is how Thai PBS presents valuable program and attractive programs at the same time. Valuable does not mean interesting. Strengthening knowledge in people is a fundamental principle for Thai PBS. However if its programs are not attractive, Thai PBS may fail. As Spenser (cited in Brown, 2007) and Leonard (1999) believed that entertainment-education programs are important programs for supporting a better of life for the citizens in the future.

Respondents also thought the best programs should keep in mind social responsibility and be free from outside intervention factors. Besides, the results from chapter 4 in the part of testing that show the respondents' attitude toward techniques and factors of programs may criticize those factors and techniques mentioned in the questionnaire. They are equally important in terms of drawing attention from people because the scores were not very different. Eventually in the discussion part, Public TV should be a gatekeeper to broadcast quality and informative programs which can edify and improve the quality of people's life. Moreover, "Social Responsibility" is definitely needed for media in providing programs

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the study is to learn the respondent's attitude toward programs they preferred on Thai PBS, what are the techniques and factors for producing valuable programs and the respondents' understanding of Thai PBS. The following conclusions can be drawn from the discussion above.

5.4.1 Thai PBS's role

Unfortunately, some respondents even those studying in the Mass Communication field, only partially acknowledged Thai PBS's fundamental role particularly in programs provided on Thai PBS which can be any program in terms of edify and improving the quality of people's life according to the goal of Public TV or PSB.

5.4.2 Existing television stations

Although the respondents fairly appreciated existing television stations in terms of the numbers of television stations and the various content and programs,

the respondents agreed that more creative and knowledgeable programs should be provided by the existing television stations: channels 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11. Besides, the respondents' believe those television stations are still interfered with capitalists, politicians and the government.

5.4.3 Favored Programs on existing television station and Thai PBS

News programs as the most favored program for respondents on both existing television, channels 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11, and Thai PBS. Over the last few years, news programs have become interesting for audiences. It is a good sign for society allows people to access information in its various aspects. However, the respondents believed there is outside intervention which manipulates on the news or information aired on TV. Besides, the respondents hope for more creative and informative programs to be provided by the existing TV stations and Thai PBS such as documentaries, political, educational and children's program.

5.4.4 Techniques and Factors

The respondents agreed that quality, informative and interesting programs should make on aware of social responsibility and have unbiased factors in producing the contents and the programs. Additionally more varied contents in the programs were preferred by the respondents.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed for Thai PBS in producing quality and informative programs and for future research

5.5.1 The Thai PBS board should create awareness among the general public of the importance and fundamental values of PSB, encourage them to participate and express ideas in the most common interest of the people.

5.5.2 The Thai PBS board should be staffed by non-civil servants in order to prevent outside intervention. If they are well known and accepted by the public for their ethical behavior, it should create confidence among Thais that the station can ensure them a better quality of life and all can access accurate information.

5.5.3 Thai PBS should provide knowledgeable and attractive programs at the same time. Many techniques in producing programs should be adopted to draw viewers' attention.

5.5.4 Further study should adopt this survey to test people's attitudes in other provinces or region such as the South, North or other regions. Besides, the study can narrow the scope of samples divided by target groups or careers. Information from those surveys can be of benefit to Thai PBS in providing the required programs which can meet all the people needs. This is the significant role of PSB characterized by UNESCO that PSB should broadcast programs made, financed and controlled by the public, for the public.

5.5.5 Further study and research about Thai PBS can focus on other areas. Researchers may test the audiences' attitude toward program content or diverse program scheduling based on specific target groups, compared with the existing channels.