

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents five parts: 1) the summary of the study, 2) the summary of the findings, 3) discussion of the findings, 4) conclusion and 5) recommendations for further research.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The summary of this study can be summarized as follows:

5.1.1 Objective of the Study

The study of the attitude of local people in Muang district, Kanchanaburi toward horseback riding aimed to ascertain the local people's attitude toward horseback riding. In addition, it aimed to find out personal factors contributing to the local people's opinions or attitudes toward practicing horseback riding, and to examine what services they wanted from the horseback riding club.

5.1.2 Subjects, Materials and Procedures

The subjects of this study were divided into two groups. The first group was 50 parents, either mothers or fathers, who lived in Muang district, Kanchanaburi. The second group was 60 students who were studying in primary, secondary and high schools from both private and government schools and lived in Muang district, Kanchanaburi.

The material in this study was a closed-ended questionnaire and was separated into two forms, which were questionnaires for parents and for children. However, both forms of the questionnaires were divided into three main parts. The first part asked about the personal information of the respondents, the second part was about the attitude of the respondents toward horseback riding and asked about additional services that they wanted from the club in the last part. Anyway, it was also a suggestion part for the respondents to fill in at the end.

For the procedures of this study, the data were collected from the primary source. The researcher herself went to the Tesco Lotus store and some government offices in Muang district, Kanchanaburi to distribute the questionnaires to the respondents who were either mothers or fathers. In addition, the researcher asked for assistance from her friend who is a teacher to distribute the questionnaires to her students. However, the researcher also used accidental sampling to distribute the questionnaires to other students from different schools in Muang district, Kanchanaburi and explained the questions to them.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The results of this study can be summarized as follows:

5.2.1 Personal Data of the Respondents

The total number of the respondents in this study was 110 respondents divided into 50 parents and 60 children.

From the study, it was found that 58 percent of the parents were fathers with an age range of 23-63. Moreover, fifty-two percent of them finished not higher than secondary school and 42 percent worked for the private sector. The majority of the respondents' monthly income was between 10,001 and 15,000 Baht and had no horseback riding experience.

For children, the female and male respondents were 50 percent equally with an age range of 11-18. About 33 percent of the students were equally studying in primary, secondary and high schools and half of them were from private schools. The majority of them had no horseback riding experience.

5.2.2 Attitude of Local People in Muang District, Kanchanaburi toward Horseback Riding

For the attitude toward horseback riding as an exercise, the findings showed that both the parents and the children agreed that horseback riding was good exercise, and it ranked at the highest degree of attitude among all the questions. Moreover, both of the two groups also agreed that horse riders had a good personality.

Regarding the attitude toward horseback riding as a challenging sport, the children, like the parents, agreed that being able to control a powerful animal was challenging for them. Both of the parents and children were not afraid of horses; anyway, they were uncertain whether horseback riding was a risky sport or not. In contrast to the children, the parents were uncertain whether they liked to do extreme sports or not, while the children stated that they liked to do extreme sports.

From the 14 questions, the results of the study pointed out that both the parents and the children had a positive attitude toward horseback riding. The researcher also found that the respondents were mainly interested in riding activity outside the club, learning how to groom a horse, and having a restaurant for additional services.

5.2.3 Comments and Suggestions about the Horseback Riding Club

For the comments and suggestions, the respondents were quite worried about the expense of doing horseback riding. They suggested that it should be set at a reasonable price in order to gain more visitors. They also agreed that the club should be very concerned about the quality of the services and the quality of live of the horses.

5.3 DISCUSSIONS

The relevant studies indicate that horseback riding can improve gross motor function in children with cerebral palsy (Sterba, 2001) and also help the children to increase upper body strength (Truelove, 2006). Children who continuously participate in the therapeutic riding have better improvement and gain more benefits in their lives. The findings of this researcher are consistent with the findings in earlier studies in that both the parents and the children also agreed that horseback riding was good exercise. Furthermore, they thought that horseback riders had a good personality.

As for the negative effects of horseback riding, however, many relevant studies showed that horseback riding could cause severe brain injury, loss of consciousness, loss of memory and some persistent effects on brain nerves. These

studies also revealed that horseback riding was another factor that led to traumatic brain injury, which was one third of all injuries in the United State (OHDS, 1992). Moreover, horseback riding seemed to be more dangerous than the expected dangerous activities like bungee jumping that had lower injury accidents than horseback riding (Dr. Bentley's survey, 1998).

Although many relevant studies reported that horseback riding could cause negative effects, the researcher's study showed that both the parents and the children were still uncertain about the danger of horseback riding. They thought that horseback riding was a good exercise. Even though the parents could not decide whether to practice horseback riding or not, the majority of the children said that they wanted to do horseback riding. Furthermore, while the parents would support their children to do horseback riding, the children also wanted to recommend anyone they know to do horseback riding. And unsurprisingly, both would love to have a horseback riding club in their local area.

In Bjeke's (1998) study of the attitudes toward animals among Norwegian adolescents, the Norwegian adolescents aged between 9 and 15 had a dominionistic attitude. They were interested in the mastery and control of animals, typically in sporting situations. Like the Norwegian adolescents, both Thai parents and children felt that being able to control a powerful animal was challenging for them. They also agreed that an activity related to animals like horseback riding did not make animals suffer.

After testing the hypotheses, the researcher found that only different occupations contributed to a different attitude of the parents toward horseback riding. It showed that government officials had a more positive attitude than those from other careers. This was probably because many of the respondents were soldiers who were more familiar with horseback riding. In addition, soldiers, by nature, seemed to be interested in extreme sports to show their bravery. Horseback riding is such a sport.

Next, only different school types affected the attitude of the students toward horseback riding. The results showed that the students from the government school had a more positive attitude toward horseback riding than those from the private school. The researcher noticed that the occupation of the parents, soldiers, might affect the students' attitude. In this study, the parents of most children worked for the army and sent their children to the government school. The children from the government school had a more positive attitude toward horseback riding. So it was possible that their attitude might be influenced by their parents' occupation because the government school students had a more positive attitude toward horseback riding than those from the private schools.

Overall, both the parents and the children had a positive attitude toward horseback riding. It can be implied that the possibility of establishing a horseback riding club is quite high. While the majority of the students agreed that they wanted to do horseback riding but were uncertain whether their parents would support them or not, the results of the surveys of parent attitudes showed that they supported their children to do horseback riding.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

Even though horseback riding has both positive and negative effects, from this study, the local people in Muang district, Kanchanaburi expressed a good perception of horseback riding. They seemed to recognize the strengths of horseback riding more than the weaknesses. To them, horseback riding was good exercise and it was a challenging sport. Furthermore, the children wanted to do horseback riding, and the parents agreed to support them. This increases the possibility of establishing a horseback riding club in Muang district, Kanchanaburi.

However, horseback riding is the kind of sport that requires high safety standards. If the good safety standards are provided, horseback riding is likely to benefit the riders. If done without any safety standards, a great loss could happen. Many respondents, especially students, suggested that the club should provide good safety standards and quality services to customers.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made for further research.

- Since the researcher had only a limited time to conduct the survey, so only 110 respondents were included in the study. It should be advantageous if other researchers conduct further research with more respondents.

- This research was limited to only local people. Because Kanchanaburi is a well visited city, other researchers should add tourists to the sample groups in order to find out whether those from a different culture and environment are interested in joining the club or not.

- Other researchers should survey the opinions of parents and children from the same family so that the results will be more accurate.