

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents (1) a summary of the study, (2) a summary of the findings, (3) discussions of the findings related to teen novel book reading behavior and the effects on teenage readers, (4) conclusions, and (5) recommendations for further research.

#### **5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY**

This research aimed to reveal the teen novel book reading behavior and its effects on teenage readers. The objectives of this study were to find out the behavior of teenagers in Bangkok Metropolis in reading teen novel books, to identify the reasons why teenagers read teen novel books, and to explore the effects of teen novel book reading behavior on the readers in different aspects of their lives.

A cross-sectional study was used to conduct the research, and the subjects of this study were 180 teenage readers from three schools in Bangkok Metropolis, whose ages were between 12 and 18 and who studied at secondary school level or high school level. The research instrument was a Thai questionnaire formulated with both closed-ended and opened-ended questions. The questionnaire consisted of four major parts: demographic data, teen novel book reading behavior, effects of teen novel book reading behavior on different aspects of life, and readers' comments and suggestions. The data collection took place between December 8<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008, and sixty questionnaires were distributed to the subjects in each school.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS**

The findings of this study can be summarized as follows:

##### **5.2.1 Demographic Data**

There were a total of 180 respondents who participated in this study and 76.7 percent of them were female while 23.3 percent were male. Most of them were

aged thirteen and had gained a very good GPA of 3.51 – 4.00. The weekly allowance that the majority received was between 251 and 500 baht.

### **5.2.2 Teen Novel Book Reading Behavior**

The results on the behavior of respondents in reading teen novel books show that most of them received information about teen novel books from their friends, and their top three favorite types of teen novel books were romance, fantasy and adventure, respectively. Mostly, the readers usually read teen novel books at home and three days a week on average. They also spent two hours at most reading teen novel books and normally read them on both weekdays and weekends. Additionally, the majority of respondents preferred reading teen novel books between 17.00 and 20.00. while the least preferred time was after 22.00.

Furthermore, in order to read teen novel books, it is reported that most readers purchased them, spending 151 – 200 baht per month on average, whereas the second preferred way was to borrow the books from their friends. When asked about the reason for reading, most respondents answered that they read teen novel books because the books helped them relax and relieve stress. The second most important reason was that they liked the interesting and entertaining plots. Finally, more than three-fourths of the teenage readers responded that they would continue reading teen novel books in the future.

### **5.2.3 Effects of Teen Novel Book Reading Behavior**

Regarding the effects of reading behavior on different aspects of their lives, most readers felt rather positive about the effects that were asked. Regarding the effects on health, they felt relaxed when reading and could manage their reading time well enough that it had minimal effects on their health. Moreover, most of them also found fewer problems about the money that was spent on purchasing teen novel books. Although the majority liked reading teen novel books more than text books, their academic performances did not drop. Finally, most respondents agreed that there were fewer negative effects on their relationships between family and friends. Rather, they felt neutral that their family encouraged them to continue reading teen novel books and that they had more new friends resulting from the reading.

### 5.3 DISCUSSION

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

5.3.1 According to the findings in this study, it is apparent that the majority of respondents who participated in the study were teenage girls while there were a slight number of teenage boys who read teen novel books. This difference regarding reading interests between boys and girls can be explained by the concept of media exposure (Klapper, 1960) in that people tend to expose themselves to particular types of media owing to their interests and attitudes and avoid materials that do not fit their interests. At present, it is observed that the teen book publishing industry tends to focus on girls, so, in many types of teen novel books, the protagonists are female characters whose views and experiences are centrally portrayed throughout the story. The general theme about love and romance is also prevalent. Thus, girls may find teen novel books more enjoyable and close to their real life.

On the contrary, it is possible that teenage boys may prefer reading other kinds of books. Because this research study did not include teenage students who did not read teen novel books, the researcher had spoken off the record with a number of male students who were approached to participate in the study but did not read teen novel books. The researcher found that they were more likely to read comic books because the books had pictures and illustrations rather than words that were rather long. Moreover, some of them found teen novel books somewhat girlish, suitable just for girls.

5.3.2 Romance was stated to be the most popular type of teen novel books read by the respondents. Due to a large number of respondents who were teenage girls, it can be implied that girls were more likely to often read teen romance books. This can be supported by Supatra Chatngoen (สุภัทรา ฉัตรเงิน, 2526) who studied the reading interests of teenagers in the book “Literature for Children and Adolescents”, which stated that girls aged between 11 and 16 were fond of reading books about relationships, love affairs and romance. In addition, it can be said that teenagers are in the transitional stage where one looks for love and being loved by those of the opposite sex. Many teen romance books responded to this need, providing such

underlining theme of love that attracts many young readers because of their wish fulfillment.

5.3.3 Most teenage readers in the study revealed that they read teen novel books for the purpose of relaxation and emotional relief, followed by entertainment. According to the reasons for media exposure by Dr. Surapong Sothanasathian (สุรพงษ์ โสธนเสถียร, 2533), one of the main reasons that people expose themselves to media is diversion, that is, the need for emotional relief and relaxation as well as entertainment. People need something that provides entertainment to reduce boredom and stress in their lives. From the reasons reported by the respondents, it can be implied that the teenage students encountered stressful situations that occurred in their lives. One factor could be study. After long hours and days from studying, doing homework and reviewing lessons for examinations, the teenagers may look for ways to escape this tiresome and stressful time. When they read teen novel books that contained characters, settings and experiences resembling their own lives, they enjoyed reading the books. Even when they read teen books that contained stories beyond reality, they enjoyed imagining the fantasy world. As a result, the enjoyment that they received from reading teen novel books subsequently brought the teenage readers relaxation and stress relief that took them away from an unpleasant reality.

5.3.4 Although friends ranked fourth among the reasons of reading teen novel books, it is interesting to note that teenagers eventually want to socialize with friends and be part of a group. This finding is related to Sujetra's study (สุจิตรา ศรีสุธีวงศ์, 2544) in that apart from family's recommendation, the teenage readers chose to read youth literature because of friends. Furthermore, this finding can be explained by Sukhum Chaloeysap (สุภูมิ เกลยทรัพย์, 2529) who stated that one of the factors that affects the reading interests among children is the need to belong to a group. Children are ready to follow their friends just to be accepted as part of a group. In this study, the teenage readers read teen novel books or even read the same books that their friends read because they would have topics of interest to talk to their friends with and even start relationships with new friends. This is in relation to the effects on relationship with

friends in that teen novel books became the main topic of conversation among the readers and their friends.

5.3.5 Not many research studies about effects of teen novel book reading behavior have been conducted in Thailand. According to this study, it is a new finding that most teenage readers showed positive feelings towards the effects that they received from reading teen novel books. Regarding the effects on health, the reasons that the readers' health was not much affected can lie in the fact that the readers did not spend much time reading teen novel books at a time (only two hours on average) and that they usually read in the evening between 17.00 and 20.00., which was not late at night. Therefore, they did not have a problem that they had little time to sleep. Moreover, in terms of education, although most readers reported that they preferred reading teen novel books more than text books, they still maintained good academic performances. This may result from the fact that the majority of readers (slightly over 75 percent) in the study had high grades between 3.00 and 4.00. They did not let themselves read teen novel books for too long; as a result, they could spare reasonable portion of their time for their lessons and homework. In addition, concerning the economy, the teenage readers did not have a problem about money spent on purchasing teen novel books because most of them spent only around 151 – 200 baht per month, a smaller amount when compared to their monthly allowances. It can be stated that these teenage readers could manage their reading well enough that this reading did not have a lot of negative effects on their lives.

5.3.6 Finally, the majority of readers asserted that they would continue reading teen novel books in the future. To the readers, this kind of printed media was not a harmful material because it helped them relax and relieve stress and also provided them with entertainment. Besides, it gave the readers useful knowledge that could subsequently support them in both education and life. Additionally, the readers in the study indicated that there were fewer negative effects of teen novel book reading behavior on their lives. With these reasons, teen novel books can retain their popularity among teenagers and tend to be more recognized by other non-readers like parents who appeared to neutrally encourage their children to continue reading teen novel books and buy the books for their children themselves.

## **5.4 CONCLUSION**

The findings from this study can be concluded as follows:

5.4.1 Most of the readers were teenage girls and had pretty good grades at schools between 3.51 and 4.00.

5.4.2 The top three favorite types of teen novel books most often read were romance, fantasy and adventure.

5.4.3 Most teenage readers normally read teen novel books at home and spent two hours on average reading teen novel books.

5.4.4 Most teenage readers purchased teen novel books from bookstores and spent around 151 – 200 baht per month on the purchasing.

5.4.5 The most important reason that the teenage readers read teen novel books was for relaxation and emotional relief.

5.4.6 It is reported that teen novel book reading behavior did not have a lot of negative effects on the teenage readers in terms of their health, economy, education, relationship with family and relationship with friends.

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESARCH**

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

5.5.1 Although this study aimed to find out the behavior of teenage readers in Bangkok Metropolis in reading teen novel books, the samples in the study were taken from three schools only due to the vast amount of teenage population in Bangkok Metropolis and also due to time limitation. Therefore, further research may consider a larger amount of samples who would more accurately represent the population in order to gain reliable results.

5.5.2 Apart from a larger amount of samples, further research can focus on teen novel book reading behavior and its effects on teenage readers who live in other regions in order to see whether teenage readers from different regions reveal different results.

5.5.3 Based on the findings of this study, the teenage readers significantly showed positive results on the effects of teen novel book reading behavior on them and also indicated that they would continue reading the books. Consequently, it is suggested that further research focus on the characteristics or factors of teen novel books that appeal to the readers in order to learn which ones influence their reading interests. Such characteristics or factors can be plots, writers, publishers, packages and premiums, prices, and so on.

5.5.4 It is further recommended that further studies involve school librarians by which researchers explore the librarians' attitudes towards teen novel books and whether teen novel books can encourage teenagers' recreational reading.

5.5.5 Lastly, it is recommended that the relationship between teen novel book reading and the readers' socialization be further investigated.