CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes: (1) the subjects, (2) the materials, (3) the procedures used in the collection and analysis of the data, and (4) the data analysis.

3.1 SUBJECTS

The subjects in this study were the consignees, mostly factories in Thailand's Industrial Estates, who have recently received their cargo in a damaged condition. In order to know such consignees, the network companies of the researcher such as Thai Adjusting Co., Ltd. or TAC (a local claims settling agent for 18 leading marine insurance companies in East Asia) and Sri Muang Insurance Co., Ltd. or SMIC (who had the biggest share of 12.63%-17.34% in Marine Insurance in Thailand between 2004-2006) were approached for an interview. The population from both companies was estimated to be around 1,000-5,000 consignees who have damaged cargo in one year. Then, the samples were selected from the populations of both companies by using the purposive sampling design. That is, those who were interested in and expressed their willingness in answering the questionnaire were invited to be samples of the study. The total subjects of this study were 50 consignees.

3.2 MATERIALS

A questionnaire was used as the instrument for this study. The questionnaire was divided into 4 parts with closed-ended questions. The first part of the questionnaire asked about the background of the consignee, such as years in business, frequency of import shipment and volume of shipment per month. In part two, all subjects were asked for the background of damage to their recent shipment such as port of loading, period of shipment, container type, style of packing, value and quantity of damage. In part three, the consignees were asked about the behavior of the shipper, shipping line, port, forwarding agent and the consignee themselves. In the last part, the consignees could give some comments or ideas to reduce damage to imported cargo through an open-ended question.

3.3 PROCEDURES

3.3.1 Research Design

This research study is a cross-sectional study to find out the main causes of damage to imported cargo during marine transportation. It aims to collect information from local consignees, via a 5-point scale questionaire of Likert Scale, part of which includes a closed-ended and open-ended question.

3.3.2 Data Collection

From December 2007 to January 2008, the researcher distributed copies of the questionnaire to the consignees who had recently made claims against Thai Adjusting Co., Ltd. and Sri Muang Insurance Co., Ltd. The participants were asked for their willingness and explained the purpose and objective of this study. Most of them were able to return the completed questionnaires upon our survey. Some of them were busy and had to return their completed questionnaires via fax or e-mail later.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

In order to measure the variables, the opinions of the participants in Likert Scale was given the score.

The score is 5 for the answer "strongly agree"

The score is 4 for the answer "agree"

The score is 3 for the answer "depends"

The score is 2 for the answer "disagree"

The score is 1 for the answer "strongly disagree"

For the analysis, the raw data was processed through the following steps:

1. Editing: The correctness of the returned questionnaires was checked and incomplete ones were segregated in order to maintain the complete 50 questionnaires.

2. Coding: Each answer in questionnaires was coded for further analysis.

3. Processing: Descriptive statistics was mainly used for the interpretation of data such as percentage – in order to explain the general information of the participants. Raw data that had been coded was processed through the SPSS/PC program.

In summary, this chapter has shown the methodology that the researcher employed in order to obtain information from the sample group. In the next chapter, the results of this study will be presented.