CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the research methods used for this study and an analysis of the data gathered from the survey.

3.2 Research Methodologies Used

For this study, the descriptive research method was utilized. In this method, it is possible that the study would be cheap and quick. It could also suggest unanticipated hypotheses. Nonetheless, it would be very hard to rule out alternative explanations and especially infer causations. Thus, in this study we will use the descriptive approach. This descriptive type of research utilizes observations in the study. To illustrate the descriptive type of research, Creswell (1994) guided the researcher when he stated: Descriptive method of research is to gather information about the present existing condition.

The purpose of employing this method is to describe the nature of a situation, as it exists at the time of the study and to explore the cause/s of a particular phenomenon. We use this kind of research to obtain first hand data from the respondents so as to formulate rational and sound conclusions and recommendations for the study.

To come up with pertinent findings and to provide credible recommendations, this study utilized two sources of research: primary and secondary. Primary research data were obtained through this research study. The questionnaire surveys were conducted. On the other hand, the secondary research data were obtained from previous studies on the same topic.
3.3 Respondents of the Study

The general population for this study is composed of 20 managers from small and medium enterprises which are already implementing e-commerce. These managers were surveyed and 100 consumers who regularly shop online were surveyed regarding customer viewpoint.

3.4 Instruments used

To examine the active utilization of e-commerce by Turkish SMEs, the researcher prepared a questionnaire. The questionnaire contains six parts; each is dedicated for a separate dimension. Part A includes three statements which examine Security and Privacy Issues. Part B includes three statements which assess Personnel Qualification. Part C contains three statements which access Customer Satisfaction. Part D contains three statements which examine Organizational Change. Part E contains three statements which assess the effects of e-commerce system on marketing. Part F includes five statements that examine Overall Management. The final part contains seven statements which assess consumer attitudes. In addition, the survey includes some questions on demographic characteristics of the respondents (sex, age, education). The statements in the six parts of the questionnaire were measured by five point Likert scale of agreement, running from strongly agree to strongly disagree (1=strongly disagree, 3 is the mid point of the scale, and 5=strongly agree).

The decision was made to use a questionnaire for the data collection for this project. The use of the questionnaire provides the project owner with the ability to test the views and attitudes of the managers. The questionnaire forms sent to the managers and received their response by fax in the month of February 2003 and as surveying consumers’ view of e-commerce; researcher gave the questionnaire to the consumers by hand and by fax and collected their response in the same way.
3.5 Validation and Administration of the Instrument

For validation purposes, we initially tested a sample of the set of survey questionnaires and after the approval of the supervisor; the initial survey was tested with five respondents. After the questions were answered, the respondents were asked for any suggestions or any necessary corrections to ensure further improvement and validity of the instrument. Afterwards, we again examined the content of the questions to find out the reliability of the instrument. Then we excluded irrelevant questions and changed words that would be deemed difficult by the respondents, to much simpler terms. The researcher excluded the five respondents who were initially used for the validation of the instrument. We then compute, score and tabulate all the responses in the provided questions.

3.6 Statistical Treatment of the Data

When the entire survey questionnaire have been collected, we used statistical tools to analyze all the data; and was assisted by the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) in coming up with the statistical analysis for this study. For the consumer survey questions, a content analysis was drawn in order to identify factors pertaining to the effective/ineffective application of e-commerce. Because of this research design, the results of the data gathered were limited to the determination of factors that affect the utilization of e-commerce by small and medium companies. Thus other possible findings in the field of e-commerce were not being pursued.

At the analytical stage, some statistical techniques were employed to satisfy study objectives, including frequency analysis, descriptive analysis.
3.7 Conclusion

As stated in this chapter on research methodology, the research underwent stages. In the research design, the researcher collected secondary data and formulated and developed the questionnaire and interview questions. In this stage, this instrument was subjected to approval and validation. During the data collection, the researcher collated and summarized the data obtained from the questionnaire and interview. The researcher then analyzed these data and came up with findings and recommendations that shall be presented in the following chapters.