

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**EXPLORING E-RETAILERS'
PERCEPTION OF COURIER
SERVICE QUALITY: A
QUALITATIVE APPROACH**

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ABSTRACT

There has been a tremendous paradigm shift in the retail sector where most of the retails, trading and any other form of business has shift from brick-and-mortar stores to e-commerce platform. As the e-retailers is facing an intense competition in the digital market, courier service quality is one of important characteristics to gain competitive advantage. However, most of studies in courier service quality are focusing on online shopper perception rather than e-retailers. Hence, study about courier service quality from e-retailers point of view is still lacking. Therefore, this study fills in the gap by exploring the courier service quality attributes in e-retailers' selection of the courier service provider (CSP). This research was conducted based on qualitative approach. A sample of ten (10) informants was selected for interview. Interview data were collected using semi-structured questions designed based from literature review. The data collected then was analysed using the thematic analysis method to determine the major themes that influence the e-retailers' intention to choose their preferred CSP. The analysis of interview identified that Systematic Pre-Delivery, Transparent and Seamless Delivery, Convenience After Delivery have been the factors that influence the e-retailers' choice of courier service providers. The findings of the research suggested the Theoretical Framework of Courier Service Quality as a strategic approach for the courier company to segmentized their customer's based on their roles and needs. The ability to accommodate the e-retailers' expectation will attract a good business alliance with the e-retailers, gaining their trust and winning the competitive advantage and finally to ensure that the courier industry can grow in tandem with the booming of the e-commerce industry.

Keyword: *e-commerce, courier service, service quality, choice*

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study is conducted with the aim to identify the courier service quality in e-commerce industry from the perspective of e-retailers. The findings are significant in supporting the growth of the digital economy and open broader perspectives in the e-commerce ecosystem by pointing out the role of an efficient parcel delivery in online business. This study highlights several attributes that e-retailers consider when choosing the courier service provider (CSP). The findings can be a reference by the stakeholder in improving the e-commerce operation holistically. This chapter will lay out the rationale why this study is conducted. It will be started with the description of the background of the study, the objectives, and the research questions. The scope and the research gap are also being explained in this chapter.

1.2 Background of the Study

The rise of digital trends has propelled e-commerce to new heights, benefiting e-retailers while also providing new opportunities for the courier sector to prosper. The emergence of the Internet has changed the landscape of buying and selling activity. In addition, the global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic outbreak in December 2020 has amplified the boom of e-commerce and online purchasing. As millions of people stayed at home in early 2020, the 'new normal' has resulted in digital channels and online activities as the most popular option (Mangano et al., 2021). More people are getting into doing business transactions or also known as electronic commerce from the comfort of their armchair with no visible retail facilities. This advancement of doing business has brought many advantages to the e-retailers as well as the customer in terms of the flexibility of business hours, easy access, eliminating the cost of transportation and rental of physical stores, larger market catchment and broad customer visibility of products. Geographical locations and the size of operations are no longer relevant considerations and this allows not only large companies but small businesses to sell their products via the Internet and