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CAN THE TRANS CASPIAN INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORTATION ROUTE (TITR) REALLY LINK ASIA TO EUROPE? AN ASSESSMENT OF PORT SERVICE QUALITY (PSQ) IN SEAPORTS WITH ROPMIS MODEL

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ABSTRACT

Ports play a crucial role in the economy of many countries and regions. Failure or unreliability of port services can significantly influence port customers—shipping lines and cargo owners—and result in their dissatisfaction. TITR is an emerging trend competing to be the most effective, secure, and time-efficient transportation route, which runs through China, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey and Ukraine and goes to Europe. It reduces time of shipments almost twice and promises high-level security. TITR is believed to highly contribute to the growth of the economies located on the route and neighborhood. However, no any prior academic study has been published assessing service quality of the seaports by comparing 5 countries, which can help to evaluate how competitive TITR will be in international transportation. The primary aim of the study is to utilize ROPMIS model proposed by Thai (2008) and employed by very few studies, particularly in Southeast Asia region. By using 257 logistics professionals with purposive sampling technique, the SEM results revealed that PSQ is five-factor construct, and resources, management, image and social responsibility, and outcomes significantly and positively affect customer satisfaction. In addition, it was found that PSQ's indirect effect on attitudinal and behavioral loyalty of logistics firms on seaport service providers is more significant than direct effect. The major theoretical contribution of the study is that it validated ROPMIS model in broader geographical context rather than in one country, by further incorporating attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. The results would also be equally significant for countries and policy-makers to enhance the service quality in their sea-ports.

Keywords: PSQ, ROPMIS, TITR, Customer Satisfaction, Loyalty