



## ABSTRACT

Today the shipping sector has become the backbone of international trade and globalization by means of transporting goods globally, from one place to another beyond the territory. Therefore the freight transportation selection is a critical importance factor for the both shippers and IFF's in terms of achieving higher efficiency, customer satisfaction and the cost saving. There are over 50,000 merchant ships trading internationally, transporting every kind of cargo. The world fleet is registered in over 150 nations, and manned by over a million seafarers of virtually every nationality. Thus, evaluation of requirements and trends of freight forwarding while understanding key factors that govern its efficacious flow is a timely need to provide high quality service to communities involved in the business.

This study titled as "Determinants That Affect the Buying Behaviour of the Shippers and International Freight Forwarders When Selecting an Ocean Carrier With Reference To Sri Lanka" aims to determine the factors that affect for the both shippers and IFF's when selecting an ocean carrier preference to the Sri Lanka. The research is based on primary data collected via questioners, each containing of 25 variables. Such collected data was subjected to analysis by means of statistical models such as SPSS reliability test, hypothesis test and general linear model- univariate analysis was conducted prior generating data in order to generate the results.

The outcome of the research revealed several significant factors that affect the behaviour of shippers and International Freight Forwarders in carrier selection process with regards to Sri Lankan context, which are further discussed in methodology and statistical analysis. Therefore, this research can be used as a reference in understanding important factors that contributes to ocean carrier selection. This research also provides newer insights into customer services related to shipping industry, emphasizing on key factors that helps in service quality enhancement.

**Key words:** Shippers, International Freight Forwarders, Buying Behaviour