

Collaboration of Academics and Business Practitioners in The Analysis of Conditional Trade Policies and Import Duty: A Study on Indonesia-Malaysia Trade at Tuanku Sultanah Bahiya Polytechnic

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the collaboration between academics and business practitioners in analyzing conditional trade policies and assessing their implications for the academic environment at Tuanku Sultanah Bahiya Polytechnic. The research approach uses a qualitative case study method, involving in-depth interviews, participant observation, and analysis of related policy documents. The research subjects consisted of lecturers, students, and business actors actively involved in the implementation of conditional trade policies. The results show that this collaboration enhances academics' understanding of the dynamics of real-world business practices, while providing a practice-based perspective for business actors in formulating strategies aligned with regulations. Furthermore, this study identified challenges in the form of differences in priorities and perceptions between academics and practitioners, which require effective communication and coordination mechanisms. The implications of this study emphasize the importance of sustainable synergy between academia and industry to create adaptive, relevant trade policies that provide direct benefits for student capacity development and improving the quality of business practices at the local level.

Keywords: Academic-Practitioner Collaboration, Conditional Trade Policy, Academic Implications, Tuanku Sultanah Bahiya Polytechnic

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Introduction

Conditional trade policy is a strategic instrument used by governments to regulate international trade flows while protecting domestic economic interests. This instrument includes the application of import duties, anti-dumping duties, safeguards, and exemptions for national security reasons. Nasution (2021) emphasized that this policy has a dual justification: economically, to protect domestic industries from unfair competition and ensure the stability of local production; politically, to safeguard national interests, economic sovereignty, and the stability of international relations. The impact of conditional trade policy is not only felt by companies directly affected by the regulation but also affects business strategies, corporate behavior, and the quality of the regional economy. Therefore, an in-depth analysis of the implementation of this policy is essential for its effective implementation, responsiveness to market dynamics, and ability to accommodate the interests of various parties.

International trade between Indonesia and Malaysia serves as an important context for understanding the dynamics of conditional trade policies. The two countries have a very active bilateral trade relationship, particularly in the commodities, manufacturing, electronics, and energy sectors. These import-export flows often face challenges in the form of tariff regulations, differences in technical standards, and price competition. The implementation of import duties is a key instrument in managing this bilateral trade. Import duties not only serve as protection against imported products that could harm domestic industries, but also serve as a tool to encourage local production, improve the quality of domestic goods, and strengthen the country's bargaining position in international trade negotiations. In practice, this policy requires companies to make strategic adjustments, ranging from pricing, product diversification, supply chain optimization, and product innovation to remain competitive in regional and global markets.

Furthermore, trade dynamics between Indonesia and Malaysia are often influenced by external factors, such as commodity price fluctuations, changes in market demand, and global trade policies. Therefore, companies are required to be flexible in dealing with regulations, including import duties and safeguards, to maintain economic performance. Research by Andika et al. (2021) and Indrawan, Pramono, & Nasution (2020) shows that company characteristics—such as capital structure, liquidity, profit growth, and company size—influence a company's ability to respond to trade regulations. Adaptive companies tend to be able to minimize risks, maintain competitiveness, and capitalize on opportunities arising from regulatory changes.

In the context of higher education, Politeknik Tuanku Sultanah Bahiya plays a strategic role as a center for trade policy studies and research, particularly in fostering students' and academics' understanding of real-world practices. Collaboration between academics and business practitioners provides an effective approach to analyzing conditional trade policies and their impacts. Academics provide theoretical frameworks, literature analysis, and systematic research methodologies, while business practitioners contribute field experience, company data, and regulatory adaptation strategies. This synergy enables a comprehensive understanding of policy implementation, company responses, and economic consequences, while providing students with practical experience through case studies, collaborative projects, and business strategy simulations.

Furthermore, this collaboration not only impacts the quality of academic research and the company's business strategy but also has implications for human resource capacity development. Students involved in collaborative activities gain analytical and practical experience relevant to real-world industry conditions, strengthen problem-solving skills, and enhance their understanding of bilateral trade regulations, including the role of import duties in the context of Indonesia-Malaysia trade. This underscores the importance of an integrative approach between academic theory and business practice in producing realistic, effective, and sustainable policy recommendations that can be implemented at both the corporate and higher education levels.

Literature Review

2.1 Conditional Trade Policy and Import Duties

Conditional trade policies include the application of tariffs, safeguards, and import duties to protect domestic industries from detrimental trade practices, such as dumping or excessive imports. Nasution (2021) explains that these policies have economic justification, to maintain local industrial stability, and political justification, to protect national interests and economic sovereignty. In the context of Indonesia-Malaysia trade, the application of import duties is a strategic instrument to balance export-import flows, ensure domestic industrial competitiveness, and stimulate regional economic growth. Previous research has shown that these regulations influence corporate strategies, from price adjustments and product diversification to supply chain management (Andika et al., 2021; Indrawan, Pramono & Nasution, 2020).

2.2 The Role of Companies and Adaptation Strategies

Companies operating under conditional trade regulations are required to adapt their business strategies to remain competitive. Adaptation strategies include product diversification, operational efficiency, price adjustments, and flexible supply chain planning. Research by Andika et al. (2021) shows that company characteristics—such as capital structure, liquidity, profit growth, and size—influence a company's ability to respond to trade policies. Companies' responses to import duties and safeguards in the context of Indonesia-Malaysia trade demonstrate that adaptive strategies can minimize risks, maintain market share, and capitalize on opportunities arising from regulatory changes.

2.3 Academic-Practitioner Collaboration in Policy Analysis

Collaboration between academics and business practitioners is an effective approach to comprehensively evaluating the impact of conditional trade policies. Academics provide the theoretical framework, research methodology, and literature analysis, while business practitioners contribute real-world experience in addressing regulations, market challenges, and corporate adaptation strategies. Hasibuan et al. (2020) emphasize that practitioner involvement in academic research enhances the relevance of findings, while academic involvement helps companies understand the economic implications and evidence-based strategies. This collaboration also benefits higher education by involving students in research projects and case studies related to Indonesia-Malaysia bilateral trade, including the implications of import duties on goods.

2.4 Implications for Education and Academic Research

Academic-practitioner collaboration impacts student capacity development, academic research, and corporate business strategies. Students gain practical experience, analytical skills, and a contextual understanding of trade regulations and corporate responses. Academics can develop more relevant, evidence-based research, ensuring that research findings are not only theoretical but also applicable. Business practitioners gain additional insights into analytical approaches and adaptation strategies based on data and theory. Overall, this synergy creates an integrative model that connects theory, practice, and policy, positively contributing to international trade, particularly the Indonesia-Malaysia economic relationship.

Research Methodology

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design, which aims to explore in-depth the interaction between academics and business practitioners in analyzing conditional trade policies and their implications within the Tuanku Sultanah Bahiya Polytechnic. The qualitative approach was chosen because it can capture experiences, perceptions, and adaptation strategies that are contextual and complex, thus facilitating a holistic understanding of the phenomenon of collaboration and policy implementation at the educational institution and business levels. This case study allows for a comprehensive analysis of real-world practices and decision-making processes involving various parties, both academic and business.

The research was conducted at Tuanku Sultanah Bahiya Polytechnic, focusing on academics, students, and business practitioners directly involved in the implementation or evaluation of conditional trade policies. Subjects were selected using purposive sampling, with criteria including active involvement in academic-practitioner collaboration, an understanding of conditional trade policies, and experience in addressing economic challenges or business strategies related to regulations. This approach ensures the data obtained is relevant, in-depth, and authentically reflects the reality on the ground.

Data collection was conducted through a combination of complementary techniques. First, in-depth interviews with academics, students, and business practitioners were used to obtain information about their experiences, strategies, and perspectives on conditional trade policies. Second, participant observation was conducted to document interactions, discussions, and collaborations that occurred in real-world settings within educational institutions and the business world. Third, document analysis included trade policies, research reports, company strategy documents, and relevant academic records. This combination of methods enabled data triangulation, resulting in more valid and comprehensive research results.

The data obtained were analyzed using thematic analysis, where data were coded and grouped into key themes, such as academic-practitioner collaboration, corporate adaptation strategies, and the impact of conditional trade policies. The analysis was conducted systematically, starting with interview transcription and pattern identification, and then interpreting the results based on the context of the literature and policy documents. This approach allows the research not only to describe the phenomenon but also to understand the dynamics of interactions, challenges, and opportunities within academic-practitioner collaboration to effectively assess and implement conditional trade policies.

3.1 Research Approach

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design, aiming to explore in-depth the collaboration between academics and business practitioners in analyzing conditional trade policies and import duties on goods, particularly in the context of Indonesia-Malaysia trade. A qualitative approach was chosen because it captures contextual and complex experiences, perceptions, and adaptation strategies, thus facilitating a holistic understanding of the interaction between academic theory, business practice, and regulatory implementation. This case study allows for in-depth analysis of actual practices, decision-making processes, and the policy's impact on companies, higher education institutions, and students.

3.2 Research Location and Subjects

The research was conducted at Tuanku Sultanah Bahiya Polytechnic, which serves as a hub for collaborative activities between academics, students, and business practitioners involved in the implementation or evaluation of conditional trade policies. The research subjects consisted of three main groups: (1) academics with expertise in economics, management, and public policy; (2) business practitioners directly involved in trade, including exports and imports between Indonesia and Malaysia; and (3) students participating in collaborative projects or research related to trade policies. Subjects were selected using purposive sampling, with criteria of direct involvement in collaboration and relevance to the research topic, so that the data obtained reflect appropriate experiences and perspectives.

3.3 Data Collection Techniques

Data collection was conducted through several complementary methods. First, in-depth interviews were conducted with academics, business practitioners, and students to obtain information on their experiences, adaptation strategies, and perspectives on the impact of conditional trade policies and import duties. Second, participant observation was conducted to directly observe collaborative interactions, strategic discussions, and policy implementation processes within educational institutions and companies. Third, document analysis was conducted on research reports, trade policies, company strategy documents, and academic records related to Indonesia-Malaysia

trade. This combination of techniques enabled data triangulation, ensuring the validity and reliability of the information.

3.4 Data Analysis Methods

The data obtained were analyzed using thematic analysis, where all data were coded and grouped into key themes, such as forms of academic-practitioner collaboration, company adaptation strategies, and the impact of conditional trade policies on higher education. The analysis process included interview transcription, identification of patterns and similarities, systematic coding, and interpretation of findings based on the context of literature and policy documents. This approach enabled researchers to generate an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of collaboration, adaptation strategies, and practical implications of conditional trade policies and import duties, while ensuring the relevance of the research findings for academics, business practitioners, and policymakers.

Results

4.1 Collaboration between Academics and Business Practitioners in the Analysis of Conditional Trade Policies and Import Duties on Goods

The research findings indicate that collaboration between academics and business practitioners at Tuanku Sultanah Bahiya Polytechnic is conducted through a structured and sustainable mechanism. Academics play a role in providing a theoretical framework related to conditional trade policies and import duties, including an analysis of the economic and political consequences and regulatory implications for international trade, particularly between Indonesia and Malaysia. Business practitioners contribute with real-world experiences in dealing with regulations, corporate adaptation strategies, and operational challenges in bilateral markets. This interaction occurs through activities such as panel discussions, workshops, case studies, and collaborative research projects that enable the simultaneous exchange of knowledge between academic theory and business practice.

Furthermore, this collaboration facilitated a contextual understanding of the policy's impact on trade flows between Indonesia and Malaysia. Academics were able to analyze how import duties and conditional trade regulations impact corporate strategies, while business practitioners provided practical insights into corporate responses, operational planning, and risk mitigation. Interviews indicated that this collaborative approach strengthened the quality of policy analysis, generated more realistic recommendations, and prepared students to navigate the dynamics of international trade head-on.

The research also found that the success of this collaboration hinged on effective communication, ongoing coordination, and a shared understanding of objectives. Despite challenges, such as differing priorities between academics and practitioners, limited resources, and differing perceptions of regulatory urgency, well-managed synergy resulted in comprehensive analysis and applicable policy recommendations. Thus, the academic-practitioner collaboration not only strengthens the academic literature on conditional trade and import duties but also provides practical impacts on corporate strategy and student capacity development in the context of Indonesia-Malaysia bilateral trade.

4.2 Adaptation Strategies for Companies and Higher Education Institutions

The research findings show that companies involved in bilateral trade between Indonesia and Malaysia implemented various adaptation strategies to address the impacts of conditional trade policies and import duties. Key strategies included price adjustments, product diversification, supply chain efficiency, and more flexible operational planning. Companies that were able to predict regulatory changes and their impact on the market adjusted their marketing and production strategies more quickly, thereby maintaining competitiveness. Furthermore, companies that collaborated with academics received data-driven risk analysis and more targeted adaptive strategy recommendations, resulting in more effective regulatory responses.

On the higher education side, Tuanku Sultanah Bahiya Polytechnic has adapted its learning and research strategies to reflect the dynamics of conditional trade. The curriculum has been developed to integrate real-life case studies, business strategy simulations, and analyses of the impact of import duty policies on international trade. Students are involved in collaborative projects that provide practical experience, analytical skills, and an understanding of regulatory implementation. Academics have also adapted their research methodologies to be more relevant to industry conditions, ensuring that research findings can make tangible contributions to companies and policymakers.

Furthermore, the study found that the success of adaptation strategies depends heavily on coordination, communication, and shared goals between academics, business practitioners, and educational institutions. Challenges such as limited resources, differing priorities, and differing perceptions of policy urgency can be overcome through effective collaborative management. With a structured adaptation strategy, companies remain competitive, students gain contextual learning experiences, and higher education institutions can produce relevant and applicable research.

4.3 Implications of Academic-Practitioner Collaboration on Student Capacity Development, Academic Research, and Business Strategy

The research findings show that collaboration between academics and business practitioners has a significant impact on student capacity development. Students involved in collaborative projects gain practical experience in corporate strategies for addressing conditional trade policies and import duties, particularly in the context of Indonesia-Malaysia trade. This activity enhances analytical, decision-making, and problem-solving skills, while providing a deeper understanding of the relationship between academic theory and business practice.

From an academic research perspective, this collaboration enables academics to develop more relevant, field-based studies. Business practitioners provide insights into companies' responses to regulations, operational challenges, and adaptation strategies, enhancing the quality of the research and generating applicable recommendations. This ensures that research is not merely theoretical but also addresses the practical needs of industry and policymakers.

In the context of business strategy, companies that collaborate with academics can formulate more effective and regulatory-compliant adaptive strategies. This collaboration helps companies understand the impact of conditional trade policies and import duties, predict risks, and develop appropriate mitigation measures. The resulting strategies are more measurable, sustainable, and evidence-based, thereby enhancing companies' competitiveness in international markets. Overall, the synergy between academics and practitioners creates mutually beneficial positive effects on human capacity development, research quality, and business strategy success, while strengthening understanding of Indonesia-Malaysia bilateral trade.

Conclusion

This research confirms that collaboration between academics and business practitioners plays a strategic role in analyzing conditional trade policies and import duties, particularly in the context of Indonesia-Malaysia trade. Academics provide a theoretical framework, research methodology, and analysis of the political-economic consequences, while business practitioners contribute real-world experiences related to corporate adaptation strategies and operational challenges in the field. This synergy results in a more comprehensive understanding, ensuring that policy recommendations are realistic, applicable, and relevant to industry conditions.

The research findings demonstrate that this collaboration significantly impacts student capacity development, academic research, and corporate business strategies. Students gain practical experience, analytical skills, and a contextual understanding of international trade regulations, including the application of import duties. Academics are able to produce more relevant, evidence-based research, while companies are able to formulate adaptive strategies that comply with regulations, improve operational efficiency, and maintain competitiveness in regional and international markets.

Overall, the success of academic-practitioner collaboration is determined by effective communication mechanisms, ongoing coordination, and agreement on shared goals. Challenges, such as differing priorities, limited resources, and differing perceptions of policy urgency, can be overcome through effective collaboration management. The practical implications of this research indicate that academic-practitioner synergy not only enriches the academic literature and students' experiences but also makes a tangible contribution to the implementation of adaptive, relevant, and sustainable conditional trade and import duty policies.

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