

ABSTRACT

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) was formed as an effort to strengthen economic integration in the Asia-Pacific region through the liberalization of trade in goods and services, including tariff reduction policies. This study aims to identify the challenges in implementing tariff reduction policies in the RCEP at the Free Trade Area (FTA) stage to achieve regional economic integration. The type of research used in conducting this study is descriptive qualitative. This research employs Bela Balassa's theory of economic integration, the preconditions for integration and stages of integration according to Dominick Salvatore, as well as the problem malignancy and the problem-solving capacity framework from Miles and Underdal, to analyze the challenges faced. This study shows that the implementation of tariff reduction policies in the RCEP still faces various challenges, including numerous tariff schedules, limited and uneven liberalization, low preference margins, protection of certain sectors (agriculture, automotive, natural resources), complex rules of origin, low utilization of the agreement, and structural asymmetries among members. These conditions indicate the need to strengthen institutional capacity and harmonize policies among members to achieve the goal of regional economic integration.

Keywords: RCEP, tariff reduction, economic integration, implementation challenges, Asia-Pacific

ABSTRAK

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) dibentuk sebagai upaya untuk memperkuat integrasi ekonomi kawasan Asia-Pasifik melalui liberalisasi perdagangan barang dan jasa, termasuk kebijakan penurunan tarif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui tantangan dalam implementasi kebijakan penurunan tarif di RCEP pada tahap *Free Trade Area* (FTA) terhadap upaya pencapaian integrasi ekonomi kawasan. Jenis penelitian yang digunakan dalam menyusun penelitian ini adalah kualitatif deskriptif. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti menggunakan teori integrasi ekonomi menurut Bela Balassa, prakondisi integrasi dan tahapan integrasi menurut Dominick Salvatore, serta kerangka problem malignancy dan problem-solving capacity dari Miles dan Underdal untuk menganalisis tantangan yang dihadapi. Penelitian ini menunjukkan hasil bahwa implementasi kebijakan penurunan tarif di RCEP masih menghadapi berbagai tantangan, antara lain banyaknya jadwal tarif, liberalisasi yang terbatas dan tidak merata, margin preferensi yang rendah, proteksi sektor tertentu (pertanian, otomotif, sumber daya alam), kompleksitas *rules of origin*, rendahnya pemanfaatan perjanjian, serta asimetri struktural antar anggota. Kondisi ini menunjukkan perlunya penguatan kapasitas kelembagaan dan harmonisasi kebijakan antar anggota agar tujuan integrasi ekonomi kawasan dapat tercapai.

Kata kunci: RCEP, pengurangan tarif, integrasi ekonomi, tantangan implementasi, Asia-Pasifik