



(REVIEW ARTICLE)



## RCEP trade zones within the framework of political communication Asia pacific countries

Idris Kusumanegara \*, Hilmannur Badruzaman and Galih Meigiansyah Putra

*Master's Communication Science, Faculty of Social & Political Sciences, University of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Serang, Banten, Indonesia.*

World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews, 2022, 16(02), 156–160

Publication history: Received on 28 September 2022; revised on 01 November 2022; accepted on 04 November 2022

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2022.16.2.1155>

### Abstract

The trade feud between the Americas and Europe, making the countries of the Asian region heat up, was initiated by China. Several Asia Pacific countries established multilateral trade political communication by forming the RCEP trade zone, (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership), then Australia and New Zealand expressed interest in joining the RCEP. This manuscript explores the deepening of the material using literature study, literature review, repositories, and relevant blog content. The methodology used is in qualitative form. The conclusion reached is that the Chinese state continues to create digital-based connecting channels and create delivery channels for goods and services, which are carried out to make it smoother and faster, so that member countries can achieve superior competitiveness in terms of marketing commodities goods and services, with the hope that it can have superior competitive value compared to the commodities of other regional countries.

**Keywords:** Trade; Multilateral; Indonesia; China

### 1. Introduction

A total of 15 Asia-Pacific countries have signed the world's largest free trade deal. The agreement is seen as China's way of expanding its influence on the world economy.

The agreement is a Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) covering 10 countries in the ASEAN region along with China, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, and Australia, accounting for about 30% of global GDP.

But the signing of this RCEP was not followed by India. The country was absent during the virtual signing and already withdrew from the agreement last year out of concern for cheap Chinese goods that would later enter the country.

The Chinese government claims that multilateralism is the right path, and represents the right direction for the global economy and the progress of the people.

Deals to lower tariffs and open up trade in services within the bloc without American interference are seen as China's alternative to finding a replacement for a trade agreement with America that is now no longer working properly. but behind that, some trade experts say that the RCEP reinforces China's broader regional geopolitical ambitions around the Belt and Road Initiative.

\* Corresponding author: Idris Kusumanegara

Master's Communication Science, Faculty of Social & Political Sciences, University of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Serang, Banten, Indonesia.

The dominance of prosperous countries in international trade hurts Asian countries. It was seen in the Asian economic crisis in 1997 – 1998.

Based on international economic and trade conditions, political communication is established due to technological changes and capitalist ideology is the root of the formation of international trade cooperation.

This research focuses on Indonesia's political communication framework for trade regionalization (RCEP).

---

## 2. Bibliography review

China's dominance in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership forum is a form of free trade cooperation that is in the process of negotiations between ASEAN member states and ASEAN free trade partner countries. Once completed, the partnership will house 16 countries, representing 45% of the world's population.

China is showing high interest in RCEP. This can be seen in the many efforts that have been made by China.

China intends to play an active role in promoting the acceleration of the RCEP negotiation process and will lead the way in negotiations and implement the necessary policies in the negotiation process.

China, which has an interest in RCEP, has three driving factors that motivate it to play a more active role in the finalization of the RCEP negotiations:

China joins RCEP negotiations, and actively unifies diverse domestic preferences among member states that can amplify their voices and spark debate over China's regional role and identity.

China develops regionally recognized norms through a long-term process of trade diplomacy. This makes China's presence in the Asian-Pacific region even stronger.

China's involvement in the RCEP doesn't just show its interest. Instead, it has an interest in the negotiation process for the finalization of the RCEP, which is always beneficial for the country. The negotiation process requires a political communication framework to convey its goals and objectives in encouraging the ratification of norms in the process of finalization.

According to Entman, R. (1996), the ruling groups in the political system are the print media and the mass media, which are in charge of communicating the political views of various groups and controlling those groups. Likewise, if you look at the reference of Lasswell's model according to Shoemaker (2004), namely linear communication, where communication is divided into elements, namely who, saying what, where, to whom and what effect is formed.

Every country that is part of the RCEP international trade cooperation has its interests in the process. Therefore, negotiations require actors who can communicate the political narrative to realize the expectations of each citizen.

Political communication can be defined as the relationship between politics and citizens and the mode of interaction that connects these groups. Whether the relationship is formed by the mode of persuasion, Pathos, Ethos, or Logos. Political economy is an approach to studying media whose focus is attenuated on the way media is produced, distributed, and consumed, rather than analyzed.

Communication theory treats the Government as a decision-making system based on various information flows. This theory is equally important in international politics. Communication has indeed changed human relations as well as relations between countries to a much greater degree than other developments. Develop an advanced understanding of the issues and debates surrounding political communication, focusing on areas such as diplomacy, campaigning, reporting, and media effects contextualized in the 21st-century communication and media environment. the three most important classical theories in the field of International Political Economy (IPE): Mercantilism, economic liberalism, and Neo-Marxism.

Political Communication deals with active engagement with local, regional, state, national, and international issues and how the power of information, persuasion, and strategic message design can be used to understand and influence outcomes at that level, particularly in the field of government.

### **3. Research methods**

The approach used in this study is descriptive and qualitative. Data were collected by conducting a review of the research literature. Data sources are manuscripts, articles, and books related to political communication perspectives in the development of the finalization of the RCEP negotiations conducted by ASEAN against partner countries to centralize economic needs and free market trade in the Asia Pacific environment.

---

### **4. Discussion**

#### **4.1. The Existence of RCEP as ASEAN Economic Centralization**

As a forum for ASEAN centralization which aims to facilitate the international-based free trade process followed by ASEAN member states and partner countries, namely Japan, China, South Korea, and New Zealand - ASEAN has an important role to realize the interests of regionalization of the trade sector in the ASEAN region.

The formula that was originally made seems to have no significant influence on the development of trade in ASEAN. RCEP is considered to have effectiveness in building an atmosphere of free trade between multilateral countries where it is easy and does not overlap with the rules.

In addition, the RCEP regulation allows ASEAN to accommodate partner countries to participate in international trade platforms. The formula for simplifying the trade process of each country owned by RCEP is the same as the previous cooperation, namely to reduce tariffs and trade barriers to increase the volume and profit of international trade.

For ASEAN, RCEP is also influential in increasing the integration of previously established agreements. At the same time, RCEP eliminates trade barriers related to tariffs as well as non-tariff barriers.

One of them is the agreement on RoO (Rules of Origin) which regulates the identity of goods and commodities traded.

ASEAN, as a leader in the RCEP negotiation process, is considered successful because it can bring many countries to agree to agreements whose process is not simple.

In addition to creating a conducive atmosphere, the rules made mutually beneficial to each country are the attraction for partner countries to join the ASEAN-initiated RCEP international trade cooperation.

#### **4.2. China's Influence on ASEAN State Multilateral Cooperation**

Negotiations on the cooperation framework only began in 2012, but China has taken the initiative to continue to encourage other countries to immediately complete the process of negotiating the RCEP cooperation framework. China's huge role was increasingly apparent when China sought to complete the negotiation process in 2015. Through the various RCEP cooperation negotiations that have been carried out, China is increasingly visibly taking over the negotiation process. Some even mentioned that the current leadership of RCEP is in the hands of China.

Just like the case of the Trans-Pacific Partnership when America took over the ongoing negotiation process. This indicates that there is a Chinese interest that China is pursuing this RCEP cooperation.

Politically, RCEP can be used as a foundation that can expand China's diplomatic and economic framework called the One Belt One Road where the impact of integration will be valuable for ASEAN. China's goal through the One Belt One Road is to strengthen the economic ties currently established with Euro Asia, as well as to secure China's commodity inventories.

RCEP will play an important role in the One Belt One Road program to promote trade and investment in Asia, as seven out of China's ten largest trading partners are in Euro Asia.

Meanwhile, the goals of ASEAN's 10 largest trading partners are in the RCEP negotiations. China and ASEAN share a common interest in maintaining Asian stability and integration through RCEP.

Based on the three driving factors China plays an active role in the process of finalizing the RCEP, it has great importance for its country.

China is a developed country that has large commodities with products that allow smooth trade in the Asia Pacific region, RCEP has the potential to be side by side with the Trans-Pacific Partnership, it can even be higher than the Trans-Pacific Partnership itself in the value of its economic strength.

RCEP will also have an impact on strengthening the cohesion of Asia Pacific countries. In recent years, with the peaceful rise of China and the increasing status of Asian economies in the global economy, it has slowly made the Asia-Pacific a "hot area" in the world. Not only did America take an interest in the region through the idea of the "Asia-Pacific Rebalance", but the European Union and Russia also accelerated the implementation of their plans for the region.

All countries participating in the RCEP are core members of the Asia-Pacific region, therefore, making RCEP an eye on the connecting chain of Asia-Pacific countries to promote regional integration, strengthening and expanding greater economic impacts, reviving economic and trade relations among all countries to become closer, and promoting faster regional economic development will benefit from strengthening cohesion in the Asia-Pacific region and is critical to regional peace and stability (MOFCOM, 2014).

Based on this, it can be seen that RCEP has an important role in China to achieve its interests in the regional and global environment.

#### **4.3. RCEP also has two important meanings for China**

- The emergence of the Trans-Pacific Partnership led by the United States could provide an advantage for the United States to carry out the "Asia-Pacific Rebalance" strategy, which will further strengthen the United States' position in the Asia-Pacific region. Through the RCEP, China is trying to clamp down on those American efforts. Its participation in the RCEP is expected to give China the advantage of maintaining its leadership position geopolitically in the Asia-Pacific region.

Based on this, it can be seen that RCEP has an important role in China to achieve its interests in the regional and global environment. RCEP also has two important meanings for China:

- The United States' "Asia-Pacific Rebalance" strategy could benefit from the establishment of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which will further strengthen the United States' position in the Asia-Pacific region. China wants to stop American efforts by using RCEP. Hopes China's participation in the RCEP will help it maintain its position as a geopolitical leader in the Asia-Pacific region.

China wants to make RCEP cooperation an alternative to the framework of cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, considering that the majority of RCEP members are also members of the Trans-Pacific Partnership. It is expected that countries in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which is similar to the free trade agreement, will prefer RCEP. The Existence of RCEP as ASEAN Economic Centralization.

---

## **5. Conclusion**

RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) is a form of multilateral cooperation between countries that have 10 ASEAN members and 6 partner countries that are members. It is a forum for cooperation initiated by ASEAN which has the aim of centralizing international trade in the Asia Pacific and improving global economic processes through free trade.

One partner country that is part of the RCEP, namely China, has a keen interest in this cooperation because it has the potential to increase the huge economic impact on the Asia Pacific region and its countries as an opportunity to create a new Trans-Pacific Partnership to counter U.S. dominance in the global economy.

---

## **Compliance with ethical standards**

### *Acknowledgments*

We would like to thank the lecturer supporters, the Head of the Department, and the Dean of the Faculty of Social & Political Sciences, University of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Serang, Indonesia for supporting this particular study.

*Disclosure of conflict of interest*

The authors of this study consist of similar scholars with the same backgrounds and who reside in a similar educational institution, the Faculty of Social & Political Sciences of the University of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa.

---

**References**

- [1] Bachrudin. A.A (2019). Political Communication. ASWAJA PRESSINDO, Sleman, Yogyakarta.
- [2] Cnbcindonesia.com/news/20201115145424-4-201946/ MOFCOM. (2014, September 1).
- [3] Damayanti, Indira, Wahyuni Prayoga, Kevin (2018). ASEAN amid U.S.-China Rivalry: ASEAN's Cooperation with RCEP in Mitigating the Impact of the Trade War. Indonesian Perspective, Vol. 3, No. 2 (July-December 2018): p.145-158
- [4] D. Parna (2017). Indonesia's Interest in Initiating Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Negotiations. Jom FISIP Volume 4 NO. 1 February
- [5] Mukhtar. (2018) Rulers and power in the view of Machiavelli's political communication. COMMUNICOLOGY Journal of Communication and Social Sciences Development.
- [6] Susanto. E.H (2013). Political Communication of Leadership Messages and Audiences. - Jakarta: Media Discourse Partner Publishers.
- [7] Y. Fukunaga (2015). ASEAN's Leadership in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 103–115 doi: 10.1002/app5.59.