

Economics Teachers Perception on Asean Economic Community and the Implication toward the Teaching of Economics

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Keywords: Economic Community, Economic Integration, Asean Economics Teaching.

Abstract: This study attempts at exploring economics teachers' perception on the realization of Asean Economic Community (AEC) in Indonesia and identifying its implications toward the teaching of economics in high school level. Economics teachers of high school level in Jombang, East Java, Indonesia, participated as the subject of this study in 2016. Quota sampling technique was employed to choose the samples of this study in which there were 17 teachers chosen as the informants. The data were collected through in-depth interviews and observations. The obtained data were then analyzed using descriptive method. The result of this study shows that Economics teachers perceived AEC as a great opportunity and a challenging threat as well. As the implication, teachers insert AEC into teaching materials presented in the form of concrete examples of local product sold in international trading. Based on the result and discussion of this study, it is suggested that teachers develop and add AEC issue into teaching materials and activity by implementing cooperative teaching method and empathizing the importance of appreciating local products.

1 INTRODUCTION

Globalization is something that is inevitable in today's social life (Nicolescu, 2015). The development of social, economy, and politics in any countries always follow globalization (Keohane and Nye, 2000; Dreher, 2006). According to Nicolescu, (2015), globalization affects the mind-set of the new generations, knowledge acceleration and the development of culture. The new era has brought major changes in the relationship among nations in many aspects. Within the context of economy, globalization brings consequences related to the mobilization of economic sources and the mobility of various trading commodity in ASEAN countries. As the anticipation of any negative possibilities, ASEAN countries are united as an organization that conducts special coordination in the economic aspect. The organization provides facilities to solve problems which appear as the effects of the world's economic liberalization. The organization is called Asean Economic Community (AEC). Asean countries held economic cooperation to enhance their products to have higher competitiveness in the international trading. As stated by the International Labour

Organization and the Asian Development Bank (2014), the realization of Asean Economic Community is able to create strong market and production base for people of Asean countries.

AEC is expected to support ASEAN countries for more intensive interaction within the context of nations' economy. This interaction is a starting point to solve various problems related to inability to provide enough amount of commodity (goods and services) as well as problems related to price gap of the commodity sold in ASEAN market. AEC is also expected to stimulate economic integration which gives positive benefits for the member of the AEC. Economic integration leads to market unity and enhances better product quality to compete in ASEAN market. Besides, economic integration also strengthen the flow of the capital. Economic development in ASEAN is expected to improve through economic activities in the form of intra ASEAN trading and intra ASEAN capital flow. The basic principles of AEC is to create strong market, innovative environment, balanced nation development, and total economic integration among ASEAN nations (www.asean.org).

Indonesia holds a strategic role in the implementation of AEC for Indonesia has the highest

number of residence and the largest area, making Indonesia a key player for the success of the AEC in Asean countries. On the other hand, Indonesia is also facing complex and serious intern problems related to its domestic economy. The problem includes high number of unemployment, poverty, and high economic and social gap. AEC might give negative effect toward the national economy if the government does not take constructive anticipation programs. As the implication, Indonesia has to construct some strategic plans to make sure that AEC give positive effect toward the national development. The result of a study conducted by Taty (2016) shows that the position of Indonesia in the constellation of human capital in ASEAN is considered low. Indonesia still suffers from various weaknesses such as lack of expertise, low education, inadequate facilities, low competitiveness, unemployment, imbalance salaries, and low productivity.

Possible problems and the benefits of AEC in Indonesia should be thoroughly understood. Precise understanding of AEC shapes a positive expectation that AEC gives positive effect toward the economy of the members. In order to sharpen people's understanding on AEC in Indonesia, government should consider the big role of teachers in classroom teaching and learning. This can be done by constructing a curriculum which puts AEC issue as one of the materials. Teachers may also show concrete examples on the effect of AEC toward economic activities in the low-end business sector. In addition, teachers should also implement teaching strategies that enhance students' understanding on the effect of AEC in their life.

High school level appears to be the most appropriate level to become the object of AEC socialization. The current curriculum of high school contains a material on international economic partnership. AEC is a representation of economic activities within Asean regional that involves interaction among nations. Students of high school are mature enough and able to think rationally that let them understand the material on AEC easily.

High schools in East Java Province, Indonesia are quite heterogeneous. This heterogeneity appears as the effect of the implementation of the 2013 curriculum and the consideration of local wisdom at the same time. Within the context of economics teaching, the delivery of materials can be adjusted to the local wisdom. Examples can be taken from the real economic activities in the local area. Jombang district is a district in East Java province that is well known as "kota santri" or Islamic student city for there are quite big number of Islamic boarding

schools in Jombang, making Jombang the center of Islamic studies in Indonesia and in the world. This fact affects the characteristic of the people especially the students in understanding theories of economics. Besides, this phenomena also affects their economic behavior as the effect of the AEC realization.

In the context of economics teaching, the role of economics teachers in the socialization of AEC is quite crucial. The curriculum has insert teaching material on AEC, which makes it easier for the teachers to create innovations to make the teaching and learning about AEC more interesting and comprehensible for the students. The material can be delivered through the use of dynamic teaching method that drives students to be more active and creative as individuals or as a group. In this case, teachers are demanded to not only deliver the materials contained in the 2013 curriculum, but they are also required to develop teaching media which are able to accommodate the substances of the materials on the economic integration of Asean countries in the form of Asean Economic Community.

Based on those explanation, this study aimed at exploring high school economics teachers' perception on the implementation of AEC 2016 in Indonesia as well as to look into how they design teaching and learning activities of materials related to AEC in Indonesia.

2 METHODS

We strongly encourage authors to use this document this study is an explorative study that explored various characteristics and phenomena that occurred around the subject which is being studied. This study took place in Jombang District, East Java Province, Indonesia, involving high school economics teachers. The sampling was done using quota sampling method considering the fact that there were a total of 17 economics teachers in the area. Thus, all the researchers involved all of them to participate as the subjects of this study. The data of this study were obtained from the respondents which were collected by conducting in-depth interviews and observation. In-depth interviews were administered by personally questioning the respondents using a set of interview instrument. Meanwhile, observations were done by observing the facts and phenomena related to students' behaviors and teachers' responses in delivering teaching materials on economics. Besides, observations were also done to analyze documents and archives related to the teaching of economics conducted by the teachers. The validity of the data

was confirmed by prolonging the time and triangulation. The obtained data were then analyzed descriptively by explaining various obtained information to get clear and complete picture of the object.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Opportunities and Threats of AEC Implementation in Indonesia

The questionnaires distributed to the respondents obtained this following data.

Table 1: Teachers' perception on AEC.

Indicator	Result
Opportunity	1
Threat	1
Opportunity and Threat	15
Sum	17

Source: Questionnaires, 2016

Economics teachers perceived AEC as an opportunity and threat to the economy of Indonesia. Out of 17 informants, 15 of them believed AEC is an opportunity and a threat as well for the economy of Indonesia. The opportunity and threat may occur in various aspects. From the result of the study, the benefit of AEC for Indonesia is it enhances the economic growth of Indonesia. This occurs because AEC opens wider market of goods and service, market of production and broader scope of employment. AEC demands the producers to improve the quality of their products to be able to compete in the international market, and AEC also stimulates international-level partnership.

It has been confirmed in this study that economics teachers see AEC as an opportunity and threat for Indonesia. The implementation of ARC might cause changes on the trading pattern and the mobility of production factors as well as changes on the flow of goods and service in the international economic activities of Asean countries. As stated by some experts, AEC might appear as an opportunity and threat in the forms of:

- AEC gives chances for local industries to introduce their products in international market. Yet, they also have to compete with products from other countries.

- AEC motivates producers to create products with relatively low and competitive price. Yet, to be able to compete with those from other countries, they are also required to maintain the best quality.
- Indonesia has the chance to export the products at higher amount which becomes devised for Indonesia. On the other hand, Indonesia should also guarantee the quality of the exported products.
- AEC expands the marketplace which is open for anyone to compete. At the same time, Indonesia has to anticipate this phenomena as a threat since there will be high number of products from other countries are sold in Indonesia.
- For creative businessman, AEC appears as a challenge for them to improve their capability and their enterprises, yet for those who have low creativity, AEC becomes a threat since they tend to be more consumptive that will affect negatively to the economy of Indonesia.
- It is clear that AEC expands the marketplace which also improves the rate of export and devised. However, this also becomes a threat for Indonesia considering the fact that there are still high number of workers with low education, low-quality products, and high number of unemployment.
- AEC opens up broader job availability. Yet, Indonesia has to deal with the high number of foreign workers coming to get jobs in Indonesia.

In the conclusion, teachers re-explained about the opportunities and threats that will be faced by Indonesia. Seen as an opportunity, teachers tend to explore the potencies of Indonesia to prepare for AEC. This exploration focuses on enhancing creative activities that support students' and people's productivity. Meanwhile, seen as a threat, teachers tend to focuses more on the weakness and lacks of Indonesia to face AEC. With the highest number of population, Indonesia is seen as the biggest market in Asean. Considering AEC as an opportunity and a threat at the same time, teachers tend to be more careful in exploring the strengths and weaknesses to face AEC in order to provide more comprehensible picture about AEC for the students.

3.2 Readiness to Face AEC

AEC implementation requires community preparedness. This readiness is related to both regulatory, metal and economic preparations for AEC to contribute positively to regional or national economic development. Here is the opinion of the

economic teachers about the readiness of Indonesia in the AEC game.

AEC demands readiness from the people. In facing AEC, people has to be ready in the terms of regulation, mentality, and local economy in order to get the best benefit from AEC program for the development of national and local economy. Table 2 presents the opinions from economics teachers on the readiness of Indonesia in facing AEC.

Table 2. Readiness in facing AEC.

Behavioral Indicators	Respondents
A. Ready	6
B. Not ready	11
Sum	17

Source: Questionnaires, 2016

The result of the questionnaires shows that economics teachers considered Indonesia not yet completely ready for AEC. Out of 17 respondents, only 6 of them considered Indonesia ready for AEC. This result implies that the capability of Indonesia is not yet strong enough compared to other Asean countries in facing AEC. Indonesia needs time to get ready before actively participating in AEC to take the most benefit of this program.

Some teachers provided their reasons as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Reasons on the readiness of Indonesia in facing AEC.

Indicators	Result
A. Massive amount of natural resources	4
B. High quality of human resources	4
C. High productivity potency	3
D. High competitiveness	1
E. Good mastery of information and technology	1
F. Readiness of local business	1

Source: Questionnaires, 2016

Based on those data, it can be implied that informants considered Indonesia ready for AEC for Indonesia has quite massive potency of natural and human resources. Natural resources and human resources are the key factors to the success of Indonesia in AEC. Therefore, government should conduct various programs to strengthen the capability of those two resources.

Table 4: Reasons on the unreadiness of Indonesia for AEC.

Indicator	Result
A. Low quality of human resources	9
B. The bureaucracy is not supportive	8
C. Low productivity potency	7
D. Low product competitiveness	6
E. Indonesians are mostly highly consumptive	2
F. Indonesians have low entrepreneurship character	1
G. Indonesians have low commitment in working	1
H. Indonesians have low creativity	1
I. Poor management of natural resources	1
J. Low loyalty to local products	2
K. High number of unemployment	1

Source: Questionnaires, 2016

Based on this result, it can be implied that the key factors to the unreadiness of Indonesia for AEC are the low quality of human resource and the bureaucracy that is not supportive. It is still controversy whether or not the human resources of Indonesia ready for AEC.

3.3 The Teaching of Economics in the Era of AEC in Indonesia

The teaching of economics in AEC era should be modified in certain way considering the ever-changing business environment presently. Modifications should be made as the responses to the shift of human behavior in fulfilling their needs. AEC is seen an era of openness and liberty in conducting any regional-scale economic activity. People are given broader marketplace that also requires some efforts as the consequences of participating in AEC.

Based on the result of this study, generally, AEC appears as an opportunity and a threat at the same time for people's welfare. In this case, the human resources should be enhanced to be able to compete in the regional Asean market. Education institutions should make some basic modification to improve the quality of the graduates as the agent of change in AEC. The most possible strategic effort to apply is designing a curriculum which is adaptive toward the ever-changing business environment.

Basically, teaching is a research that keeps developing. Dynamic learning environment requires teachers to adjust their teaching to the current situation. One of the aspect in the economics theory is economic activities. Within an economic program,

AEC attempts at enhancing the economic activities done by the people. There are some ways to introduce AEC to the people, one of which is through education. Teachers hold the duty to introduce students about AEC. As facilitators, teachers have to teach students about AEC and its meaning through various teaching strategies. Teachers may assign the students to explore from various sources about the definition, objectives, and characteristics of AEC. This teaching strategy goes in line with the principle of the 2013 curriculum in which students are demanded to actively search for what they want to learn from various sources. As facilitators, teachers are allowed to give explanation when necessary, and let the students to learn themselves. Students are expected to have high understanding and comprehension on AEC. Teachers should also motivate students and get them aware that they are the future productive economic players who should stay optimistic in competing in the AEC era.

Based on the result of a study conducted by Huang and Lee (2012) in Siregar, et al (2016), human resources (including the quality of teachers), process, organizational policies and curriculum are significant factors of competitive value development in higher education level in Taiwan. Those four factors shape strong foundation of the skills and the cognition of the students in understanding learning materials. In the context of the implementation of AEC, improving the quality of the human resources (students), schools, and implementing an integrative curriculum become important agenda. In this context, curriculum and students are two important elements in the teaching and learning process at school. Whereas, teachers act as actors who facilitate and motivate the students to develop their skills and knowledge.

The result of this study supports Dangdang (2016) who confirmed that in order to obtain high comprehension skill, educators should be aware of the dynamic global environment strategies to be considered in designing a curriculum. Presently, students found difficulties in improving their comprehension skill and their cognition, besides they also found problems in understanding the Asean Economic Community. This fact demands teachers to design good curriculum to equip the students with adequate knowledge and skills that will allow them to adapt well with the dynamic global environment.

Teachers hold a key point in introducing AEC to the students. The process of knowledge transfer runs smoothly when teachers have innovative and dynamic view on the ASEAN free trade area. Teachers' cognitive skills should be presented in the form of effective psych motoric and affective actions. Within the cognition framework, implications that may occur in the teaching and learning activities include: 1) How are information or substances of

learning materials should be delivered by teachers in the classroom? 2) Based on teachers' expectation, what are competences that should be mastered by students in facing AEC era? 3) What are appropriate teaching strategies to prepare students' competences in facing AEC?. Within the psychomotor domain, teachers should present concrete examples on the implementation of AEC in student's daily life. Whilst in the affective domain, teachers should show illustrations on the behavioral changes that appear as the consequences of AEC implementation in the local, regional and national economic activities. The most important aspect of affective domain is the importance of nurturing students' nationalism and pride of Indonesia's local products.

An obvious effort to do for the success of AEC is designing appropriate economics teaching for students of high school level. Some important points to develop teaching and learning plans of economics include:

- Review of curriculum, core competence and basic competence: International economic partnership
- Designing Syllabuses: Arranging course sequences
- Material determination: The benefit of international economic partnership of AEC for the national economy and local products.
- Learning sources planning: Text book, journal, articles, and internet
- Teaching method : Cooperative learning using Think Pair Share technique
- Arranging lesson scenario: Teaching administrations, teaching media, and facilities

Teaching administrations should be made based on the curriculum applied for high school level in Indonesia. The implementation of the 2013 curriculum offers broader chance for teachers in creating innovations and developing their own teaching materials and teaching practices. The materials of economics can be added with international economic partnership and its implications toward economic development of a nation. In designing lesson plans of economics course, students should be driven to comprehend the importance of the empowerment of local products to compete in global Asean market. Local-scale economic activities are reflected upon various economic activities that involve local genuine products, local labour, and local market. The ability to maintain the existence of this local market aggregately strengthens the foundation national economy.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Some conclusions are drawn based on the result of this study as follow. Economics teachers perceive AEC as an opportunity and a threat at for Indonesia's economy at the same time. Teachers also consider Indonesia unready to join AEC. Yet, they also believe that AEC gives massive benefits for the national economic development. Modifications on economics teaching and learning include: modification of teaching materials by giving more proportion on the knowledge on international economic activities and international economic partnership. Within The international economic partnership materials, AEC should be presented. Besides, observations and on-hand practices should be frequently conducted related to international trading. Teaching and learning activities should be done using the cooperative method by utilizing cooperative strategies such as Think Pair Share to stimulate students' better teamwork ability and problem solving.

Considering the results of this study, suggestions are directed to some parties as follow. Teachers should conduct coordination in a teachers' forum to design a relevant economics teaching for high school by adding AEC into the teaching materials and choosing appropriate teaching method. Schools should provide facilities for teachers in implementing cooperative learning method for the teaching of economics to improve students' comprehension on AEC by providing suitable classrooms to support on-hand practices of cooperative learning method.

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