# INDONESIAN COMMERCIAL DIPLOMACY TO JAPAN THROUGH THE INDONESIAN TRADE PROMOTION CENTER (ITPC) IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSMEs) IN INDONESIA

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Indonesia and Japan have a natural relationship (natural partner) where diplomatic relations have been going on since 1958, and Japan is one of Indonesia's trading partners and investors. The Indonesian government through the Director General of National Export Development of the Ministry of Trade opened a Trade Promotion office, namely the Indonesian Trade Promotion Center (ITPC) Osaka. The purpose of this study is to find out how to implement Indonesian commercial diplomacy towards Japan through the Indonesian Trade Promotion Center Osaka in increasing the export value of MSMEs in Indonesia. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a literature study as a data collection technique. The analysis of this paper will use the theory of commercial diplomacy. This theory is quite comprehensive in explaining various commercial diplomacy activities which include trade, investment, business advocacy and tourism promotion activities. Through the process of data analysis and interpretation, the results of this study are that Indonesian Commercial Diplomacy through ITPC Osaka in increasing the Export Value of Indonesian MSMEs has increased the export value in the last 3 (three) years starting from 2019, but it is still not optimal, because there are several factors including the existence of trade promotions that are still limited to exporters and the requirements for export eligibility in Japan are quite difficult.

Keywords: Commercial Diplomacy, Indonesian Trade Promotion Center, Export SMEs

#### A. INTRODUCTION

One important component of economic diplomacy is commercial diplomacy. President Jokowi stressed the importance of improving the performance of Indonesia's commercial diplomacy abroad. On several occasions, President Jokowi said that the priority task of the Indonesian Ambassador was to carry out economic and commercial diplomacy, especially economic promotion to boost exports (Sahban & SE, 2018). The practice of commercial diplomacy is an integral part of economic diplomacy. Commercial diplomacy itself can involve various actors at various levels, both at the national and regional levels. As one of the actors in diplomatic practice, local governments usually carry out commercial diplomacy in the form of trade promotion activities, investment promotion and tourism promotion. Commercial diplomacy is one part of the larger framework of economic diplomacy. If economic diplomacy focuses on decision-making and negotiation activities in the fields of trade, investment, labor and the environment (Woolcock, 2011), then commercial diplomacy focuses only on activities to promote exports of goods and services and efforts to attract foreign investment (inward investment flow) (Rana, 2007).

By looking at this definition, it can be said that basically commercial diplomacy activities can be carried out by any state actor, both by the central government and local governments. In Law No. 37 of 1999 concerning Foreign Relations it is stated that foreign relations are any activities related to regional and international aspects carried out by the government, at the central and regional levels, or their institutions, state agencies, business entities, political organizations, community, non-governmental organizations, or Indonesian citizens. Economic activities carried out by selling domestic products to foreign markets by exporters, whose goal is to make a profit, can also be called the meaning of Export (Sahban & SE, 2018). Export activities are also not just increasing the country's foreign exchange. However, developing countries generally rely on the smooth flow of foreign exchange earnings and their economic activities through exports. Indonesia is one of the developing countries that has been doing export activities for a long time (Hasoloan, 2013).

Based on data from the Indonesian Ministry of Trade regarding Indonesia's export data to Japan for Non-Oil and Gas materials, the growth is quite significant, although it experienced a decline in 2019 and 2020, it is proven that in 2017 it was valued at 14,690.6 Million US\$, experienced an increase in 2018 amounting to 16,307.9 Million US\$, and decreased the value of exports in 2019 to 13,814.4 million US\$, decreased again in 2020 to 12,885.3 million US\$. But in 2021 it has increased again to 16,877.0 Million US\$. Products that are widely exported include coffee, agriculture, batik, etc. Apart from coffee products, which are known for their relatively high export values in Japan, there are also Indonesian Tempe products originating from West Java and have succeeded in penetrating market share in Japan(Nabilla, 2021).

The acceleration or deceleration of economic growth in Indonesia is influenced by various factors, one of which is the participation of MSMEs. According to Article 33 paragraph of the 19th Constitution, MSME is part of the national economy which is independent and has great potential to improve people's welfare. MSMEs have an important role in the country's economic growth. The MSME business sector in Indonesia in 2021 will reach 64.19 million with participation in the gross domestic product (GDP) of 61.97 percent or IDR 8.6 trillion (Nabilla, 2021). The Importance of the Role of MSMEs in the Indonesian Economy As one of the pillars of the Indonesian economy, MSMEs play an important role, especially as follows: MSMEs are contributors The main portion of GDP is the total national GDP or equivalent to IDR 8,500 billion in 2020. MSMEs attract a large number of workers, equivalent to 97% absorption of the business world in 2020. The large number of MSMEs is proportional to the number of jobs in Indonesia, so MSMEs have a role in absorbing labor. MSMEs absorbed the largest amount of credit in 2018, around IDR 1 trillion (WAKHYUNI et al., 2021).

Japan has proven that East Asia can be a crucial part of the economic and political constellation at the international level. Japan can collaborate with various countries, especially Indonesia, both in government to government or "G to G" and government to business or "G to B" relations. Diplomacy conducted by Japan is more oriented towards commercial diplomacy, because most of it is implemented in trade transactions. Japan has also become a destination country for exports of Indonesian products(Asnawi et al., 2021). One of the efforts to improve Indonesia's export performance is to form *Indonesian Trade Promotion Centers* (ITPC) in various countries (Fari et al., 2020).

ITPC is the Foreign Representative Office of the Republic of Indonesia which is technically in charge of Indonesian foreign commercial (Fari & Usni, 2020). The Indonesian Commercial Promotion Center has an important role to play in achieving national interests in the international arena, and being one of the government executors by providing a wealth of information and market promotion activities, facilitating business cooperation, efforts to penetrate markets, economic intelligence and helping to bring business relations closer to Indonesia and the state. other. Especially in several countries in Asia, including Africa, America, Australia, to Europe. This ITPC was formed in 1982 and was deactivated for some time, but then began to be active again in 2000, since it was re-launched, the Commercial Department of the

Republic of Indonesia mediated by the National Export Development Agency, has been very active in opening commercial promotion centers in Indonesia in many countries around the world (Krisdianto et al., 2021).

The existence of the ITPC is wrong one enough policy \_ strategic ones conducted by Ministry RI Trade . Development Export National aims for Indonesia to have power competitive products in the global (Suryadi, 2018). Besides that , another hope from the ITPC is capable speed up penetration market and add amount country destination Indonesian exports . For reach destination such , the ITPC has make an effort for always showing and take various step through activity strategic , among others through participation in program promotion including exhibition trade international held in various \_ country , recognized partner , regulate \_ meeting business Among buyer potential and Indonesian (Hasoloan, 2013).

ITPC Osaka that works same with Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and ASEAN-Japan Center too has launched a promotion platform digital based "Indonesia Goods Webstore Market". these platforms bridge the actors Indonesian SME businesses with market Japan , in particular products craft selected hand \_ through the flagship program Ministry of Trade , Good Design Indonesia (GDI)(Fari et al., 2020). these platforms made ITPC Osaka Japan different among other ITPCs , because has an integrated flagship program with Ministry Trading and in a manner open support marketing business for MSMEs through the shopping platform at ITPC Osaka. From exposure on about Diplomacy Commercial , research this will focused on Diplomacy Indonesian Commercial against Japan through ITPC inside Development export MSME products in Indonesia. related with phenomenon already \_ described , exists study the same previous also explain about Diplomacy Indonesian Commercial through ITPC.

# **B. METHODS**

Method research used \_ in study this is qualitative. About definition study qualitative , ie purposeful research \_ for understand phenomenon what happened \_ subject study in a manner intact , and through verbal description and linguistics , in nature context \_ Specific and use method scientific . Bogdan and Taylor in Moleong argue that methodology qualitative is a research process that produces descriptive data form saying and text man as well as observed behavior (Huberman & Miles, 2002). As for definition methodology qualitative according to Michael Patton and Michael Cochran in Umar ( Barry , 2016) put forward that Study qualitative this be marked with goals , which are related with understanding a number of aspect social life , and use the methods ( on generally ) produces words (words) as data for analysis , and no numbers .

In book Method Study Connection International (Bakry, 2016), concluded that study qualitative have characteristic features as following:

- 1. Destination study qualitative is for understand ( understand ) and interpret ( explain ) as ) a behavior or interaction social.
- 2. In study qualitative, researcher function as tool research (researcher is tool data collection).
- 3. Collected data in study qualitative often in the form of words, pictures or object, no numbers.
- 4. Group or subject studied \_ in study qualitative usually sized small ( no too big ) and no determined in a manner random.
- 5. Study qualitative for produce non-numerical data, especially verbal data.

#### Validity and Data Reliability

Data validity is wrong one strength study qualitative and involve determination is result Correct from corner view researcher participant or reader report . validity show that researcher use procedure for verify

accuracy result. Data validity is not differentiate between the data obtained researcher with real data occur on subject study so that the validity of the data could accounted for (Mezmir, 2020).

Test validity and Deep Data Reliability study this is use method Triangulation, Triangulation is used is data source is dig truth information certain through various method and source data acquisition. For example, besides through Interview and observation, researcher can use observation involved (participant observation), documents written, archive, document history, notes official, note or writing personal and picture or photo.

# C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

# Implementation of Indonesian Commercial Diplomacy towards Japan through the Indonesian Trade Promotion Center Osaka (ITPC)

In the implementation of Indonesian Commercial Diplomacy with Japan through the ITPC Osaka, it is carried out in several forms, namely through Trade Promotion. Trade promotion is one of the instruments of Commercial Diplomacy, in the implementation of trade promotion of course it has its own indicators of success (Mulyani, 2019), namely:

- a. Advertising
- b. Individual selling
- c. Sales Promotion
- d. Public Relations
- e. Direct Marketing
- f. Product Display;
- g. Introduction of Promotional Programs;
- h. Giving gifts
- i. Sample product
- j. Product Consultation

In fulfilling the above trade promotion success indicators, the Ministry of Trade through ITPC Osaka carried out several activities, including:

#### 1. International Trade Fairs

Participation in international trade shows including in-store promotions is a starting point for exporters targeting new consumer markets or consolidating business relationships in other countries especially Japan (Smith et al., 2003). In this case the Director General of National Export Development, participated in this exhibition by looking at the potential possessed by Indonesian exporters, market potential for Indonesian products, recommendations from foreign importer/exporter experts, consultants and business associations. The Director General of National Export Development assists the participation of Indonesian exporters at selected exhibitions by arranging displays, space reservations, design and construction, publications, travel and accommodation, and meetings with potential buyers during the event. So that in this international trade show it is not only promotional content but also the content of seeking opportunities for export cooperation with the destination country.

#### 2. Trade Missions

This trade mission aims to see Indonesian business opportunities selected by the Director General of National Export Development to obtain first-hand information about certain market characteristics and opportunities to enter the international market (Mahalli, 2020). Usually in carrying out trade missions entrepreneurs will deal with certain products or services, and are usually accompanied by the Minister of Trade, senior government officials, and representatives

from other business sectors in carrying out trade missions with each other to see each other's opportunities.

# 3. Inaexport

The Director General of National Export Development provides a "Virtual Exhibition" of Indonesian products on the internet to market Indonesian export products to potential foreign buyers. This site provides a one-stop source of product information with pictures, price quotes, and contact details of participating companies. This product can be viewed and accessed through Inaexport.id (Saputri & Ardiyanti, 2016).

# 4. Permanent Trade Display

Foreign buyers can also visit the ITPC Osaka office in person to be able to observe various kinds of Indonesian export products to see what kind of products are presented at the ITPC Osaka office. These products are selected or superior products based on the number of buyers' interest (Saputri & Ardiyanti, 2016).

- 5. Export Promotion or Communication Training
  - In the field of promotion or communication, ITPC Osaka provides various Export Promotion or Communication training programs (Sani, 2020) such as:
    - E-Commerce, Utilization of E-Commerce in the export business can already be felt at this time. With E-Commerce business activities become faster, practical, efficient and inexpensive. In this training participants will gain knowledge and skills on how to apply E-Commerce in the export business effectively and efficiently.
    - Multimedia for Export Promotion, this training is intended so that participants can design
      and create attractive, practical and efficient multimedia-based export promotions. After
      attending this training, participants can design and create their own promotional tools,
      both in the form of multimedia promotion on the internet (website) and dynamic
      interactive multimedia (Company Profile) (Mardalis et al., 2001).
    - Negotiation Techniques and Export Trade Contracts, Providing knowledge and skills on
      effective negotiation techniques to reach a win-win solution business agreement. The
      results of the negotiations will then be poured into the form of a trade contract in
      accordance with the principles of international law.
    - Export Trade Contracts, Export Trade Contract Training aims to improve the competence and abilities of participants regarding international trade contracts, contract terminology and conditions, marine insurance and dispute resolution. This training aims to ensure trade transactions are legally guaranteed and risks can be avoided.
    - Business Negotiation Techniques, Business Negotiation Techniques Training is aimed at business negotiators in order to be able to improve communication competence, especially in activities to design, carry out and evaluate personnel-relation, public relations, marketing and negotiation tasks in a sympathetic, tactical, persuasive and effective manner.
    - Techniques of Participating in Trade Shows
       This training is designed for private companies or agencies who wish to promote their
      - products at home and abroad. Participants will be equipped with knowledge on how to choose the right exhibition, make work plans and budgets, how to prepare exhibitions, design stands and prepare brochures and other publications and also how to manage stands during the exhibition.
    - Export Promotion Strategy, This training is designed for entrepreneurs or agencies who
      wish to promote their products or their regional economic potential. Participants will be
      equipped with techniques for how to publish through various promotional methods with
      print media, broadcast media and space media by means of exhibitions.
    - Webinars / Trade Show Activities

Japan is one of the largest trading partner countries for Indonesia, apart from China, Malaysia and Thailand in the Asia Pacific region. In the Asia Pacific region, Japan is ranked the second country with the highest total export value after China or China. In December 2021, the value of Indonesia's exports to Japan reached USD 154.5 million (around Rp. 2.22 trillion) for the oil and gas sector and USD 1,695.3 million (around Rp. 24.31 trillion) for the non-oil and gas sector. Based on the data above, in other words, Indonesia's exports to Japan are dominated by the non-oil and gas sector (Trade, nd-a). In addition, Indonesia has always experienced a trade surplus in export-import with Japan so far.

Changes in the value of Indonesia-Japan trade for the period 2021-2022 (Jan-Jun) in US\$ for oil and gas and non-oil and gas (in %) are as follows.

Table 1 Changes in the value of Indonesia-Japan trade

| Description             | Perub .(%) 22/21 | 2022 (Jan-Jun) |  |
|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|--|
| TOTAL TRADE (TP)        | 39.0%            | 20.2B          |  |
| (TP) MIGAS              | 184.4%           | 1.1B           |  |
| (TP) NON OIL AND GAS    | 35.1%            | 19.2B          |  |
| TOTAL EXPORTS           | 48.1%            | 11.8B          |  |
| OIL AND GAS EXPORT      | 178.7%           | 1B             |  |
| NON OIL AND GAS EXPORTS | 41.9%            | 10.8B          |  |
| TOTAL IMPORTS           | 27.9%            | 8.4B           |  |
| OIL & GAS IMPORT        | 327.3%           | 62M            |  |
| NON OIL AND GAS IMPORTS | 27.2%            | 8.3B           |  |
| TRADE BALANCE (NP)      | 142.2%           | 3.4B           |  |
| (NP) MIGAS              | 172.5%           | 946.1M         |  |
| (NP) NON OIL AND GAS    | 132.4%           | 2.5B           |  |

Source: Bps.go.id

From the data above, the total non-oil and gas exports are greater than oil and gas. This is due, in part, to Japan being a densely populated country. According to ceicdata, the total population of Japan is estimated to be around 125.5 million in 2021. With this much population, it is certain that this country's demand for food ingredients to meet the daily needs of Japanese people is quite large. Even though this country is developed, Japan is known to be poor in natural resources because only 12% of the land area in Japan can be used for agriculture (ITPC, 2020).

With a dense population, the high demand for food is not proportional to the natural wealth produced. Therefore, as much as 50% of Japan's agricultural product needs are obtained from imports. Apart from agricultural products, Japan is the largest market for the fishery sector. The Japanese are used to consuming processed fish as a side dish to accompany rice. However, after the 1973 oil crisis, deep sea fisheries in Japan declined (Sahban & SE, 2018). The decline in Japan's domestic fish catch has led to an increase in import demand for fishery products. With the various conditions above, Japan has become one of the largest export destinations for the market for agricultural and fishery products. However, Japan has high standards for every product that is exported to Japan. Apart from the quality and continuity aspects, these products must meet Japanese standards in terms of food safety traceability, food safety and sustainability.

ITPC Osaka also initiated an online open service by launching an Inquiry Form and Check Promotion on its official website. There is a digital-based promotion platform Indonesia Goods Webstore Market. This platform is a bridge for Indonesian SMEs through the marketing of the Ministry of Trade's flagship Good

Design Indonesia (GDI) program. ITPC Osaka activities will focus on market penetration through strengthening business networks, market information services, and providing information through webinars and export coaching programs. The leading Indonesian MSME products that have been successfully exported, including through ITPC, are as follows:

Table 2 Export Data of Indonesia's Leading Products to Japan

| No | Product Superior         | Year / U | Year / USS Dollars (\$)/ Million |        |  |
|----|--------------------------|----------|----------------------------------|--------|--|
|    |                          | 2019     | 2020                             | 2021   |  |
| 1  | Coffee                   | 68,523   | 55,923                           | 65,434 |  |
| 2  | Shoes/Footwear           | 157      | 192                              | 221    |  |
| 4  | Grass Marine / Algae     | 982      | 970                              | 1.014  |  |
| 5  | Clothes So               | 699      | 606                              | 535    |  |
| 6  | Pepper Black             | 3,298    | 4.104                            | 6,333  |  |
| 7  | Fresh Fish Results Catch | 12,149   | 15,174                           | 12,265 |  |
| 8  | Fruit fruit              | 2,828    | 2,211                            | 1,909  |  |
| 9  | Briquettes Charcoal      |          |                                  | 19,2   |  |
| 10 | vanilla                  | 88       | 133                              | 103    |  |
| 11 | Porang                   | 59,2     | 45,6                             |        |  |
| 12 | tubers tubers            | 4,8      | 2,5                              | 2,5    |  |
| 14 | Batik                    | 17,4     | 20,8                             |        |  |
| 15 | Tempe                    |          |                                  | 35,9   |  |
|    | Amount                   |          | 79,313                           | 87,814 |  |

Note: Data Not yet Available

Source: ITPS Osaka

From the data above it can be seen that coffee is still Indonesia's leading product in Japan, followed by fresh fish products. It turns out that Japanese people really like Indonesian coffee, and of course fresh fish from Indonesia. This was also reinforced by the presence of a special stand for Indonesian Coffee at the ITPC Osaka office.

There is export data that is still not available in both the ITPC Osaka report and the International Trade Report from the Ministry of Trade. This can happen because the first 2 (two) possibilities are that there is no export activity in that year or the data has not been updated in the reporting system because it is still waiting for the verification process. This certainly affects the total value of the successful export of Indonesian products to Japan. The products that are still undervalued in exports to Japan are root products, this is due to the competitiveness of export countries, including Thailand. The other thing is that Indonesia focuses on exports of these tubers, the main destination countries being China and then Japan.

Running for approximately one year after the office at ITPC Osaka was relocated, of course, it will increase the export value of Indonesia's superior products to Japan. In addition to this, the event held by ITPC Osaka was able to open up opportunities for Indonesian exporters to compete in international markets. In general, the value of Indonesia's exports in 2019 was 88.723 million dollars, 2020 was 79.313 million dollars, and 2021 was 87.814 million dollars. In 2020, when the Covid pandemic hit, several production sectors experienced a decline, but with the strategy devised by ITPC Osaka and the Ministry of Trade, it was possible to increase the export value of superior products in 2021 (*Bedah Pasar Ekspor Ke Jepang\_ Produk Pertanian Dan Perikanan*, n.d.).

# D. CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of ITPC Osaka in developing Indonesia's superior products and increasing Indonesia's export value is still limited, this is based on data on Indonesian superior MSME or UKM products that have managed to penetrate the Japanese international market which is still very limited. According to a report from ITPC Osaka that the requirements or standardization of products to successfully export and enter the Japanese market is quite difficult. Unlike the ITPC in Saudi Arabia, the activities of Indonesian MSMEs are translucent and very rapidly in demand by Saudi Arabia.

The form of assistance provided by ITPC Osaka is providing information on business opportunities in Japan to Indonesian exporters and conversely providing information on potential Indonesian export products to Japanese importers as well as providing promotional media for Indonesian export products, including by facilitating Indonesian entrepreneurs to participate in trade promotion activities. (exhibition) on an international scale held in Japan, providing a permanent display room for Indonesian export products at the ITPC Osaka office, providing the ITPC Osaka website which can be utilized by Indonesian and Japanese entrepreneurs as a source of information and also facilitating various trade mission, business matching, and others.

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