



Collaborative Efforts Between Disperindag Jatim and PT Feihuang in Increasing Halal Food and Beverages to China

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Abstract: Business matching is an activity where businesses and buyers meet with the same commodity background to create an exchange of information about market characteristics and consumer preferences of each party. Seeing this potential, the East Java Provincial Industry and Trade Office (Disperindag Jatim) organized offline business matching on November 14, 2024 to bring together halal-certified food and beverage sector MSME players from East Java with prospective buyers from China. This study aims to explain the collaborative efforts through business matching conducted by the East Java Disperindag in collaboration with PT Feihuang. The novelty of this research lies in exploring how regional government and private sector collaboration serves as a strategic model to facilitate halal product exports through business matching activities. The method used is descriptive qualitative with data collected in primary data collection through interviews with the Head of the East Java Disperindag Export Promotion Division and secondary data in the form of activity documents and literature studies, analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model consisting of data collection, reduction and conclusion drawing. The results showed that this business matching activity successfully facilitated the exchange of strategic information related to market preferences between countries and became the first step in building mutually beneficial and long-term oriented trade cooperation.

Keywords: Business Matching, East Java Disperindag, East Java MSMEs, PT Feihuang

Introduction

In recent years, global demand for halal food and beverage products has increased significantly, including in non-Muslim countries such as China. (Hashem, n.d.) Halal products are not only assessed from a religious aspect, but can also be seen as one of the things that reflect the standards of quality, hygiene, and safety of consumption (Markets, n.d.). East Java, as one of the provinces with a growing food processing industry sector, has great potential to fill this market demand, seen from the contribution of the industrial sector which dominates non-oil and gas exports by 93.75 percent and the value of exports to China which reached USD 269.21 million in August 2024 (BPS Jawa Timur, 2022), with processed food and beverage products as the main commodity (Distribusi, 2024). However, the challenges in the export of halal products are still quite large. Some of them include limited information and understanding of export standards, limited production capacity, low readiness of MSMEs in meeting export requirements, and lack of understanding of international market standards and coaching to penetrate the global market. Therefore,

collaborative efforts between stakeholders are needed to open strategic export channels through approaches such as business matching (Business, 2025).

One concrete form of this facilitation effort is the collaboration between the East Java Provincial Industry and Trade Office (Disperindag Jatim) and PT Feihuang Berdikari Sentosa. The East Java Industry and Trade Office is a local government agency that plays a strategic role in creating and advancing the industrial and trade sectors, including facilitating the export of regional superior products. Disperindag Jatim is active in identifying the potential of MSMEs and building connections with foreign trading partners (Rahmi, 2021). Meanwhile, PT Feihuang Berdikari Sentosa is an integrated service company that focuses on international business consulting services including business travel exchange, exhibition organization, trade promotion, and cultural cooperation. The company also focuses on developing connectivity between Indonesian businesses and potential buyers in China (Chao, 2018).

One of the strategies used to bridge market needs and business readiness is through business matching activities. Business matching itself is one of the mechanisms for aligning business plans, strategic targets, and business implementation readiness (Moghaddam & Nof, 2017), where the form of implementation is a meeting forum between local businesses and potential international buyers to exchange information, introduce products, and explore opportunities for trade cooperation. In the context of exports, business matching allows MSME businesses to understand foreign market preferences and find suitable distribution partners. In addition, business matching activities can also be part of an effective trade promotion strategy because they encourage direct interaction between interested parties.

Based on the need to open market access for halal food and beverage exports to China, the East Java Disperindag and PT Feihuang agreed to organize offline business matching activities on November 14, 2024 (Kominfo, n.d.). This activity is a continuation of the initial relationship established since the East Java trade mission to Hong Kong in 2023, where PT Feihuang representatives from China were present as potential buyers and established initial communication with the East Java Disperindag. Through intensive closeness and communication, both parties agreed to organize business matching as a form of concrete collaboration that is mutually beneficial.

Seeing the importance of this activity, the author expressed his interest in researching the form of collaborative efforts between the East Java Disperindag and PT Feihuang through business matching as a mechanism for facilitating access to exports of halal products. This research aims to explain how the collaboration process through business matching is implemented. This research was conducted to answer several problem formulations, including how the form of cooperation between the East Java Disperindag and PT Feihuang in business matching activities and how the process of implementing business matching in capturing and facilitating export-ready MSMEs.

Theoretical Framework

To further understand this research topic, there are three main concepts used as a theoretical basis, namely the concept of collaboration, the concept of business matching and the concept of export. These three concepts are interrelated in explaining how cooperation between stakeholders can encourage increased export performance, especially in the context of halal products.

Collaboration Concept

Referring to (McNaught, 2024), collaboration that builds naturally between various stakeholders can encourage the formation of a joint commitment if there is a common interest, goal, or strategic vision. Collaboration is not simply technical cooperation, but rather a relationship that emphasizes long-term interaction, trust, and shared responsibility in achieving mutually beneficial outcomes. In a collaborative process, each party contributes according to its capacity and has the space to participate actively, both in the planning, implementation and evaluation stages of the activity. According to (Minhas & Sindakis, 2022) collaboration in entrepreneurship is driven by social cohesion among actors, where trust and shared goals create the optimal conditions for innovation to occur, while managers play an essential role in moderating these interactions to sustain long-term synergy. In addition, (Fitriasari et al., 2024) explains that collaboration particularly in the form of open innovation between universities and industries serves as a mechanism for exchanging knowledge and expertise across institutional boundaries, thus enhancing competitiveness and organizational learning. Furthermore, as highlighted by (Mrabti et al., 2022) and subsequent studies on horizontal collaboration, collaboration can occur vertically or horizontally within supply chains, enabling efficiency, cost reduction, and sustainability through shared logistics, mutual support, and coordinated strategies. There is also the definition by (Khan et al., 2022) that tells about collaboration is a joint innovation process that involves various stakeholders in building a sustainable innovation ecosystem through the exchange of resources, knowledge, and values between network partners.

In the context of this research, the collaboration between the East Java Disperindag and PT Feihuang reflects the synergy built on the basis of common interests, namely opening export market access for halal food and beverage products from East Java to China. PT Feihuang as a private party and diaspora representative has a need to find halal products that meet Chinese market standards, while the East Java Disperindag has a mission to expand the export network of local MSMEs. This common goal is the basis for the formation of cooperation in the form of business matching, which is not only a means of trade promotion, but also a forum for exchanging strategic information. This kind of collaboration shows that synergy between the public and private sectors is crucial in supporting regional economic diplomacy and strengthening the position of local products in the global market.

Business Matching Concept

Referring to (Moghaddam & Nof, 2017), business matching is one of the mechanisms for aligning business plans, strategic targets, and business implementation readiness. In the context of trade facilitation, business matching is seen as a strategic approach because it

allows direct negotiations between producers and buyers, reduces cross-border communication barriers, and helps identify product suitability with destination market demand. In this research, business matching is a form of implementation of collaborative efforts between the East Java Disperindag and PT Feihuang to facilitate export access for halal food and beverage products to the Chinese market. This activity not only provides space for MSMEs to promote their products directly to potential buyers from China, but also acts as a bridge in bringing together the needs of the Chinese market with the readiness of superior halal products from East Java. According to (Syah & Rahmawaty, 2022) Along with the development of business forms and models in society, business matching is one of the relevant strategies to answer increasingly complex and diverse market dynamics. In addition, according to (Hotmauli & Syafganti, 2022) business matching activities can also have a positive impact where new business relationship opportunities can be created that are beneficial for visitors and those who are just starting a business.

Export Concept

Referring to the book by (Balassa, 1985), export is defined as an activity that is not only about trading abroad, but also an important tool in promoting economic efficiency, increased productivity, and long-term growth. According to (Fajria & Susyanti, 2021) In recent years, Indonesia has shown a positive trend in the growth of exports of various products and services to the global market. This achievement needs to be maintained and improved considering the intense competition between countries in exploring export opportunities. Historically, exports have always played a significant role in the economic development of nations. From the days of the Silk Road to modern global supply chains, exporting goods and services has enabled countries to access broader markets, gain wealth, and spur technological advancements (*Export*, n.d.). Export also strongly influences economic growth, where empirical studies (Kulińska, 2024) show that higher exports correlate with higher output per capita, highlighting the reciprocal relationship between export expansion and national economic growth within the framework of globalization. Furthermore, recent studies (Piedra-muñoz et al., 2021) indicate that exporting can be an effective method for achieving international competitiveness without overstressing domestic resources, while environmental sustainability and eco-innovation have become new strategic dimensions influencing the success of exports in global supply chains. There is also the definition by (Makioka, 2021) that tells about exports are international trade activities facilitated through the exchange of information between sellers and buyers, such as in export promotion and trade exhibitions, in order to expand market access and increase cross-border transactions.

In the context of developing halal food and beverage exports to China, success is not only measured by the volume or value of transactions, but also by the extent to which business actors are able to understand the characteristics of the destination market and build sustainable trade relationships. Therefore, the collaborative effort between the East Java Disperindag and PT Feihuang through business matching activities is a strategic first step in facilitating export access. Although it has not resulted in direct transactions, this activity

enables a two-way exchange of information between East Java MSMEs and potential buyers from China, especially regarding consumer preferences, product standards, and future cooperation opportunities.

In this regard, diaspora networks play an important role in connecting home countries with global markets by facilitating bilateral trade, investment, and the diffusion of knowledge and technology across borders. (Rapoport, 2019) Moreover, the Indonesian diaspora spread across countries such as China, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Australia, the UAE, and the United States serves as a strategic bridge in expanding Indonesia's international trade, providing valuable insights into local market preferences, and promoting halal product exports through their networks and cultural understanding. (Syafitri, Freesca. Andayani, 2023) Thus, business matching serves as an important foundation in introducing East Java's superior halal products while preparing business actors to face competition in the global market in a more prepared and directed manner.

Methodology

The research method used in this research is descriptive qualitative research. Descriptive research aims to systematically describe the facts or characteristics of the object under study. (Donkoh, 2023) In this context, the descriptive approach is used to explain how the form of collaboration between the East Java Disperindag and PT Feihuang in facilitating export access for halal food and beverage products through business matching activities to the Chinese market. To analyze the data, the researcher uses the method of data analysis from Miles Huberman. Miles Huberman define analysis in three parts, which is Data Collection, Data Reduction, and Conclusion drawing/verification.

In this research, data collection is done through two main sources, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with representatives from the East Java Ministry of Industry and Trade, especially the Head of Export Promotion who has a direct role in the implementation of these activities. Secondary data was obtained through document studies, such as official reports of business matching activities, as well as through literature studies that included scientific journals, books, and relevant information sources from the internet. (Sugiyono, 2013)

After all the data was collected, the researchers conducted a data reduction process, namely by filtering and sorting out information that was relevant and in accordance with the research focus. Furthermore, researchers carried out a matching process between the data obtained and the formulation of the problem, in order to obtain precise and accurate answers to the predetermined research objectives. (Matthew B. Miles, 1994)

Result and Discussion

Based on the results of existing research, an overview of the flow of implementation of business matching activities carried out between the East Java Disperindag and also PT Feihuang in supporting export access for halal food and beverage products to China is obtained, which is explained in the figure below:



Figure 1.

Source: Data processed by researchers, 2025

Discussion

From the figure, it can be seen that this process has gone through several stages, including Initiation of Cooperation by PT Feihuang through an Official Letter, East Java Disperindag Responds, Determination of Food and Beverage Commodities, Registration of MSMEs, Curation and Selection of MSMEs, Technical Preparation, Implementation of Business Matching, Follow-up and Evaluation.

Initiation of Cooperation by PT Feihuang through an Official Letter.

The process of implementing business matching between the East Java Trade Department and PT Feihuang began with a meeting during the East Java trade mission to Hong Kong in 2023, where PT Feihuang was present as a potential buyer. The meeting developed into ongoing communication, both through webinar participation and direct visits to the East Java Industry and Trade Office by bringing potential buyers from China. In the process, PT Feihuang expressed special interest in halal-certified food and beverage products from East Java MSMEs and officially submitted a letter of cooperation request to the East Java Disperindag. The request then became the basis for planning business matching activities that were designed to be more focused and based on market needs, as a first step in expanding export access for East Java halal products to China. This stage reflects the initial phase of collaboration as described by (McNaught, 2024), where mutual interests and shared goals between public and private actors become the foundation for building long-term and trust-based cooperation. The initiative by PT Feihuang demonstrates how private sector motivation can serve as a catalyst for institutional collaboration in trade facilitation.

East Java Industry and Trade Office Responds

This request for cooperation was welcomed positively by the East Java Provincial Industry and Trade Office (East Java Disperindag) as a form of strategic opportunity to expand market access for regional superior products abroad. The East Java Department of

Industry and Trade sees the involvement of diaspora partners such as PT Feihuang, which has a base in China, as a great potential in opening direct distribution channels that are more targeted and based on market needs. In addition, the invitation for cooperation shows that there is real interest from outside parties in local East Java products, especially from the small and medium business sector which has added value and characteristics. In line with (Rapoport, 2019) and (Syafitri, Freesca. Andayani, 2023), diaspora networks play an intermediary role in linking domestic producers with international buyers contributing to bilateral trade and knowledge transfer. PT Feihuang's involvement as a diaspora partner strengthens the collaborative mechanism between East Java MSMEs and the Chinese market.

Determination of Food and Beverage Commodities

After receiving a positive response from the East Java Disperindag, PT Feihuang then determined food and beverage commodities as commodities that would be the main focus in business matching activities. These commodities were chosen because they have great potential for the export market to China, which has begun to pay attention to halal assurance standards as part of product quality and safety. This aligns with the export theory of (Balassa, 1985), emphasizing that export development must focus not only on transaction volume but also on quality and sustainability through adaptation to market standards.

Registration of MSMEs

After determining the commodities, the East Java Disperindag began to register by distributing e-flyers through official social media accounts on the Instagram application to attract potential MSMEs. Interested MSMEs are asked to fill in data through a Google form regarding business legality, have complete food and beverage product certifications, food and beverage products have distribution permits and guaranteed product quality. This step reflects the participatory element of collaboration (McNaught, 2024), where all stakeholders such as government, private sector, and MSMEs actively engage in the process to ensure inclusiveness and shared responsibility.

Curation and Selection of MSMEs

The collected data is then curated based on an administrative scoring system. MSMEs with the best export documents and completeness will receive the highest score. From this curation process, 55 halal food and beverage MSMEs were selected which were considered the readiest to meet with potential buyers from China in business matching activities. According to (Moghaddam & Nof, 2017), business matching serves as an alignment mechanism between market readiness and strategic targets which is evident in the structured selection of qualified MSMEs ready for export.

Technical Preparation

Technical preparations for business matching activities are carried out in a structured manner by the East Java Disperindag to ensure the smooth running of the event and the readiness of participants. Each selected MSME is facilitated with a special table to display

product samples and legality documents such as halal certification, distribution permits, and business profiles. In addition, the meeting room is arranged in such a way as to allow direct interaction between business actors and buyers in turn. PT Feihuang as a cooperation partner also prepared for the arrival of 45 prospective buyers from China and provided Mandarin-Indonesian translators to bridge communication during the activity. This technical preparation includes logistics management, event organization, meeting flow, and session division so that the implementation of business matching on November 14, 2024 runs effectively and on target. This supports the idea by (Syah & Rahmawaty, 2022) that business matching adapts to complex market dynamics, requiring careful technical arrangements to facilitate effective exchanges.

Implementation of Business Matching

The implementation of business matching activities between the East Java Industry and Trade Office and PT Feihuang was carried out offline on November 14, 2024 for 1 day in the Meeting Room Building B 2nd Floor of the East Java Industry and Trade Office. A total of 55 selected MSMEs engaged in the food and beverage sector were met directly with 45 potential buyers from China facilitated by PT Feihuang. Each MSME occupied their respective tables to present products, show business legality, and answer questions from prospective buyers regarding quality, production capacity, and export certification. The same thing was also done by MSMEs to prospective Chinese buyers so that communication between the two parties was assisted by Mandarin-Indonesian translators provided by PT Feihuang, considering that most buyers only use Mandarin. The meeting took place in an open and rotating session format, where buyers could move from one MSME to another according to their interests and needs. This activity became an interactive space for information exchange, initial assessment of product readiness, and exploration of potential trade cooperation opportunities. Consistent with (Hotmauli & Syafiganti, 2022), the implementation stage of business matching opens the possibility of creating new business relationships that extend beyond the event serving as a platform for future cooperation.

Follow-up and Evaluation

After the business matching activities took place, the East Java Disperindag conducted follow-up and evaluation through monitoring the progress of communication between participating MSMEs and potential buyers from China. However, until this research was conducted, no official trade contracts had been agreed upon because most buyers were still waiting for administrative readiness from MSMEs, especially regarding the ownership of export certifications such as GACC (General Administration of Customs of China). The East Java Disperindag set an indicator of the effectiveness of the activity through a minimum target of 5-10% of participants who can continue communication after the event. In addition, Disperindag is also committed to providing ongoing assistance for MSMEs that are considered potential but have not yet fulfilled all export requirements. This stage exemplifies the collaborative evaluation process highlighted by (McNaught, 2024), where both sides continuously interact to build trust and long-term cooperation.

The findings suggest that regional trade promotion agencies should strengthen partnerships with diaspora networks and private intermediaries in target countries to facilitate sustainable export linkages. Governments can institutionalize business matching as part of export diplomacy strategies by providing technical assistance for MSMEs to meet destination market standards, including export certification such as GACC. Additionally, collaboration frameworks should integrate post-event mentoring programs to ensure MSMEs maintain communication with potential buyers and progress toward formal trade agreements.

In a broader context, this study highlights how collaboration-based business matching can serve as an effective model for other provinces in Indonesia to enhance export readiness through public-private partnerships. It demonstrates that sustainable trade relations are not solely built through transactions, but through continuous information exchange, trust-building, and diaspora engagement making this model replicable for advancing Indonesia's halal exports in global markets.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that business matching between the East Java Disperindag and PT Feihuang is a form of concrete collaboration in opening export access for East Java halal food and beverage MSMEs to the Chinese market. This process begins with a direct request from PT Feihuang and is followed up by the East Java Disperindag through a series of stages ranging from curation of MSMEs, technical preparation, to the implementation of activities on November 14, 2024. This activity successfully brought together 55 MSMEs with 45 prospective buyers from China, and created a two-way information exchange space that enriched business actors' understanding of export market preferences.

The efforts of the East Java Disperindag have been successful in accommodating market demand appropriately and bringing together businesses that have met legality standards and have halal certification. Although it has not resulted in a direct trade contract, this activity has established an important initial line of communication and opened up opportunities for follow-up for long-term transactions. In the context of PT Feihuang, this activity also shows a reciprocal business relationship, where buyers not only look for products from East Java but also introduce Chinese products to local businesses.

As a suggestion, similar collaborations need to be continued with strengthening in the aspect of MSME assistance. The local government through the East Java Industry and Trade Office also needs to encourage MSMEs to adopt halal and export-oriented production systems from the start, so that the selection and curation process in the future becomes more efficient. With continuous support, it is not impossible that East Java MSMEs can consistently penetrate the Chinese market and become part of the global supply chain for halal food and beverage products.

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