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CONTENTS

2. A D D S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S) MACHINE USAGE BASED ON PRODUCT MIX IN MANUFACTURING CLASSIFICATIONS MR. SURESH TULSHIRAM SALUNKE & SHWETA SURESH TULSHIRAM SALUNKE STUDY ON THE CHALLENGES FACED BY TIRUPUR GARMENT EXPORTERS MR. S. SARANANAN & S. MOHANRAJ IEEALTHCARE AND MEDICAL TOURISM: RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT I. VEERAPPAN, J. SASIGANTH, FR. ANGELO JOSEPH & A. JOE ROBINSON RADE BETWEEN INDIA AND ASEAN COUNTRIES FOR AGRICULTURAL AND MINERAL PRODUCTS: EXPLORING COMPATIBILITY THROUGH IEVEALED COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE IR. B. P. SARATH CHANDRAN IELEVANCE OF ISLAMIC BANKING TO INDIAN ECONOMY I. NAYAMATH BASHA & DR. BADIUDDIN AHMED IXIOMATIZATION OF THE PREFERENCE CORE IN MULTICRITERIA COOPERATIVE GAMES II. SUGUMARAN & P. VISHNU PRAKASH IORPORATE GOVERNANCE & INFORMATION SECURITY: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY MR. BADIUDDIN AHMED, SYED HAMID MOHIUDDIN QUADRI & IRFANUDDIN IULIPEE FALLING: DOLLAR IS ON HORSE RIDE M. RAMU, M. S. K. VARMA & S. SUDHEER IN ANALYSIS OF INDIAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY: SLOWDOWN AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT MR. ANKUR KUMAR RASTOGI & NITIN GOPAL GUPTA IN PROPOSED THEORY OF NEURAL NETWORKS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR AN EXPERT SYSTEM	Page No. 1 5 8 11 17 21 25 28 36
2. A D D S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S	AR. SURESH TULSHIRAM SALUNKE & SHWETA SURESH TULSHIRAM SALUNKE A STUDY ON THE CHALLENGES FACED BY TIRUPUR GARMENT EXPORTERS BR. S. SARANANAN & S. MOHANRAJ BEALTHCARE AND MEDICAL TOURISM: RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT BY VEERAPPAN, J. SASIGANTH, FR. ANGELO JOSEPH & A. JOE ROBINSON RADE BETWEEN INDIA AND ASEAN COUNTRIES FOR AGRICULTURAL AND MINERAL PRODUCTS: EXPLORING COMPATIBILITY THROUGH BEVEALED COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE BR. B. P. SARATH CHANDRAN BELEVANCE OF ISLAMIC BANKING TO INDIAN ECONOMY BRADE BASHA & DR. BADIUDDIN AHMED BY SUGUMARIAN & P. VISHNU PRAKASH BORDORATE GOVERNANCE & INFORMATION SECURITY: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY BY BADIUDDIN AHMED, SYED HAMID MOHIUDDIN QUADRI & IRFANUDDIN BURDEE FALLING: DOLLAR IS ON HORSE RIDE BY ARAMU, M. S. K. VARMA & S. SUDHEER BY ANALYSIS OF INDIAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY: SLOWDOWN AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT BY ROPOOSED THEORY OF NEURAL NETWORKS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR AN EXPERT SYSTEM	1 5 8 11 17 21 25 28
2. A D 3. H R. 4. TI R. D 5. R S. 6. A A 7. CO D 8. R N 9. A D 10. A V 11. TI D	A STUDY ON THE CHALLENGES FACED BY TIRUPUR GARMENT EXPORTERS OR. S. SARANANAN & S. MOHANRAJ IEALTHCARE AND MEDICAL TOURISM: RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT OF VEERAPPAN, J. SASIGANTH, FR. ANGELO JOSEPH & A. JOE ROBINSON RADE BETWEEN INDIA AND ASEAN COUNTRIES FOR AGRICULTURAL AND MINERAL PRODUCTS: EXPLORING COMPATIBILITY THROUGH REVEALED COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE OR. B. P. SARATH CHANDRAN RELEVANCE OF ISLAMIC BANKING TO INDIAN ECONOMY ON NAYAMATH BASHA & DR. BADIUDDIN AHMED IXIOMATIZATION OF THE PREFERENCE CORE IN MULTICRITERIA COOPERATIVE GAMES ON SUGUMARAN & P. VISHNU PRAKASH ORPORATE GOVERNANCE & INFORMATION SECURITY: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OR. BADIUDDIN AHMED, SYED HAMID MOHIUDDIN QUADRI & IRFANUDDIN RUPEE FALLING: DOLLAR IS ON HORSE RIDE OF RAMU, M. S. K. VARMA & S. SUDHEER ON ANALYSIS OF INDIAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY: SLOWDOWN AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT OR ANKUR KUMAR RASTOGI & NITIN GOPAL GUPTA ON PROPOSED THEORY OF NEURAL NETWORKS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR AN EXPERT SYSTEM	8 11 17 21 25 28
5. R. S. C. D. S. R. M.	R. S. SARANANAN & S. MOHANRAJ REALTHCARE AND MEDICAL TOURISM: RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT R. VEERAPPAN, J. SASIGANTH, FR. ANGELO JOSEPH & A. JOE ROBINSON RADE BETWEEN INDIA AND ASEAN COUNTRIES FOR AGRICULTURAL AND MINERAL PRODUCTS: EXPLORING COMPATIBILITY THROUGH REVEALED COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE R. B. P. SARATH CHANDRAN RELEVANCE OF ISLAMIC BANKING TO INDIAN ECONOMY RAYAMATH BASHA & DR. BADIUDDIN AHMED EXIOMATIZATION OF THE PREFERENCE CORE IN MULTICRITERIA COOPERATIVE GAMES R. SUGUMARAN & P. VISHNU PRAKASH FORPORATE GOVERNANCE & INFORMATION SECURITY: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY R. BADIUDDIN AHMED, SYED HAMID MOHIUDDIN QUADRI & IRFANUDDIN RUPEE FALLING: DOLLAR IS ON HORSE RIDE M. RAMU, M. S. K. VARMA & S. SUDHEER IN ANALYSIS OF INDIAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY: SLOWDOWN AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT DR. ANKUR KUMAR RASTOGI & NITIN GOPAL GUPTA A PROPOSED THEORY OF NEURAL NETWORKS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR AN EXPERT SYSTEM	8 11 17 21 25 28
8. R. M. D. A. D. D. A. V. U. 11. Ti D. D. A. D.	RADE BETWEEN INDIA AND ASEAN COUNTRIES FOR AGRICULTURAL AND MINERAL PRODUCTS: EXPLORING COMPATIBILITY THROUGH REVEALED COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE BY B. P. SARATH CHANDRAN RELEVANCE OF ISLAMIC BANKING TO INDIAN ECONOMY ANALYMATH BASHA & DR. BADIUDDIN AHMED EXIOMATIZATION OF THE PREFERENCE CORE IN MULTICRITERIA COOPERATIVE GAMES AS SUGUMARAN & P. VISHNU PRAKASH CORPORATE GOVERNANCE & INFORMATION SECURITY: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY BY BRADIUDDIN AHMED, SYED HAMID MOHIUDDIN QUADRI & IRFANUDDIN RUPEE FALLING: DOLLAR IS ON HORSE RIDE ANALYSIS OF INDIAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY: SLOWDOWN AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT BY PROPOSED THEORY OF NEURAL NETWORKS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR AN EXPERT SYSTEM	11 17 21 25 28
4. TI R D D S. R S. C. A A D D D A D D D A D D D D D D D D D	RADE BETWEEN INDIA AND ASEAN COUNTRIES FOR AGRICULTURAL AND MINERAL PRODUCTS: EXPLORING COMPATIBILITY THROUGH REVEALED COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE OR. B. P. SARATH CHANDRAN RELEVANCE OF ISLAMIC BANKING TO INDIAN ECONOMY . NAYAMATH BASHA & DR. BADIUDDIN AHMED EXIOMATIZATION OF THE PREFERENCE CORE IN MULTICRITERIA COOPERATIVE GAMES I. SUGUMARAN & P. VISHNU PRAKASH CORPORATE GOVERNANCE & INFORMATION SECURITY: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OR. BADIUDDIN AHMED, SYED HAMID MOHIUDDIN QUADRI & IRFANUDDIN RUPEE FALLING: DOLLAR IS ON HORSE RIDE M. RAMU, M. S. K. VARMA & S.SUDHEER IN ANALYSIS OF INDIAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY: SLOWDOWN AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT OR. ANKUR KUMAR RASTOGI & NITIN GOPAL GUPTA A PROPOSED THEORY OF NEURAL NETWORKS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR AN EXPERT SYSTEM	17 21 25 28
8. R. M. P.	REVEALED COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE OR. B. P. SARATH CHANDRAN RELEVANCE OF ISLAMIC BANKING TO INDIAN ECONOMY . NAYAMATH BASHA & DR. BADIUDDIN AHMED EXIOMATIZATION OF THE PREFERENCE CORE IN MULTICRITERIA COOPERATIVE GAMES I. SUGUMARAN & P. VISHNU PRAKASH CORPORATE GOVERNANCE & INFORMATION SECURITY: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OR. BADIUDDIN AHMED, SYED HAMID MOHIUDDIN QUADRI & IRFANUDDIN RUPEE FALLING: DOLLAR IS ON HORSE RIDE M. RAMU, M. S. K. VARMA & S.SUDHEER IN ANALYSIS OF INDIAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY: SLOWDOWN AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT OR. ANKUR KUMAR RASTOGI & NITIN GOPAL GUPTA A PROPOSED THEORY OF NEURAL NETWORKS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR AN EXPERT SYSTEM	17 21 25 28
5. R 5. A 7. C D 8. R N 9. A D 10. A V.	ELEVANCE OF ISLAMIC BANKING TO INDIAN ECONOMY . NAYAMATH BASHA & DR. BADIUDDIN AHMED EXIOMATIZATION OF THE PREFERENCE CORE IN MULTICRITERIA COOPERATIVE GAMES I. SUGUMARAN & P. VISHNU PRAKASH CORPORATE GOVERNANCE & INFORMATION SECURITY: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY FOR. BADIUDDIN AHMED, SYED HAMID MOHIUDDIN QUADRI & IRFANUDDIN EUPEE FALLING: DOLLAR IS ON HORSE RIDE FOR RAMU, M. S. K. VARMA & S.SUDHEER IN ANALYSIS OF INDIAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY: SLOWDOWN AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT FOR ANKUR KUMAR RASTOGI & NITIN GOPAL GUPTA A PROPOSED THEORY OF NEURAL NETWORKS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR AN EXPERT SYSTEM	21 25 28
6. A A A 7. CO D 8. R N 9. A D 10. A V 11. TI D	A PROPOSED THEORY OF NEURAL NETWORKS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR AN EXPERT SYSTEM	25 28
7. COD 8. R M 9. A D 10. A V 11. TI	ORPORATE GOVERNANCE & INFORMATION SECURITY: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OR. BADIUDDIN AHMED, SYED HAMID MOHIUDDIN QUADRI & IRFANUDDIN SUPEE FALLING: DOLLAR IS ON HORSE RIDE M. RAMU, M. S. K. VARMA & S.SUDHEER IN ANALYSIS OF INDIAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY: SLOWDOWN AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT OR. ANKUR KUMAR RASTOGI & NITIN GOPAL GUPTA A PROPOSED THEORY OF NEURAL NETWORKS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR AN EXPERT SYSTEM	28
8. RI N 9. A D 10. A V 11. TI D	RUPEE FALLING: DOLLAR IS ON HORSE RIDE M. RAMU, M. S. K. VARMA & S.SUDHEER IN ANALYSIS OF INDIAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY: SLOWDOWN AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT OR. ANKUR KUMAR RASTOGI & NITIN GOPAL GUPTA A PROPOSED THEORY OF NEURAL NETWORKS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR AN EXPERT SYSTEM	
9. A D 10. A V 11. TI D	M. RAMU, M. S. K. VARMA & S.SUDHEER IN ANALYSIS OF INDIAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY: SLOWDOWN AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT OR. ANKUR KUMAR RASTOGI & NITIN GOPAL GUPTA IN PROPOSED THEORY OF NEURAL NETWORKS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR AN EXPERT SYSTEM	
10. A V. 11. TI	OR. ANKUR KUMAR RASTOGI & NITIN GOPAL GUPTA A PROPOSED THEORY OF NEURAL NETWORKS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR AN EXPERT SYSTEM	36
11. TI		
11. Ti	Y. SUMALATHA	41
	HE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF BHIRDAR UNIVERSITY	45
l	PR. MATEBE TAFERE VEBLENIAN SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL MODEL: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY	51
13. IN	OR. K. ABRAHAM & DR. M. RAJASEKHAR NNOVATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING TO ENHANCE CRITICAL THINKING AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICE, FOR QUALITY AND RELEVANCE OF IEALTH EDUCATION OR REPLECTIVE PRACTICE, FOR QUALITY AND RELEVANCE OF IEALTH EDUCATION	56
14. A	OR. BIRHANU MOGES ALEMU A STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF PHYSICALLY DISABLED POPULATION: DEVELOPMENT IN REHABILITATION SCHEMES	68
	DR. CHINNA ASHAPPA ISE OF E-JOURNALS IN THE DISCIPLINES OF LIFE SCIENCE IN K.U.K: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY	72
	INIL KUMAR SLAMIC MICROFINANCE-FINANCING THE POOREST OF THE POOR	79
	DILAWAR AHMAD BHAT USE OF CLOUD COMPUTING IN MANUFACTURING COMPANIES	83
SI	HEETAL MAHENDHER & SUBASHREE	
_	CLIMATE CHANGE AND VECTOR BORNE DISEASES: THE ROLE OF GIS & REMOTE SENSING ONLYPA GEORGE & DR. R. RAJKUMAR	88
	EASIBILITY STUDY FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ACTIVITY- BASED COSTING SYSTEM (ABCS) IN ALLOY STEEL INDUSTRIES (ASI) MAJID NILI AHMADABADI & ALI SOLEIMANI	96
20. A	IN IMPACT OF SERVICE QUALITY ON LOYAL CUSTOMER AND ITS SATISFACTION: A STUDY OF PRIVATE BANKS IN KANPUR CITY (INDIA) AVINDRA KUMAR KUSHWAHA, GURPREET SINGH, NEERAJ JOSHI & NEHA PUSHPAK	101
21. A	STUDY ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL IN CEMENT INDUSTRY IN TAMILNADU	107
	DR. M. RAGURAMAN, R. VEERAPPAN, S. ALBERT, M. SUGANYA & S. HEMAVATHY DETERMINANTS OF MOBILE BANKING TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION OF COMMERCIAL BANKS IN ETHIOPIA	110
	EMENU AYNADIS, TESFAYE ABATE & ABEBE TILAHUN VALUATION OF LIC'S EFFICIENCY IN GENERATING CAPITAL FUNDS UNDER ULIP'S SCHEMES	117
	MANJUSHREE S VALUATION OF COST MANAGEMENT TOOLS: A STUDY ON MULTINATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES OF BANGLADESH	120
	AHMINA AHMED IN EVALUATION OF NEW ZEALAND'S EXPORT COMPETITIVENESS USING SHIFT-SHARE ANALYSIS	126
D	OR. SATYA GONUGUNTLA NCREASING INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AROUND THE WORLD, AND ITS PATTERNS IN INDIA	
W	VITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INDO-GERMAN COLLABORATION MUNEEB HUSSAIN GATTOO & MUJEEB HUSSAIN GATTOO	131
27. A	STUDY ON THE ETHICAL INVESTMENT DECISION MAKING IN INDIAN RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS WHICH BABURAJ KALUVILLA	135
28. G	REEN MARKETING MIX: A STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	138
29. C	. NANDA GOPAL CONSIDERING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CASH WITH CAPITAL COST AND FINANCIAL FLEXIBILITY	140
	IHMAD GHASEMI & DR. ROYA DARABI INDERSTANDING THE GREEKS AND THEIR USE TO MEASURE RISK	146
S	ANJANA JUNEJA REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK	150

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NEED/IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES

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RESULTS & DISCUSSION

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SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

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TRADE BETWEEN INDIA AND ASEAN COUNTRIES FOR AGRICULTURAL AND MINERAL PRODUCTS: **EXPLORING COMPATIBILITY THROUGH REVEALED COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE**

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ABSTRACT

In the post 1990 liberalized economic environment, India made concerted efforts to improve trade relations with ASEAN countries which culminated in signing of the India – ASEAN Free Trade Agreement in August 2009. India - ASEAN FTA in trade in goods which will come to effect from 1st January 2010 envisages reduction and elimination of tariffs in 89.34 percent of the product lines where as the remaining 10.66 percent product lines are kept outside the ambit of tariff reduction in the negative list. For any Regional Trade Agreement (RTA) to be successful, it is imperative on partner countries to have complementary trade structure to be exploited for mutual benefit. Countries which got complementary trade structure are likely to trade more where as economies with similar trade structure often struggle to improve trade share unless there is substantial intra industry trade. Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA) indices, despite their limitations, provide a useful quide to underlying comparative advantage and offer a further insight into the competitiveness of participating countries and hence reveal the possibility of increased trade cooperation between them. In this direction the paper computed RCA between India and ASEAN countries for Agricultural Products and Mineral Products to understand the trade structure between them. Computation of RCA at finer levels of disaggregation helped to identify complementarity trade structure existing between India and ASEAN.

JEL CLASSIFICATION

F10, F14, F15

KEYWORDS

Agricultural Products, ASEAN, India, Regional Trade Agreements, Revealed Comparative Advantage.

t is generally understood that complementarity in the trade structure of the countries facilitates more export and import between them and there is scope for mutual benefit from this increased trade. Hence identifying and measuring trade complementarity is an important task in realizing trade potential and for forging trade cooperation among countries. Regional Trade Agreements are effective and successful only if they are carefully designed by identifying and collating complementary products and sectors. There are different indices developed to examine the trade pattern and to see whether increased cooperation is possible between nations. In this paper an attempt is made to construct Revealed Compartive Index (RCA) for Agricultural and Mineral Products between India and ASEAN and to see whether increased trade cooperation between these two trading partners is possible or not in these very important

REVEALED COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE (RCA) INDEX

Revealed Comparative Advantage Index shows how comparative is a product in countries export compared to the products share in world trade. A product with high RCA is competitive and can be exported to countries with low RCA. Measures of revealed comparative advantage (RCA) have been used to help assess a country's export potential. The RCA indicates whether a country is in the process of extending the products in which it has a trade potential, as opposed to situations in which the number of products that can be competitively exported is static. It can also provide useful information about potential trade prospects with new partners. Countries with similar RCA profiles are unlikely to have high bilateral trade intensities unless intra-industry trade is involved. RCA measures, if estimated at high levels of product disaggregation, can focus attention on other nontraditional products that might be successfully exported. The RCA index of country 'i' for product j is often measured by the product's share in the country's exports in relation to its share in world trade:

$$RCA_{ij} = \frac{(x_{ij}/X_{it})}{(x_{wj}/X_{wt})}$$

Where x_{ij} and x_{wj} are the values of country i's exports of product j and world exports of product j and where X_{it} and X_{wt} refer to the country's total exports and world total exports. A value of less than unity implies that the country has a revealed comparative disadvantage in the product. Similarly, if the index exceeds unity, the country is said to have a revealed comparative advantage in the product.

Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA) for ASEAN countries is calculated at two levels namely Commodity Groups and, HS-2 levels and compared against India's RCA to see trade complementarity between these trading partners. At the aggregate level, RCA is calculated for eight ASEAN countries for Agriculture and Mineral Products for 17 years to identify specific advantage in trade. Data for calculating RCA is collected from IMF, WTO and ASEAN Secretariat.

RCA for ASEAN countries taken together at HS-2 classification for the year 2008 is calculated and compared against India for getting a picture on India - ASEAN trade complementarity. Data pertaining to Brunei, Laos, Indonesia, Myanmar and Vietnam is not included for non availability of data. The following section provides the analysis of RCA for Agricultural commodities and Mineral Products for between India and ASEAN countries.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

India's RCA for agricultural products for the year 2006 is 1.53 which illustrated that India's agricultural exports are higher than share of agricultural exports in world trade. The RCA for agricultural products among ASEAN countries are high for Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. That means India can have higher agricultural exports with other ASEAN countries such as Brunei, Cambodia, Philippines and Singapore.

INDIA Year BRU CAM INDO MALA **PHIL** SING VIET 1990 1.6224 0.0571 1.3455 2.1177 1.7242 0.6458 2.8070 1.8084 1.5813 0.4407 1995 1.3717 1.2300 2.1597 2000 1.7649 0.4485 1.3871 0.9534 0.5951 0.3157 2.0677 3.1900 2001 1.6164 0.0061 0.3966 1.3698 0.9139 0.6707 0.3034 2.0756 3.3025 2002 1.5754 0.0030 0.3249 1.5757 1.0727 0.6274 0.2966 2.0201 3.0619 2003 1.4925 0.2846 1.6530 1.2193 0.7270 0.2534 2.0823 2.8072 2004 1.3166 0.3343 2.0105 1.2158 0.7539 0.2532 2.0784 2.6359 2005 1.3353 0.2979 1.9899 1.1680 0.8143 0.2435 1.9904 2.6154 2006 1.5331 0.3070 2.2647 1.2399 0.2395 2.1111

TABLE 1: RCA FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN INDIA AND ASEAN

Source: Computed from WTO database

0.8363

The RCA for the period 1990 to 2006 (seventeen years) provide the long term trend for each product. The mean RCA for agricultural commodity is above one for India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam and below one for Brunei, Cambodia and Singapore. This means there is a scope to trade agricultural Commodities between India and low RCA countries of ASEAN such as Brunei, Cambodia and Singapore. Fig. 1 diagrammatically represents the RCA for ASEAN countries and India for the period 1990 to 2006.

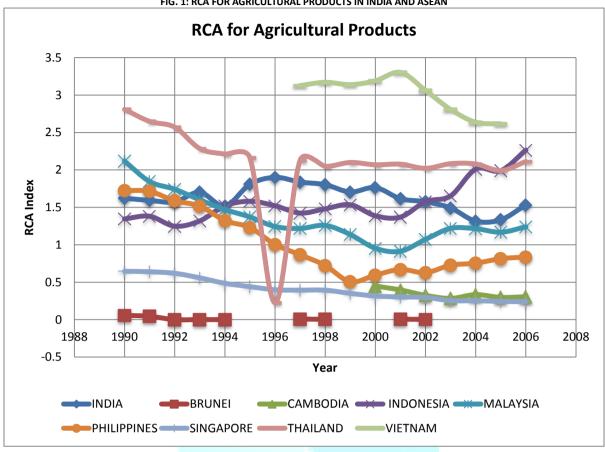


FIG. 1: RCA FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN INDIA AND ASEAN

FOOD

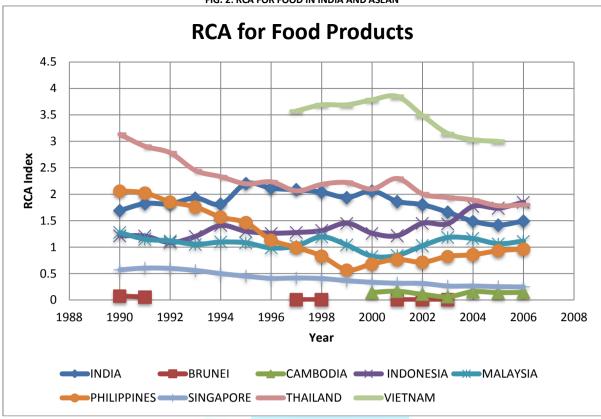
Food items form part of agricultural products and resemble the same pattern of RCA that of agricultural products. RCA for food is high for India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam and low for Brunei, Cambodia, Philippines and Singapore. The average RCA showed that the two ASEAN countries namely Vietnam and Thailand are having a strong RCA of above two. But Brunei, Cambodia and Singapore got a very low RCA in food and India which got a mean RCA of 1.8374 can export food articles to these nations. It is also revealed from the table 4.6 that Philippines and Thailand which had high RCA for food items in the early nineties weakened its RCA over the period time. Table 2 and Fig. 2 provide the RCA for food items for India and ASEAN.

TABLE 2: RCA FOR FOOD IN INDIA AND ASEAN									
Year	INDIA	BRU	CAM	INDO	MALA	PHIL	SING	THAI	VIET
1990	1.6922	0.0741		1.2146	1.2743	2.0625	0.5694	3.1323	
1995	2.2018			1.2994	1.0817	1.4593	0.4505	2.1973	
2000	2.062		0.1442	1.2631	0.8278	0.6818	0.3353	2.0985	3.7839
2001	1.864	0.0054	0.1674	1.2172	0.8451	0.7656	0.3182	2.2969	3.8486
2002	1.8012	0.0053	0.1079	1.4514	1.0273	0.7134	0.3134	2.0040	3.4874
2003	1.6585	0.0060	0.0632	1.4431	1.1815	0.8243	0.2659	1.9374	3.1470
2004	1.488		0.1590	1.7704	1.1622	0.8553	0.2654	1.8903	3.0291
2005	1.416		0.1413	1.7379	1.0646	0.9298	0.2531	1.7821	2.9978
2006	1.4928		0.1464	1.8487	1.1133	0.9639	0.2489	1.8010	

TABLE 2: RCA FOR FOOD IN INDIA AND ASFAN

Source: Computed from WTO database

FIG. 2: RCA FOR FOOD IN INDIA AND ASEAN



FUELS AND MINING PRODUCT

Fuel and Mining are resource based products depending on the natural endowments of the country. But industries can be established to process and refine these products. For Mining and Fuels, RCA is high in Brunei, India, Indonesia, and Vietnam and low in Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. The three oil rich countries of ASEAN are Brunei, Indonesia and Vietnam and they export petroleum related products to other parts of the world. India has a rich deposit of mineral ores and export them to the mineral scarce countries of ASEAN and rest of the world. India is a huge importer of petroleum crude and its requirements are surging ahead every year and they can look forward to ASEAN oil exporters to meet the demand. Table 3 gives the RCA for fuels and Mining products taken together for India and ASEAN countries.

TABLE 3: RCA FOR FUELS AND MINING PRODUCTS IN INDIA AND ASEAN

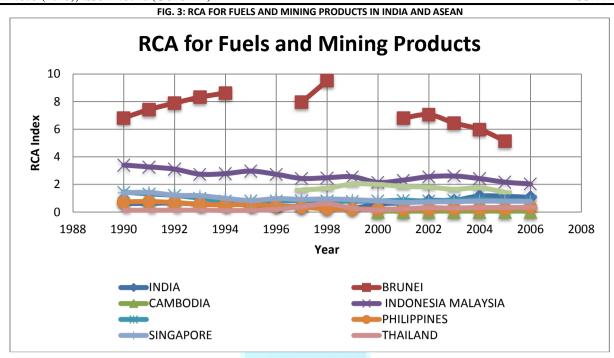
Year	INDIA	BRU	CAM	INDO	MALA	PHIL	SING	THAI	VIET
1990	0.6106	6.8225		3.3997	1.4410	0.7339	1.3900	0.1323	
1995	0.5136			2.9650	0.7881	0.5456	0.8347	0.1267	
2000	0.5727		0.0005	2.1471	0.7942	0.2102	0.8080	0.1498	2.0004
2001	0.6609	6.8003	0.0004	2.3121	0.8481	0.2111	0.6887	0.2342	1.8595
2002	0.8381	7.0537	0.0001	2.5573	0.7896	0.2190	0.7373	0.3150	1.8086
2003	0.8507	6.4454	0.0016	2.6073	0.8607	0.2574	0.7492	0.2850	1.6552
2004	1.1596	5.9856	0.0006	2.4236	0.8962	0.2585	0.7901	0.3322	1.7611
2005	1.14	5.1412	0.0002	2.1663	0.8426	0.2424	0.7748	0.3254	1.4371
2006	1.0606		0.0003	2.0348	0.7994	0.3483	0.7688	0.3419	

Source: Computed from WTO database

The mean RCA shows, Brunei and Indonesia got strong RCA for fuel and mining products while Vietnam got high RCA and they can export fuel products to Cambodia, Philippines and Thailand who have weak RCA and India, Malaysia and Singapore who have low RCA. This showed there is complementarity in trading fuel products in the ASEAN region. With regard to the mining products alone, India got the comparative advantage in many product categories and can export them to most of the ASEAN countries.

2006

1.0095



FUELS

If we consider fuel separately; Brunei, Indonesia and Vietnam got a high comparative advantage. Brunei's single most item of export is petroleum and enjoys the mean RCA of 7.7632. Indonesia is a member of OPEC and Vietnam is exploring new wells to increase petroleum export. Singapore and Malaysia got high RCA in fuels for refining and exporting the products to other countries. India, Cambodia, Philippines and Thailand got weak RCA and import large quantity of fuel from other countries.

BRU INDO Year INDIA CAM MALA PHIL SING THAI VIET 1990 0.2766 4.1639 1.7431 0.2639 1.7256 0.0792 1995 0.2353 3.4809 0.9586 0.2062 1.0513 0.0988 2.2144 0.9246 2000 0.4448 0.0001 0.1221 0.9350 0.1157 2001 0.5203 8.8049 0.0003 2.2390 0.9939 0.0850 0.7745 2.7467 2002 0.589 9.1306 0.0001 0.9233 0.1276 0.8383 0.2876 2.2870 0.8451 0.0001 2003 0.6228 8.1856 2.7555 1.0072 0.1553 2.0520 0.2636 2004 0.8229 2.7599 0.1152 0.9128 7.7207 0.0001 1.0554 0.3238 2.1480 2005 0.871 4.9744 0.0000 2.0658 0.9670 0.1364 0.8863 0.3145 1.6958

TABLE 4: RCA FOR FUELS IN INDIA AND ASEAN

Source: Computed from WTO database

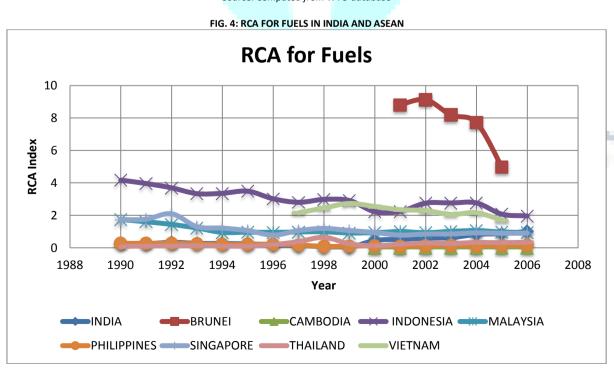
0.9371

0.1495

0.8954

0.3396

1.9545



REVEALED COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE FOR HS-2 CLASSIFICATION

In order to get product level comparative advantage, Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA) for HS-2 digit classification of Agricultural commodities and Minerals are calculated for India and ASEAN countries for the period 2003 to 2006. The Data pertaining to HS2 classification of commodity exports and imports are extracted from DOTS of WITS (World Integrated Trade Solutions). RCA for the period 2003-2006 is calculated for India and combined ASEAN countries and a mean RCA is obtained for comparison. The HS-2 data is not available for some ASEAN countries and only available data is taken for calculating RCA for ASEAN group. The absolute difference in RCA between India and ASEAN is obtained to understand the extend of complementarity in commodities. This is supplemented with trade performance under HS-4 digits classification to know finer specialization of products by India and ASEAN countries. The results of RCA for HS-2 products for India and ASEAN are discussed below.

Table 5 showed the mean RCA, RCA category and absolute difference in RCA between India and combined ASEAN for agricultural commodities in HS-2 digit classification. Of the 24 HS-2digits commodities, 9 categories showed trade complementarity between India and ASEAN. These include Edible vegetables and certain roots(HS-07), Edible fruit and nuts; peel of citr (HS-08), Prod.mill.indust; malt; starches (HS-11); Oil seed, oleagi fruits; miscellgr (HS-12), Animal/veg fats & oils & their clea (HS-15), Prep of meat, fish or crustaceans(HS-16), Residues & waste from the food industry (HS-23) and Tobacco and manufactured tobacco su (HS-24). The highest RCA for India in agricultural products is in Vegetable plaiting materials; veget (HS14) and Coffee, tea, mati and spices (HS-09) and for ASEAN is Animal/veg fats & oils & their clea (HS15) and Prep of meat, fish or crustaceans (HS-16). The highest absolute difference in RCA is for Vegetable plaiting materials; veget (HS-14) and Coffee, tea, mati and spices (HS-09).

TABLE 5: RCA FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN HS2 CLASSIFICATION

HS Code	Commodity Name	Mean RCA of India	Mean RCA of ASEAN	RCA category- India	RCA Category- ASEAN	Absolute difference in RCA
01	Live animals	0.0514	0.2266	weak	weak	0.1752
02	Meat and edible meat offal	0.8696	0.0751	low	weak	0.7946
03	Fish & crustacean, mollusc& other	2.4041	1.6525	strong	high	0.7516
04	Dairy prod; birds' eggs; natural ho	0.3893	0.2745	weak	weak	0.1148
05	Products of animal origin, nes or	0.7329	0.2131	low	weak	0.5197
06	Live tree & other plant; bulb, root	0.5906	0.2919	low	weak	0.2987
07	Edible vegetables and certain roots	1.4093	0.4803	high	weak	0.9290
08	Edible fruit and nuts; peel of citr	1.6377	0.4496	high	weak	1.1881
09	Coffee, tea, matï and spices.	5.3282	1.1762	strong	high	4.1520
10	Cereals	3.5873	1.3762	strong	high	2.2112
11	Prod.mill.indust; malt; starches;	0.5891	1.0784	low	high	0.4892
12	Oil seed, oleagi fruits; miscellgr	1.4195	0.1055	high	weak	1.3140
13	Lac; gums, resins & other vegetable	9.9841	0.4704	strong	weak	9.5137
14	Vegetable plaiting materials; veget	5.7112	1.2402	strong	high	4.4710
15	Animal/veg fats & oils & their clea	0.8091	4.4486	low	strong	3.6395
16	Prep of meat, fish or crustaceans,	0.5465	3.0308	low	strong	2.4844
17	Sugars and sugar confectionery.	2.0349	1.1313	strong	high	0.9037
18	Cocoa and cocoa preparations.	0.0352	0.8690	weak	low	0.8338
19	Prep.of cereal, flour, starch/milk;	0.3507	0.7988	weak	low	0.4481
20	Prep of vegetable, fruit, nuts or o	0.4113	0.8604	weak	low	0.4491
21	Miscellaneous edible preparations.	0.5320	0.8521	low	low	0.3201
22	Beverages, spirits and vinegar.	0.0784	0.3768	weak	weak	0.2984
23	Residues & waste from the food indu	3.3460	0.5091	strong	low	2.8370
24	Tobacco and manufactured tobacco su	1.3953	0.6878	high	low	0.7075

Source: Calculated from data extracted from WITS

India enjoys comparative advantage in many mineral products compared to ASEAN countries. These include Iron and steel (HS-72) Articles of iron or steel (HS-73), Copper and articles thereof (HS-74) and Zinc and articles thereof (HS-79) in which India got high RCA against ASEAN. ASEAN's comparative advantage lies in Tin and articles thereof (HS-80) and India can import this from ASEAN as the absolute difference is highest in this category.

TABLE 6: RCA FOR MINERAL PRODUCTS IN HS2 CLASSIFICATION

HS Code	Commodity Name	Mean RCA of India	Mean RCA of ASEAN	RCA category- India	RCA Category- ASEAN	Absolute difference in RCA
72	Iron and steel.	1.5293	0.3017	high	weak	1.2275
73	Articles of iron or steel.	1.5586	0.5872	high	low	0.9714
74	Copper and articles thereof.	1.7848	0.6129	high	low	1.1719
75	Nickel and articles thereof.	0.0746	0.1882	weak	weak	0.1136
76	Aluminium and articles thereof.	0.5731	0.3871	low	weak	0.1861
78	Lead and articles thereof.	0.4707	0.7170	weak	low	0.2463
79	Zinc and articles thereof.	1.6277	0.4693	high	weak	1.1585
80	Tin and articles thereof.	0.6575	7.1447	low	strong	6.4872
81	Other base metals; cermets; article	0.1696	0.2006	weak	weak	0.0310
82	Tool, implement, cutlery, spoon	1.0636	0.5422	high	low	0.5214
83	Miscellaneous articles of base meta	0.5790	0.4598	low	weak	0.1192

Source: Calculated from data extracted from WITS

ASEAN has strong RCA for Electrical machinery, equipments, parts thereof (HS-85) and high RCA for Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery (HS-84) against India and export lot of items to India. On the other hand India's RCA include Ships, boats and floating structure (HS-89), Clocks and watches and parts thereof (HS-91) and Works of art, collectors' pieces etc. (HS-97).

CONCLUSION

The Revealed comparative Advantage Index showed that there are trade complementarity between India and some ASEAN countries. For both agricultural Commodities and Food articles, India got comparative advantage and it can export to Brunei, Cambodia, Singapore and Philippines. India got comparative advantage in Mineral Products, but comparative disadvantage in fuel. India can import fuel from Brunei and Indonesia as it imports large volume from the Gulf countries. RCA for HS-2 digit classification shows there are strong complementarity in products like edible vegetable, edible fruits, malt, gums and resins, animal or vegetable fat, fish or crustaceans etc. In the area of Mineral products there is a trade complementarity in Iron and steel, Articles of iron or steel, Copper and articles thereof, Zinc and articles thereof, Tin and articles thereof and Tool, implement, cutlery, spoon. It reveals there is scope for enhanced trade cooperation between India and ASEAN.

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