

Restructuring logistics education in Brunei Darussalam: a multi-stakeholder perspective

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Abstract

Purpose – This study explores the restructuring of a postgraduate logistics program at a public university in Brunei Darussalam. The objective is to better align the curriculum with current industry requirements by incorporating stakeholder input and enhancing the integration of academic and practical competencies.

Design/methodology/approach – An exploratory case study approach was adopted, using focus group discussions to gather qualitative insights from key stakeholders, including industry professionals, government representatives, and alumni. Data were collected through feedback forms and analysed using narrative and content analyses to derive themes relevant to logistics curriculum reform.

Findings – Stakeholders emphasised the importance of covering a broad range of logistics and supply chain management topics. There was agreement on renaming the program to “Master of Logistics and Supply Chain Management” to reflect its expanded scope. Opinions varied on program duration, with some supporting a one-year intensive program and others recommending a longer, in-depth program with embedded internship opportunities.

Research limitations/implications – The findings are specific to a single institution in Brunei Darussalam and may not reflect broader regional or international logistics education standards and practices. However, the study underscores the importance of sustained curriculum review and responsive design to ensure relevance in the ever-evolving logistics industry.

Originality/value – This paper offers practical insight into curriculum reform in a developing context, drawing on multi-stakeholder engagement. It highlights how collaboration between academia and industry can inform program design, particularly in regions where logistics plays a central economic role.

Keywords Higher education, Logistics education, Program restructuring, Stakeholder engagement, Focus group, Southeast Asia

Paper type Research article

1. Introduction

Logistics management has long been a key driver of global commerce, facilitating the movement of goods and services from producers to consumers. In today’s interconnected world, the importance of logistics is heightened by complex supply chains that span continents (Akhavan, Ghiara, Mariotti, & Sillig, 2020; Almpak, Isikli, & Apak, 2023; Yavas & Ozkan-Ozen, 2020). Effective logistics ensures timely delivery, reduces waste, and makes efficient use of resources (Butt, Ali, & Govindan, 2023; Li, Liu, & Jiang, 2022), all of which impact economic performance, environmental outcomes, and customer satisfaction (Butt *et al.*, 2023; Li, Sohail, Majeed, & Ahmad, 2021; Uvet, 2020).

However, the global business environment is constantly changing, shaped by technological innovation (Li *et al.*, 2022), geopolitical development (Kasarda, 2016), and shifting consumer



preferences (Uvet, 2020). These factors influence how stakeholders operate and compete. To meet emerging challenges and seize new opportunities, the logistics field must remain responsive and adaptive. Hence, this calls for ongoing reflection, assessment, and restructuring of logistics education (Fayezi, 2022; Lutz & Birou, 2013; Mulkeen, Abdou, Leigh, & Ward, 2019).

A central aspect of logistics education is stakeholder engagement. The logistics ecosystem involves a diverse set of actors, such as government, corporations, and consumers, each with distinct roles, interests and expectations (Ballou, 2007; Lambert, 2008; Uvet, 2020). This includes regulatory agencies (Ab Talib, Pang, & Ngah, 2020), industry practitioners (Kasarda, 2016), and academic institutions tasked with training future logistics professionals (Fayezi, 2022). Engaging these stakeholders requires adaptive strategies (Pettit, Croxton, & Fiksel, 2019; Wieland & Durach, 2021) and supports the development of high-quality, relevant, and future-ready logistics education (Fawcett & Rutner, 2014; Yew Wong, Grant D., Allan, & Jasiuvian, 2014).

Furthermore, stakeholder engagement also encourages a collaborative culture. When stakeholders feel their input is valued, it fosters shared ownership over a university program (Mulkeen *et al.*, 2019). This strengthens implementation and collective commitment to a logistics program's success. As a result, the curriculum restructuring of a logistics program becomes more than just a theoretical task that becomes a shared process anchored in real-world problem-solving skills (Fayezi, 2022; Lutz & Birou, 2013).

Building on this premise, the paper aims to examine how stakeholder engagement can inform the restructuring of logistics education. Specifically, this paper presents a case study from Universiti Brunei Darussalam, a public research university, where the UBD School of Business and Economics undertook a curriculum revision of its postgraduate program. To achieve the objective, the paper seeks to address the following research questions (RQ).

- RQ1. What new modules must be offered in the logistics program, and what should their contents encompass?
- RQ2. How should the program's duration be structured, and what are the related issues and significance of this duration?
- RQ3. What attributes should logistics students possess upon program completion, and what skillsets, tools, and techniques should be delivered to students?

Through these research questions, the paper hopes to derive critical insights into how collaborative input and stakeholder-driven curriculum reform can shape program content, structure, and desired graduate outcomes.

2. Logistics education in Southeast Asia

Logistics education originated from military operations and later gained prominence in the decision sciences and management disciplines (Ballou, 2007; Fawcett & Rutner, 2014). While the body of literature in North American and European contexts is well established, logistics education research in Southeast Asia remains relatively underexplored (Schinckus & Nguyen, 2022; Wu, 2007). This regional gap is important, especially as logistics capabilities have become increasingly critical in supporting trade, infrastructure, and supply chain resilience across ASEAN economies (Nguyen, Nguyen, & Zhang, 2021). Table 1 summarises selected literature that has examined logistics education across different educational levels and stakeholder perspectives in the region.

Table 1 highlights the varied scope of logistics education in Southeast Asia, spanning secondary, tertiary, and professional education contexts. At the secondary level, Dwiyanti, Wulansari, and Okitasari (2021) assessed the competency of logistics engineering graduates from vocational schools, while Prapinit, Sabar, and Melan (2019) examined student interest in logistics education through a mixed-method approach. At the tertiary level, studies by

Table 1. Logistics education research in Southeast Asia

Author	Country	Scope	Objective	Methodology	Findings
Sha'ari and Lahad (2022)	Malaysia	Module-specific of an undergraduate program at a public institution	To investigate how simulation-based mobile learning can enhance the learning experience of logistics students	Quantitative survey	The use of simulation-based mobile learning is highly relevant and appropriate for improving logistics education
Dwiyanti et al. (2021)	Indonesia	Logistic engineering vocational school	To establish the competence of vocational education graduates in the logistics industry based on industry demands	Literature review	The study recommends that vocational education graduates acquire industry-relevant soft skills and hands-on experience
Schinckus and Nguyen (2022)	Vietnam	Professional program at a private institution	To develop a real-life environment for teaching logistics management that emphasised bridging theory and practice	Qualitative case study	The use of a real-life-based teaching method can contribute to authentic learning
Sari et al. (2020)	Indonesia	Multiple universities	To determine effective and competitive strategies for tertiary institutions to produce industry-ready graduates	Structured Interview	Industry linkages and cooperation, foreign university collaboration, and training certification are strategies that can support the sustainability of higher education
Prapinit et al. (2019)	Thailand	Public primary schools	To examine the interest in logistics education among high school seniors	Mix method	There is a demand for logistics higher education to meet the workforce demand in the sector
Thai and Yeo (2015)	Singapore	Logistics professional in maritime sector	To propose and validate a competency framework for professionals in container shipping logistics, encompassing business, logistics, and management competencies	Mix method	Logistics professionals perceived the competencies proposed in this framework as important for their work performance
Pei, Daud, and Jonathan (2012)	Malaysia	Undergraduate program at a private university	To analyse the impact of knowledge, skills, and talent on logistics internship programs	Quantitative survey	Students' knowledge and skills do not affect a logistics internship program, but the talent created from such a program does

(continued)

Table 1. Continued

Author	Country	Scope	Objective	Methodology	Findings
Thai <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Singapore	Logistics managers competencies	To identify the core skills and abilities that logistics managers must possess	Quantitative survey	Management-related competencies were perceived as more important than business and logistics competencies
Dimailig and Jeong (2010)	The Philippines	Transportation education in a higher education institution	To compare curriculum designs and delivery methodologies for maritime transportation education	Qualitative content analysis	The curriculum designs and delivery methods of the two institutions are different but there are similarities in the core maritime courses

Dimailig and Jeong (2010), Sari, Hidayat, Fahriza, and Mafrudhoh (2020), and Sha'ari and Lahad (2022) provided insights into curriculum offerings and institutional structures in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia, respectively. In contrast, Thai, Ibrahim, Vidya, and Huang (2012) and Thai and Yeo (2015) focused on professional development, revealing that logistics practitioners in Singapore value management-oriented competencies over technical or general business skills. Collectively, these studies demonstrate the fragmented yet evolving nature of logistics education in the region. However, they also underscore a lack of continuity and coherence across educational levels, raising questions about the alignment between educational outputs and industry expectations.

While the reviewed studies provide useful insights into various aspects of logistics education, few directly address curriculum development in a strategic or future-oriented sense. Notably, Dimailig and Jeong's (2010) touched on curriculum design, but their analysis remained descriptive, lacking critical engagement with how programs should adapt to shifting industry demands. This signifies a broader limitation in the literature, especially the lack of pedagogical research that examines logistics education through the lens of reform, responsiveness, and curriculum innovation. Most past research has concentrated on areas such as applied learning (Schinckus & Nguyen, 2022; Sha'ari & Lahad, 2022), student interest and perceptions (Daud & Jonathan, 2012; Prapinit *et al.*, 2019; Woschank & Pacher, 2020), competency framework (Dwiyanti *et al.*, 2021; Thai *et al.*, 2012; Thai & Yeo, 2015), and institutional structures (Sari *et al.*, 2020). However, a comprehensive analysis of program restructuring, particularly one that accounts for stakeholder input and dynamic industry requirements, remains absent. This gap signals the need for a more reflective and strategic approach to curriculum development in logistics education, one that responds to both local and global transformations in the field.

A closer look at Table 1 reveals that much of the past logistics education research in Southeast Asia is derived from the "big six", often called the ASEAN 6. The ASEAN 6 countries, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, are members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). These economies, often prioritised due to their market size and trade volume, have been the focal point of regional logistics studies (Nguyen & Bui, 2021). Unfortunately, to the best of the authors' ability, no previous study has investigated logistics education in Brunei Darussalam. While it may be tempting to attribute this to Brunei's small population and limited domestic logistics activities, such reasoning overlooks the country's strategic positioning, its dependence on trade, and its

ambition to diversify its economy through logistics and connectivity development. Moreover, ignoring Brunei's logistics education limits a fuller understanding of the regional landscape and risks overlooking valuable insights from a unique national context. Therefore, equal attention to Brunei's logistics education is a worthwhile endeavour that contributes to the logistics education literature and body of knowledge.

Across the reviewed studies, a common thread is the recognition that logistics education in Southeast Asia is shaped by technology integration (Sha'ari & Lahad, 2022), shifting industry requirements (Daud & Jonathan, 2012; Prapinit *et al.*, 2019), and institutional strategies (Sari *et al.*, 2020). Despite variations in scope and context, these studies converge on the need to bridge academic knowledge with industry-relevant skills. However, the absence of research focused on Brunei leaves a gap in understanding how these influences manifest in smaller economies with distinct policy, trade, and development priorities. Addressing this gap, the next section offers an overview of logistics education in Brunei, with specific attention to Universiti Brunei Darussalam as the country's leading public higher education institution.

3. The case study and methodology

Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD), established in 1985, is Brunei's leading public university, recognised for its academic standing, global partnerships, and contributions to national development. Through collaboration with international institutions, UBD offers a broad range of academic programs and plays a central role in cultivating a skilled and future-ready workforce.

The UBD School of Business and Economics (UBDSBE), accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), reflects the university's commitment to delivering high-quality business education and maintaining curriculum relevance. Among its postgraduate offerings is the Master of Logistics (ML), introduced in 2011. Designed for full-time and part-time students, the program requires the completion of 40 modular credits, comprising 24 credits from core modules and 16 from optional modules. span key areas in logistics and supply chain management, allowing students to tailor their learning according to career objectives. The program's interdisciplinary approach supports broad exposure to industry-relevant topics, preparing graduates to meet the demands of a dynamic logistics industry.

UBDSBE is currently revising the ML program to better align with current industry needs and technological advancements. This restructures the importance of maintaining curriculum responsiveness and reflects broader efforts to incorporate contemporary pedagogy and sustainable education practices (Woschank & Pacher, 2020).

To examine this restructuring initiative, the study adopts an exploratory case study design, guided by the outlined research questions. Drawing on the approaches of Myers (2013) and Creswell and Creswell (2018), the case study method was selected to generate an in-depth understanding of stakeholder perspectives on logistics education in Brunei. The study engaged nineteen participants from various logistics service providers, government agencies, and alumni of the ML program (Table 2). Participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure a diverse range of perspectives.

Data collection involved focus group discussions and structured feedback forms. Participants were divided into three groups to facilitate meaningful dialogue and ensure a breadth of experience. The discussions were guided by questions developed specifically for the program review and aligned with the research aims (see Table 3). Feedback forms were used to complement the group discussions by capturing more structured responses.

Data analysis followed two phases. First, a narrative analysis was conducted to extract themes from the focus group discussions, particularly relating to module offerings, program duration, and graduate competencies (Myers, 2013). Second, content analysis of the feedback forms was used to classify responses and link them to the core research questions. Together,

Table 2. Description of participating respondents and organisations

Respondent	Role	Affiliation description	Sector representation
Respondent A1	Human Resource and Corporate Communication Manager	Primary port management organisation overseeing maritime operations and logistics in Brunei	Maritime and port operations
Respondent A2	Human Resource Assistant Manager		
Respondent B1	Youth Activist	Graduates from the ML program, holding diverse roles in the logistics sector	Education and alumni network
Respondent B2	Shipping and Declarant Officer		
Respondent C1	Senior Head Finance	Managing and operating cargo handling and logistics at a major international airport	Aviation and cargo handling
Respondent C2	Senior Head of Human Resource		
Respondent C3	Business Development Senior Officer		
Respondent D1	Head of Procurement and Administrations	A firm offering comprehensive logistics solutions for both local and international needs	Logistics and supply chain
Respondent E1	Deputy Managing Director	Specialised company in freight forwarding and global transportation services	Logistics and freight forwarding
Respondent F1	Sales and Marketing Manager	Provider of maritime shipping, container services, and other related maritime services	Logistics and freight forwarding
Respondent G1	Head of Supply Chain Management	Oil and gas exploration and production entity in the country	Upstream oil and gas industry
Respondent G2	Supply Chain Lead Logistics		
Respondent G3	Logistics Planner		
Respondent H1	Research and Development Officer	Government body overseeing transportation and communication policies and regulations	Public sector
Respondent H2	Senior Special Duties Officer		
Respondent H3	Manager		
Respondent J1	Procurement Manager	Producer and exporter of premium halal products under a recognised national brand	Food production and export
Respondent J2	Chief Executive Officer		
Respondent K1	Vice President	Association advocating for and supporting the interests of the freight forwarding industry	Freight and trade association

these methods enabled a comprehensive interpretation of stakeholder views and informed key directions for revising the ML program at UBDSBE.

To guide the analysis and interpretation of stakeholder input, this study proposes a conceptual framework grounded in stakeholder theory and curriculum design principles (Figure 1). The framework captures how external drivers, such as technological change, evolving industry expectations, and pedagogical developments, influence stakeholder perspectives on logistics education. It categorises stakeholder contributions across three key curriculum dimensions: content, structure, and outcomes. These dimensions are aligned with the study's research questions and reflect the core components of program restructuring. Figure 1 thus provides a structured lens through which to examine how stakeholder insights can inform curriculum redesign and support the development of a responsive, industry-aligned postgraduate logistics program.

Table 3. Questions for focus group

RQ	Description	Sample questions
1. What new modules must be offered in the logistics program, and what should their contents encompass?	Explores new modules that should be introduced in the program to ensure industry relevance, examining module names, relevance, and types for a comprehensive curriculum	• Are the current core and optional module names reflective of key areas in contemporary logistics management? • Are there specific logistics functions or specialisations, that should be added to ensure the curriculum's relevance? • Is the current balance of core and optional modules appropriate for a comprehensive logistics education, or should certain optional modules be moved to core status?
2. How should the program's duration be structured, and what are the related issues and significance of this duration?	Investigates the optimal structure and duration of the logistics program by assessing feasibility, relevancy, and practicality in terms of study modes and module count	• Should new logistics modules be structured to accommodate an internship-based learning? • How relevant is the extended duration for meeting industry expectations, and will it enhance the employability of graduates? • Does increasing the number of core and optional modules enhance the program's relevance
3. What attributes should logistics students possess upon program completion, and what skillsets, tools, and techniques should be delivered to students?	Examines the essential attributes, skills, tools, and techniques that ML graduates should possess to meet industry expectations effectively	• What do you think are the expected attributes of ML graduates? • What do you think are the expected skills of ML graduates? • What tools/techniques should ML graduates master?

4. Findings and discussion

The findings from the focus group discussion were classified into three categories, namely module offering and contents, program duration and structure, and desired attributes and skills, matching the RQs presented in the Introduction section. UBD's commitment to academic excellence, in this case, logistics education, was evident in the rich and interactive deliberations from the multi-stakeholder focus group session. Delving into the sophistication of logistics education, the exploratory approach of the stakeholder engagement exercise revealed varied insights that provide a robust foundation for informed decision-making in restructuring the ML program at UBDSBE.

4.1 Module offerings and contents

The first set of questions aimed to extract the possible new and contemporary modules and omit or rename obsolete ones. The list of current and new module offerings is shown in [Appendix A](#). This exercise is crucial in ensuring future module offerings are relevant and feasible amid the dynamics of the logistics field. A common point of emphasis among participants was the comprehensive coverage of the revamp and newly proposed modules. It traverses fundamental yet vital dimensions of core logistics elements, transportation operations, procurement, and supply chain management. Such a broad perspective is

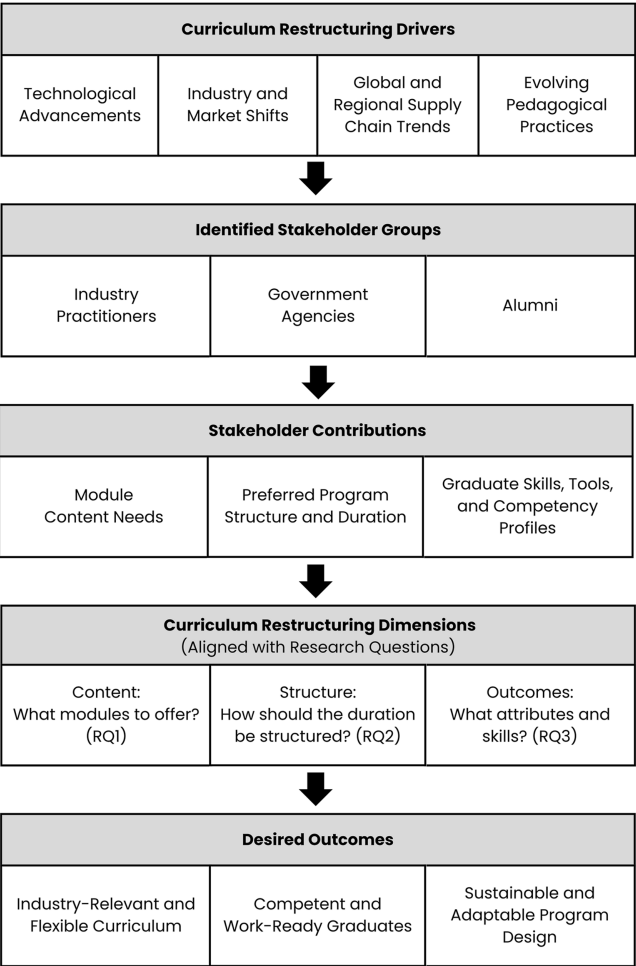


Figure 1. Research framework

academically enriching and crucial in producing professionals equipped to handle the complex and demanding logistics industry. More specifically:

I found that the proposed modules are quite diverse and comprehensive as they cover from basic to advanced, as well as in-depth knowledge of what constitutes logistics [and] transportation management. (Respondent J2, Procurement Manager)

We can see that the number of core modules has increased. The introduction of International [and] Commercial Shipping as core, along with the inclusion of Export-Import Management, is a good approach. (Respondent H2, Senior Special Duties Officer)

However, beyond this foundational knowledge, participants proposed the inclusion of a module on “Supply Chain Finance and Accounting”. Such a module would bridge the gap between supply chain design and the financial models underpinning these decisions. This recommendation reflects the industry’s practical and pecuniary nature, where logistics

professionals are expected to possess operational expertise and the ability to make prudent financial decisions.

Overall, I find that there is a good mix of modules, but I think a supply chain finance-related module is missing and should be offered as well. (Respondent D1, Head of Procurement and Administrations)

Further responses to the first question, the discussion revealed that names and terminologies are essential in academic program offerings as they influence stakeholder perception and topic relevance. A notable suggestion was renaming the module “Maritime Conventions and Security” to incorporate the word “safety”, reflecting a more holistic approach – “Maritime Conventions *Safety* and Security”. Moreover, concerns were expressed about the “Issues in Logistics Management” module name. Respondents found that the topic may only focus on and address problems in the field and may reflect little on its progress and opportunities. Thus, renaming the Contemporary Topics in Logistics module is more apt and all-inclusive. Additionally, the respondents held similar views that the program’s name could be changed and refined to ‘Master of Logistics and Supply Chain Management’. This exciting suggestion could make the program more marketable and reflect a more comprehensive representation of the logistics and supply chain domains.

If you look at other regional and renowned business schools that offer logistics programs, they all have either the word logistics management or supply chain. Perhaps UBD can change the current program name from Master of Logistics to Master of Logistics and Supply Chain Management. (Respondent G1, Head of Supply Chain Management)

Apart from the module offerings, when asked about the potential contents of the new modules, the participants were unanimous in the view that not much could be proposed. Some felt that it would be imprudent to ascertain topics solely by a module’s name. Naturally, there were some suggestions to have the modules’ outlines ready before making any judgements or suggestions. Nonetheless, one participant suggested that future content must be relevant to international and local contexts, as the balance will benefit graduates’ future careers:

The contents of each proposed module must not only cater to local market needs but should also be at par with the development beyond Brunei’s border. (Respondent A1, Human Resource and Corporate Communication Manager)

Another participant echoed this view and emphasised that logistics modules’ content breadth and depth are paramount. Incorporating topics like bill of lading, incoterms, forecasting, demand management, and route planning and network ensures that students are equipped with both foundational and specialised knowledge, making them industry-ready.

We should not only be concerned about how many varieties of contents of the modules are on offer. I think the university should also look into the depth of modules as well. . . this could be crucial for [the students] when they join the industry. (Respondent G3, Logistics Planner)

4.2 Program duration and structure

Turning now to the second set of questions on the program structure and duration. As mentioned earlier, the current duration of the ML program is one year. However, the School is considering a new one-and-a-half-year structure (see [Appendix B](#)). The duration of the ML program emerged as a particularly contentious theme. Findings from the focus group revealed that stakeholders were split between a one-year and a one-and-a-half-year program structure. On the one hand, particularly government stakeholders and representatives from logistics and forwarding companies advocated for a shorter and condensed one-year ML program. Their argument hinged on the benefits of time efficiency and the competitive advantage of quick educational turnaround. They posited that a shorter master’s program would reduce

opportunity costs for students and allow for a quicker transition into the workforce. This viewpoint is sound and has credence over the need for more logistics professionals with in-depth knowledge, which is particularly beneficial in a fast-paced industry like the logistics sector.

A one-year program, in my opinion, is sufficient enough for students to learn about logistics, and within one year, they will already have a master's degree (Respondent H1, Research and Development Officer)

The current one-year program should be maintained as this will attract students who want to study for an advanced degree and then join the workforce, which could make them stand out in terms of qualifications. (Respondent K1, Vice President)

However, on the other hand, other industry stakeholders and alumni representatives voiced for an extended one-and-a-half-year program. Their rationale was grounded in the belief that a broader and longer program timeframe would provide a more profound and comprehensive education. The view surfaced mainly in relation to the call for more extensive module offerings raised earlier. Reasonably, they argued that an extended ML program would allow ample time for students to explore a wider array of subjects, hence fostering a deeper understanding of the logistics field. Besides, several participants indicated that the additional time allows students to engage with more significant projects, participate in valuable excursions to the industry, local or abroad, and benefit from guest lectures by corporate experts and leading academicians. Interestingly, this group of stakeholders emphasised that a more expansive educational experience would prepare students not just for their post-graduation professions but perhaps for a meaningful lifelong career in logistics. Collectively, a one-and-a-half-year program will provide graduates with sufficient room to appreciate and comprehend the vast logistics and supply chain knowledge domain that will groom them for the anticipated demanding industry. Some of the excerpts from the focus group include:

I found that having an extra semester would allow me to gain more understanding and might give me more opportunity to truly immerse myself in the logistics knowledge (Respondent B1, Youth Activist)

Since the faculty (UBDSBE) has no logistics major in the bachelor's program, students may come from various backgrounds. So, they must be properly introduced to the logistics knowledge and concepts before going more in-depth. That is why I think a one-and-a-half-year program is the way forward. (Respondent C2, Senior Head of Human Resources)

This debate reflects the broader tension in higher education between the drive for efficiency and the pursuit of depth. It underscores the need for UBDSBE to carefully consider the program's structure and content, ensuring that the pursuits align with the strategic vision of the university and the demands of the logistics industry. Balancing the advantages of a rapid course of study with the benefits of a more expansive educational journey will be crucial in the ML program's restructuring efforts. Irrespective of the structure, an overwhelming majority of participants expressed the need for an industrial placement through internship or fellowship opportunities. In one case, a participant commented:

We always welcome students from any universities in Brunei to come and undergo an internship attachment with us. In the past, we have successfully guided students in the real world and have hands-on experience in logistics import and export, and we are happy to do so in the future (Respondent J2, Chief Executive Office)

Another participant alluded to the notion of practical industrial placement:

To me, this practice is a win-win situation for the students and (participating) companies. By the time they graduate, they have some experience under their belt, which is good for their CV. And for the company, if the students are good, they can easily be absorbed as full-time staff when they graduate from the program. This will reduce the time and cost of retraining. (Respondent G1, Head of Supply Chain Management)

Talking about the possible internship placements, one of the participants offers a compelling word of caution:

An internship route is attractive for both sides (university students and corporations), but we don't want it to be [a] short [placement]...it should be extensive – maybe from the very first semester. (Respondent C3, Business Development Senior Officer)

The proposed inclusion of internships from the onset reflects a pragmatic approach, valuing hands-on experience and parallel application of theoretical knowledge learnt in class to real-world settings. Admittedly, the proposed ML program durations have pros and cons, and including an internship initiative would be challenging. For instance, a closer look at [Appendix B](#) indicates that the internship pathway will result in fewer optional modules than the non-internship route, limiting module diversity but offering practical exposure. Nevertheless, the final decision will undoubtedly have a significant impact on the program's attractiveness to potential students, its efficacy in preparing logistics professionals, and its alignment with industry talents and national long-term vision, *Wawasan Brunei 2035*, of exceptional education that contributes to progressive human capital development.

4.3 Desired attributes and skills

The discourse around the attributes and skills expected of graduates from the ML program revealed a harmonised vision for a well-rounded logistics professional ([Appendix C](#)). During the focus group deliberations, stakeholders collectively agreed that the core competency of ML graduates should be a robust conceptual understanding of the logistics and supply chain discipline. A good grasp of conceptual foundations is essential as this gives graduates strong basics that may enable them to navigate the complexities of global trade and logistics operations. However, theoretical understanding alone is inadequate. Industry participants underlined that graduates must also be able to apply critical and innovative thinking to solve logistical challenges and provide viable solutions. Hence, striking conceptual-practical knowledge involves problem-solving within a given framework and the ability to think outside the box and innovate. Such critical thinking is crucial in an era where logistics is continuously transformed by technology and globalisation.

Students must have some practical knowledge of how the logistics industry works, and to have it first requires a fundamental understanding of the theories in the field. (Respondent G1, Head of Supply Chain Management)

Being book smart is expected among students, but being street smart, meaning being able to think sharp and critically, is a bonus (Respondent J1, Procurement Manager).

Furthermore, besides a strong comprehension of the logistics field, the respondents firmly believe that good grades are pointless if graduates fail to improve their communication skills. The view underlines that good communication skills are one of the coveted attributes for ML graduates. The ability to articulate ideas clearly and effectively is vital, particularly given the need for logistics professionals to coordinate with a wide range of stakeholders, regulatory bodies, and customers. Therefore, graduates must be able to bridge communication gaps that can arise in such diverse environments, which ultimately ensures seamless operations across the logistics chain.

Over the years, I noticed that having good grades does not necessarily guarantee that a student can communicate well. This skill may take years of experience to develop, but having good confidence and eagerness to learn and improve is the way forward to being [a] good communicator. (Respondent C2, Senior Head of Human Resource)

Another common attribute desired among the stakeholders was the ability to work in diverse environments beyond communication. More specifically, participants agreed that a graduate's ability to understand cultural nuances and global business practices is highly sought after.

According to one of the participants from the private sector, the logistics sector deals with people and organisations of various backgrounds of distant geographical locations and deals with varying local and central government rules and regulations. Therefore, the ability to navigate and operate within international and multicultural contexts is exceptionally critical in the logistics field. This includes the capacity to adapt to various cultural settings, and understanding and respecting local and international laws can profoundly impact logistics operations and negotiations.

Our daily business deals with international clients from many countries in China, Europe, and the UK. So, to have someone who can come in and quickly learn and adapt to various local and international laws is a rare find, and this is the kind of people we need. (Respondent E1, Deputy Managing Director)

Regarding tools and techniques, there was a clear expectation that ML graduates should be proficient in the latest software and analytical tools. This includes but is not limited to warehousing and inventory management systems, transportation management software, and data analytics tools that enable efficient supply chain operations. However, exposure to the tools and software may be limited, but having some basic know-how through industrial visits and demonstrations would be valuable to students. Undoubtedly, familiarising and eventually mastering the tools of the trade is crucial for graduates to stay competitive and effective in their future roles in logistics.

When we received work applications and resumes, my team and I, we tend to focus on the software tools and skills as this may indicate some exposure, which would require little to moderate training. (Respondent C2, Senior Head of Human Resource)

The findings gathered from the stakeholder engagement with logistics practitioners and public organisations in Brunei strongly reinforce the need to restructure the ML program at UBDSBE. As logistics becomes more complex and increasingly tied to global strategies, graduates of the ML program, who will be future professionals leading the industry, must be equipped with a balanced combination of theoretical understanding, critical thinking, communication skills, and operational tool exposure. The focus group discussions were particularly insightful, offering valuable direction for improving the program's module offerings, structure, and intended graduate outcomes. To summarise the core findings from each thematic area, [Table 4](#) presents a consolidated overview of stakeholder insights that informed the proposed restructuring of the ML program.

5. Conclusion

The restructuring of the ML program at UBDSBE represents a forward-looking response to the evolving demands of the logistics sector. Insights from the exploratory case study involving diverse stakeholders confirmed the relevance of proposed changes to module offerings, program structure, and graduate attributes. These findings reinforce UBDSBE's ongoing efforts to maintain academic excellence and industry quality while aligning its curriculum with national development priorities and industry expectations.

5.1 Implications for higher education and industry

While this study is situated in Brunei, its implications extend to other small economies and developing higher education systems with comparable limitations, such as constrained student markets, limited program specialisation, and concentrated industry-academia linkages. The approach taken here, grounded in stakeholder consultation and localised relevance, offers a replicable model for institutions in similar contexts seeking to modernise their logistics or professional education programs.

The careful restructuring of the ML program has significant implications for academia and the logistics industry. Academically, this study highlights the importance of ongoing

Table 4. Summary of key themes and stakeholder insights

Theme	Subtheme	Key insights
Module Offerings and Contents	New module suggestions	Add modules such as “Supply Chain Finance and Accounting” to reflect the integration of logistics and financial decision-making
	Module renaming	Suggested renaming includes “Maritime Conventions Safety and Security” and updating “Issues in Logistics Management” to “Contemporary Topics in Logistics”
	Program title	Strong preference for renaming the degree to “Master of Logistics and Supply Chain Management” for better alignment with other regional universities/schools
	Content relevance	Module content should be globally informed but also address local and regional needs
	Depth of learning	Emphasis on deeper coverage of technical topics to ensure industry readiness
Program Duration and Structure	Preferred duration	Diverging views as some support a one-year program for efficiency, while others favour a one-and-a-half-year duration to allow broader content and project exposure
	Internship integration	Internship placements are widely supported, ideally starting early for longer exposure and learning
	Value of placement	Internships viewed as beneficial for students for employability and the industry as a recruitment pipeline
Graduate Attributes and Skills	Core competencies	Graduates should combine conceptual knowledge with problem-solving and technical skills
	Communication skills	Strong communication skills are essential for cross-functional coordination and stakeholder engagement
	Global mindset	Ability to work across international contexts, adapting to legal and cultural differences, is highly valued
	Technical proficiency	Basic familiarity with logistics and supply chain tools is expected upon graduation

curriculum innovation. Besides, it provides a real-world collaborative effort by integrating academia with active industry engagement for the betterment of logistics education and its current and future talents. Moreover, by addressing an area with limited prior research, particularly within the context of Brunei, this study encourages further exploration into curriculum development in logistics education. Meanwhile, for the industry, the proposed changes promise to deliver graduates who would be well-versed in logistics concepts and equipped with critical thinking, effective communication skills, and a deep understanding of diverse business practices. In the Brunei context, the ML program restructuring involving industry insights is a step towards achieving the much-desired Wawasan Brunei 2035 of producing a highly educated and skilled workforce for the country’s sustainable future. Overall, this study contributes valuable knowledge to the logistics education literature by addressing an overlooked area, which may also encourage further research in similarly underrepresented small economies and regions.

5.2 Limitations and future research

Being limited to Brunei and the UBDSBE, the generalisability of the findings is subject to certain limitations. For instance, although the focus group discussions were rich in insights, they represent a specific subset of stakeholders within Brunei’s education sector. The perspectives of international logistics experts and educators should have been included, which could broaden the understanding of global logistics education standards. Moreover, the research was constrained by the inherent biases of purposive sampling and the subjective nature of interpreting qualitative data. Despite the limitations, the restructuring of the ML

program offers valuable insights into the crucial need to overhaul academic programs and be coherent with the ever-more challenging higher education and job market.

As the present study is one of the few, if not the first, that explored logistics education in Brunei, it is advised that the curriculum be expanded to include financial elements of supply chain management and that course contents be updated with practical tools and topics relevant to local and international logistics practices. Additionally, the renaming of the program to ‘Master of Logistics and Supply Chain Management’ is proposed to encapsulate its broadened scope better and enhance its appeal to prospective local and international students. Moreover, in terms of program duration, an emphasis on practical internships could cater to students’ diverse aspirations and future career paths and may benefit prospective employers. Ongoing dialogue with broader stakeholders, particularly at the international level, will be crucial to the program’s continuous improvement and relevance. Pedagogically, experiential learning should focus more on enriching students’ practical knowledge, complementing their in-class conceptual understanding. Accordingly, the devotion to preparing graduates to enter the competitive local and global labour markets necessitates the delivery of modules that enhance cultural competency and international business acumen. Simultaneously, technological proficiency must be prioritised to ensure graduates’ fluency with advanced logistics software and tools. Lastly, once operationalised, further research should be undertaken to evaluate the restructured program’s effectiveness in improving graduate outcomes and to ensure its alignment with future industry developments. By following these recommendations, UBDSBE can fortify its ML program, cementing its status as a premier institution that not only meets the current demands of the logistics industry but also anticipates and shapes future trends.

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Supplementary material

The supplementary material for this article can be found online.

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