

# Exploring the Import Barriers Confronted by Importers in Pakistan; An Exploratory Sequential Design

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**Abstract.** This research employs an Exploratory Sequential Design methodology to explore the import barriers that are confronted by importers of Pakistan and comprehend factors that significantly influence businesses performance. The investigation comprises two phases: qualitative and quantitative, at the end integration of both phases. During the initial phase of the qualitative research, in-depth interviews were used to investigate import barriers. The qualitative analysis was made easier by NVIVO 14, while SmartPLS was used in quantitative analysis. Word Cloud approach was used to identify and visualize the most prominent import barriers in the qualitative part of the research, where six major barriers were identified. This conceptual framework served as the foundation for the quantitative phase, where a survey questionnaire had been adapted from existing literature to identify the barriers that are significantly affecting the business performance. The results of the survey were evaluated using statistical methods. In the context of Pakistani imports, the results indicate that four out of the six constructs identified from the qualitative phase has significant influence on business performance. Overcoming these barriers is essential in order to improve the competitiveness of businesses that are involved in import activities and increase their profitability. The integration of qualitative data with quantitative data enables a thorough knowledge of import barriers and their potential impact on business performance. This study makes a significant contribution to the existing research by using a novel Exploratory Sequential Design, giving an in-depth perspective on import barriers in Pakistan, and presenting findings that can be put into action by policymakers, firms, and other stakeholders engaged in international trade.

**Key words:** Import, Import Barriers, Business Performance, Trade, Custom Clearance.

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## 1 Introduction

Trade plays a major component of any nation's economic system by significantly impacting its development. Pakistan is a developing nation that faces complex economic challenges. Pakistan is struggling to increase its exports of manufactured products, while many emerging countries are boosting their exports. Pakistan does not produce quality raw material, its industries are dependent on imports (Rana and Akhter, 2015). Imports and exports both are parallel to each other (Omer et al., 2023). Pakistan is unable to grow its market share internationally due to inability to compete on prices. Moreover, any decrease in imports inevitably results in decline

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of exports (M Elakkad, 2024). It is crucial for the government, policymakers, economists, business owners, stakeholders to have a solid understanding of these barriers in order to mitigate the impact of these barriers on industries.

Over the years, several nations have made trade agreements and lowered import tariffs (particularly after the establishment of the WTO), leading to increased international trade volume (Baldwin, 2016). But Pakistani importers still faces many trade barriers such as customs policies, tariffs and duties, political instability and regulatory requirements. These barriers, influenced by geopolitical dynamics, international agreements are continuously impacting businesses and industries.

Import plays major role in Pakistani businesses, particularly in manufacturing industry dependent on imported raw materials. Pakistan is an import-oriented country (Rana and Akhter, 2015). In 2022, imports shared 19% of the GDP, while exports contributed 9.98% (Ishrat et al., 2023). The significant drop in imports by 25% in 2022-2023 resulted in 10% decrease in exports (Ghulam and Abushammala, 2023). This study focuses on understanding import barriers due to their substantial impact on business performance.

This research shed light on the challenges that importers face and how these challenges affect business performance. In a global interconnected world it is important to understand these difficulties. This study can help policymakers to formulate effective trade policies, that fostering economic growth and international cooperation. Business owners can adapt their strategies, improve supply chains, and ensure smooth operation. Additionally, stakeholders from various industries can make informed decisions to expand markets and drive economic growth.

This research only focuses on import barriers and their impact on business performance in Pakistan. It does not delve into other factors that are affecting economy of Pakistan. Data is gathered from importers by conducting interviews, there is no wide range of data collection from other business communities.

## 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Phenomenology Theory

Phenomenology guided both the philosophical foundation and the research design of this investigation. Many phenomenologists believe that humans derive meaning from their personal experiences in the world (Gasparyan, 2021; Hourigan and Edgar, 2020; Koopman et al., 2014). Phenomenology is a unique philosophy that assists us in understanding individual experiences with in specific contexts (Errasti-Ibarrondo et al., 2019; Van Manen, 2017). Phenomenology is a qualitative research method that attempts to capture the significance of a phenomenon as it is experienced by several people (Alhazmi and Kaufmann, 2022). Phenomenology emphasizes the researcher's objectivity and treats reality and experience as separate entities. Phenomenological analysis involves personal experiences with a phenomenon to understand its essence (Creswell, 2021).

Phenomenological qualitative research design comprises three main components: the study's goals, the underlying philosophical assumptions, and inquiry methods. These aspects are approached with the aim of uncovering the essence and using adaptable procedures and activities (Yakushko et al., 2016).

Face-to-face, in-depth interviews using open-ended and semi-structured questions are considered one of the best methods for gathering data in phenomenological research (Marshall and

Rossmann, 2014). This approach allows researchers to effectively explore the phenomena and gain deeper insight into the lived experience of participants (Padilla-Díaz, 2015).

## 2.2 Trade

The last two centuries have witnessed a significant surge in global trade, transforming the global economy (Ortiz-Ospina et al., 2018). Trade involves the exchange of goods or services between countries or entities, facilitated by markets and supported by international trade agreements. Developing countries, including Pakistan, often face challenges due to fluctuations in trade terms, particularly in raw material exports (Fatima, 2010).

A persistent trade imbalance can hinder economic growth and requires attention from policymakers (Muhammad et al., 2010). The importance of trade in the global economy has grown significantly in the past 50 years, with trade outpacing output growth (Martin, 2001). Exchange rate fluctuations also influence trade terms by impacting output, investments, and government policies (Agolli et al., 2015).

## 2.3 Significance of Import

International trade provides significant economic and social benefits (Boudreaux, 2020). While exporting is often emphasized, the economic benefits of free trade primarily stem from what countries import rather than what they export. Pakistan, like many emerging countries, heavily relies on imports. Imports play a crucial role in Pakistan's economic growth, with a 1% increase in total imports contributing nearly 28% to Pakistan's overall growth (Ali et al., 2016).

Capital goods and heavy machinery imports are particularly essential for enhancing Pakistan's manufacturing sector and contributing to economic growth (Ali et al., 2016). Imports also play a vital role in local capital building, as they are used to produce goods for export, thereby boosting economic growth (Boudreaux, 2020). Importing capital and intermediate goods enables local companies to specialize, diversify, and increase productivity, leading to greater profitability over time (Kim, 2016).

With globalization and the expansion of global supply chains, imports are increasingly significant in world trade (Ereshchenko et al., 2021). Imported items offer domestic businesses access to a wide variety of high-quality goods at competitive prices (Ereshchenko et al., 2021). Moreover, imports facilitate technology transfer to the receiving nation, driving economic development (Almeida and Fernandes, 2008).

The significance of imports, particularly capital imports, is evident in the initial phases of economic development (El Anouz et al., 2022). Imports ensure an adequate supply of goods that cannot be domestically produced, thereby maintaining consistent quality and lower production costs compared to local production (Gulaliyev et al., 2019).

## 2.4 Trade Deficit in Pakistan

Pakistan has struggled with a persistent trade deficit, impacting its economy (Lakhan et al., 2021). A trade deficit occurs when a country's imports exceed its exports, affecting its economic growth and stability (Safdar et al., 2021). Pakistan's economy is primarily based on agriculture, and it is the seventh-most populous country in the world, with about 188 million people. The trade deficit has been a longstanding issue since the 1950s, stemming from poor management and external economic factors.

Efforts by the government and the State Bank of Pakistan to reduce the trade deficit have been largely unsuccessful (El Anouz et al., 2022). Despite these efforts, the country's foreign exchange reserves continue to decline, leading to a devaluation of the Pakistani rupee (PKR) and higher inflation rates (Gulaliyev et al., 2019). The trade imbalance negatively affects the country's overall income and economic stability (Muhammad et al., 2010).

### 3 Hypothesis Development

These hypothesis statements are not driven from previously published work; rather, they emerged spontaneously from a comprehensive qualitative data collection process. Instead of relying on existing hypotheses, the researcher explored unexplored ground and gleaned valuable insights through interviews. The complexity and context-specific nature of our data is reflected in these hypotheses, which illustrate the potential of qualitative research to offer unique perspectives and inspire original inquiries.

*H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant effect of custom clearance business performance.*

*H<sub>21</sub>: There is a significant effect of government policies on business performance.*

*H<sub>3</sub>: There is a significant effect of import taxes on business performance.*

*H<sub>4</sub>: There is a significant effect of internal inefficiencies on business performance.*

*H<sub>5</sub>: There is a significant effect of logistic support on business performance.*

*H<sub>6</sub>: There is a significant effect of procedural barriers on business performance.*

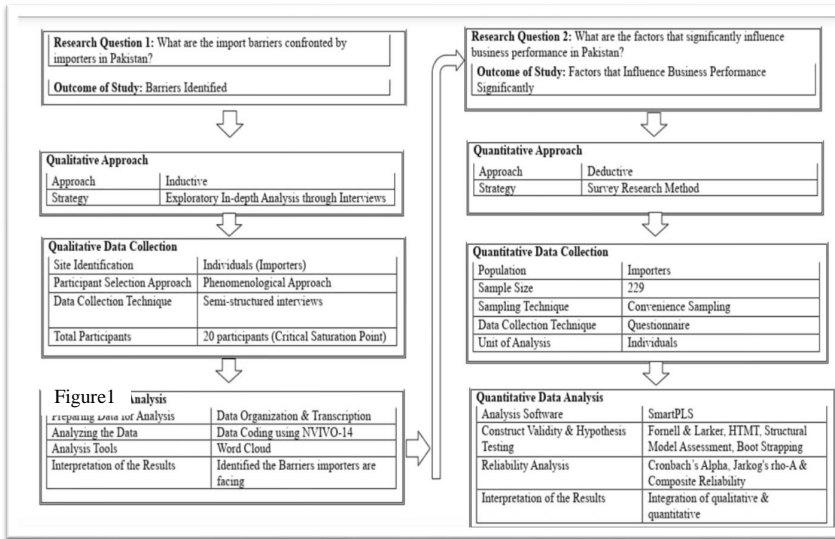
### 4 Research Methodology

This section discusses the research methodology used in study, focusing on the path followed by researchers to conduct their investigation. Mixed method has been used as the methodology encompasses both qualitative and quantitative approaches, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of import barriers in Pakistan and their impact on business performance.

The research design guides the process of data collection and analysis, connecting conceptual research questions to empirical research. An exploratory sequential design was followed in this research; moving from qualitative to quantitative and integrating both within a single study. This transition allowed the researchers to gain a deep qualitative understanding before quantifying and validating the research findings.

In this study, the population was importers across Pakistan. The sample represents a subset of this population; chosen to understanding the dynamics of trade barriers among importers and challenges they face in international trade.

The sample size relies on the population size and study objectives. Twenty in-depth interviews were conducted with Pakistani importers for qualitative insights. The sample size restricted to 20 because the investigation attained theoretical saturation as there was not any new data emerging. For quantitative data collection "ten times rule" was applied. Researchers distributed 270 survey questionnaires and got 229 responses.



In the first phase of the study, interviews were conducted with importers across Pakistan until the researcher reached at theoretical saturation point. In the second phase of quantitative data collection, convenience sampling method was used. This method was chosen to balance time and resource constraints while still obtaining valuable insights.

As this study explored the import barriers and identified the barriers that significantly impact business performance in Pakistan. The study addresses the underexplored topic; hence the study adopts inductive approach. Inductive reasoning allows the creation of hypotheses based on observations and patterns in the data, leading to the development of theories about the phenomena under investigation. A well-structured instrument ensures the accuracy, reliability and quality of data. In this research paper, to collect primary data the researchers adapted the interview questions from the existing literature by [Louis and Macamo \(2011\)](#) and expert insights to fulfill the requirements of study. Later on, for quantitative data the researchers adopted the survey questionnaire of each variable from literature. Researchers had adopted the components of dependent variable business performance from [Ali et al. \(2016\)](#), the components of independent variable are as follows; 5 components of custom clearance has been adopted from [Ngari \(2018\)](#), 1 component of government policy has been adopted from [Altıntaş et al. \(2007\)](#), 4 components of import tax has been adopted from [Mohamed et al. \(2019\)](#), 2 components of internal inefficiency barriers has been adopted from [Altıntaş et al. \(2007\)](#), 4 components of logistics has been adopted from [Amjad \(2018\)](#), 3 components of system/procedural barriers has been adopted from ([Altıntaş et al., 2007](#)). The development of instrumental scale was guided by a commitment to ensure the validity and reliability of the study to ensure an accurate assessment of import barriers that importers are facing.

In this paper researchers used cross-sectional time horizon to conduct this study, as they collected data at specific time from specific population to find the results. Cross-sectional method aligns with research objectives, providing valuable insights into import barrier and their impact.

In this research NVivo14 has been used as a data analysis tool, to facilitate the comprehensive analysis of qualitative data. While for quantitative data analysis SmartPLS4.0.9.6 has been used

as a data analysis tool.

Word Cloud was used as analytical method from NVivo14 for qualitative data, to highlight the frequency of terms in the data, which helped to identify the most frequently mentioned barriers in interviews. Measurement Model Assessment and Structural Model Assessment are used as analytical method from SmartPLS4.0.9.6 for quantitative data analysis, to evaluate model fit and relationships. These analytical methods had collectively helped researchers to analyze data effectively and develop deep understanding of actual barriers into the import sector.

## **5 Analysis & Result**

This section presents the findings of both qualitative and quantitative analyses. It begins by highlighting the import barriers identified by participants during interviews, followed by an examination of the import barriers that significantly affect business performance. The subsequent section will discuss the results of all three analysis methods, with the integration of both quantitative and qualitative study and at the end.

### **5.1 Word Cloud**

For the analysis of interviews, a WORD CLOUD was generated to visualize most frequently mentioned factors during the interviews, providing insights into the prominent import barriers faced by participants. Import barriers identified during analysis are Government policy, Customs clearance, Import Taxes, System, Unskilled officials, and Transportation.

#### **5.1.1 Government Policy**

Participants highlighted challenges posed by frequently changing government policies, which create uncertainty for investors. Pakistan's political instability leads to formulation of new policies by each administration. In recent times, there were restrictions on imports by the regulatory bodies of government, to manage dollar reserves.

#### **5.1.2 System**

Participants expressed concerns about the inefficient procedures and incompetent environment at port. The system is not friendly for importer; despite it is complex and time consuming. Respondents claimed that they face loss as temperature-sensitive goods were not taken care properly during procedures.

#### **5.1.3 Custom Clearance**

Port clearance time is not specified, proceedings are very slow containers remain stuck at ports for so long; participants claimed that they faced loss as this delay affected their operations. The policies of Pakistan's Custom Department are erratic and ineffective; the department does not have an effective structure.

#### **5.1.4 Import Taxes**

In Pakistan, there is a lack of clarity on taxes and charges. Because of the significant increase in tariffs, both taxes and tariffs have become extremely irregular and time-consuming. Each cargo is subject to its own unique set of taxes and customs. In addition, the procedure for determining these tariffs and levies is arbitrary and ineffective.

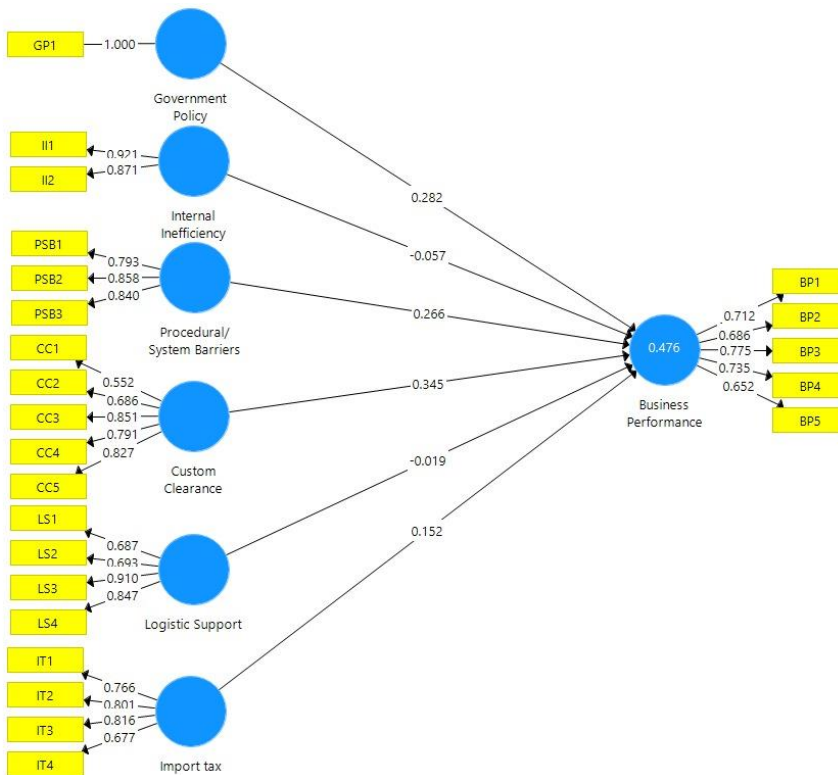
### 5.1.5 Unskilled Professionals

There is a shortage of experts who are both skilled and experienced across areas. People who work in departments that are associated with imports are inefficient and incompetent they are not trained for modern technical abilities, which lower the total efficiency of the process.

### 5.1.6 Logistics

Transportation was used as a proxy for logistics by the respondents, which is extremely slow, that results in cargo taking a very long time to arrive at the port. This results in demurrage of the shipments, which is caused by a lack of effective payment mechanisms and appropriate regulation.

## 5.2 Measurement Model Assessment



The measurement assessment model is shown in Figure 3, consists of seven constructs. These constructs are: business performance, government policy, internal inefficiency, procedural/system barriers, customs clearance, logistic support, and import tax. Specifically there are five items pertaining to business performance, one global item for government policy, two items for internal inefficiency, three items for procedural/system hurdles, five items for customs clearance, four items for logistic assistance, and four items for import tax.

Table 5.1: Outer Loadings

	<b>BP</b>	<b>CC</b>	<b>GP</b>	<b>II</b>	<b>IT</b>	<b>LS</b>	<b>PSB</b>
<b>BP1</b>	0.712						
<b>BP2</b>	0.686						
<b>BP3</b>	0.775						
<b>BP4</b>	0.735						
<b>BP5</b>	0.652						
<b>CC1</b>		0.552					
<b>CC2</b>		0.686					
<b>CC3</b>		0.851					
<b>CC4</b>		0.791					
<b>CC5</b>		0.827					
<b>GP1</b>			1.000				
<b>II1</b>				0.921			
<b>II2</b>				0.871			
<b>IT1</b>					0.766		
<b>IT2</b>					0.801		
<b>IT3</b>					0.816		
<b>IT4</b>					0.677		
<b>LS1</b>						0.687	
<b>LS2</b>						0.693	
<b>LS3</b>						0.910	
<b>LS4</b>						0.847	
<b>PSB1</b>							0.793
<b>PSB2</b>							0.858
<b>PSB3</b>							0.840

*Note: BP=Business performance, CC=Government Policy, IT=Import Tax, II=Internal Inefficiency, LS=Logistic Support, PSB=Procedural/System Barriers*

The above table 1 shows the outer loadings of the constructs. Business performance have five items, custom clearance has 5 items, government policy is represented by one global item, internal inefficiency has two items, income tax has four items, logistic support has four items and procedural/system barriers have three items. Those items whose value were greater than the 0.70 threshold, indicates that there is no issue outer loadings. Hence, some items were below the threshold. Prior authors illustrate that if reliability and validity were achieved then there is no make sense to delete the items of any constructs.



Table 5.2: Construct Reliability and Validity

Variables	Alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE
<b>Business Performance</b>	0.759	0.770	0.838	0.509
<b>Custom Clearance</b>	0.803	0.835	0.862	0.562
<b>Government Policy</b>	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
<b>Income Tax</b>	0.767	0.778	0.851	0.588
<b>Internal Inefficiency</b>	0.757	0.785	0.891	0.803
<b>Logistic Support</b>	0.822	0.939	0.868	0.625
<b>Procedural/System Barriers</b>	0.776	0.782	0.870	0.690

Note: Alpha= Cronbach's alpha, CR= composite reliability, AVE= average variance extracted

Table 2 shows the reliability and validity of constructs by using Cronbach's alpha, Jarkogs rho\_A, composite reliability parameters and convergent validity. There are 7 constructs Business performance, custom clearance, government policy, income tax, internal inefficiency, logistic support and procedural/system barriers. All the parameter values of all the variables are greater than 0.70, indicating strong reliability. Additionally, the convergent validity of all the constructs exceeds 0.50, demonstrates satisfactory validity. This result shows that there are no reliability and validity issues in the table.

Table 5.3: Fornell and Larcker Criterion

Variables	BP	CC	GP	IT	II	LS	PSB
<b>Business Performance</b>	<b>0.713</b>						
<b>Custom Clearance</b>	0.554	<b>0.749</b>					
<b>Government Policy</b>	0.389	0.200	<b>1.000</b>				
<b>Income Tax</b>	0.401	0.286	0.218	<b>0.767</b>			
<b>Internal Inefficiency</b>	0.253	0.189	0.201	0.436	<b>0.896</b>		
<b>Logistic Support</b>	0.095	0.138	0.386	0.010	0.017	<b>0.790</b>	
<b>Procedural/System Barriers</b>	0.493	0.462	0.093	0.431	0.461	-0.160	<b>0.831</b>

Note: BP=Business performance, CC=Government Policy, IT=Import Tax, II=Internal Inefficiency, LS=Logistic Support, PSB=Procedural/System Barriers

Table 3 shows the Fornell and Larcker criterion model, used to verify the discriminant validity of all of the constructs. This can be seen by reviewing the table that the numbers shown in bold on the diagonals of all of the constructs is higher than the remaining correlation values which demonstrates that there are no issues with the discriminant validity of this table. However, it's important to note that this is sensitivity, which means that changing or deleting just one value can significantly impact the results.

Table 5.4: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

<b>Variables</b>	<b>BP</b>	<b>CC</b>	<b>GP</b>	<b>IT</b>	<b>II</b>	<b>LS</b>	<b>PSB</b>
<b>Business Performance</b>							
<b>Custom Clearance</b>	0.673						
<b>Government Policy</b>	0.448	0.209					
<b>Income Tax</b>	0.510	0.346	0.238				
<b>Internal Inefficiency</b>	0.345	0.227	0.241	0.563			
<b>Logistic Support</b>	0.143	0.171	0.431	0.063	0.145		
<b>Procedural/System Barriers</b>	0.630	0.581	0.108	0.569	0.587	0.201	

*Note: BP=Business performance, CC=Government Policy, IT=Income Tax, II=Internal Inefficiency, LS=Logistic Support, PSB=Procedural/System Barriers*

Table 4 presents the HTMT method, used to verify the discriminant validity of a test in order to address the sensitivity issue. Each construct in the table has a value lower than 0.85, indicating no concern regarding the discriminant validity.

Table 5.5: Inner VIF Values

<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>BP</b>
<b>Custom Clearance</b>	1.381
<b>Government Policy</b>	1.273
<b>Income Tax</b>	1.392
<b>Internal Inefficiency</b>	1.430
<b>Logistic Support</b>	1.280
<b>Procedural/System Barriers</b>	1.770

*Note: BP=Business performance*

Procedural/System Barriers 1.770

Table 5 shows that there is no issue of multicollinearity among the constructs, as all values are less than 3.

Table 5.6: Model-Fit

Parameters	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.076	0.076
d.ULS	1.715	1.715
d.G	0.680	0.680
Chi-Square	877.186	877.186
NFI	0.642	0.642

Note: SRMR (standardize root mean square residual)

In Table 6, the standardize root mean square residual parameter is used to determine the extent to which the model is appropriate. Since none of the values exceed 0.10, the model is considered accurate.

### 5.3 Structural Model Assessment

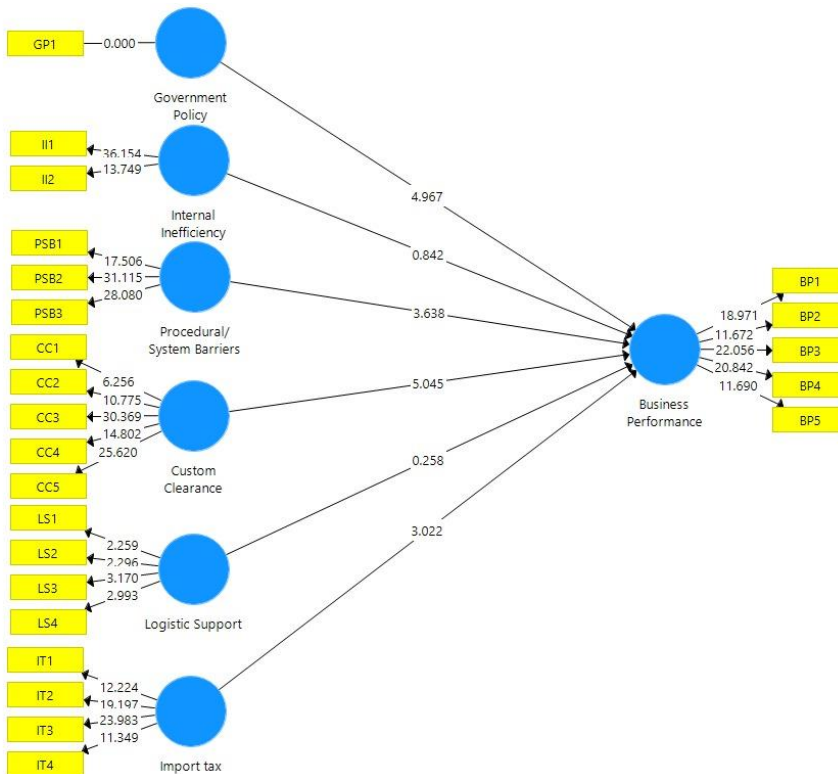


Figure 4 illustrates the structural model assessment.

Table 5.7: Path Coefficient

Parameters	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.076	0.076
d.ULS	1.715	1.715
d.G	0.680	0.680
Chi-Square	877.186	877.186
NFI	0.642	0.642

Note: BP=Business performance, CC=Government Policy, IT=Income Tax, II=Internal Inefficiency, LS=Logistic Support, PSB=Procedural/System Barriers

Table 7 illustrates the results of the hypothesis testing, using 5000 bootstrapping re-samples (Benitez et al., 2020). The analysis found that custom clearance significantly and positively affects business performance ( $\beta= 0.345$ ,  $p= 0.000$ ), with a one-unit increase associated with 35% improvement in business performance. Similarly, Government policy significantly and positively affects business performance ( $\beta= 0.282$ ,  $p= 0.000$ ), leading to a 28% improvement with a one-unit increase. Additionally, Income Tax significantly and positively affect business performance ( $\beta= 0.152$ ,  $p= 0.00$ ), resulting in a 15% improvement with a one-unit increase. However internal inefficiency ( $\beta= -0.057$ ,  $p= 0.406$ ) and logistics support ( $\beta= -0.019$ ,  $p= 0.794$ ) do not significantly affect business performance, as their T-values are less than 1.96. On other hand, procedural/system barriers significantly affect business performance ( $\beta= 0.266$ ,  $p= 0.000$ ), with a one-unit increase associated with a 26% improvement.

### 5.4 Integration of Qualitative and Quantitative

Table 5.8: Nexus between custom clearance and business performance

Relationship	Decision	Qualitative Study Results
CC-> BP	Supported	The word cloud analysis highlighted “Custom Clearance” as a major barrier faced by importers, impacting business performance due to inefficiencies and delays in the customs clearance process.

Table 5.9: Nexus between Government policy and business performance

Relationship	Decision	Qualitative Study Results
CC-> BP	Supported	The word cloud analysis identified “Government Policy” as a key barrier affecting business performance, particularly due to frequent changes in policies leading to economic unpredictability.

Table 5.10: Nexus between Import Tax and business performance

Relationship	Decision	Qualitative Study Results
CC-> BP	Supported	The word cloud analysis highlighted "Import Taxes" as a significant barrier affecting business performance due to irregularities and lack of clarity.

Table 5.11: Nexus between Internal Inefficiency and business performance

Relationship	Decision	Qualitative Study Results
CC-> BP	Not-Supported	The word cloud analysis identified "Internal Inefficiency" as a barrier affecting business performance due to inefficiencies and lack of expertise.

Table 5.12: Nexus between Logistic support and business performance

Relationship	Decision	Qualitative Study Results
CC-> BP	Not-Supported	The word cloud analysis highlighted "Logistic Support" as a barrier affecting business performance due to slow transportation and demurrage issues.

Table 5.13: Nexus between Procedural/System Barriers and Business Performance

Relationship	Decision	Qualitative Study Results
CC-> BP	Supported	The word cloud analysis identified "Procedural/System Barriers" as a significant barrier affecting business performance due to inefficiencies in processes and lack of expertise.

## 6 Discussion and Conclusion

The main purpose of this research was to investigate the challenges faced by importers in Pakistan, identify the barriers effecting business performance, and concentrate on the significant barriers. Initially, interviews with importers were conducted to gather information on the challenges and barriers. These interviews were analyzed using NVivo14 to identify primary import barriers such as customs clearance, corruption, government policy, import taxes, the system, and lack of logistic assistance.

The second phase of the research involved a quantitative approach. Survey questionnaires to 270 importers, with 229 of response received. The questionnaire focused on import barriers and their impact on business performance. Data that was collected were analyzed using

SmartPLS to assess its reliability, validity and to measure the significant impact of these barriers on business performance. Results showed that out of six barriers, four significantly influenced business performance while the other two are non-significant. Custom clearance significantly effects businesses performance due to inefficiency and irregularity. Custom proceeding takes lengthy time, which results in late shipments and demurrage at the port, which ultimately impacts the broader supply chain and the traders' commitments. It is possible to enhance supply chain management by increasing the effectiveness of the customs clearance procedure, which will, in consequently, lead to an improvement in the overall performance of the business.

Another factor that has a significant effect on business performance is the policies of the government. Pakistan is a highly volatile country and the governments frequently change without completing their tenure. Every new government implements its own set of policies, which contributes significantly to the level of economic unpredictability and has an impact on how well businesses. If governments complete their tenure and each new government takes ownership of the policies of the preceding government, this has the potential to improve the performance of businesses on an immense level.

The effectiveness of businesses is also strongly impacted by import taxes. The rates of import duties and tariffs are influenced by irregular and frequent shifts throughout the course of time. The performance of a business may be improved, primarily in the areas of production and management of supply chains, by streamlining the processes involved in the collection of import taxes and establishing a uniform regulatory policy applicable to all shipments.

The performance of businesses is significantly affected by procedural and systemic barriers. The processes and methods used in Pakistan are both inefficient and inconsistent. In addition, the country's tariffs are excessively high, and the process of paying them is inefficient and complex. Businesses are facing efficiency and performance issues because of officials that are poorly trained and lack in expertise, as well as by bureaucratic issues (corruption). It is possible to improve overall business performance by focusing on these activities.

## 6.1 Recommendations

This research provides importers with valuable insights too make informed decisions considering these barriers. Business owners can use the findings to guide their decision and mitigate the negative impact of barriers on their businesses. Government officials and policymakers can also use these findings to reform policies and improve custom department by providing them modern technology and advance knowledge and ensure accountability in custom department to reduce negative impact on business performance.

## 6.2 Limitation of Study

This study focuses solely on import barriers, leaving out experts constraints. Future, researchers could explore export constraints and their solution. This study is cross-sectional while future researcher can utilize longitudinal approach. This study simply covers the import barriers and their impact on business performance, further research can delve deeper into finding potential solutions to these barriers.

### 6.3 Future Suggestions

Future, researchers can use this study as a resource for relevant to this field. As this study focuses the import barriers in Pakistan, to generalize this study researchers can conduct same research in developed countries. Future researchers should continue monitoring the parameters identified in this study and explore export constraints. Future studies can compare global factors with those discussed here and exploring potential solutions to the findings of this study. This study focused on exploratory sequential design while in future researchers can focus on explanatory sequential design.

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