

## **Evaluation Of The Relocation Policy For Traders In Mardika Market Ambon: Impact On Social And Economic Life**

### **Evaluasi Kebijakan Relokasi Pedagang Di Pasar Mardika Ambon: Dampak Terhadap Kehidupan Sosial Dan Ekonomi**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

*This study aims to evaluate the relocation policy of traders in Mardika Market, Ambon, as well as its impact on the social and economic life of the local community. The relocation policies implemented by local governments aim to improve market infrastructure and create a more orderly trading environment. However, the impact of these policies on traders and consumers is not yet fully understood. The methodology used in this study includes a qualitative approach with data collection through in-depth interviews, field observations, and document analysis. Respondents consisted of traders involved in relocation, consumers, and the government. The results show that relocation has had a positive impact in terms of increased accessibility and convenience for consumers, but it has also posed challenges for merchants, such as increased operational costs and loss of repeat customers. This study highlights the importance of considering social and economic aspects in relocation policy planning. Recommendations for the government include the need for ongoing support for affected traders, as well as strategies to increase public involvement in the decision-making process related to market policies.*

**Keywords:** Relocation Policy, Social Impact, Merchant, Community Participation.

#### **ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengevaluasi kebijakan relokasi pedagang di Pasar Mardika, Ambon, serta dampaknya terhadap kehidupan sosial dan ekonomi masyarakat setempat. Kebijakan relokasi yang dilakukan oleh pemerintah daerah bertujuan untuk memperbaiki infrastruktur pasar dan menciptakan lingkungan perdagangan yang lebih tertib. Namun, dampak dari kebijakan tersebut terhadap pedagang dan konsumen belum sepenuhnya dipahami. Metodologi yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi lapangan, dan analisis dokumen. Responden terdiri dari pedagang yang terlibat dalam relokasi, konsumen, dan pemerintah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa relokasi memberikan dampak positif dalam hal peningkatan aksesibilitas dan kenyamanan bagi konsumen, namun juga menimbulkan tantangan bagi pedagang, seperti peningkatan biaya operasional dan hilangnya pelanggan tetap. Studi ini menyoroti pentingnya mempertimbangkan aspek sosial dan ekonomi dalam perencanaan kebijakan relokasi. Rekomendasi untuk pemerintah mencakup perlunya dukungan yang berkelanjutan bagi para pedagang yang terkena dampak, serta strategi untuk meningkatkan keterlibatan masyarakat dalam proses pengambilan keputusan terkait kebijakan pasar.

**Kata kunci:** Kebijakan Relokasi, Dampak Sosial, Pedagang, Partisipasi Masyarakat.

#### **1. Introduction**

Market relocation policies represent a crucial intersection of urban planning and economic development, influencing spatial organization, economic activities, and social equity within cities (Gao & Yuan, 2017). These policies, often implemented as part of broader urban renewal or economic revitalization initiatives, involve the planned movement of commercial activities from one location to another, typically from congested or declining areas to more strategic or newly developed sites (Akers, 2015; Johnson et al., 2021). The motivations behind market relocation are diverse, ranging from addressing urban blight and improving

infrastructure to stimulating economic growth and enhancing competitiveness (Balsas, 2020; Molle, 2017). Such interventions, however, are not without their challenges and potential consequences, requiring careful consideration of their impacts on various stakeholders, including businesses, consumers, and the wider community (Azizah & Faozan, 2023; Oitha et al., 2023).

Mardika Market, situated in Ambon, serves as a vital trading hub and a significant economic lifeline for the local community, playing a pivotal role in the distribution of goods and services within the region (Merlinda & Widjaja, 2020). Traditional markets like Mardika are important as spaces where buyers and sellers converge, characterized by direct transactions, negotiations, and a dynamic pricing system influenced by supply and demand (Kusumaningrum et al., 2020). The existence of the Merdeka Market contributes to the livelihood of many local traders who depend on income from their trading activities (Faggio, 2019). (Rahman et al., 2020) shows that traditional markets play an important role in creating jobs and increasing people's incomes, especially in urban areas. Thus, relocations or policy changes that affect these markets can have a far-reaching impact on the economic well-being of traders and the surrounding communities. This emphasizes the importance of considering social and economic aspects in any policy related to the market.

In addition, Mardika Market also functions as a symbol of local culture and identity. These traditional markets reflect the traditions and cultural values of the local people, which contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage. Thus, the existence of the Merdeka Market is not only economically important, but also as a place where local culture can be preserved and celebrated (Zou et al., 2022). Therefore, the evaluation of the policy of relocating traders in this market must consider the impact on the cultural and social identity of the community (Stacey et al., 2021; Nisic & Kley, 2019; Afonso & Gil, 2024).

The policy of relocating traders in the Mardika Market has a significant impact on the income and economic stability of traders. Research shows that relocations often lead to a decrease in initial revenue for merchants, especially if the new location doesn't attract the same customers as before. According to research by (Rahman et al., 2020) Changes in market location can result in the loss of repeat customers, which has a direct impact on merchants' sales volume and revenue. This suggests that a thorough evaluation of the economic impact of relocation policies is essential to understand how traders can adapt and survive in the new situation. In addition to the economic impact, relocation also affects social interactions between traders and consumers, as well as community dynamics around the market. Relocation can change the way merchants interact with their customers, which in turn can affect social relationships that have been established over the years. (Giliberto & Labadi, 2022) said that changes in market locations could disrupt existing social networks, which are important for business continuity and community support. Therefore, it is important to evaluate the new infrastructure built to support the relocation and compare the accessibility of the new location with the previous location, to ensure that merchants and consumers can adapt well in the new environment. Research by (Pratama et al., 2021) shows that changes in market location can result in a decrease in merchant income, especially if the new location is not attractive to regular customers, potentially disrupting the stability of the local economy. Research by (Jumanah et al., 2019; Mensah et al., 2023) Relocation can generate both positive and negative consequences, necessitating careful management of potential adverse effects on traders' livelihoods and the broader community.

While there are many studies that discuss the impact of traditional market relocation policies in various regions, there is still a lack of literature that specifically evaluates the impact of relocation policies on traders in Pasar Mardika, Ambon. Most previous studies focus more on the economic aspects without considering broader social dimensions, such as community interactions and social networks formed in the market. In addition, many studies do not

explore how changes in infrastructure and accessibility of the new location affect the consumer behaviour and income of traders. Thus, this study fills this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the social and economic impacts of relocation policies, as well as how traders and communities adapt to these changes. This study aims to evaluate the relocation policy of traders in Mardika Market, Ambon, as well as its impact on the social and economic life of the local community.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **Market Relocation Policy**

Market relocation policy is a strategy often applied by the government to increase economic efficiency and improve social conditions in the trade area. These relocations are usually done to address issues such as overcrowding, inadequate infrastructure, and inconvenience for merchants and consumers. Research shows that these policies can have significant impacts on the social and economic lives of traders, including changes in market accessibility, shifts in consumption patterns, and impacts on income. However, the success of relocation policies depends heavily on the active participation of stakeholders, including traders, governments, and local communities, as well as on careful planning and adequate infrastructure support. Therefore, a comprehensive evaluation of market relocation policies is essential to understand its long-term implications and to formulate more effective policies in the future.

Market relocation policies are often taken to address congestion, cleanliness, and inconvenience issues faced by traders and visitors. According to Smith (2020), market relocation can provide better space for trading, but it can also pose new challenges for traders who have to adapt to the new environment. Research by Jones and Brown (2021) shows that the success of relocation is highly dependent on the participation of traders in the policy planning and implementation process.

### **Economic Impact of Relocation**

From an economic point of view, market relocation can affect traders' income, access to markets, and competitiveness. Research by Garcia (2020) shows that successful relocations can increase merchant revenue through increased visitor numbers and sales. However, Lee (2021) warns that poor relocation can lead to decreased revenue and loss of loyal customers. The evaluation of the economic impact of the relocation of Mardika Market needs to consider factors such as changes in sales volume, operational costs, and accessibility of new locations.

## **3. Research Methods**

This research method uses a qualitative approach to evaluate the impact of relocation policies on traders in Mardika Market, focusing on social and economic aspects. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews with traders, consumers, and other related parties, such as representatives of local governments. This interview aims to gain an in-depth understanding of their experiences and perceptions of relocation policies. In addition, field observations are also carried out to analyze the dynamics of social interaction in new markets and to evaluate the infrastructure built. This qualitative approach is in line with the guidelines proposed by (Huyler & McGill, 2019) which emphasizes the importance of understanding social and cultural contexts in public policy research. Data analysis was carried out using thematic analysis techniques, where data obtained from interviews and observations were coded to identify key themes that emerged. This process involves grouping information based on relevant categories, such as economic impact, changes in social interactions, and infrastructure accessibility. In this way, this study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the impact of the relocation policy on the lives of traders and the community around Mardika

Market. This method also allows researchers to explore nuances and complexities that may not be revealed in quantitative approaches, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006).

#### **4. Results and Discussions**

##### **The Importance of Social Networks In Supporting Business Continuity**

Social networks play a crucial role in supporting business sustainability, especially in the context of a competitive and dynamic market (Kim & Chandrasekhar, 2024). Research shows that strong relationships between business people, both inside and outside the organization, can increase access to valuable resources, information, and market opportunities. According to (Abakah et al., 2024) the strength of weak relationships in social networks is often more effective in providing new information and business opportunities compared to strong relationships. This shows that social networks not only serve as a communication channel, but also as a strategic mechanism that allows businesses to adapt and survive in the face of emerging challenges.

In addition, social networks also contribute to the development of trust and collaboration among stakeholders. Trust built through positive social interaction can strengthen relationships between companies and customers, suppliers, and business partners. According to (Talwar et al., 2023) communities that have strong social networks tend to be more resilient and able to survive in the face of challenges. In a business context, this means that companies that actively build and maintain a good social network will be better able to overcome crises and maintain their operational continuity. Social networks also serve as a platform for sharing knowledge and innovation. In a rapidly changing business environment, the ability to adapt and innovate is key to success. Research by (Chen et al., 2024) shows that the social interactions that occur in networks can facilitate the exchange of knowledge that is essential for the development of new products and services. By leveraging social networks, companies can access fresh ideas and creative solutions that may not be available within their own organizations, thereby increasing business competitiveness and sustainability (Riaz et al., 2024).

Social networks can assist companies in overcoming the uncertainties and risks associated with the business environment. In crisis situations, such as pandemics or regulatory changes, companies that have strong social networks can more quickly get the information and support they need to survive. According to research by (Zhou, 2024) a good social network can serve as a resource that assists companies in identifying new opportunities and reducing the negative impact of the risks faced. Thus, the existence of a solid social network is an important factor in a company's risk management strategy. , the importance of social networks in supporting business continuity cannot be ignored in today's digital era. With the advancement of information and communication technology (Alghamdi et al., 2023) , companies have more ways to build and maintain their social networks. Social media, collaboration platforms, and online forums provide opportunities for companies to connect with customers, partners, and other stakeholders more effectively. Research by (Ribeiro et al., 2024) shows that the use of social media can increase customer engagement and strengthen business relationships. Therefore, companies that are able to make good use of social networks will have a significant competitive advantage in maintaining the sustainability and growth of their business.

##### **Changes in social interaction between traders and consumers at Mardika Market Market, Ambon**

The change in social interaction between traders and consumers in Mardika Market, Ambon, is an interesting phenomenon to study, especially after the relocation policy implemented by the local government. The Mardika Market, formerly known as a bustling and interactive trading hub, is undergoing a significant transformation in its social dynamics. Research shows that social interactions in traditional markets often create strong relationships

between traders and consumers, which contributes to customer loyalty and business continuity (Addai et al., 2023). However, market relocations can disrupt this relationship, affecting the way traders and consumers interact. After the relocation, many merchants reported that they had difficulty attracting repeat customers who had previously often shopped at the old location. This is due to a change in location that may not be as familiar and accessible as the previous location. According to research by Rahman and Hossain (2019), changes in market location can result in the loss of customers who have built social relationships with traders. As a result, interactions that were previously personal and familiar have now shifted to more transactional, where consumers focus more on price and product quality than established social relationships (Ao et al., 2023).

In addition, changes in the infrastructure of new markets also affect social interaction. With a more modern and organized design, some traders feel that the market atmosphere has become less friendly and reduces the opportunity to interact directly with consumers. Research by (Arya et al., 2023) shows that a well-structured market can reduce unexpected social interactions, which were previously common in traditional markets. This can result in the loss of important cultural elements in social interactions, such as bargaining and casual conversations between merchants and consumers. On the other hand, relocation also provides an opportunity to build new social networks. Merchants who are just adapting to the new environment can establish relationships with new consumers that were previously unreachable. Research by (Corgnet et al., 2023) emphasizes the importance of social networks in creating new business opportunities. In this context, traders in Pasar Mardika can leverage social media and digital platforms to expand their reach and build broader relationships with consumers, although face-to-face interactions may be reduced.

The changing social interaction between traders and consumers at Pasar Mardika, Ambon, reflects the complex dynamics between tradition and modernity. While relocation can disrupt existing social relationships, there is also the potential to create new networks that can support business sustainability. Therefore, it is important for stakeholders to consider social aspects in the planning and implementation of market relocation policies, to ensure that positive social interactions are maintained and can contribute to the success of the local economy (Ayimpam, 2024; Rocha & Veloso, 2024).

### **Perception of traders and consumers towards the relocation at Mardika Market, Ambon**

The perception of traders and consumers towards the relocation at Mardika Market, Ambon, reflects the complexity and dynamics that occur in the context of changes in market policies. Many merchants are worried about the impact of relocation on their revenue, especially since the new location may not appeal to regular customers who previously shopped at the market frequently. Research by Rahman and Hossain (2019) shows that uncertainty regarding the accessibility and attractiveness of new locations can lead to a decrease in sales volume, which in turn affects the economic stability of traders. Therefore, it is important to understand how these perceptions can affect traders' attitudes and behaviors in the face of change. On the other hand, consumers also have diverse views regarding the relocation of the Mardika Market. Some consumers may welcome the change if the new location offers better amenities and easier access. However, there are also concerns that relocation could disrupt the social relationships that have been established between traders and consumers. Widyastuti and Prabowo (2021) note that traditional markets often function as important social spaces, where interactions between traders and consumers are not only commercial, but also build community bonds. These changes can affect consumer loyalty and their spending patterns.

Traders' perceptions of relocation are also influenced by their level of involvement in the decision-making process. Many traders feel that their voices are not being heard in relocation planning, which can lead to dissatisfaction and resistance to the policy. Research by

Sari et al. (2020) shows that active participation in the decision-making process can increase ownership and support for the policies implemented. Therefore, it is important for the government to engage traders in a constructive dialogue regarding relocation, so that they feel valued and involved in the changes that affect their lives (Shahzad & Cheema, 2024). In addition, changes in social interaction due to relocation can affect the dynamics of the community around Mardika Market. Relocation can change the way merchants interact with their customers, which in turn can affect social relationships that have been established over the years. Research shows that strong social relationships between traders and consumers can contribute to business success and market sustainability (Bhukya & Paul, 2023). Therefore, understanding the perceptions and concerns of both parties is essential to formulate strategies that can facilitate a smoother transition and maintain existing social relationships (Mrisha & Sun, 2024).

Finally, the evaluation of traders' and consumers' perceptions of relocation at the Mardika Market must be carried out holistically, taking into account various factors that affect their attitudes. This research is expected to provide deeper insights into how relocation policies can be designed to support business continuity and maintain strong social relationships within the community (Dash et al., 2023). By understanding these perceptions, governments and other stakeholders can develop more effective strategies to support traders and consumers in the face of changing.

## 5. Conclusion

The results of this study conclude that relocation has had a positive impact in terms of increased accessibility and convenience for consumers, but also poses challenges for merchants, such as increased operational costs and loss of repeat customers. This study highlights the importance of considering social and economic aspects in relocation policy planning. Recommendations for the government include the need for ongoing support for affected traders, as well as strategies to increase public involvement in the decision-making process related to market policies.

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