

The Role of Traditional Markets in Increasing Traders' Income and Supporting Local Economic Development In Bengkulu City

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Abstract

Traditional markets provide trading opportunities, support livelihoods, and facilitate the circulation of money in local economies. This study describes traders' reported income, business constraints, market-facility concerns, and perceived local economic contributions at Pasar Panorama, Bengkulu City. The analysis uses a spreadsheet containing records from 30 traders and applies descriptive quantitative summaries to numeric variables alongside frequency counts for categorical responses. Average recorded daily income rose from Rp1.133.333 before to Rp1.240.667 after, a mean difference of Rp107.333 per trader per day. The aggregate recorded total increased by 9.47%, from Rp34.000.000 to Rp37.220.000. Price competition was the most common competition-related response (11 traders; 36.7%), and 14 traders (46.7%) reported limited capital. Cleanliness, parking access, and drainage were each mentioned by five traders (16.7%). Eighteen traders (60.0%) identified daily money circulation as the market's local economic contribution, while the remaining respondents cited family employment or employment more generally. The findings point to potential priorities in market maintenance, circulation and trading-space management, and access to business support. Because the spreadsheet does not specify the dates, definitions, or method used for the before-after income comparison, the recorded difference is descriptive and does not establish that the market or a particular intervention caused income to rise.

Keywords: traditional markets; traders' income; local economic development; market facilities; Bengkulu City

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INTRODUCTION

Traditional markets are also social and institutional spaces in which repeated interactions between sellers and buyers help sustain exchange, information sharing, and everyday economic relationships. Belshaw (1965) explains that markets should be understood not only as locations for transactions but also as systems of exchange shaped by social and economic arrangements. This perspective is relevant to Pasar Panorama because the dataset records different merchandise categories and customer volumes, while the broader context includes access, facilities, and competition. Local economic development involves strengthening productive activity, creating livelihood opportunities, and improving community welfare. Traditional markets can contribute by connecting suppliers, small retailers, and consumers while providing trading opportunities for micro and small businesses. Their contribution is not limited to transactions at individual stalls: market activity can also generate demand for transport, loading and unloading, supply distribution, and household labour.

The economic position of market traders is shaped by multiple factors. Sales can vary with customer traffic, product mix, selling prices, purchasing power, and competition. At the same time, traders face operating expenses and risks associated with procurement prices, perishable goods, limited capital, and the quality of market facilities. From a local development perspective, these factors matter because the ability of small traders to sustain their businesses is linked to livelihoods and the circulation of money in the surrounding economy.

Small-business performance is commonly influenced by a combination of internal resources and external market conditions. For example, access to working capital can affect the volume and variety of stock a trader is able to purchase, while changes in wholesale prices may reduce the margin available from each sale. However, income should not be interpreted in isolation from costs: sales revenue, gross margin, and net profit are distinct measures and should be defined separately when collecting data (Herman, 2021; Pego & Dewi, 2024; Pane et al., 2024). The current dataset labels its values as income but does not provide a detailed accounting definition; accordingly, this article retains the term “recorded income” rather than treating it as verified profit.

Pasar Panorama in Bengkulu City is the focus of this study. The supplied dataset records 30 traders selling varied goods, including fresh produce, food, staple goods, clothing, footwear, and household products. Rather than assuming that all traders experience the market in the same way, this article summarizes the available records to describe income values, customer counts, business constraints, facility concerns, and perceived economic contributions.

The role of a market in local development also depends on the conditions that enable traders and customers to reach, use, and maintain the trading area. Research on market management and revitalization in Indonesia has reported that changes to market facilities do not necessarily produce the same income or customer outcomes in every setting; maintenance and the way improvements are managed remain important considerations (Yuskarnaya & Yuliarmi, 2022; Cahyani et al., 2022; Salsabila & Zulfiani, 2025). These studies provide context for interpreting facility concerns in the present dataset, but they do not establish that the same mechanisms operate at Pasar Panorama.

Three questions guide the analysis: (1) What patterns appear in the traders’ recorded daily income and customer counts? (2) What business constraints and market-facility concerns are most frequently reported? (3) What practical considerations do these responses suggest for local economic development planning?

The article therefore adopts a deliberately descriptive approach. Descriptive statistics are useful for organizing observed values and showing the distribution of responses, but they do not by themselves identify causal relationships or explain why one trader earns more than another (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Saunders et al., 2019). The findings are interpreted as a profile of the supplied records and as a basis for identifying questions that future fieldwork could investigate.

The article contributes a descriptive account of the 30 supplied records. It does not claim statistical representativeness for every trader in Pasar Panorama or for markets across Bengkulu City. In particular, the before–after income fields are reported as entered in the spreadsheet; without the dates, definitions, and measurement procedure, they cannot be used to establish causation.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Data Source

This article uses a descriptive analysis of a supplied spreadsheet containing 30 trader records for Pasar Panorama, Bengkulu City. The file includes merchandise category, business duration, daily income before and after (using the source's labels), daily customer counts, competition-related responses, capital status, price or goods-related constraints, facility concerns, reported labour, and perceived local economic contribution. The analysis is based on these records; no additional interview transcripts, observation notes, or official administrative data were supplied for this revision.

Data Processing and Analysis

Percentages were calculated by dividing each category frequency by the 30 records and multiplying by 100. Because the spreadsheet contains categorical responses and the available information does not establish whether each field allowed multiple responses, frequencies are presented as recorded rather than reclassified into new categories. This approach follows the principle that data processing should remain transparent and consistent with the source records (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Saunders et al., 2019).

Numeric fields were summarized using counts, means, totals, and the recorded before–after difference. Categorical fields were summarized using frequencies and percentages, with the number of records (30) as the denominator. The aggregate percentage difference in recorded income was calculated as (total after – total before) divided by total before, multiplied by 100. Categories are retained as supplied by the spreadsheet and are not merged unless explicitly indicated.

Scope and Limitations

A further limitation concerns the absence of information about the sampling frame and non-response. The 30 records may describe the traders included in the spreadsheet, but they cannot automatically be treated as a probability sample of the entire market. In addition, no cost-of-goods, rent, transport, labour-cost, or spoilage records are provided. As a result, the analysis cannot estimate net profit, compare profitability across merchandise groups, or determine whether reported income changes were sustained. These boundaries are important for avoiding conclusions that exceed the evidence (Miles et al., 2014; OECD, 2008).

The analysis is descriptive and limited to the 30 records. The spreadsheet does not identify the sampling procedure, fieldwork dates, precise definition of income, comparison period,

or method by which before–after values were obtained. It also does not establish whether reported labour includes owners, unpaid family workers, or part-time workers. Consequently, results should not be generalized to all market traders, interpreted as net profit, or used to infer that market activity or a policy caused income changes. Further verification through trader interviews, observation, and relevant records would strengthen interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The dataset contains 30 trader records. Results are presented as descriptive summaries of the supplied spreadsheet and should be read within the limitations stated in the methodology.

Trader Profile and Customer Activity

The variety of merchandise represented in the records indicates that the market serves different everyday consumption needs. At the same time, the range of 18–58 customers per trader suggests that exposure to customer traffic is not uniform within this small dataset. Customer count alone does not determine income: the value of each transaction, product turnover, seasonal demand, and costs can also differ. The data do not contain transaction-level information, so these possible relationships are contextual explanations rather than tested findings.

The traders represented 16 merchandise categories, including vegetables, fruit, fish, meat, staple goods, prepared food, clothing, footwear, and household products. Business duration ranged from 3 to 16 years, averaging 8.0 years. Daily customer counts ranged from 18 to 58, with a mean of 36.3 customers per trader. This variation shows that the recorded businesses differ in operating history and daily customer volume; the dataset does not identify the reasons for these differences.

Indicator	Result
Number of trader records	30
Merchandise categories represented	16
Average business duration	8.0 years
Daily customers (average)	36.3 people
Daily customers (range)	18–58 people
Total reported labour	56 people (as recorded)

Recorded Daily Income

The aggregate increase should be read alongside the measurement limitations. A valid before–after assessment normally requires clearly specified observation dates, consistent definitions, and comparable recording procedures. Without those details, it is not possible to determine whether the difference reflects a real change in business performance, differences in recording, seasonal conditions, or other circumstances. Studies of market revitalization have likewise found that interventions should be assessed using defined outcome measures

rather than assuming that physical improvements automatically increase income (Yuskarnaya & Yuliarmi, 2022; Saraswati et al., 2025). This comparison is therefore useful as a description of the spreadsheet, not as an impact evaluation.

Mean recorded daily income was Rp1.133.333 before and Rp1.240.667 after, producing a mean difference of Rp107.333 per trader per day. Across all 30 records, the sum increased from Rp34.000.000 to Rp37.220.000, an aggregate difference of 9.47%. All 30 records show a higher value in the 'after' column. This consistent pattern is a feature of the supplied spreadsheet, but it cannot be interpreted as proof of a causal effect because the file does not specify the comparison dates, measurement method, or intervening circumstances.

The records also vary by merchandise type and customer count. Such differences could be associated with prices, turnover, product demand, and operating costs, but the dataset does not contain enough detail to test these explanations. The income values are therefore reported as recorded income, not as verified net profit or a measured long-term trend.

Income indicator	Before	After / difference
Mean daily income per trader	Rp1.133.333	Rp1.240.667
Total of recorded daily income values	Rp34.000.000	Rp37.220.000
Mean difference per trader per day	—	Rp107.333
Aggregate percentage difference	—	9.47%

Competition, Capital, and Supply-Related Constraints

Competition and capital constraints may interact in practice. Traders with limited working capital may have less flexibility to buy in larger quantities, diversify their stock, or absorb short-term changes in supply prices. Nevertheless, the present spreadsheet does not record credit terms, borrowing costs, inventory turnover, or traders' pricing strategies, so it cannot establish which mechanism is most important. Prior studies of traditional-market income identify capital, working hours, merchandise type, and market conditions as relevant factors to investigate, but the relative influence may vary across markets and study designs (Pego & Dewi, 2024; Pane et al., 2024; Herman, 2021).

Price competition was the most frequent competition-related response, reported by 11 traders (36.7%). Competition from other traders and competition from shops were each reported by six traders (20.0%), while competition in culinary businesses was reported by five (16.7%) and competition from similar stores by two (6.7%). These frequencies identify price competition as the most common category in this dataset; they do not measure the size of its effect on sales or income.

Fourteen traders (46.7%) reported limited capital, while 16 (53.3%) described their capital as sufficient. In the price/goods field, rising supply prices appeared seven times (23.3% of the sample); rising wholesale prices and raw-material prices each appeared four times (13.3%).

Other responses included perishability, changing purchasing power, price changes, and supplier or product prices. This mix suggests that capital access and procurement conditions merit further investigation, especially because the dataset does not include detailed stock, cost, or profit records.

Recorded constraint	Count	Share of 30 traders
Price competition	11	36.7%
Competition from other traders	6	20.0%
Competition from shops	6	20.0%
Competition in culinary businesses	5	16.7%
Competition from similar stores	2	6.7%
Limited capital	14	46.7%
Capital reported as sufficient	16	53.3%
Rising supply prices	7	23.3%
Rising wholesale prices	4	13.3%
Raw-material prices	4	13.3%

Market Facilities and Perceived Local Economic Contributions

Facility reports should be understood as traders' stated concerns rather than engineering assessments of the market. For example, the same concern about drainage may have different implications depending on its location, frequency, and effect on access or product quality. A practical follow-up would map reported problems by market zone, record their frequency and severity, and consult both traders and market managers. This would help distinguish routine maintenance needs from issues requiring larger infrastructure decisions. The approach is consistent with evidence that market management and ongoing maintenance are relevant alongside physical redevelopment (Cahyani et al., 2022; Yuskarnaya & Yuliarmi, 2022).

Cleanliness, parking access, and drainage were each listed by five traders (16.7%). Narrow stalls were recorded four times (13.3%); kiosk space and water facilities were each recorded three times (10.0%). Loading/unloading areas and kiosk arrangement were each listed twice, while customer access appeared once. The responses point to several operational issues rather than a single dominant facility concern. Direct observation and consultation with market management are needed before prioritizing infrastructure investments.

Eighteen traders (60.0%) identified daily money circulation as the market's local economic contribution. Six (20.0%) referred to employment for family members, and six (20.0%) cited employment more generally. The labour column totals 56 people across the 30 businesses, or

1.9 reported workers per record on average. Because the spreadsheet does not define whether the count includes business owners, unpaid family members, or part-time workers, it should not be treated as an official employment estimate.

Facility concern	Count	Share of sample
Cleanliness of market area	5	16.7%
Parking access	5	16.7%
Drainage	5	16.7%
Narrow stalls	4	13.3%
Kiosk space	3	10.0%
Water facilities	3	10.0%
Loading/unloading area	2	6.7%
Kiosk arrangement	2	6.7%
Customer access	1	3.3%

Perceived local economic contribution	Count	Share of sample
Daily circulation of money	18	60.0%
Employment for family members	6	20.0%
Employment more generally	6	20.0%

Implications for Local Economic Development Planning

Future monitoring could use a simple and consistent register for daily sales, operating costs, customer counts, stock losses, and facility conditions. A baseline and follow-up period should be recorded explicitly, with the same definitions and units used at each measurement point. If the objective is to assess a policy or market improvement, a stronger design would also document when the intervention occurred and consider other plausible explanations for any observed change. Such steps would improve the usefulness of the evidence for local planning without overstating what the current 30-record dataset can show. Official statistical publications, including Kota Bengkulu Dalam Angka, can provide broader contextual indicators, but they should not be treated as a substitute for market-level data unless the relevant indicator is explicitly reported (BPS Kota Bengkulu, 2025; World Bank, 2019).

Three planning considerations follow from the reported frequencies. First, market management and local government could review cleanliness, drainage, parking access, stall

space, and water facilities. These are not automatically the highest-cost or most urgent interventions; field inspection and consultation are needed to assess severity and feasibility. Second, business support could focus on practical information related to procurement, stock management, pricing, and available legitimate financing, particularly for traders reporting limited capital. Third, consistent monitoring of customer counts, sales, costs, and facility conditions could improve future planning and allow changes to be assessed over a clearly defined period.

These implications are provisional. The spreadsheet provides trader-reported categories but no interview quotations, observation checklist, market-manager perspectives, or official records. Further evidence is needed to understand how constraints differ by merchandise category, which facility concerns most affect customers, and whether recorded income changes persist over time. Decisions should therefore combine the current descriptive findings with verified field observations, stakeholder consultation, feasibility, and budget.

CONCLUSION

This descriptive analysis of 30 Pasar Panorama trader records found an average business duration of 8.0 years and an average of 36.3 customers per trader per day. Mean recorded daily income rose from Rp1.133.333 before to Rp1.240.667 after, a difference of Rp107.333 per trader per day; the aggregate recorded total was 9.47% higher in the 'after' column. Price competition was the most frequently recorded competition-related constraint, 14 traders reported limited capital, and cleanliness, parking, and drainage were the most frequently listed facility concerns. Most respondents described daily money circulation as the market's local economic contribution.

The results suggest that market maintenance, circulation and trading-space management, and accessible business support deserve consideration in local planning. However, the findings are limited to the supplied records. The period and method behind the income comparison are unspecified, and the data do not establish causation, net profit, or a representative estimate for all traders. Future work should document sampling and fieldwork procedures, define income measures and reference periods, and triangulate trader data with interviews, observation, and official market records.

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