

# Sustaining traditional market: Analyzing trader's resilience towards relocation issue

Choliq Sabana<sup>1</sup>, Rahajeng Win Martani<sup>1\*</sup>, Nur Baiti Nasution<sup>1</sup>, Dwi Agustina<sup>1</sup>, Shofian Hadi Kurniawan<sup>1</sup>, Endah Romdlanah<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Research and Community Services Centre, Universitas Pekalongan, Pekalongan, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author's email: [ajeng.winmarta@gmail.com](mailto:ajeng.winmarta@gmail.com)

## Abstract

Traditional markets play a critical role in supporting local economies, providing access to affordable goods, and fostering community interactions. However, many traditional markets face structural and environmental challenges, prompting relocation to modernized facilities. This study examines the factors influencing traders' willingness to relocate at Pasar Kajen, located in Pekalongan Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. Specifically, the research explores the roles of demographic characteristics, physical aspects, non-physical aspects, and information regarding the new location in the relocation decision-making process. A total of 100 randomly selected traders participated in the study, providing data through a survey questionnaire comprising 11 questions related to these factors. The data was analysed using Chi-Square tests and SPSS version 25 to identify significant associations. The findings revealed that demographic factors, such as years of trading, type of stall, and product type, were not significantly related to the willingness to relocate. Similarly, physical aspects, including the appropriateness of the sales area and the distance between stalls, did not show a significant relationship with relocation intentions. However, the condition of the building was found to have a significant impact on traders' willingness to relocate. Non-physical factors, including security, comfort, and cleanliness, as well as information about the new location, were also not significantly associated with relocation decisions. These results highlight the importance of physical infrastructure, particularly building condition, in influencing traders' decisions to relocate, while demographic, non-physical, and informational factors appeared less influential. This study contributes to understanding relocation dynamics in market settings and can inform future planning strategies for market management and development.

**Published:**  
May 30, 2025

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Selection and Peer-  
review under the  
responsibility of the 6<sup>th</sup>  
BIS-HSS 2024 Committee

## Keywords

Trader relocation, Market infrastructure, Willingness to relocate, Traditional market

## Introduction

Traditional markets are the backbone of economic and social life in small towns like Pekalongan Regency. These markets not only provide essential goods and services to

local residents but also serve as a primary source of income for many families, supporting livelihoods and fostering community ties [1]. The vibrancy and accessibility of traditional markets make them indispensable for both traders and consumers, especially in regions where modern retail options are limited.

Given their central role, the resilience of traders operating in these markets is crucial. Resilient traders are better equipped to adapt to disruptions—whether from economic shifts, natural disasters, or policy changes—ensuring the continuity of market functions and the well-being of their households [1]. Resilience enables traders to maintain their businesses, support their families, and contribute to the stability of the local economy even in the face of adversity.

Numerous studies have highlighted the effects of trader resilience under various challenging conditions. For example, in conflict-affected areas, traders who demonstrated adaptability—such as relocating or adjusting their business models—were more likely to buffer the impacts of shocks, though even the most resilient still faced significant contractions in trade and income [2]. In other contexts, traders have coped with market revitalization and relocation by forming support groups, leveraging social networks, and developing new strategies to sustain their livelihoods [1], [3]. However, these strategies often come with trade-offs, such as reduced household welfare or increased operational costs [1].

One of the most significant challenges requiring trader resilience is market relocation. Relocation is often initiated by local governments to improve infrastructure, safety, or urban order, but it can disrupt established trading patterns and customer relationships [4], [5], [6]. The process frequently results in reduced product quantity, shorter operating hours, inconvenient stall positions, and decreased sales turnover, all of which test the adaptability and resilience of traders [4], [6]. In some cases, traders resist relocation policies, preferring to remain in familiar locations or forming groups to advocate for their interests [7].

Research on traders' willingness to relocate reveals a complex picture. While some studies report that relocation can have a positive effect on traders' income, the impact is often modest and influenced by many external factors [8]. Other studies highlight negative outcomes, such as loss of customers, reduced capital, and dissatisfaction with new market facilities [4], [6], [9]. The willingness to relocate is shaped by factors like the quality of new infrastructure, accessibility, and the level of government support, but resistance and dissatisfaction are common when these factors are lacking [6], [7], [9].

Despite these insights, existing studies have limitations. Many focus on the immediate economic impacts of relocation, often neglecting the broader social and psychological dimensions of trader resilience. There is also a lack of comprehensive analysis on how resilience strategies can be systematically supported or enhanced during relocation processes. Most research is context-specific, making it difficult to generalize findings or develop best practices applicable to other regions or market settings [1].

This study aims to address these gaps by examining the resilience of traders in a traditional market in Pekalongan Regency, with a particular focus on their willingness and ability to adapt to relocation. By integrating both economic and social perspectives, the research seeks to provide a more holistic understanding of trader resilience and offer practical recommendations for policymakers and market managers. The goal is to contribute to the development of more effective relocation strategies that support the sustainability of traditional markets and the livelihoods of the communities they serve.

## Method

This study employed a descriptive correlational design with a cross-sectional approach to examine the factors influencing traders' willingness to relocate at Pasar Kaje, located in Pekalongan Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. The cross-sectional design allowed for the assessment of relationships between various trader characteristics and their relocation willingness at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of the current situation and enabling the identification of significant associations relevant to market management and policy development [10].

The research was conducted at Pasar Kaje, a traditional market currently facing significant structural challenges that have prompted plans for relocation to a new facility. A total of 100 traders were randomly selected to participate in the study, ensuring a diverse representation of market actors and minimizing selection bias. This sampling strategy is consistent with best practices in market research, which emphasize the importance of random selection to enhance the generalizability and reliability of findings [11].

Data were collected using a structured survey questionnaire comprising 11 questions that covered demographic characteristics, physical aspects of the market, non-physical aspects (such as security and cleanliness), and information about the new relocation site. The survey instrument used in this study consisted of four main aspects designed to capture a comprehensive view of traders' perceptions and conditions. These aspects included: (1) Demographic characteristics, covering years of trading, types of stalls, and types of products sold; (2) Physical aspects of the current market, such as the condition of the building, appropriateness of the sales area, and distances between traders; (3) Non-physical aspects, including perceptions of security, comfortability, and cleanliness; and (4) Knowledge of the new market location. The instrument was developed as a structured questionnaire with 11 close-ended items designed to ensure consistent data collection across all respondents. In addition, the question related to willingness to relocate was included as the dependent variable in this study.

The collected data were analyzed using the Chi-Square test to identify significant associations between trader characteristics and their willingness to relocate, with all statistical analyses performed using SPSS version 25 to ensure accuracy and reliability of results [12]. This methodological approach aligns with established practices for studying

willingness to pay and relocation decisions, where survey-based data and robust statistical analysis are commonly used to draw meaningful conclusions [13], [14].

## Results and Discussion

### Results

The analysis of demographic characteristics included three key sub-aspects: years of trading, types of stalls, and product type. Years of trading were categorized into three groups: less than 5 years, 5 to 10 years, and more than 10 years. Types of stalls were classified into three categories: eceran (retail), kios (kiosks), and los (open stalls). Product types were divided into perishable goods and non-perishable goods. Table 1 showed that there was no significant relationship between these demographic variables and traders' willingness to relocate ( $p\text{-value} > 0.05$ ). This indicates that, regardless of how long they have been trading, the type of space they occupy, or the kind of goods they sell, traders generally share similar perspectives toward relocation, suggesting that other factors are more influential in shaping their decisions.

Table 1. Relationship between characteristics of demographic and relocation issue

Variable	P-value	Interpretation
Years of trading	$p > 0.05$	not significant
Types of stalls	$p > 0.05$	not significant
Product type	$p > 0.05$	not significant

The analysis of physical aspects of the market focused on three sub-variables: building condition, appropriateness of the sales area, and distances between traders. Building condition was categorized into 'good' and 'damaged'; appropriateness of the sales area was assessed as either 'appropriate' or 'inappropriate'; and the distances between traders were recorded as either 'close together' or 'spacious'. Table 2 showed that the condition of the building had a statistically significant relationship with traders' willingness to relocate ( $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ ). In contrast, the appropriateness of the sales area and the distances between traders did not show a significant relationship with relocation decisions ( $p\text{-value} > 0.05$ ). This indicates that physical deterioration, especially related to infrastructure quality, plays a crucial role in shaping relocation decisions, while space layout and stall proximity appear to be less influential. Deteriorating infrastructure and inadequate facilities in the current market significantly influenced traders' willingness to relocate. Dissatisfaction with these physical conditions emerged as a key driver, underscoring the importance of infrastructure in shaping trader adaptability.

The analysis of non-physical aspects of the market included three sub-variables: security, comfortness, and cleanliness. Security was classified into 'safe' and 'unsafe' conditions as perceived by the traders. Comfortness referred to the traders' subjective experience of the market environment, categorized as 'comfortable' or 'uncomfortable'. Cleanliness was assessed based on whether traders perceived the market as 'clean' or 'unclean'. Table 3 showed that none of these sub-variables had a statistically significant

relationship with willingness to relocate ( $p\text{-value} > 0.05$ ). This suggests that while traders may value safety, comfort, and cleanliness, these factors do not play a decisive role in influencing their relocation decisions, compared to more pressing physical infrastructure issues. Social interactions, traditions, and other non-physical aspects did not significantly impact traders' willingness to relocate. While these elements are valued, they appear secondary to addressing pressing physical concerns.

**Table 2.** Relationship between physical aspects and relocation issue

Variable	P-value	Interpretation
Building condition	$P < 0.05$	significant
Appropriateness of sales area	$p > 0.05$	not significant
Distances between traders	$p > 0.05$	not significant

**Table 3.** Relationship between nonphysical aspects and relocation issue

Variable	P-value	Interpretation
Security	$P > 0.05$	not significant
Comfortness	$p > 0.05$	not significant
Cleanliness	$p > 0.05$	not significant

**Table 4.** Relationship between information of new location and relocation issue

Variable	P-value	Interpretation
Information about new location	$P > 0.05$	not significant

The analysis of knowledge regarding the new market location was based on whether traders reported being informed or uninformed about the relocation site. Table 4 showed that there was no statistically significant relationship between this knowledge and traders' willingness to relocate ( $p\text{-value} > 0.05$ ). This suggests that awareness or lack of information about the new location does not notably affect traders' decisions, reinforcing the idea that relocation preferences are more strongly driven by dissatisfaction with the current market conditions than by anticipation of conditions at the new site. Traders' familiarity or awareness of the new market location had no significant influence on their willingness to relocate. This indicates that decisions are shaped more by perceptions of current market conditions than by information about future prospects.

## Discussion

The results of this study indicate that demographic characteristics such as years of trading, types of stalls, and product types do not have a significant relationship with traders' willingness to relocate at Pasar Kaje (p > 0.05). This finding aligns with previous research, which also found that the length of business did not significantly affect traders' income or their response to relocation policies [15]. These results suggest that demographic factors alone may not be strong predictors of relocation willingness, highlighting the need to consider other influences when planning market transitions.

In contrast, the physical condition of the market building was found to have a significant relationship with traders' willingness to relocate ( $p < 0.05$ ). This underscores the importance of infrastructure quality in shaping traders' decisions, as poor building conditions can motivate traders to accept relocation in hopes of improved facilities.



However, other physical aspects, such as the appropriateness of the sales area and the distance between traders, did not show a significant association with relocation willingness ( $p > 0.05$ ). This suggests that while overall building quality is a key concern, specific spatial arrangements within the market may be less influential.

Non-physical aspects—including security, comfort, and cleanliness—were not significantly related to traders' willingness to relocate ( $p > 0.05$ ). This result is somewhat surprising, as previous studies have noted that improved security and cleanliness can enhance trader satisfaction post-relocation [16], [17]. However, it appears that in the context of Pasar Kajen, these factors are not decisive in influencing relocation decisions, possibly because traders prioritize more tangible improvements, such as building condition, over these non-physical attributes.

Additionally, the availability of information about the new location did not significantly affect traders' willingness to relocate ( $p > 0.05$ ). This finding contrasts with some earlier research, which emphasized the importance of clear communication and information dissemination in facilitating successful relocations and reducing resistance among traders [18]. The lack of significance in this study may indicate that other factors, such as direct experience with market conditions, outweigh the influence of information alone.

Overall, these results highlight that while certain physical aspects—particularly building condition—play a critical role in traders' willingness to relocate, demographic, non-physical, and informational factors may be less influential in this context. This suggests that policymakers and market managers should prioritize infrastructure improvements when planning relocations, while also recognizing that other commonly cited factors may not universally drive trader decisions. These findings contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the complex factors influencing market relocation and can inform more targeted and effective policy interventions [8], [15], [17], [19].

### *Implication of the study*

The findings of this study highlight the critical importance of prioritizing physical infrastructure improvements—particularly building conditions—when planning and implementing market relocations. Market managers and policymakers should recognize that while demographic and non-physical factors may not significantly influence traders' willingness to relocate, the state of market facilities plays a decisive role in shaping trader acceptance and satisfaction. Therefore, investments in robust, well-designed market buildings, along with transparent communication and inclusive planning processes, are essential to minimize resistance and support the economic stability of traders during and after relocation [4], [19], [20]. Additionally, policies should be responsive to traders' needs and experiences, as neglecting these aspects can lead to dissatisfaction, reduced income, and even active resistance to relocation initiatives [21].

For researchers, these results underscore the need to move beyond demographic and surface-level analyses when studying trader resilience in the context of market

relocation. Future research should focus on the interplay between physical infrastructure, trader adaptation strategies, and broader socio-economic outcomes, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches to capture the complexity of resilience processes [5], [22]. There is also a need for longitudinal studies that track the long-term effects of relocation on trader livelihoods, social networks, and market dynamics, as well as comparative studies across different market settings to identify best practices and context-specific challenges [8], [15], [23].

By addressing these implications, both practitioners and researchers can contribute to more effective, equitable, and sustainable market management strategies that support the resilience and prosperity of traditional market communities. This study provides a foundation for evidence-based policy and future research, emphasizing the central role of infrastructure and the importance of understanding trader perspectives in shaping successful market transitions.

## Conclusion

The study found that among traders at Pasar Kajen, willingness to relocate was significantly influenced by the physical condition of the market building, while demographic factors, non-physical aspects, and information about the new location did not show significant associations. These results suggest that improving market infrastructure is a key driver in facilitating successful relocation, whereas other commonly considered factors may play a less decisive role in this context.

These findings contribute to a more nuanced understanding of trader resilience and market relocation, emphasizing the importance of targeted infrastructure improvements in policy and management strategies. By focusing on the most influential factors, future relocation efforts can better support trader adaptation and market sustainability, ultimately enhancing the welfare of traditional market communities.

## Acknowledgement

We would like to thank Universitas Pekalongan and Pekalongan Regency Government for supporting this research

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