
EVALUATION OF TRADITIONAL MARKET REVITALIZATION POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF PANGKALAN BRANDAN MARKET, BABALAN DISTRICT, LANGKAT REGENCY



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Abstract

Traditional markets play a strategic role in supporting economic activities, particularly in non-urban areas, serving as distribution hubs and reflecting local social dynamics. However, they face declining competitiveness against modern retail. The Langkat Regency Government initiated a revitalization policy for the Pangkalan Brandan Market to improve service quality and maintain market existence. This study evaluates the policy through aspects of planning, implementation, and impact using a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were collected via in-depth interviews, field observations, and documentation involving government officials, traders, and visitors. The findings indicate that while physical infrastructure and cleanliness have improved, the policy implementation remains suboptimal due to limited supporting facilities, lack of trader involvement in planning, and weak post-revitalization oversight. The study concludes that the revitalization has not been fully effective, requiring better inter-agency synergy and active stakeholder engagement.

Keywords: Advertisement Revitalization, Traditional Market, Public Policy, Program Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

In the era of regional autonomy, local governments are granted broader authority to manage their own affairs, including the optimization of the trade sector to support local economic growth. Traditional markets occupy a central position in this sector, functioning not merely as venues of commercial exchange but as social institutions that reflect local identity, community solidarity, and grassroots economic resilience (Aliyah, 2017). According to Law No. 7 of 2014 on Trade, traditional markets are defined as markets built and managed by either government or private entities, typically featuring modest facilities and permanent or semi-permanent merchants. Their strategic importance extends to their role as distribution hubs, employment sources for low-income populations, and incubators of local entrepreneurship (Simonangkir, 2019).

Traditional markets in Indonesia—including those in Langkat Regency—have faced accelerating structural pressures. The proliferation of modern retail outlets (minimarkets, supermarkets, and hypermarkets), combined with the exponential growth of e-commerce platforms, has fundamentally altered consumer behavior and competitive dynamics. Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) data indicate that between 2014 and 2022, the number of traditional markets in Indonesia declined by approximately 2.1 percent annually, while modern retail outlets expanded by more than 14 percent per year (BPS, 2022). In Langkat Regency, Pangkalan Brandan Market in Babalan District serves as a primary economic hub for fishing communities, agricultural traders, and small-scale businesses—making its deteriorating condition a matter of both economic and social urgency.

In response, the Langkat Regency Government, through the Department of Industry and Trade (Disperindag), initiated a comprehensive revitalization program at Pangkalan Brandan Market. The program, implemented under Minister of Trade Regulation No. 21 of 2021, involved construction of two new stall blocks (Block A: 120 stalls; Block B: 100 stalls), improvement of sanitation and drainage infrastructure, installation of modern LED lighting, and introduction of new market management procedures. Total budget allocation across 2021–2023 amounted to IDR 4.2 billion from the Langkat Regency APBD (Disperindag Langkat, 2023).

Despite this substantial investment, the revitalization faces critical implementation challenges. Field observations reveal that as of March 2026, combined stall occupancy in Blocks A and B stands at approximately 42 percent of capacity. The majority of traders continue to operate from roadside positions along Jl. Sudirman, citing concerns about customer accessibility, rental fee burdens, and the disruption of established trading relationships. Simultaneously, the evaluation mechanisms designed to monitor program outcomes have proven inadequate, lacking systematic data instruments, defined performance indicators, and participatory processes incorporating trader knowledge (Dunn, 2018).

This research examines the evaluation of the Pangkalan Brandan Market revitalization policy across three analytical dimensions: effectiveness of implementation; quality of stakeholder engagement; and structural barriers to evaluation. The study applies Dunn's (2018) six criteria of policy evaluation—effectiveness, efficiency, adequacy, equity, responsiveness, and appropriateness—and Winarno's (2016) framework of evidence-based evaluation as primary analytical lenses.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Policy evaluation is a systematic assessment of the design, implementation, and outcomes of a public policy or program (Dunn, 2018, p. 608). Dunn identifies six criteria constituting the comprehensive evaluative framework: (1) Effectiveness—the extent to which desired results are achieved; (2) Efficiency—the relationship between effort expended and outcomes achieved; (3) Adequacy—the extent to which outcomes address the motivating problem; (4) Equity—the distribution of costs and benefits across social groups; (5) Responsiveness—the degree to which outcomes reflect actual stakeholder preferences; and (6) Appropriateness—the desirability of the values underlying policy objectives. These criteria collectively enable systematic judgment that transcends mere activity documentation to assess whether programs generate genuine public value.

Winarno (2016) distinguishes between formative evaluation (conducted during implementation to guide improvement) and summative evaluation (conducted post-completion to assess overall impact). In the market revitalization context, both are necessary: formative evaluation to address trader resistance during implementation, and summative evaluation to assess long-term economic and social outcomes. Subarsono (2012) emphasizes that evaluation must be distinguished from monitoring: monitoring tracks activity progress against plans, while evaluation assesses whether activities produced intended change. The frequent conflation of these functions in Indonesian local government practice—treating monitoring reports as evaluations—is identified as a pervasive governance weakness (Abdoellah & Rusfiana, 2016).

Traditional Market Revitalization

Traditional market revitalization is defined under Minister of Trade Regulation No. 21 of 2021 as a strategic effort to empower trade facilities through integrated physical, managerial, socio-cultural, and economic improvements. The regulation mandates four interconnected dimensions: physical upgrading of market infrastructure; managerial enhancement of market governance; socio-cultural preservation of traditional market character; and economic strengthening of trader competitiveness.

Aliyah (2017) argues that traditional markets function simultaneously as economic institutions, social spaces, and cultural heritage sites—a multidimensional character implying that physical revitalization alone is insufficient. Programs focusing exclusively on infrastructure reconstruction without attending to social dynamics, cultural significance, and economic feasibility are predictably associated with trader non-compliance. Yustini (2018) identifies seven critical success factors: clear legal mandate; adequate funding; participatory planning involving traders; transparent stall allocation; realistic relocation timelines; sustained post-construction support; and robust monitoring and evaluation. The absence of any factor significantly increases the probability of implementation failure. Evidence from market revitalization across Java, Sulawesi, and Sumatra consistently demonstrates that top-down physical interventions without participatory planning generate resistance rather than adoption (Simonangkir, 2019).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method, selected because the central research concerns—understanding implementation dynamics, stakeholder experiences, and evaluation barriers—require in-depth engagement with meaning, process, and context that

quantitative instruments cannot adequately capture (Sugiyono, 2018). Field research was conducted at Disperindag Langkat and Pangkalan Brandan Market, Babalan District, from January to May 2026.

Research Informants

Informants were selected purposively (Sugiyono, 2018) across three categories. Key informants: the Head of Disperindag Langkat (primary institutional authority for revitalization policy) and the Head of Public Relations of Disperindag (stakeholder communication and public engagement). Primary informants: four planning and data section staff with direct operational knowledge of implementation processes. Additional informants: eight market traders drawn from both Block A/B (new stalls) and roadside locations (Jl. Sudirman), selected to capture the range of trader experiences and attitudes. Total: fourteen informants. This categorical structure ensures data triangulation across governmental, operational, and community perspectives.

Data Collection

Data were gathered through three complementary methods. Observation involved sustained fieldwork documenting physical conditions, spatial arrangements, trader behavior, and operational routines. Semi-structured interviews using a guide developed from Dunn's (2018) evaluation criteria were conducted with each informant category; each interview lasted 45–90 minutes and was audio-recorded with informed consent. Documentation analysis covered government revitalization reports, APBD budget allocations, Disperindag annual reports, evaluation documents, market management regulations, and trader complaint records.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) interactive model comprising three iterative stages: data reduction (systematic coding of transcripts, observational notes, and documents according to Dunn's six evaluation criteria and emergent codes); data display (organization of coded material into thematic matrices and narrative summaries); and conclusion drawing and verification (synthesis of patterns, cross-checked through source triangulation across government, trader, and civil society perspectives, method triangulation across interview, observation, and documentary data, and member checking with two key informants).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Effectiveness of Policy Implementation

The revitalization has produced measurable improvements in physical infrastructure. The Head of Disperindag Langkat described the transformation:

“Before revitalization, the market was neglected—broken floors, ineffective drainage causing flooding, inadequate lighting making evening trading unsafe, and no systematic waste management. The new blocks represent a completely different standard of facility.” — Head of Disperindag Langkat, interview January 2026

Observational data confirmed: Block A and B feature clean flooring, LED lighting, standardized stall dimensions (2m × 3m), paved pedestrian pathways, designated waste collection, a functioning drainage system, and a computerized stall rental payment system. However, assessing effectiveness against Dunn's first criterion reveals a critical gap: as of

March 2026, only 43 of 120 Block A stalls were occupied (35.8%) and 51 of 100 Block B stalls (51%). The majority of active traders continue to operate from roadside locations along Jl. Sudirman. This occupancy shortfall—combined Block A/B occupancy at approximately 42% of design capacity—represents the policy's most fundamental effectiveness failure: the primary intended outcome of organizing market activity within modern facilities has not been achieved at scale.

The effectiveness deficit is attributable to multiple reinforcing factors. Trader interviews identified four dominant concerns: reduced customer accessibility in interior block positions relative to highly visible roadside locations; the cost burden of formal stall rental fees (IDR 150,000–250,000 per month) relative to informal roadside trading costs; anxiety about customer base disruption during transition; and distrust of government's long-term facility maintenance commitment. These concerns align with Aliyah's (2017) analysis that physical relocation without social support mechanisms generates rational resistance rather than irrational non-compliance.

Efficiency of Resource Utilization

Total program budget allocation amounted to IDR 4.2 billion (2021–2023): IDR 3.1 billion for physical construction and IDR 1.1 billion for administrative, socialization, and management system costs. Applying Dunn's efficiency criterion—the ratio of costs to outcomes—current low occupancy significantly undermines efficiency. At combined occupancy of 94 stalls, cost-per-active-stall reaches approximately IDR 44.7 million, exceeding by more than double the original design assumption of IDR 19.1 million per stall at full occupancy. Disperindag's revenue projections assumed full occupancy generating IDR 324 million annually in stall rental fees; actual collections through 2025 amount to IDR 137.4 million (42.4%), directly reflecting the occupancy shortfall.

“The inefficiency you see now is not because the facilities are bad—it is because traders have not yet made the transition. The real efficiency problem is the pace of transition, and that requires different solutions than more construction.” — Head of Public Relations, Disperindag Langkat, interview January 2026

From an organizational capacity perspective, Disperindag's ability to simultaneously manage revitalization implementation, maintain ongoing market governance, and conduct meaningful evaluation has been strained. Planning staff reported that evaluation activities are conducted in the final quarter under significant time pressure, using standardized templates that do not accommodate market-specific performance indicators most relevant to revitalization outcomes.

Stakeholder Engagement and Responsiveness

Applying Dunn's responsiveness criterion, stakeholder engagement in the Pangkalan Brandan revitalization emerges as the program's most critical design failure. Engagement has been largely formalistic rather than substantive. Traders—most directly and immediately affected—reported not being meaningfully consulted during the design phase regarding stall allocation criteria, rental fee structures, transition timelines, or spatial organization of the new layout.

“We were told what was going to happen, not asked what we needed. The announcement came, construction started, and then we were given a date to move. Nobody asked whether IDR 200,000 a month was reasonable for

someone selling vegetables with margins of IDR 50,000 a day.” — Trader Informant A, Block A vendor, interview February 2026

Disperindag conducted three formal socialization sessions prior to the relocation deadline, but these were described by trader informants as one-directional information dissemination rather than dialogic consultation. Trader Informant C observed: 'They explained the plan. They did not ask for our plan.' This pattern is consistent with Abdoellah and Rusfiana's (2016) critique of Indonesian public administration's tendency toward formalistic consultation that satisfies procedural requirements without generating genuine participatory input.

The adequacy criterion requires examining whether engagement failures constitute a root cause of the implementation gap. Evidence strongly suggests they do: the most frequently cited trader objections—cost, location preference, customer access—are precisely the concerns that participatory design would have surfaced and potentially resolved through negotiated compromise. The absence of structured engagement mechanisms directly contributed to the occupancy shortfall that undermines the program's fundamental effectiveness.

Impact on Local Economy

Economic impact is heterogeneous across trader categories. Traders in central Block A positions reported a 15–20% increase in average monthly revenue, attributing improvement to enhanced customer comfort, reduced weather disruption, and the market's improved reputation among middle-income consumers. The revitalization has also attracted younger traders who find the modern stall format consistent with their preferences.

However, traders remaining on the roadside have experienced increased regulatory pressure without corresponding support. Periodic enforcement actions to force relocation have created income uncertainty and trading disruption. From an equity perspective (Dunn's fourth criterion), the distributional impact has been regressive: traders with established customer relationships, sufficient capital to manage the transition, and favorable block positions have benefited, while economically marginal vendors—particularly daily-volume vegetable and fish sellers—face heightened stress without adequate support. Disperindag's annual rental fee revenue of IDR 137.4 million against a projected IDR 324 million quantifies the direct fiscal consequence of the occupancy shortfall.

Public Response

Public response is divided along experiential lines. Disperindag's October 2025 visitor surveys recorded 72% satisfaction on physical environment indicators. However, satisfaction on 'completeness of goods available' was only 41%, directly reflecting the incomplete trader transition. Criticism centers on zoning decisions and spatial logic: multiple informants described the new block arrangement as counterintuitive, separating commodity categories previously clustered for consumer convenience and positioning high-frequency-purchase items (vegetables, fish, staples) in interior locations with lower foot traffic than their former roadside positions.

“Customers come for vegetables first. If vegetable vendors are inside and customers have to walk past clothing stalls to reach them, many will just buy from roadside vendors on the way in.” — Trader Informant F, interview February 2026

The spatial logic was developed by architectural consultants without, according to multiple informants, direct input from vendors about established consumer traffic patterns. This reflects a systemic design failure: technical expertise without contextual knowledge generated a layout that is aesthetically organized but functionally misaligned with the market's established consumer behavior. Applying Dunn's appropriateness criterion—the desirability of values underlying policy objectives—the program's implicit prioritization of formal, modern aesthetic standards raises legitimate questions about alignment with the actual preferences of the market's primary user populations.

Barriers to Policy Evaluation

The evaluation process in Langkat faces five interlocking structural barriers that constitute a systemic evaluation deficit:

Limited and Unsystematic Data: Disperindag lacks a data management system capable of generating time-series information necessary for meaningful evaluation. Visitor counts are not recorded systematically; trader revenue data are unreliable due to informal accounting; and pre-revitalization baseline data are insufficient for before-after comparisons. Without such data, evaluation is reduced to impression-based reporting that cannot withstand analytical scrutiny (Dunn, 2018, p. 612).

Social Resistance to Evaluation Participation: Several trader informants expressed reluctance to participate honestly in official evaluation processes, fearing that reported dissatisfaction or non-compliance would trigger punitive enforcement. This creates systematic bias in self-reported data—traders provide socially desirable rather than accurate responses. Genuine evaluation requires trust that information will be used for program improvement rather than compliance enforcement—a trust not yet established in the Pangkalan Brandan context.

Budgetary Constraints: Evaluation receives less than 3% of program budget and is treated as an administrative reporting exercise rather than a substantive analytical investment. This funding level cannot support field surveys, data analyst engagement, or participatory evaluation processes. Subarsono (2012) identifies this pattern—evaluation as administrative formality—as dominant in Indonesian local government, producing documents satisfying bureaucratic requirements without generating actionable knowledge.

Human Resource Capacity Deficits: Evaluation activities are conducted by Disperindag administrative staff trained primarily in regulatory enforcement and program administration. Skills required for meaningful policy evaluation—qualitative interviewing, quantitative data analysis, sampling design, interpretive synthesis—are not systematically developed within the existing staffing model. The consequence is evaluation reports describing activities (inputs and outputs) without analyzing outcomes or testing causal relationships (Abdoellah & Rusfiana, 2016).

Inconsistent Monitoring: Field monitoring is triggered primarily by specific events (complaints, enforcement actions, annual reporting) rather than a scheduled monitoring calendar. Gradual deterioration in program performance—such as declining occupancy or increasing informal trading—may not be detected until it reaches a critical threshold, at which point remediation becomes significantly more resource-intensive.

CONCLUSION

The revitalization of Pangkalan Brandan Market has produced genuine improvements in physical infrastructure and facility quality. However, evaluated against Dunn's (2018) comprehensive framework, the program has achieved only partial success. From effectiveness: the primary intended outcome—trader relocation to organized facilities—remains unachieved at scale (42% occupancy). From efficiency: the low occupancy rate generates a cost-per-outcome ratio exceeding double the design assumption. From adequacy and responsiveness: formalistic stakeholder engagement failed to incorporate trader knowledge into program design, generating resistance that participatory processes could have substantially mitigated. From equity: distributional impact has been regressive in the short term, benefiting established traders while increasing stress for economically marginal vendors. From appropriateness: the program's implicit value prioritization of formal aesthetic standards raises questions about alignment with community preferences.

The barriers to meaningful evaluation—data deficits, social resistance, budgetary under-investment, human resource capacity gaps, and inconsistent monitoring—constitute a systemic evaluation deficit that, if unaddressed, will prevent the Langkat Regency Government from generating the evidence needed to improve current implementation or design future market development policies effectively.

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