

RATIONAL CHOICE ANALYSIS OF MICRO-ENTREPRENEURS IN THE VICINITY OF BONTANG CITIMALL

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ABSTRACT:

This study aims to analyze entrepreneurial motivation and the changes in micro-enterprise conditions around Bontang Citimall, particularly after the shopping center began operating. The research employed a descriptive qualitative method, with data obtained through in-depth interviews with micro-business owners in Kelurahan Tanjung Laut. The findings indicate that entrepreneurial motivation is driven by economic needs, the desire for independence, and market opportunities arising from the high mobility of mall visitors. The presence of Bontang Citimall has had a significant impact on the economic aspects of micro-enterprises, including an increase in the number and diversity of consumers, higher sales turnover, and expanded business capacity. Although social changes are not visibly dominant, this study found changes in the interaction patterns among business actors, such as adjustments in operating hours and informal communication. Moreover, the study also reveals gaps in access to information regarding government MSME empowerment programs, including training, promotion, and financing schemes. These additional findings show the importance of synergy between modern infrastructure development and the strengthening of the local economy, as well as the improvement of MSME empowerment policy effectiveness to make it more inclusive.

Keywords: Bontang Citimall, Entrepreneurial Motivation, Micro-Enterprise, Modern Market, Socio-Economic Change

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1. INTRODUCTION

Development is a process of economic, social, and political change that results in improvements in living standards, social welfare, and community participation. Midgley (2013) explains that development is a deliberate effort to improve the social conditions of a region, covering various aspects such as the economy, education, health, and infrastructure. This aims to enhance the overall well-being and standard of living of the community. The development process encompasses not only economic growth, but also social transformation and improvements in the quality of human life.

In the context of urban development, Daldjoeni (in Kumurur, 2010) posits that cities serve as both a reflection and a symbol of integrated social relations, functioning ecologically as spaces in which humans adapt to their environment. Consequently, urban development should be oriented toward humans as the primary subjects, with the aim of enhancing social welfare through the provision of infrastructure, public facilities, and public spaces that promote inclusive economic growth.

In Indonesia, urban development is marked by the emergence of various public facilities such as roads, hotels, and shopping centers (malls) that serve as catalysts for regional economic growth. The development of malls in particular often has significant economic and social impacts, both in terms of increased consumption and employment opportunities as well as changes in local economic patterns. One example can be seen in the city of Bontang, East Kalimantan, with the establishment of Bontang Citimall in December 2022. The presence of this shopping center is expected to increase local revenue (PAD) and expand employment opportunities for

the surrounding community (Hasanah, 2023). Based on data from the Bontang City Manpower and Transmigration Office in 2022, there were 8,407 job seekers, a significant decrease due to the many job opportunities provided by Bontang Citimall, especially in the retail sector such as Matahari Department Store.

Moreover, Bontang Citimall has the potential to generate economic benefits for micro businesses in the surrounding area. Data from the Bontang City Cooperative, Micro Business, Industry, and Trade Office indicate an increase in the number of micro-businesses from 19,065 units in 2022 to 21,109 units in 2024, with most of this growth occurring in the Tanjung Laut sub-district where the mall is located. This trend suggests that economic activities generated around the shopping center exert both direct and indirect influences on the development of local micro-businesses.

To explain this phenomenon, this study draws James S. Coleman's Rational Choice Theory (in Ritzer, 2004). This theory states that individuals act as rational agents who make decisions based on the resources available to them to achieve certain goals as is the case with the farm laborers in Jati Serang village, in this phenomenon, the actors, who are farm laborers from the village, chose to switch professions to become hoe laborers in Bandung. In terms of resources, the farm laborers only have the skills to perform manual labor and the social network in Bandung that already works as hoe laborers. Furthermore, there are values or choices (preferences) that drive them to move to Bandung as hoe laborers. The rationality chosen by these farm laborers illustrates how actors will use resources to maximize profits or fulfill their needs and desires. (Sri Apriliani et al., 2019). In utilizing existing resources, traders in traditional markets also make utility efforts. At the micro level, each trader considers their available resources, such as capital resources, merchandise variety, and technological mastery, before deciding on resilience. Clothing traders with limited resources tend to make rational choices with a conservative approach based on social relations and risk management. Conversely, clothing traders with sufficient resources, technological mastery, and broad market reach tend to make rational choices with adaptive strategies. The differentiation of resources owned by actors also influences the differences in rational decision-making taken by the actors themselves (Kristanto, 2025).

Unlike the farm laborers from Jatinegara village who chose to change careers, pedicab drivers in Yogyakarta have chosen to continue their profession amidst the difficult economic conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic. This decision was made to survive, as being a pedicab driver is their only skill and resource at the moment (Prayogo & Candra Lesmana, 2022). The decision to maintain their profession was also made by tobacco farmers in Tampelsari Village, the decision to maintaining their existence is based on considerations that the profession has been carried out for generations, limited access to water during the dry season, and concerns about switching to other professions. The actors in this study, tobacco farmers, have maximized their available resources to achieve their goal of meeting household needs (Tri Fatmah, 2024). The same action was also carried out by Madurese women in the research on Rational Choices of Madurese Women in Strengthening the Family Economy Based on Madurese Culinary (Nur Hakim et al., 2024) that highlight the actions of actors in managing resources. Yes, in order to achieve optimal results despite facing various challenges and obstacles in this way combining traditional skills and innovation to maintain the continuity of culinary businesses.

Several previous studies have shown that in the face of pressure, actors make adaptation efforts to adjust to their available resources. This is also the case for micro-entrepreneurs operating around Bontang Citimall, who can be understood as actors who rationally evaluate opportunities and risks before deciding to establish or expand their businesses in the area. Their decisions are shaped by economic considerations (potential profits and capital), social considerations (networks and customer interactions), and basic survival needs. Thus, this theoretical framework helps explain the formation of entrepreneurial motivation and how business actors adapt their strategies in response to changes in the surrounding economic environment.

In addition to this theoretical perspective, the concept of the modern market also serves as an important analytical reference in this study. Koentjaraningrat (in Devy Pramudiana, 2018) conceptualizes the market as a social institution that regulates interactions between sellers and buyers in the exchange of goods and services. Over time, markets have undergone processes of modernization, characterized by the emergence of malls as shopping centers featuring self-service systems and enhanced consumer facilities (Prihatminingtyas, 2016). Malls such as Bontang Citimall thus function not only as contemporary economic hubs but also as social spaces that shape new consumption patterns within urban communities.

From the perspective of business actors, entrepreneurial motivation constitutes a key factor influencing their decision to engage in business activities. McClelland (in Surendra et al., 2022) argues that entrepreneurial motivation arises from three fundamental needs: the need for achievement, the need for power, and the need for affiliation. In the context of this study, micro-entrepreneurs operating around Bontang Citimall are driven by economic necessities (such as income generation), the desire for autonomy, and market opportunities generated by the substantial flow of visitors to the mall.

Furthermore, the dynamics surrounding Bontang Citimall can also be examined through the lens of socioeconomic change. Soemardjan (in Marius, 2006) defines social change as transformations in social

institutions that influence societal systems, values, and behavioral patterns. In parallel, Sukirno (in Prio Utomo, 2021) conceptualizes economic change as shifts in economic systems and activities that impact output, employment opportunities, and income distribution. Within the context of this study, the presence of Bontang Citimall not only stimulates economic change reflected in increased turnover and customer flows for micro businesses but also generates social change through the emergence of new patterns of interaction between business actors and consumers.

Several previous studies provide an empirical foundation for this research. The article "The Impact of the Development of the Cibinong City Mall on Social and Economic Change in RW 04 Pakansari Cibinong" highlights the mall's impact on the local economy and demonstrates that there has been an increase in economic aspects for the surrounding community across various sectors since the mall's arrival near their settlement (Novianto et al., 2023). Meanwhile, The report "Socioeconomic Conditions Following the Construction of Hartono Mall" shows significant changes in the income and social structure of the community surrounding the mall (Latifah & Lestari, 2021). Looking at the positive impacts similar to those in Cibinong City, the surrounding community experienced an increase in employment opportunities, from employees working at the mall to the proliferation of traders and small businesses around the mall. However, another issue has arisen: since the construction of Hartono Mall, the number of people with traditional livelihoods has gradually decreased, due to the shift in land use from gardens and agricultural land to commercial areas. Similar conditions also occur. It was found that shopping centers can have a positive impact on businesses through increased employment opportunities and market access (Novanda et al., 2022).

On the other hand, in a study entitled "The Impact of Grand Mall on Traders' Income Levels at Batangase Market, Maros Regency," it was revealed that there was a decline in traditional traders' income due to the shift of consumers to shopping centers (Nirmayanti & Falihin, 2023). In this case, at a macro level, there is added value for regional economic development, although it does not directly save the income of traditional market traders. When modern markets are not accompanied by protection for small and traditional business actors, the socio-economic gap can widen on a broad and structural scale (Aryansyah & M. Afdal in Rahman et al., 2025) due to their inability to compete in terms of location, facilities, and promotion, traditional markets become uncompetitive, potentially leading to a systemic decline in competitiveness for MSMEs. This results in the loss of loyal customers and disrupts family financial stability. Traditional markets ultimately experience significant declines, impacting the sustainability of the local economy. While the presence of modern malls tends to put pressure on traditional markets due to changing consumer preferences and the appeal of more convenient facilities, not all vendors experience a significant decline in economic performance. Thus, the impact of malls on traditional market vendors' income is partial and depends on each vendor's individual adaptability (Rezky, 2019).

Based on the findings of previous studies, it can be concluded that the development of modern markets with the emergence of shopping centers or malls in the midst of society does have a significant impact on the economic development of the area, but it cannot be denied that this development also has a negative impact ranging from shifts in people's livelihoods to pressure for small and medium enterprises. This study offers scientific value and novelty by integrating two important aspects that have not been widely studied together, namely entrepreneurial motivation and changes in the conditions of micro-enterprises in response to the presence of modern malls. This study explains how micro-entrepreneurs operating around Bontang Citimall make rational decisions in managing their businesses, while analyzing their responses to social and economic changes that have emerged since the shopping center began operating. The findings of this study are expected to provide empirical contributions to the formulation of local economic development policies and the empowerment of MSMEs in urban contexts.

2. METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method aimed at gaining a direct understanding of the social and economic phenomena occurring around Bontang Citimall. This approach was selected to enable the researchers to describe in detail the entrepreneurial motivations and the changes in microbusiness conditions following the commencement of operations of the shopping center. Data collection was conducted through field observations from 11 to 14 April 2025 to examine the intensity of economic activities around the mall, including the increased frequency of visitors such as online motorcycle taxi drivers, travel service drivers, and mall employees who regularly purchase food from nearby food stalls.

The research procedures encompassed several stages, including preparation, field observation, interviews, and conclusion drawing. The research activities focused on micro-businesses located in Tanjung Laut Village, South Bontang District, Bontang City, East Kalimantan with observation areas categorized into zones of close,

medium, and relatively distant proximity to Bontang Citimall. This categorization was intended to capture variations in economic activity based on the distance from the shopping center.

The data used in this study consist of primary data collected directly by the researchers in the field. These data include interviews with micro-business owners and community leaders, observations of buying and selling activities around the mall, and field notes documenting business conditions. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format, allowing informants to provide comprehensive insights regarding their entrepreneurial motivations, changes in revenue, and survival strategies following the establishment of the mall.

In addition to primary data, this study also utilized secondary data obtained from documents issued by the Bontang City Cooperative, SME, and Trade Office, online news sources, and social media information related to the development of Bontang Citimall. The secondary data were used to complement and validate the field findings, as well as to provide a broader overview of the development of micro businesses in the research area.

Data analysis was carried out using the Miles and Huberman model, as outlined in Sidiq & Choiri (2019) which encompasses data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Each interview and observation result was systematically selected, organized into narrative form, and subsequently interpreted in accordance with the research focus. Through this analytical process, the researchers developed a comprehensive understanding of how the presence of Bontang Citimall has influenced the motivations and business conditions of micro-entrepreneurs in the surrounding area.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Economic activity in the community around Bontang Citimall has shown significant dynamics since the mall began operating. The mall's presence not only attracts consumers but also creates opportunities for local residents to establish or expand their businesses. The presence of a shopping center in an area often has significant impacts on nearby merchants and MSMEs. Micro-enterprises in Tanjung Laut Village have capitalized on this situation for various reasons, including generating income, increasing economic independence, and maintaining social engagement through interactions with customers and other businesses.

A closer look shows that the logic of rational choice applied by micro-entrepreneurs has been used, for example, by clothing traders at the Wage Market in Tulungagung. In this phenomenon, traders are faced with the challenge of market transformation, ranging from physical to the emergence of e-commerce. The choices made by actors, namely clothing traders at the Wage Market, reflect a close relationship where the prevailing system, in this case, the emergence of modern markets, influences the rational decisions chosen by actors. This condition results in two groups of traders. Clothing traders with limited resources tend to make rational choices with a conservative approach based on social relations and risk management, therefore, it is difficult for this group to develop further. Conversely, clothing traders who have sufficient resources, mastery of technology and broad market reach tend to make rational choices with adaptive strategies that enable them to expand their market by following the current system (Kristanto, 2025). A similar decision-making process was also carried out by the Buronan Ndower MSME group, where traders made contextually rational choices, in which they continued to strive to optimize their profits despite facing constraints. Merchants chose digital payment technologies like QRIS because they could improve customer purchasing decisions through ease, speed, and transaction security. This suggests that merchants chose an approach that yielded greater returns from their efforts. Rational merchant choices typically stem from a combination of market analysis and intuition built from experience rather than perfect calculation. In determining the business strategy best suited to their circumstances, internal factors such as human resource quality, product innovation, and managerial capabilities are reasonable considerations. However, merchants cannot always make the best decisions if they lack sufficient information or resources. Instead, they tend to make decisions that are "reasonably profitable," or satisfactory, as a way to adapt to these limitations. Therefore, the choices made by MSME merchants are more akin to "bounded rationality," where decisions are based not only on considerations of benefits but also on actual circumstances (Sahya Fadiah et al., 2025). The decisions made by the Buronan Ndower MSME group are supported by research conducted by Amanda P. Cowen, where the "Coleman's Boat" framework plays a crucial role in connecting the macro and micro levels in management studies. In this situation, the actions of individuals as the main actors are influenced by macro factors such as technological advances, market dynamics, and economic policies; however, these factors do not directly determine the final outcome. In other words, decisions made by business actors are a crucial mechanism linking structural changes to the resulting economic outcomes. This method asserts that individual behavior, including MSME traders, can be considered logical choices influenced by their preferences, resources, and the information they possess. This research also emphasizes the importance of "microfoundations," which explain organizational phenomena based on the

actions and interactions of individuals. Traders see this in their responses to environmental changes, such as using marketing strategies or digital technology to increase profits and business sustainability. However, due to limited information and resources, these rational choices do not always produce the best decisions. Traders' decisions are more akin to bounded rationality, where they still try to choose the best alternative that can be achieved under current circumstances. Therefore, the "Coleman's Boat" framework is used in this study to support the argument that rational trader choice is a bridge connecting macro elements with economic outcomes at the business level (Cowen et al., 2022).

The survival of new ventures in developing countries is strongly influenced by the multilevel interaction between institutional support, individual perceptions, and entrepreneurial behavior. Entrepreneurs' perceptions of environmental uncertainty are crucial in shaping adaptive behavior that increases the chances of venture survival. Using Coleman's bathtub framework, Franczak in *Immersed In Coleman's Bathtub: Multilevel Dynamics Driving New Venture Survival In Emerging Markets* demonstrates a clear micro-macro mechanism, where the influence of institutional factors on venture performance is not direct, but rather mediated by individual interpretations, perceptions, and actions (Franczak et al., 2023). This assumption is further supported by research conducted by Liridon Kryeziu (2023), which demonstrated a strong correlation between actors' perceptions of rational choice and institutional elements such as social and cultural norms that drive business behavior, while regulatory elements do not always have a significant impact. Conversely, factors such as business size, age, and flexibility also influence how MSMEs make decisions. Considering their resources, opportunities, and limitations, business actors act as actors who choose the most profitable strategy from a rational choice perspective. However, due to environmental pressures and limited information, decisions taken are not always optimal, but rather rational. Thus, MSME behavior reflects a rational choice process influenced by macro conditions and manifested through individual actions as described in Coleman's framework (Kryeziu et al., 2024).

In order to get more concrete results in this study, the business owners who served as informants came from diverse backgrounds and characteristics, including variations in business type, operating duration, and proximity to Bontang Citimall. These differences influenced how they perceived market opportunities, formulated survival strategies, and experienced changes after the mall's operations began, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Identity of Primary Informants

Name	Age	Gender	Type of Business	Length of Business (around Bontang Citimall)	Business Location (Distance from Bontang Citimall)
GW	40	Female	Culinary (food stall)	6 months	100 meters
R	53	Female	Culinary (food stall)	2 years	100 meters
W	33	Female	Culinary (food stall)	5 months	50 meters
A	44	Male	Culinary (<i>Gorengan</i>)	14 years	650 meters
M	47	Female	Retail (Small Grocery Store)	15 years	600 meters
I	44	Female	Retail (Small Grocery Store)	11 years	450 meters
G	22	Female	Retail (Small Grocery Store)	4 years	400 meters
N	23	Female	Retail (Phone Counter)	2 years	70 meters
F	45	Male	Service (Phone & Laptop Repair)	8 years	50 meters
AK	34	Male	Service (Motorcycle Repair Workshop)	3 years	400 meters

Source: Processed by Primary Data (2026)

As shown in Table 1, the majority of businesses operate within a radius of less than 600 meters from Bontang Citimall and are concentrated in the culinary, retail, and service sectors. Several informants represent long-established businesses with existing customer bases prior to the construction of the mall, while others are newly established enterprises that emerged in response to the increased mobility of Citimall visitors. These differences in business characteristics provide a strong analytical foundation for understanding the diversity of

entrepreneurial motivations and strategies, as well as assessing the extent to which the presence of Bontang Citimall has shaped local economic change.

These differences in characteristics not only illustrate the diversity of business types but also reflect variations in the mindsets and motivations of community members when making entrepreneurial decisions. In this context, the motivations of micro-entrepreneurs operating around Bontang Citimall constitute a crucial aspect for understanding how the community responds to the economic changes that have emerged as a result of the presence of this modern shopping center.

3.1. Entrepreneurial Motivation among Micro-Entrepreneurs

The results of the research obtained through in-depth interviews and field observations show that the motivation of micro-businesses around Bontang Citimall is not singular, but rather diverse according to the social, economic, and individual experiences of each person. The establishment of Bontang Citimall has generated a new economic landscape that compels the surrounding community to adapt through entrepreneurial initiatives. The increase in economic activities in the mall's vicinity, driven by visitors, mall employees, and *ojek* online, has created market opportunities that local residents have utilized to establish businesses, particularly in the culinary, service, and retail sectors.

Most micro-entrepreneurs reported that their primary motivation for starting a business was to meet household economic needs. They sought to generate additional income to support their families and achieve greater financial independence. In addition, several entrepreneurs established businesses that align with their existing skills, such as motorcycle repair services, mobile phone counters, and electronic repair shops. Others were driven by the strategic location surrounding Bontang Citimall, which they perceived as offering promising opportunities due to the high level of local activity and the steady flow of visitors on a daily basis.

This motivation is further supported by empirical conditions in the field, which indicate an increase in the number of food stalls, mobile phone counters, and small grocery stores in the areas surrounding the mall. Key informants, including the head of RT 24 and the head of Tanjung Laut Village, stated that the presence of Bontang Citimall has encouraged residents to establish new businesses due to the potential customer traffic and emerging market opportunities generated by mall visitors.

Overall, the findings indicate that the motivations of micro-entrepreneurs can be grouped into two primary categories: economic motivation and the attractiveness of strategic business locations. Economic motivation encompasses the need to increase household income, achieve financial independence, and utilize existing skills to generate economic value. Meanwhile, the appeal of strategic locations is associated with emerging market opportunities driven by increased community mobility and the geographical proximity of businesses to local activity centers. The interplay of these two factors reflects the community's adaptive response to shifts in the local economic structure following the establishment of Bontang Citimall as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Entrepreneurial Motivation among Micro Entrepreneurs

Informant (type of business)	Economic	Strategic Location & Market Opportunities	Others
GW (Culinary)		✓	
R (Culinary)		✓	
W (Culinary)		✓	
A (Culinary)	✓		
M (Retail)	✓		✓
I (Retail)	✓		
G (Retail)	✓	✓	
N (Retail)		✓	
F (Service)		✓	
AK (Service)	✓		

Source: Processed by Primary Data (2026)

As shown in Table 2, indicates that the majority of entrepreneurs are motivated by economic factors and the strategic location, which are perceived to provide profit opportunities. Non-economic motivations, such as the desire for social interaction, maintaining activity, and occupying leisure time, are also evident, though to a

lesser extent. These findings suggest that the decision to engage in entrepreneurship around Bontang Citimall is driven by rational considerations of economic conditions, individual skills, and the existing market opportunities.

The motivation of micro-entrepreneurs to establish or expand businesses around Bontang Citimall did not emerge spontaneously but rather resulted from a process of adaptation to changes in the local economic structure. The study's findings indicate that the presence of the mall has generated new market opportunities that encourage the surrounding community to engage in entrepreneurial activities. This is in line with Coleman's view in Rational Choice Theory, which explains that individuals act consciously to achieve certain goals by calculating the most beneficial benefits and risks (Coleman, 1990).

The majority of micro-business owners are primarily motivated by economic factors, including the desire to increase household income, achieve financial independence, and leverage their skills for profit generation. Other entrepreneurs are influenced by strategic location factors, perceived as promising due to the high mobility of mall visitors and the surrounding economic activity. These findings are in line with Edwar's research (2019), which explains that entrepreneurial motivation is generally influenced by the need for freedom in work, profit, and economic independence.

In addition, non-economic factors, such as the desire to remain productive and engage in social interactions, also serve as motivating factors for some entrepreneurs. Many choose to establish businesses to avoid idleness at home or to occupy their free time with productive activities. This motivation aligns with McClelland's Hierarchy of Motivation theory, which posits that the need for achievement and the need for affiliation significantly influence an individual's decision to pursue entrepreneurship (Surendra et al., 2022).

Thus, the entrepreneurial motivation of micro-businesses around Bontang Citimall can be categorized into two main factors: economic motivation and the appeal of a strategic location, reinforced by social factors such as the desire to achieve and maintain involvement in social life. The combination of these various motivations shows that the community's decision to become entrepreneurs around Bontang Citimall is the result of complex rational considerations between economic opportunities, market potential, and the social values that have developed in their environment.

3.2. Changes in Business Conditions After the Mall Starts Operating

The presence of a mall in an area certainly has a significant impact, especially for traders and MSMEs in the surrounding area. Andarina (2019) in a study on the impact of the Grand Mall Batangase in Maros Regency showed that the presence of this modern shopping center caused a decrease in income for some traders in the traditional market in Batangase. This was due to a decrease in the number of customers and the shift of people to modern markets that offer convenience, more complete facilities, and a more efficient service system. Although some sellers did not experience a significant decline, some did experience a direct impact on sales levels. Conversely, the presence of the Grand Mall also benefits the overall economic growth of the region, by increasing economic activity and regional development. Therefore, although the impact is dual, conventional market traders are more likely to lose income (Andarina, 2019). On the other hand, the presence of malls also inevitably has a positive impact, such as the presence of Tunjungan Plaza Mall, which has succeeded in increasing the number of small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the surrounding area. This occurs due to increased economic activity and high visitor flow, which opens up new business opportunities for the community, especially in the culinary, service, and small trade sectors. Many people take advantage of this opportunity by establishing businesses to meet the needs of customers and employees around the mall. As a result, Tunjungan Plaza is not only a shopping center, but also encourages the growth of small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and provides economic opportunities for the local community (Alifia & Kristiyanto, 2025). Several studies have illustrated the complexity of the impacts caused by the presence of shopping centers. Therefore, it is very necessary to conduct an in-depth study of how the emergence of shopping centers can have a significant impact on the decline and improvement of the surrounding economy.

Changes in the conditions of micro-enterprises around Bontang Citimall have become increasingly apparent since the shopping center began operating. Based on interviews and field observations, micro-entrepreneurs have demonstrated various forms of adaptation to the emerging economic dynamics in the area. In general, these changes can be categorized into three main aspects: consumer type, income level, and business capacity. Variations in these changes among entrepreneurs are influenced by the type of business, location, and each entrepreneur's ability to capitalize on market opportunities. A summary of the research findings concerning these changes is presented in the following Table 3 below.

Table 3. Changes in Business Conditions After the Mall Commenced Operations

No	Informant	Changes in Consumer Type	Changes in Income	Changes in Business Capacity
1	GW (Culinary, Food Stall)	Increasing and more diverse (<i>Ojek</i> online drivers, mall employees, general shoppers)	± Rp10-15 million/month	Opened a 3×4 m shop at home, added online services
2	R (Culinary, Food Stall)	More crowded (<i>Ojek</i> online drivers, mall employees, general shoppers)	± Rp20 million/month	3×4 m food stall, adding variety to the menu & online services
3	W (Culinary, Food Stall)	More diverse, many buyers are mall employees during lunch hour	± Rp800.000 /day (Rp20 million/month)	Establishing an outlet on the side of the road near the mall
4	A (Culinary, <i>Gorengan</i>)	No change, that is, from the local community	Stable (Rp15-20 million/month)	No change, still with 1 cart (<i>gerobak</i>) & 2 stoves (<i>kompur</i>)
5	M (Retail, Small Grocery Store)	No change, regular customers are local residents	Stable (Rp3-5 million/month)	No change
6	I (Retail, Small Grocery Store)	Increased (mall employees who live near the mall (<i>ngekos</i>))	Increased from Rp 2 million to Rp5-7 million/month	Adding variety to the products sold
7	G (Retail, Small Grocery Store)	More diverse (mall employees & surrounding community)	Increased from Rp 5-7 million to Rp10 million/month	Add products, reduce operating hours
8	N (Retail, Phone Counters)	Different (mall visitors & mall payment top-up users)	Increased to ± Rp20 juta/bulan	Rent a 3×4.5 m shop house, plus digital services
9	F (Service, Hp & Laptop Repair)	No change (young people) but increasing in number	Increased from Rp 5-7 million to ± Rp 20 million/month	Adding new electronic service tools
10	AK (Service, Motorcycle Service Workshop)	No change, that is, from the local community	Stable (Rp 25-30 million/month)	No change, workshop area 5×4 m

Source: Processed by Primary Data (2026)

In general, the findings show that culinary and service-based microbusinesses experienced the most substantial positive effects, particularly in terms of increased customer volume and higher income. In contrast, retail and motorcycle repair enterprises tended to remain relatively stable, as their operations rely more heavily on established local customers. Several businesses also undertook capacity adjustments, including product diversification, reduced operating hours, and improvements to facilities and equipment. Overall, these findings show that the presence of modern shopping centers such as Bontang Citimall has functioned as a catalyst for economic activity in the surrounding community.

The presence of Bontang Citimall has exerted a measurable influence on the dynamics of microbusiness activities in its surrounding area. Data from the Bontang City Office of Cooperatives, UKM, and Trade show an increase in the number of micro-scale enterprises in Tanjung Laut Village, from 48 units in 2022 to 62 units in 2024. This growth demonstrates the direct impact of the mall's operation on the development of the microbusiness sector, particularly in culinary, retail, and service-related industries.

The changes encountered by micro-businesses differ based on the type of enterprise, geographical location, and the adaptive capacity of each business owner. The culinary sector exhibits the most substantial positive impact, driven by the high consumption needs of mall visitors and employees, which has contributed

to an increase in customer volume and sales turnover. Retail businesses, such as grocery stores, have also reported higher sales, primarily due to additional customers from mall employees residing in nearby boarding houses. In contrast, service-oriented enterprises including mobile phone repair and motorcycle workshops demonstrate more moderate growth, which is largely contingent upon the nature of services provided and the proximity of business locations to primary visitor activity areas.

In addition to the increases in revenue and customer volume, several businesses have also adjusted their operational strategies. For instance, some retail businesses have shortened their operating hours because their revenue targets can be met despite reduced opening times. Others have expanded their product offerings and upgraded their equipment to accommodate increasingly diverse consumer demands. These developments demonstrate an active process of adaptation to market shifts triggered by the operation of Bontang Citimall.

However, the other findings also show that not all micro-entrepreneurs have benefited directly from government support, particularly with regard to capital assistance and empowerment programs. Several informants reported being unaware of training initiatives or zero-interest loan schemes offered by local government institutions. This situation reflects a disconnect between policy formulation and the dissemination and implementation of these policies at the micro-entrepreneur level.

Overall, the changes observed since the operation of Bontang Citimall demonstrate that the development of modern shopping centers can stimulate local economic growth, expand opportunities for micro-business development, and foster entrepreneurial activity within the community. Nevertheless, these positive effects will be more substantial if accompanied by targeted and sustainable empowerment policies, particularly in the areas of capital support, training, and market access.

The findings of this study show that the presence of Bontang Citimall has not only changed the local economic landscape but also given rise to new social dynamics among micro-businesses. The economic activities of the community around the mall have developed organically through adaptation to market opportunities and changes in consumption patterns brought about by the presence of this modern shopping center. This confirms that the existence of commercial infrastructure such as Bontang Citimall plays a strategic role in encouraging local entrepreneurial activities, especially in the small business sector that is oriented towards the daily needs of the community.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the presence of Bontang Citimall has increased the economic activity of the surrounding community, particularly among micro-enterprises that benefit from the mobility of visitors and mall employees. The motivation to become entrepreneurs is driven by a combination of internal factors, such as economic needs, the desire for financial independence, and the drive for productivity, as well as external factors such as, the strategic location and market opportunities that have been created around the mall. The changes in business conditions include an increase in the number of customers, consumer diversity, increased turnover, and the addition of product and service variations as a form of adaptation to the new economic environment. However, the impact is not uniform due to differences in distance, type of business, and target market segment. These findings indicate that the development of modern shopping centers can be a catalyst for local economic growth if balanced with inclusive and sustainable MSME empowerment policies. Therefore, collaboration between local governments, mall managers, and micro-businesses is necessary to create a mutually reinforcing economic ecosystem and ensure that the benefits of development are felt evenly by the community.

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