Evaluation of the Impact of the Thrifting Ban Policy at Gedebage Market Bandung City

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ABSTRACT

The issue of used clothing, or trifling, has become a significant concern for the government and the wider public today, both in social and print media. This study analyzes the impact of the policy banning the sale of used clothing at Gedebage Market, Bandung, which was implemented to protect the local textile industry and reduce textile waste. Using a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques such as interviews and documentation studies, the findings of this study found that the policy banning the trifling trade had a significant impact on various aspects of life. Economically, traders experienced a decrease in income and some were forced to close their businesses. Socially, people lost access to affordable clothing and resistance emerged. From a political perspective, there was debate about the fairness of the policy and the lack of public involvement in its formulation, which directly impacted traders. Meanwhile, from an environmental perspective, this policy is considered to have positive potential in reducing textile waste, although it still requires further policy support such as the provision of facilities. This study recommends various participatory and inclusive policy evaluations in the implementation of policies related to the ban on trifling in the Cimol Gedebage market in Bandung City, by considering several aspects of balance, including the economic interests of the community and environmental sustainability that encourage efforts not to marginalize traders who sell used clothes in the Cimol Gedebage market in Bandung City.

INTRODUCTION

Thrifting comes from the word "thrift," meaning thrifty, and has been around since 14th-century England. Initially, this practice of buying secondhand goods was carried out by the upper-middle class as a form of saving and maintaining prosperity (Bosangit et al., 2023). Over time, thrifting has become a global trend, including in Indonesia. This activity involves purchasing used goods, both local and imported, and is becoming increasingly popular among young people as the zero-waste lifestyle becomes more popular (Salim, 2022). The thrifting industry in Indonesia is growing rapidly through online and offline stores and festivals in various regions (Diahwahyuningtyas, 2023; Rahayuningtyas et al., 2025). Globally, thrifting has become a multi-billion dollar industry that not only offers low prices and unique items, but also creates business opportunities and contributes to reducing textile waste (Roberts, 2023; Siddique, 2024; Widhia Arum Wibawana, 2023).

Thrifting, or the purchase of used clothing, is increasingly popular in Indonesia, especially among the younger generation, as a more economical and sustainable alternative to traditional consumption. Gedebage Market in Bandung is one of the largest thrifting centers in West Java and has long been a source of livelihood for thousands of small businesses. However, in 2022, the Indonesian government issued Minister of Trade Regulation No. 40 of 2022, which explicitly prohibits the import of used clothing, citing concerns about protecting the national textile industry and addressing textile waste. Despite its well-intentioned intentions, the implementation of this policy has created new problems. Many vendors have lost their livelihoods, market activity has decreased, and people have lost access to affordable clothing. Furthermore, this policy has been deemed to have minimal public participation and lacks an adequate transition strategy for affected parties. In this context, this study aims to comprehensively evaluate the impact of the thrifting ban at Gedebage Market.

Several previous studies have discussed policies related to thrifting, firstly Ghilmansyah et al., (2022) whose research analyzed the Thrifting Phenomenon as a Lifestyle of Bogor Millennials. Next, research conducted by Gustina (2024) analyzed the Meaning of Branded Thrifting Goods by Generation Z. Third, research conducted by Agustian et al., (2023) analyzed Fashion Thrift in FISIPkom Unida Students as Self-Expression. Fourth, research by Oktawiningsih et al., (2023) analyzed the Thrifting Phenomenon on Student Lifestyles. Finally, research conducted by Wulantari et al., (2025) whose analytical findings found Sustainable Clothing Consumption in Thrifting Practices in Yogyakarta. Different from several previous studies, this study analyzes the evaluation of the impact of policies related to the

prohibition of thrifting using the Dunn model. In a broader sense, evaluation is a systematic process for collecting, analyzing, and evaluating information about policy programs or activities (Amrullah et al., 2024). Meanwhile, impact is a collision, an influence that has both positive and negative effects. Natural disasters, public policy, social change, and the use of technology are some examples of situations where impact can occur. There are two types of effects: positive and negative. Beneficial effects are called positive effects, while detrimental effects are called negative effects

Policy evaluation is the process of assessing a program or policy to understand its impact, effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance. Evaluation is conducted to assess a policy's contribution to achieving its objectives and to identify its positive and negative impacts on the community and the program in question. Evaluation also helps to comprehensively understand the consequences and impacts of a policy on the community. Policy evaluation, according to Dunn (2018), refers to the process of evaluating a policy or program to understand its impact, effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance. Dunn emphasizes the importance of evaluation as an integral part of policy analysis. Evaluation helps understand a policy's contribution to achieving its objectives and identifies its positive and negative impacts on the community and the program in question. Dunn also highlights the importance of collecting valid and reliable information in the evaluation process to support better decision-making regarding public policy.

According to Dunn (2018), impact evaluation in public policy involves collecting accurate and reliable information about how policies affect the community and the programs concerned. This study uses the impact evaluation theory, which covers four main dimensions: economic, social, political, and environmental. The theoretical basis used discusses the necessary theories, which aim to provide academic understanding for researchers. The theories are then presented as answers to the questions in the researcher's problem formulation, which then become suggestions and directions for the ongoing research. The theory that is raised will be a reflection or limitation of the theory raised as the basis for research conducted by researchers. This approach aims to provide a comprehensive picture of policy effectiveness and recommendations for improving policies to be fairer and more sustainable. The following graph shows the value of used clothing imports into Indonesia over the past five years (Chart 1).

Chart 1.1 Value of Used Clothing Imports (Thrifting) in the Last 5 Years (2020-2024)
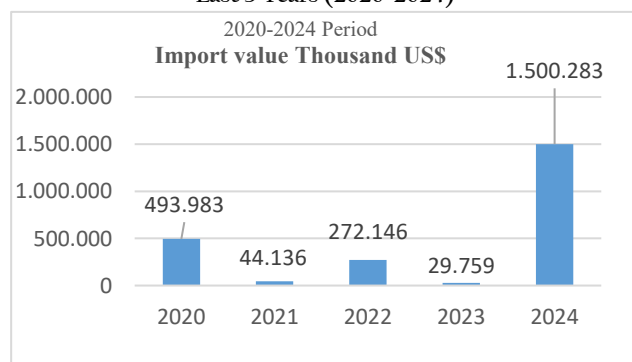
Source: Badan Pusat Statistik 2025

The graph above shows a significant decrease in the number of active traders and sales turnover following the implementation of the ban on used clothing imports. This data reinforces field findings that the policy has had a direct impact on the economic stability of thrifting businesses. This decline not only impacts the sustainability of traders' businesses but also has implications for overall market activity and reduced employment opportunities in the Gedebage Market area. This indicates that policy implementation has not fully addressed the readiness of local businesses to adapt, as well as the lack of support in the form of economic transition programs. Based on this explanation, the researcher is very interested in conducting research on the impact of implementing the thrifting policy at Gedebage Market, Bandung City and stated it in the following research formulation "How to Evaluate the Impact of the Thrifting Prohibition Policy at Gedebage Market, Bandung City?"

METHOD

The research methodology used in this study is qualitative descriptive research. The reason for this research using this approach is to analyze social phenomena meaningfully (Djamba & Neuman, 2002). Qualitative research is a method for exploring and understanding the meaning by a number of individuals or groups of people who are considered to originate from social or humanitarian problems. The location of the research conducted by the researcher is located at Cimol Gedebage Market and the research time is approximately calculated from September 2024 to July 2025. Types of data according to their sources are primary data and secondary data, primary data by conducting interviews and secondary data obtained in this study including journals, books, browsing on the internet and notes related to the problem being studied.

The data collection techniques in this study used data collection techniques such as observation, interviews, and documentation. The informant determination technique used in this study is the technique proposed, namely Purposive Technique or Purposive Sampling. The informants used were the West Java Trade Office, the community near the Gedebage Market area, traders at Gedebage Market, and the Traders Association at Gedebage Market, Bandung City (Creswell, 2018). The data analysis technique used in this study is by using interactive analysis that takes place simultaneously with other parts of qualitative research such as data writing and processing various research findings up to drawing conclusions. Finally, the data validity test technique used in this study is data source triangulation and time triangulation (Miles & Huberman, 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study will present four analytical dimensions used as analytical tools to analyze the impact of the trifling ban policy in Gedebage Market, Bandung. This Result and discussion can be seen as follows:

Economic Dimension

The ban on secondhand clothing imports has had a significant economic impact on traders at Gedebage Market. Income has plummeted, many stalls have been forced to close, and there have been job cuts. Furthermore, there are no transition strategies such as entrepreneurship training, access to financing, or integration into the formal sector. The economic impact also extends to surrounding communities dependent on market

activities, such as stall owners, parking attendants, and porters. This indicates that the policy has not been accompanied by a sustainable economic approach for affected groups. This situation was exacerbated by the lack of a clear transition strategy from the government, such as training for new businesses, capital assistance, or access to alternative local products. As a result, vendors' turnover plummeted, some stalls were forced to close, and some were forced to reduce their workforce to reduce operating costs. This decline in economic activity was also felt by the community surrounding the market, especially small businesses such as food stalls, parking services, and goods transporters. Community activity around the market area decreased significantly due to the sluggish economic activity following the implementation of the policy.

The West Java Provincial Industry and Trade Office stated that it was merely implementing central government policy. While the primary goal of the ban is to protect domestic industry and combat illegal imports, the regional government acknowledged that implementation at the local level faces significant challenges due to the lack of full involvement of affected communities. The office also added that a dialogue space is now being opened so that traders and the public can convey their concerns to the central government. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the implementation of the thrifting ban at Gedebage Market has created significant economic pressure on businesses and the surrounding community. This policy not only leads to decreased income but also undermines public trust in the government's policy-making process. The lack of community involvement and a transitional framework render this policy socio-economically ineffective. One crucial aspect of public policymaking is considering economic factors as a crucial component to ensure policies gain widespread public acceptance (Masquillier & Cosaert, 2023).

Social Dimension

From a social perspective, the policy created unrest and uncertainty among traders. The loss of livelihoods triggered anxiety and psychological stress, especially since not all traders received government assistance or training. Inequality in the distribution of aid created a sense of injustice, thus reducing trust in the government. Social cohesion was disrupted because most traders felt excluded from the transition process or policy solutions. Not only were the vendors affected, but the surrounding community, who had been indirectly dependent on the market's economic activities, also felt the social impact of this policy. Small businesses such as food stalls, parking services, snack vendors, and even freight transporters experienced significant declines in income. Some residents were even forced to close their businesses due to their inability to survive.

The Gedebage Market Traders Association assessed that the policy had an impact on the social lives of its members. In addition to declining income and market activity, social relationships between traders were also disrupted. Many traders lost their jobs suddenly without any viable alternatives to other businesses. The regional government, through the West Java Provincial Department of Industry and Trade, recognizes that this policy poses significant social challenges. Although guidance has been provided, the department acknowledges that not all traders and affected communities have received the necessary support, including training, capital assistance, or business mentoring. These findings indicate that the thrifting ban at

Gedebage Market has had a far-reaching impact on the community's social structure. The loss of income sources, weak support, and changing market dynamics have created unrest and uncertainty. Therefore, in addition to a regulatory approach, such a policy requires a more comprehensive social strategy with active community involvement, the provision of concrete alternative solutions, and ongoing guidance to ensure a just and sustainable social transition. Social acceptance is a crucial component of any policy. Explains that social transition changes occur when public policies are implemented, particularly in the transformation of the capital city's relocation from Jakarta to North Penajam Paser, also known as the IKN (Andri et al., 2025).

Political Dimension

Politically, this policy is considered top-down because it does not involve active participation of traders in its formulation. Socialization is carried out only through associations or intermediaries, not reaching all affected individuals. Furthermore, policy implementation tends to be uneven, with assistance only receiving some. This creates a perception of inequality and worsens relations between the government and affected communities, as well as reducing the policy's legitimacy at the grassroots level. The West Java Provincial Department of Industry and Trade stated that following the implementation of the thrifting ban, the government has attempted to foster entrepreneurship training and encourage a shift to local products.

However, in practice, this training has been largely conducted through associations or trader representatives. The department acknowledged that limited resources have prevented them from reaching all business owners directly. This approach creates disparities at the business level. Many traders reported never having participated in training or received direct government assistance. Representation mechanisms through associations are considered ineffective in ensuring equitable access to information and development programs.

Figure 1. Advocacy Conducted by the Association

Source: Researcher 2025

These findings indicate that limitations in policy development and communication mechanisms contribute to the low effectiveness of implementation on the ground. Involvement that is merely symbolic or focused on representative structures is insufficient to address the needs of the broader community. Therefore, a more inclusive approach that directly reaches affected individuals or groups is needed to prevent policy disparities and inequities in benefit receipt. The impact of this ban gave rise to various escalations of conflict and resistance from existing trader associations. The impact of this ban has led to various escalations of conflict and resistance from existing merchant associations.

The following photographic documentation was obtained from Gedebage Market, represented by the Merchant Association, during advocacy regarding the West Java Provincial Government's ban on imports of used goods (Figure 1). Political support is key to policy stability, ensuring direct public support (Rajapaksa et al., 2018). The strong correlation between political ideology and public administration policies, as well as how public opinion and political actors influence policy implementation (Wlezien & Soroka, 2016).

Environmental Dimension

From an environmental perspective, although the ban on trifling aims to reduce textile waste, its implementation has not been supported by a proper waste management system in the field. Many unsold used clothes become new waste, piling up around the Gedebage market in Bandung City and polluting the environment. To date, there are no recycling facilities or training for productive textile waste processing. The West Java Provincial Department of Industry and Trade explained that imported used clothing is often unfit for use and has the potential to become waste, polluting the environment if not managed properly. This policy is expected to shift consumer behavior to be more responsible and strengthen the local, sustainable textile industry.

However, in practice, this policy has created new environmental problems. Many traders have difficulty selling the stock of used clothing they purchased before the policy was implemented. Because there is no clear distribution or waste management system, some of the used clothing is simply thrown away and piles up around the market area. As a result, the market environment becomes dirty and polluted by unmanaged textile waste. Residents living around Gedebage Market have also felt the environmental impact of this policy.

They believe the thrifting ban was not accompanied by concrete solutions for managing used clothing waste. The lack of storage facilities, collection systems, and education on textile waste management has resulted in items originally intended to be banned for environmental reasons instead creating new burdens for the community. This indicates that the policy still lacks a sustainable environmental approach. Hupe & Hill (2016) stated that environmental factors are a key factor in the impact of policy implementation on society. Meanwhile, Van Metter and Van Horn also mentioned that environmental aspects are an important concern that has a broad impact on the implementation of policies that are implemented.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and analysis of the policy prohibiting the sale of thrifted used clothing at Gedebage Market in Bandung City, it can be concluded that although this policy has good intentions, namely to protect domestic industry and maintain environmental sustainability, its implementation in the field still leaves complex problems and has a direct impact on the lives of many people, especially small traders and their families who depend on this business for their livelihood. The thrifting ban at Gedebage Market, while intended to protect domestic industry and the environment, has had complex negative impacts. Economically, many traders have lost income without adequate transitional support. Socially, the policy has created unrest and a sense of injustice because not everyone has received assistance.

To ensure the optimal implementation of the thrifting ban policy, relevant agencies need to strengthen transition mechanisms for affected businesses by expanding entrepreneurship training, providing access to legal business financing, and facilitating integration into the formal sector. Intervention programs must also be distributed equitably and standardized to avoid concentration of aid on specific groups. They must be supported by an accurate, objective beneficiary data management system integrated with the national population system. In policy formulation, a participatory approach based on public policy evaluation must be intensified to increase legitimacy and acceptability at the operational level. Furthermore, the development of a comprehensive textile waste management system, including infrastructure for collecting, sorting, and processing used clothing that is not absorbed by the market, is crucial.

Politically, the top-down approach without public involvement has weakened trust in the government. Meanwhile, from an environmental perspective, the lack of a textile waste management system has led to new pollution. Overall, this policy needs to be reviewed with a more inclusive and equitable approach. This research has theoretical implications, primarily in increasing knowledge regarding impact evaluation in public policy. Furthermore, impact evaluation also has practical implications in providing information on aspects that need to be addressed in established policies, as an evidence-based approach. This study has limitations primarily in examining various policy instrument approaches related to the thrifting ban, so it is hoped that future research will utilize existing policy instrument theory.

Acknowledgement

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