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Social Embeddedness and the Negotiation of Work Ethos: Economic Strategies of Javanese Migrants in the Micro Heterogeneity of Makassar City

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis secara mendalam mengenai manifestasi spirit kerja komunitas perantau etnis Jawa, mengidentifikasi pola interaksi sosial-ekonomi dengan masyarakat lokal heterogen, serta memetakan strategi adaptasi usaha mereka di wilayah Kecamatan Makassar. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus deskriptif, proses pengumpulan data lapangan dilakukan melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara mendalam terhadap 10 orang informan kunci, dan studi dokumentasi di Kelurahan Bara-Barayya Timur. Hasil penelitian ini berhasil menunjukkan tiga temuan utama yang saling berikatan. Pertama, modal budaya berupa spirit kerja etnis Jawa terejawantahkan secara kuat melalui prinsip pantang menyerah, eliminasi gengsi sosial, serta internalisasi nilai kejujuran berbasis rasionalitas subsistensi yang didukung fasilitas mobilitas memadai di perantauan. Kedua, interaksi sosial-ekonomi dengan masyarakat lokal (Bugis, Makassar, dan Enrekang) secara umum berlangsung harmonis dalam ranah kehidupan sosial serta asimilasi perkawinan, meskipun pada dimensi hubungan industrial perkotaan tetap terdapat friksi mikro akibat adanya pergeseran relasi kuasa kelas kerja lokal. Ketiga, strategi adaptasi usaha yang dibangun oleh informan bersifat dinamis dan bervariasi, di mana akumulasi modal sosial melalui penguatan jaringan kekerabatan serta fleksibilitas ceruk pasar informal menjadi kunci keberhasilan transformasi ekonomi perantau dari sektor informal menjadi wirausahawan mapan. Kajian sosiologi ekonomi ini diharapkan dapat memberikan kontribusi teoretis baru bagi studi riset migrasi urban dan menjadi rujukan praktis strategis bagi seluruh jajaran pemerintah daerah.

Kata Kunci: Etos kerja, Keterikatan Sosial, Masyarakat Urban, Perantau Jawa

Abstract

This study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the work ethic manifested by the Javanese migrant community, identify their patterns of socio-economic interaction with a heterogeneous local population, and map their business adaptation strategies within the

Makassar District. Employing a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study method, data collection was conducted through participant observation, in-depth interviews with 10 key informants, and document analysis in the Bara-Barayya Timur sub-district. The research reveals three interconnected findings. First, the cultural capital specifically the Javanese work ethic is strongly expressed through principles of perseverance, the setting aside of social prestige, and the internalization of honesty rooted in a subsistence-based rationality, all facilitated by adequate mobility in the migrant setting. Second, socio-economic interactions with the local population (comprising Bugis, Makassar, and Enrekang ethnic groups) are generally harmonious, characterized by integration in social life and interethnic marriage; however, minor frictions persist within urban industrial relations, stemming from shifts in power dynamics among the local working class. Third, the business adaptation strategies employed by the informants are dynamic and diverse; the accumulation of social capital strengthened through kinship networks combined with the flexibility to navigate informal market niches, has been key to the migrants' economic transformation from informal workers into established entrepreneurs. This study in economic sociology offers new theoretical contributions to the field of urban migration research and serves as a practical, strategic reference for local government authorities.

Keywords : Work Ethic, Social Attachment, Urban Society, Javanese Migrants

INTRODUCTION

Demographic phenomena and interregional population mobility are crucial determinants in accelerating national development in developing countries like Indonesia (Rahman, 2018). As a vast archipelagic nation, Indonesia faces a structural challenge in the form of spatial population imbalance; the island of Java despite its relatively limited geographical area has historically had to accommodate approximately 64 percent of the total national population (Arif & Nurwati, 2022). This excessive demographic concentration on Java has direct consequences, including increased ecological pressure, a drastic reduction in productive agricultural land, a shrinking supply of decent housing, and a massive deficit in formal employment opportunities. These complex conditions serve as primary push factors, compelling many ethnic Javanese to migrate from their homelands whether through government-facilitated transmigration schemes or via independent, self-initiated migration in pursuit of better livelihoods (Rozi et al., 2025).

Within this landscape of mobility, regions outside of Java offer new horizons acting as powerful (pull factors) particularly in metropolitan cities that serve as epicenters for regional economic growth (Faoziyah et al., 2025). The city of Makassar, which holds a strategic geopolitical position as the primary gateway to the economy of Eastern Indonesia, has become a highly sought-after urban destination for ethnic Javanese migrants seeking vertical socio-economic mobility (Pratiwi & Nikensari, 2024). The transformation of Makassar into a metropolitan urban area has not only attracted local migrants from the surrounding hinterlands but has also drawn a diverse influx of migrants from various other ethnic groups. The complexity of urban space in the city of Makassar ultimately gives rise to a site for the

contestation of new identities and economic dynamics, where migrant groups are compelled to reformulate their survival strategies amidst the forces of globalization and competitive urban modernization.

Theoretically, the success and socio-economic resilience of ethnic Javanese migrants as they navigate urban dynamics in a foreign environment can be analyzed through the lens of economic sociology. In this discipline, economic action never occurs in a vacuum; rather, it is always intertwined with and embedded within the social, cultural, and moral networks of the local community a concept popularized by Mark Granovetter as embeddedness (Rahe et al., 2025). The primary drivers of these migrants' economic activities stem from their possession of cultural capital manifested as a distinct work ethic and robust social capital. According to Max Weber, an individual's economic actions are often motivated by their deeply held values (Sudrajat, 1994). For the ethnic Javanese migrant community in the Makassar District, cultural values from their place of origin are preserved and transformed into a practical work ethic in their new environment. Traits such as resilience, persistence, patience (*nerimo*), and an unyielding spirit serve as intangible cultural capital, giving rise to value-rational economic actions. Typically, they begin their economic journey at the lowest stratum of the informal sector with minimal capital for instance, by selling *siomai* (steamed fish dumplings) as mobile vendors, operating small stalls selling *tahu* (tofu), or offering repair services for damaged goods.

To situate this research within an objective academic framework, three prior studies are particularly relevant as an empirical foundation. First, a comprehensive study by Muh. (Angrayani et al., 2026) reveals that while Javanese migrants in the Makassar District are guided by a principle of hard work, they also embrace the Javanese cultural philosophy of *aja ngaya* the practice of not pushing oneself beyond reasonable physical limits which psychologically helps maintain their mental stability amidst the intense pressures of urban competition. Second, a scholarly article on the multicultural existence of Javanese people in Minasa Upa, Makassar City, asserts that their cultural adaptation strategy relies on the institutionalization of a community association the *Kerukunan Keluarga Jawa* (KKJ) and the assimilation of the local language, both of which serve to minimize the potential for horizontal conflict (Wahib, 2026). Third, a historical study by Rohman, which traces the migration patterns of the Javanese ethnic group to Makassar, concludes that the pursuit of economic well-being has consistently been the primary driver for the survival of these migrants, regardless of the various fluctuations in local political dynamics that have occurred throughout history in their new environment (Rohman, 2025).

While the narrative surrounding the resilient work ethic of Javanese migrant groups has been extensively explored, much of the existing literature tends toward a homogenizing perspective portraying migrant ethnic groups as interacting passively with a single, monolithic dominant culture in their host environment (such as the Bugis or Makassar cultures, viewed in broad, macro terms). The novelty of this study lies in its specific spatial locus and its focus on socio-economic interactions within a micro-urban, heterogeneous setting: the Bara-Barayya Timur sub-district, located in the Makassar district. This area embodies a high degree of pluralism, where the Javanese migrant community lives alongside and interacts intensively with indigenous Bugis and Makassar residents, the ethnic Chinese community,

and secondary internal migrants from the Enrekang Regency the latter of whom dominate the niche market for the poultry trade. This complex web of relationships has given rise to a highly dynamic phenomenon: some Javanese migrants, having achieved upward social mobility and become successful entrepreneurs, now serve as employers for the surrounding population including local Bugis and Makassar residents who work within these Javanese-owned enterprises.

Yet, beneath this economic success lie critical issues that demand rigorous scholarly investigation. First, the forces of globalization and modernization have triggered a shift in values, potentially eroding the original spirit and the cultural support provided by kinship-based networks (chain migration) networks that have historically sustained the Javanese community in the Makassar district. Second, disparities in capital ownership between newcomers and established entrepreneurs often foster social segregation, stereotypical biases, and distortions in socio-economic interaction patterns with the local, heterogeneous population (comprising Bugis, Makassar, and Enrekang groups) a situation now characterized by shifting power dynamics within the working class. Third, the intensifying competition for limited public and informal commercial space in urban areas compels Javanese migrants to devise highly creative business adaptation strategies, ensuring they are not swept away by the tide of urban economic failure.

To address this challenge, this study employs a descriptive-qualitative approach utilizing in-depth case studies to examine the mechanisms that drive the economy of Javanese migrant groups. The analysis focuses on how social capital such as community associations (*paguyuban*), trans-local kinship networks, and a communal spirit is leveraged to bolster the resilience of their businesses. Furthermore, this approach seeks to map out a framework based on harmonious intercultural communication and entrepreneurship strategies rooted in local wisdom, aimed at mitigating social tension and fostering equitable economic integration with local communities in heterogeneous urban settings.

Based on the background, problem formulation, and the problem-solving approach outlined above, this research is directed toward several primary objectives: to comprehensively identify, describe, and analyze the following: (1) The manifestations of the spirit and cultural ethos, as well as the forms of interpersonal and institutional work support, that have been cultivated and embraced by the Javanese community in Makassar District to enhance their work productivity. (2) The patterns and dynamics of socio-economic interaction established by the Javanese people with the heterogeneous local population (comprising Bugis, Makassar, Enrekang, and Chinese ethnic groups) in Makassar District, particularly within the context of shifting work relations and cultural integration in their adopted home. (3) The formulation of work strategies, business adaptation methods, and capital accumulation management employed by the Javanese from the initial stages of launching their ventures and sustaining them, to expanding their extensive economic enterprises as they transition from the informal sector to becoming established entrepreneurs in Makassar District.

Academically, this study is expected to make a significant theoretical contribution to the fields of economic sociology and urban migration studies specifically by enriching the literature on embeddedness and the reconstruction of economic power relations among minority groups within heterogeneous urban spaces. In practical terms, the research findings

can serve as a strategic reference for local governments and policymakers in formulating inclusive commercial spatial regulations and economic empowerment programs rooted in cultural integration. Furthermore, the insights gained regarding strategic approaches and work ethics can provide an empirical guide for local business owners and fellow migrants, helping them build harmonious and sustainable business synergies amidst the diverse society of Makassar City.

RESEARCH METHOD

A qualitative approach using a descriptive case study method was adopted for this research to gain an in-depth and holistic understanding of the phenomenon. In line with the perspective of Bogdan and Taylor, this approach is oriented toward generating descriptive data in the form of written or oral narratives regarding the behaviors of the observed subjects (Ikbar, 2012). Field data collection was conducted rigorously through participant observation of the work ethic and social interactions of migrants, in-depth interviews to explore the informants' underlying motives and spirit, and the use of visual documentation and secondary records to strengthen the validity of the findings.

Data sources were selected intentionally using purposive sampling to ensure the relevance of the study. The key informants who served as the primary data sources consisted of 10 ethnic Javanese migrants residing in the Bara-Barayya Timur sub-district (Kelurahan) of Makassar District. These individuals met specific criteria: they had transitioned from the lower informal sector to become established entrepreneurs who employ local residents. Additionally, secondary data were gathered through supplementary interviews with local community members (from the Bugis, Makassar, and Enrekang ethnic groups) and by consulting sub-district monographs to map the social heterogeneity of the research site.

The data analysis procedure follows the circular interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (Komara, 2014). The first step is data condensation, which involves selecting and focusing field findings on themes such as work ethic, business strategies, and patterns of inter-ethnic interaction . The second step is data display, presenting the information in a logical, narrative format often using descriptive matrices to clearly illustrate the relationships between social phenomena. The final step is conclusion drawing and verification, which incorporates theoretical frameworks from economic sociology to rigorously test the validity of the findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Manifestations of Spirit, Enthusiasm, and Work Support Among Javanese Migrants in Makassar District

Work is, fundamentally, a universal obligation for every individual to meet material needs and ensure survival (Utami et al., 2026). However, if work is viewed narrowly merely as a mechanical routine for subsistence the passion and internal motivation driving it often come into question. In the study of cultural sociology, this skeptical perspective is frequently linked to traditional Javanese expressions, which are often perceived as being at odds with modern productivity. Popular phrases such as *alon-alon waton kelakon* (taking things slowly,

as long as the goal is eventually reached) (Fahmi et al., 2024) and the fatalistic economic adage *ana dina ana upa* (there will always be a day, and there will always be food) are often pejoratively misinterpreted by outside observers (Putri & Setyowati, 2024). Such expressions create the impression that the Javanese people tend to lead overly relaxed lives, characterized by resignation, a lack of intense ambition, and a deficit in the drive for competitive work.

This reductionist interpretation fosters a negative stigma: the idea that one need not push oneself to the limit physically or mentally for the sake of work. Through this stereotype, the Javanese are perceived as being content to work at a slow, measured pace, provided that the family's basic, minimal needs are met. This assumption is further reinforced by the concept of *nerima ing pandum* a philosophy of contentment which is commonly misconstrued as a tendency to be easily satisfied, lacking any aspiration for significant upward social mobility. Consequently, such crude generalizations regarding these cultural expressions construct a negative stigma that overlooks the true determination and work ethic inherent among the Javanese people.

Nevertheless, when this reality is examined through the lens of economic sociology specifically Mark Granovetter's theory of embeddedness (Melis, 2018) and Max Weber's ethics of economic action a sharp distinction emerges between normative cultural texts and the actual contextualization of economic behavior in practice (Sairin et al., 2002). The life philosophy of *aja ngaya* also identified by Endraswara in her study on the peaceful and harmonious social order of the Javanese embodies profound positive moral values (Endraswara, 2018). It should be noted that Darni's study focused on Javanese people in their homeland (the island of Java), whereas this research examines Javanese migrants living in the heterogeneous urban environment of the Makassar District. When the "aja ngaya" philosophy is brought to a new setting, its meaning is recontextualized into a value-rational instrument that maintains mental balance and social harmony, rather than serving as a justification for idleness.

Philosophically, *ngaya* refers to actions forced beyond the reasonable limits of human capacity. Rejecting *ngaya* does not mean that the Javanese in the Makassar District shun hard work. On the contrary, the prohibition against *ngaya* acts as a moral brake, preventing individuals from becoming trapped in a vortex of destructive competitiona cycle that can lead to deviant behavior, dishonesty, or the ends justify the means mentality in the pursuit of material wealth. This principle reflects both a biological and spiritual awareness that the human body has a natural right to rest. Lacking such a moral brake is akin to treating the body like a machine; if forced to operate incessantly, it will reach a point of exhaustion (fatigue), ultimately leading to fatal breakdown. Therefore, the *aja ngaya* principle truly represents a "sustainable work ethic" rooted in the achievement of both internal and external harmony.

Indirectly, the application of the *aja ngaya* principle within the economic activities of the Javanese involves a dialectic between two supporting factors: an internal dimension and an external dimension. In its internal dimension, this principle acts as a check on the individual ego, preventing one from pushing the body beyond reasonable limits. For instance, consider a Javanese migrant who sets a daily income target of IDR 1,000,000; ideally, they

would continue working until this goal is reached. However, if, after pouring all their sweat and energy into their labor from dawn until dusk, the target remains unmet, the safety valve of the *aja ngaya* (do not overexert) principle comes into play. The individual chooses to practice *nerimo* an attitude of acceptance and concludes the day's work, thereby preserving their physical well-being for the following day. In its external dimension, this principle serves as a social adhesive, fostering *rukun* (social cohesion) and *selaras* (harmony) within the community. By tempering intense, unbridled ambition, the principle acts as a preventive measure against unhealthy business competition whether among fellow Javanese migrants or with other local ethnic groups sharing the same marketplace.

This philosophical reality aligns closely with empirical findings gathered in the field regarding the manifestation of a tangible work ethic among Javanese people in the Makassar District. In this context, this spirit operates within the realm of core beliefs firmly held by individuals. Interestingly, this work ethic is expressed symbolically through language and practical life mottos. Based on in-depth interviews with 10 key informants, the work ethic of Javanese migrants in the study area reflects a robust character: tireless perseverance, the necessity of living independently in a foreign land, an extraordinary fighting spirit, and an unwavering commitment to honesty above all else. These field findings challenge past fatalistic assumptions and reveal a dynamic of "chain migration" that transforms the migrants' cultural capital, rendering it more progressive than that of the communities in their places of origin.

The emergence of this high-energy work ethic is further supported by two structural factors in the host environment: spatial conditions and facilities that enhance mobility. The Makassar District offers a strategic setting with high urban economic density, serving as a fertile ground of opportunity for informal entrepreneurs. Furthermore, access to adequate mobility infrastructure such as motor vehicles acts as a vital instrument, expanding the reach of their commercial distribution within diverse neighborhoods like Bara-Barayya Timur.

When correlated with the conceptualization of the work ethic as proposed by Miller and Sinamo, it becomes clear that a work ethic is, in essence, a total commitment to a set of positive values within the professional sphere. Work is not merely viewed as a means to satisfy biological needs; rather, it is embraced as a noble calling that demands both integrity (honesty) and a high degree of dedication (hard work). This theory finds clear empirical relevance within the context of the study site. Through in-depth observation, it becomes evident that the work ethic of ethnic Javanese migrants in the Makassar District is not defined by complacency or blind resignation. On the contrary, their economic activities are shaped by a synthesis of economic rationality driven by the aspiration for upward mobility (becoming successful entrepreneurs who employ local Bugis and Makassar people) and a firm cultural morality that keeps them anchored in values of honesty, social harmony, and social justice within a diverse, metropolitan urban society.

Dynamics of Socio-Economic Interaction Patterns Between Javanese Migrants and a Heterogeneous Local Community

The arrival of waves of ethnic Javanese migrants in the Makassar District has, from a sociological perspective, created a dynamic space for cultural encounter. This spatial

migration process has triggered intensive social interaction between the migrant group as newcomers (an in-group) and the local population, who represent the dominant, established culture (an out-group). Based on field data and empirical narratives gathered by the researcher through observation and interviews, it is concluded that the structure of social interaction in the research site directly impacts three crucial spheres of life: social relations within the community, industrial and commercial/business relations, and the institution of intermarriage (amalgamation). The meeting of these two distinct cultural groups inherently generates dynamic social fluctuations, where associative processes (such as cooperation and assimilation) occur alongside dissociative elements manifesting as urban commercial competition and micro-scale social friction particularly within the Javanese community that has established long-term residency in the Makassar District.

When these empirical phenomena are examined through a theoretical lens, the characteristics of the social interactions between the ethnic Javanese migrant community and the local residents align closely with the theory of social interaction (Sunarto, 2005). The social interaction is the key to all social life, manifesting across two primary poles: associative processes, which tend toward unity, and dissociative processes, which tend toward opposition. In the field, these associative processes manifest as communal cooperation and accommodation, serving to maintain stability, harmony, mutual tolerance, and collective tranquility among the residents of the Bara-Barayya Timur sub-district. Conversely, dissociative processes appear in the form of competition within the urban informal market, as well as potential conflict which occasionally surfaces when parties fail to manage differing economic interests judiciously. The interaction phenomena related to the social relationship patterns of the Javanese people can be observed across the following three domains:

1. The Realm of Social and Community Interaction

Daily relationships remain harmonious, fostered by the convergence of the local *sombere* character defined by friendliness, openness, and tolerance with the Javanese migrant trait of being polite and conflict-averse. These interactions are guided by ancient Javanese philosophies that prioritize maintaining harmony (*rukun*) and mutual respect. Furthermore, the principle of *aja ngaya* (avoiding excess or overreaching) serves as a spiritual and moral check, preventing migrants from adopting dominant or aggressive behaviors in their new environment. This self-restrained attitude effectively mitigates social jealousy, accelerates cultural acceptance, and fosters strong patterns of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) among neighbors in urban settings.

2. The Realm of Work and Business Relations

The economic transformation of Javanese migrants from small-scale traders into successful entrepreneurs has shifted class-based power dynamics. Applying Mark Granovetter's theory of embeddedness, this financial success is intrinsically linked to their economic activities, as they have become employers for local residents (from the Bugis, Makassar, and Enrekang ethnic groups). While there is a tendency to recruit through chain migration networks, their openness to hiring local workers has successfully established socio-economic legitimacy.

On a macro level, there is an absence of horizontal conflict, as these businesses contribute to the local economy. However, at the micro level within the public sphere, dissociative dynamics occasionally emergemanifesting as minor crimes, such as extortion by certain local youths. This phenomenon persists due to the enduring stereotype that Javanese people are inherently gentle and timid (*ewuh pakewuh*). Rather than retaliating, these Javanese entrepreneurs often choose to yield and pay security money to preserve long-term peace and ensure the continued operation of their businesses.

3. The Realm of Marriage (Amalgamation)

The most profound evidence of this successful cultural integration is the prevalence of interethnic marriages (amalgamation). Intimate social contact within a shared spatial environment succeeds in dissolving racial prejudices and breaking down the barriers of exclusivity surrounding newcomers. According to Milton Gordon's theory, this amalgamation represents the ultimate indicator of assimilation specifically through intermarriage signifying that a minority group has fully integrated into the host society.

Economically and socially, such intermarriages yield a profound impact for Javanese migrants: first, social protection, by gaining access to an informal safety net provided by the local family; second, access to capital, by facilitating entry into local social capital; and third, cultural legitimacy, by dismantling long-standing stereotypes that once labeled the Javanese as an exclusive group. Through amalgamation, the harmony that is cultivated is no longer merely a superficial display within the marketplace; rather, it becomes firmly embedded within the domestic sphere of the family.

Formulation of Work Strategies, Business Adaptation, and Capital Accumulation Management Among Javanese Migrants

The success of vertical economic mobility among the Javanese migrant community in Makassar District is the result of internalized cultural values combined with the tactical acumen to formulate adaptation strategies amidst intense urban competition. The primary driver of these strategies is rooted in a fundamental subsistence belief: "*Kalo nggrenja pasti mamah* (if one works, one will certainly eat) This expression carries the conceptual implication that an individual who is not actively working will inevitably fail to meet their basic nutritional needs. Work is positioned as the anchor of one's spirit and the most fundamental defense mechanism. This critical awareness compels Javanese migrants to maintain a strategic vigilance in managing their business ventures, thereby avoiding the trap of urban poverty.

In practice, the economic activities of Javanese migrants in Makassar District are heterogeneous and context-dependent, shaped by their capital capacity, personal experience, and their ability to navigate the informal market. These various tactical formulations can be categorized into four primary entrepreneurial typologies:

1. Psychological Resilience and Mental Toughness Strategy. Manifested through a steadfast commitment to maintaining consistent motivation, disregarding external environmental distractions, and cultivating the mental fortitude to remain resilient avoiding psychological collapse when faced with fluctuations or declines in sales revenue within a competitive urban ecosystem.

2. Trans-Local Capital Accumulation Strategy. Implemented through consumption efficiency and a frugal lifestyle while living away from home, with the goal of accumulating long-term financial capital. This accumulated capital is deliberately allocated to serve as a foundation for establishing or expanding new business ventures upon the migrants' eventual return to their home regions.
3. Consumer Retention Strategy Based on Quality Consistency and Product Innovation. This is implemented by strictly maintaining a consistent flavor profile to foster and preserve customer trust. This commitment to quality is balanced with creative flexibility periodically introducing product variations to prevent consumer boredom aligning with the quality theories of Miller and Sinamo.
4. Cross-Sector Business Diversification Strategy Employed by established entrepreneurs, this approach involves operating multiple business units across various sectors ranging from restaurants to home-based snack production. Such diversification serves as a preventive measure to mitigate the risks of market uncertainty, ensuring that the family's economic foundation remains intact even if one business sector falters.

From a sociological perspective, this multifaceted strategic framework effectively addresses the third research question concerning the survival tactics employed by migrants in an urban environment. The convergence of a subsistence-oriented spirit encapsulated by the Javanese adage if one keeps working, one will surely eat and a keen aptitude for navigating informal markets provides a clear, scholarly explanation for the high level of economic success achieved by Javanese migrants in the Makassar District. Through the effective management of social capital and well-considered risk mitigation, they have moved beyond mere survival to achieve economic prosperity. This is evidenced by their transformation from small-scale informal workers into successful entrepreneurs, capable of creating employment opportunities for the diverse community around them.

CONCLUSION

The work ethic and drive of ethnic Javanese migrants in the Makassar District stem from a combination of the philosophy *aja ngaya* which serves as a gauge for physical limits and the adage *kalo nggrenja pasti mamah* (if one exerts effort, one will surely eat), which fuels a subsistence-based rationality. Their resilient, honest, and unpretentious nature shapes them into independent, hard-working individuals striving to secure their future needs. This internal motivation is structurally reinforced by their ownership of personal transport and the strategic selection of urban locations for their business activities. Social interaction between Javanese migrants and the heterogeneous local population unfolds harmoniously across three primary spheres. In the social realm, harmony is achieved through the blending of the migrants' attitudes with the friendly (*sombere'*) character of the local residents. In the professional sphere, Javanese entrepreneurs have successfully forged economic ties by employing local people, though minor frictions such as occasional extortion attempts by local youths still occur. Meanwhile, in the domestic sphere, cultural integration is strengthened through intermarriage (amalgamation). The business adaptation strategies and capital accumulation management employed by Javanese migrants are dynamic and vary from

person to person. These tactical approaches include strengthening psychological resilience, practicing consumption efficiency to save capital, and consistently maintaining product quality alongside market innovation. Ultimately, the most concrete strategy is the diversification of business across different sectors, which serves to mitigate the risks and uncertainties inherent in the informal economy, thereby enabling the migrants to achieve economic stability in their new environment.

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