

The Role of the Brick Industry in Increasing Total Household Income in the Local Community of Pejagan Village, Jambesari D.S District, Bondowoso Regency

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: 01 Juni 2026

Revised: 27 Juni 2026

Accepted: 30 Juni 2026

Keywords:

Brick Industry, Household Income, Local Economy, Social Phenomenology, Rural Development.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the role of the brick industry in increasing the total household income of the people of Pejagan Village, Jambesari Darus Sholah District, Bondowoso Regency. The brick industry is one of the micro and small businesses that have an important contribution to the rural economy through the use of local resources, labor absorption, and improvement of community welfare. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques in the form of in-depth interviews, field observations, and documentation involving industry players, workers, and village officials. Data analysis was conducted using the interactive models of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, while the validity of the data was tested through triangulation of sources, techniques, and time. The results of the study show that the brick industry contributes more than 60% to the total household income of the people of Pejagan Village. In addition to being a major source of income, this industry also has strong social and cultural values, such as mutual cooperation, independence, and local community identity. Brick industry activities also create a multiplier effect for supporting economic sectors, such as trade in raw materials and transportation services. However, limited capital, market fluctuations, and lack of environmental regulations are still challenges. Therefore, government support is needed through coaching, access to capital, and the application of environmentally friendly technology to realize sustainable industrial development.

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INTRODUCTION

The brick industry is a form of micro and small enterprises (MSEs) that have a significant contribution to improving the economy of rural communities. Based on Law Number 20 of 2008 concerning Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, local governments are obliged to provide protection, empowerment, and ease of access to capital for small business actors such as brick producers. MSEs have a strategic role in absorbing labor, reducing the unemployment rate, and increasing household income in rural areas (Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, 2020).

Brick industry activities are also closely related to environmental aspects. According to Law Number 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management, every production activity is obliged to pay attention to environmental sustainability through the sustainable management of raw materials and waste. In practice, most brick industry players in rural areas, including in Pejagan Village, do not have official business licenses or environmental documents such as *Environmental Management Efforts and Environmental Monitoring Efforts* (UKL-UPL). This condition causes weak legal supervision and guidance for small industries from local governments (Rahmawati, 2021).

Household income has an important meaning in determining people's welfare. Todaro (2011) explained that household income includes all income from the formal and informal sectors that are used to meet the needs of life. In the rural context, the source of household income can come from agriculture, trade, small industries, to freelance work. Meanwhile, according to Blakely and Leigh (2010), local economic development occurs when communities utilize the potential of their resources, such as land, labor, and social capital, to create productive economic activities. The brick industry is one of the real examples of local potential-based economic activities that are able to encourage village economic turnover. Likewise, Sukirno (2012) explained that the household industry is a small-scale production activity with limited capital use and family labor. The presence of this kind of industry can increase employment opportunities, reduce unemployment, and increase the income of rural communities. Based on this theory, the brick industry in Pejagan Village can be understood as a means of economic empowerment that is able to

increase total household income through the optimization of family labor and local natural resources.

The development of the brick industry in Pejagan Village is not only an economic activity, but also part of the social and cultural identity of the local community. This work is passed down from generation to generation, creates social bonds among workers, and becomes a symbol of economic independence for local communities. In accordance with Nasution, this activity reflects the value of mutual cooperation, perseverance, and community adaptation to the decreasing limitations of agricultural land (2020).

Various studies show that the brick industry has a real role in increasing household income. The results of field studies in several regions of East Java found that households involved in the brick industry experienced an increase in income of 25–40% compared to households not involved in the industry (Sari, 2021; Wahyudi, 2020). In addition to providing additional income, the industry also creates job opportunities for family members who do not have formal skills. However, earnings from this sector are volatile and are heavily influenced by seasons and market demand. Therefore, innovation and policy support are needed so that the brick industry can become a stable and sustainable source of income (Rahayu & Kurniawan, 2022).

The local context of Pejagan Village, Jambesari D.S. District, Bondowoso Regency has unique social and geographical characteristics compared to other regions. The majority of the people depend on the brick industry sector for their livelihood, both as business owners and workers. However, until now there have not been many studies that comprehensively examine the role of the brick industry in the village in increasing total household income. Most previous studies have only highlighted economic contributions without linking them to the social, cultural, and juridical aspects inherent in local communities.

This research is important because it offers an integrative approach that combines household economic analysis, social phenomenology, and juridical analysis in comprehensively assessing the role of the brick industry. The focus of this research is directed at Pejagan Village, which has never been the object of study before in the context of the brick industry. In addition, this study seeks to describe the social meaning and

solidarity of the brick worker community which contributes to improving household welfare.

The importance of this research fills the gap in literature related to the role of the brick industry in Bondowoso, as well as contributes to the development of development economics and rural socio-economics. From a practical perspective, the results of the research are expected to provide regional policy recommendations for strengthening the brick industry as a sustainable and environmentally friendly local economic driver.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS

1. Development Economics Theory

Development Economics Theory, especially the concept of development based on local economic *development*. This theory emphasizes that economic development is not only determined by large investments or macro policies, but also by local economic activities that utilize the resources owned by local communities (Todaro & Smith, 2011).

The brick industry in Pejagan Village is a tangible form of *local resource-based development*, where the community utilizes the potential of clay and local labor to create economic value. Development based on local potential like this is believed to increase household income, strengthen economic independence, and reduce inequality in rural and urban areas.

According to Blakely and Leigh (2010), local economic development occurs when communities use local natural, social, and labor resources to produce productive and sustainable economic activities. Thus, this theory is relevant to explain how the brick industry plays a role in increasing the income and welfare of rural households through the economic empowerment of communities.

2. Household Economic Theory

This theory explains how households allocate resources such as labor, time, and capital to maximize their economic well-being (Becker, 1965). In this study, the theory was used to analyze how family members in Pejagan Village contribute collectively in the brick industry to increase the total household income.

This approach emphasizes that household economic decisions in rural areas are based not only on rational aspects of the economy alone, but also on social, cultural, and resource availability. Households often combine agricultural activities, household industries, and informal work to achieve economic stability.

Household economics theory helps to understand the mechanisms of increasing household income through the direct involvement of family members in brick production, both as labor and as household-based small business managers.

3. Social Phenomenology

In addition to economic theory, this research is also based on the theory of social phenomenology developed by Alfred Schutz (1967). This theory explains that social reality is formed through the experiences and meanings given by individuals to their daily activities. In the context of the brick industry, work is not only an economic activity, but also has social, cultural, and identity meaning for the people of Pejagan Village.

Through a phenomenological approach, this study seeks to understand how people interpret work in the brick industry as a form of independence, mutual cooperation, and cultural heritage, as well as how these values contribute to strengthening household economic motivation.

Integrative Framework

This study integrates the three theories above to produce a comprehensive analysis:

- Development Economics Theory explains the *macro and structural role of the* brick industry in local economic development.
- Household Economic Theory explains *the micro-mechanism* of income increase at the family level.
- Social Phenomenological Theory explains the *social and cultural dimensions* behind these economic activities.

With an integrative theoretical approach, this research not only describes economic relations alone, but also understands the social and cultural realities of communities in the context of sustainable rural development.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to deeply understand the role of the brick industry in increasing people's household income in Pejagan Village, Jambesari Darus Sholah District, Bondowoso Regency. This approach was chosen because it is able to explore the experiences, perceptions, and social meanings of people who work in the brick industry as part of local economic and cultural life. The data used included primary data (the results of interviews, observations, and documentation from industry players, workers, and village officials) and secondary data (village documents, government reports, and scientific literature). Informants were determined by purposive sampling with criteria of at least two years of involvement in the brick industry and willingness to provide open information. Data collection techniques include observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, while data analysis is carried out using the interactive model Miles, Huberman & Saldaña through the stages of reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawn. To maintain the validity of the data, triangulation of sources, techniques, and time is used, while the research stages include preparation, field data collection, analysis, and preparation of research reports.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that the brick industry in Pejagan Village has a significant role in increasing the total household income. Most respondents stated that more than 60% of the family's source of income comes from brick production activities, both as business owners, workers, and transporters. These findings are in line with the theory of household economics (Becker, 1965) which states that every household will strive to allocate labor and time to activities that provide maximum economic benefits. In this context, the brick industry becomes a strategic alternative when the agricultural sector experiences fluctuations in crop yields due to seasons and climate.

The income earned from the brick industry is not only cash, but also in the form of other socio-economic benefits such as employment opportunities for family members, household economic stability, and the ability to meet basic needs. Empirically, these results support the finding of Ellis (1998) that diversification of rural household economic activities plays an important role in maintaining income sustainability. Thus, the brick

industry can be categorized as *an economic safety net* for rural communities that depend on the informal sector.

Field analysis shows that the existence of the brick industry has created a *local multiplier effect* in the Pejagan Village community. This economic activity not only provides direct income to workers, but also grows supporting sectors such as raw material trade, transportation, and household consumption. These findings reinforce the view of Blakely and Leigh (2010) that local economic development occurs when human and natural resources are used to create sustainable economic activities at the community level.

The brick industry serves as a center of local economic activity that harnesses the potential of clay and village labor. In the context of regional development, this is in accordance with the development economics theory put forward by Todaro & Smith (2011), that development oriented towards local resources can strengthen community capacity, reduce dependence on external economies, and create village economic independence. Therefore, the role of the brick industry is not only as a source of income, but also as a driver of local economic circulation that contributes to the welfare of the community.

In addition to its economic function, the study found that work in the brick industry has a deep social and cultural significance for the people of Pejagan Village. This activity has been passed down from generation to generation and is considered a symbol of perseverance and independence. Brick workers see their work not only as a means of earning a living, but also as part of the social identity of families and communities. This perspective is relevant to the social phenomenological theory of Alfred Schutz (1967), who emphasizes that social actions have subjective meanings constructed through everyday life experiences.

Mutual cooperation, solidarity between workers, and the family work system are important elements in maintaining the sustainability of this industry. The work was carried out collectively starting from the process of printing, drying, to baking involving the participation of all family members. This phenomenon shows that economic activity in rural communities cannot be separated from the social and cultural values that shape it. Thus, the brick industry plays a role not only as a means of production, but also as a

forum for the reproduction of social values, work ethics, and the togetherness of the local community.

Despite having a positive contribution to household income, this study also found various obstacles that hinder the sustainability of the brick industry. Among them are limited capital, dependence on the dry season, and fluctuations in market demand. In addition, most business actors do not have business licenses or environmental documents such as UKL-UPL, so it has the potential to cause legal and environmental problems as stipulated in Law No. 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management.

This problem emphasizes the importance of local government policy interventions in the form of MSME empowerment, access to capital, environmentally friendly technology training, and regulations that favor micro businesses. These results reinforce the view that the economic empowerment of rural communities cannot be separated from partisan structural and policy support (Blakely & Leigh, 2010).

Theoretically, the results of this study confirm the integration between development economics theory, household economics theory, and social phenomenology. The brick industry serves as a bridge between the microeconomic dimension of the household and the social and cultural dynamics of the local community. Household income increases not only because of work productivity, but also because of the existence of a collective work system based on social values, which strengthens the solidarity and efficiency of the family workforce.

This research contributes to the development of the concept of *community-based economic development*, where the strengthening of the local economy is measured not only by increasing income, but also by the extent to which economic activities are able to maintain social cohesion and community cultural values. In the context of Pejagan Village, the brick industry is a concrete example of how the traditional informal sector can become a motor of sustainable development if supported by adaptive and participatory policies.

Based on the overall findings, it can be concluded that the role of the brick industry in increasing the total household income in local communities is multidimensional covering economic, social, and cultural aspects. This industry is not only the main source of income for the community, but also strengthens social networks,

community identities, and contributes to village economic development. However, the sustainability of this industry requires serious attention from local governments in terms of coaching, environmental regulations, and capital support in order to remain a socially and ecologically friendly productive sector.

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, SUGGESTIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

The results of the study show that the brick industry has a strategic role in increasing the total household income of local communities in Pejagan Village. This industry is not only a major source of livelihood, but also creates a chain economic effect that strengthens family welfare and the sustainability of the village economy. Through the involvement of family members in the production process—from printing, drying, to brick burning—there is a pattern of collective work-based household economics that increases efficiency and overall income contribution.

From a socio-economic perspective, the brick industry has expanded informal employment, reduced the unemployment rate, and strengthened the solidarity of local communities. Phenomenologically, people interpret this work not only as an economic activity, but also as a local social and cultural identity that is strongly embedded in daily life. However, on the other hand, challenges such as fuel price fluctuations, dependence on seasons, and limitations of technological innovation still limit productivity and revenue improvements. Thus, the brick industry plays a significant role in improving household economic welfare in Pejagan Village, but it requires local government support in the form of training, environmentally friendly technology innovations, and sustainable economic empowerment policies so that this local potential can develop optimally.

Based on the results of the research, there are several suggestions and recommendations that can be given for the development of the brick industry in Pejagan Village, Jambesari Darus Sholah District, Bondowoso Regency. Local governments are expected to provide policy support and sustainable guidance to industry players through business management training, technical skill improvement, and the application of production technology that is more efficient and environmentally friendly. Support in the form of access to capital, assistance with production tools, and marketing facilitation is also very important so that the local brick industry is able to develop and compete in the wider market.

For industry players, innovation in the production process needs to be continuously developed by utilizing simple technologies to improve energy efficiency, reduce operational costs, and improve product quality. The formation of joint business groups or production cooperatives can be a strategy to strengthen bargaining positions and expand distribution networks. Meanwhile, local communities are expected to raise awareness of the importance of diversifying sources of income so that they are not completely dependent on the seasonal brick industry. Strengthening the household economy through other productive activities such as agriculture, livestock, or micro businesses can be a solution to support family income.

For academics and researchers, it is recommended to conduct further research with quantitative and comparative approaches to measure the contribution of the brick industry to household income more specifically, as well as research environmental and sustainability aspects so that these economic activities can run in balance with the preservation of local natural resources.

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